

# MONROE COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

## BACKGROUND: WHY AND WHY NOW?

Prior to the 100-Day Challenge, Wayne County – which often collaborates with Monroe County on CoC efforts – was selected to be part of a Phase II cohort for the Rural Youth Peer Network (RYPN) initiative with a 6-month focus on building capacity for developing non-time-limited supportive housing for youth. Monroe County learned about distinct strategies and opportunities for addressing youth homelessness from the experiences of the CoC and its partnership with Wayne County, including essential components of service delivery for youth such as practicing trauma informed care, harm reduction, motivational interviewing, positive youth development, and Housing First.

Based on the groundwork laid in Monroe County and the interest and willingness of housing providers, Monroe County Children and Youth Services, and philanthropic organizations to prevent and end youth homelessness, the 100-Day Challenge presented a distinct opportunity to build on local momentum and increase alignment around addressing the housing and service needs of youth.

## 100-DAY CHALLENGE PRIORITY AREAS

Monroe County chose to center their 100-Day Challenge around building local capacity and resources for addressing youth homelessness. The community identified the following priority areas to address during their 100-Day Challenge:

- Develop a Coordinated Response for all youth under age 18 to be piloted within the school system and focused on youth experiencing literal homelessness, bringing together and maximizing both homeless system and mainstream resources to provide comprehensive care.
- Develop safe housing strategies for young adults 18-24, including transitional and permanent housing models.

### 100-Day Goal

#### Coordinated Response for Youth under 18:

- Identify a same-day crisis response to youth experiencing literal homelessness, ensuring schools and emergency responders (211) have a safe place to shelter minors tonight.

#### Safe Housing Strategies for Young Adults 18-24:

- Launch Pad Mission - a centralized database that will post available housing resources for all case managers to use – for use by housing programs, market rate landlords, affordable housing providers and shared housing options.
- Explore a transitional housing option for youth experiencing homelessness in the Poconos.

## PROGRESS, SUCCESS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

*\*Monroe County, PA focused on building system capacity and cross-system collaboration during their 100-Day Challenge and therefore did not track housing placements.*

### SUCSESSES IN INNOVATION AND COLLABORATION

#### **INCREASED PARTNERSHIPS AND ALIGNMENT AROUND YOUTH HOMELESSNESS**

Monroe County's 100-Day Challenge brought together representatives from across the community, including the United Way, local school districts, Monroe County Children and Youth, Children's Roundtable of Monroe County, faith-based organizations and volunteers to develop a coordinated response to youth homelessness. A key focus for Monroe County was increasing alignment across youth-serving systems and increasing engagement of traditional and non-traditional youth system partners - including domestic violence, education and juvenile justice - to add capacity and develop system goals for local youth homelessness efforts. In the future, Monroe County will continue developing Launch Pad Mission, a centralized database of available housing resources accessible to all case managers across the system and utilized by housing programs, market rate landlords, affordable housing providers, and shared housing options.

#### **IDENTIFICATION OF YOUTH EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS**

The 100-Day Challenge Team improved compilation and analysis of youth homelessness data from across local systems of care, resulting in better identification of youth experiencing homelessness and a deeper understanding of what youth homelessness looks like in Monroe County. During the launch of the 100-Day Challenge, the Team identified gaps in local data collection around youth ages 18 to 24 experiencing homelessness, including youth in unsheltered situations who were not engaging in services and therefore not being captured on the by-name list. Data on youth homelessness was compiled from all known sources – including school level data – through the coordinated efforts of 100-Day Challenge Team members, resulting in improved identification of youth experiencing homelessness in Monroe County. This information will help Monroe County develop targeted goals and strategies for addressing local need.

#### **DEVELOPING A CRISIS RESPONSE FOR MINORS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS**

Monroe County utilized the 100-Day Challenge to begin addressing an urgent need in the community – the development of a coordinated community response for minors (youth under the age of 18) experiencing literal homelessness. The 100-Day Challenge Team engaged diverse stakeholders from across the community in discussions around developing a same-day crisis response for minors that will allow school representatives and first responders such as 211 to immediately make referrals to a safe shelter or housing placement. The community identified Family Promise hotel vouchers as a resource to help minors experiencing homelessness and their families reside in safety and security when shelter space is not available in the county. The 100-Day Challenge Team plans to continue its work of providing shelter opportunities for minors by expanding understanding and utilization of Family Promise hotel

vouchers, assisting sheltered youth to navigate the system of care and access permanent housing (either through funded resources or housing problem solving), and beginning the development of a family engagement and mediation response for minors who are doubled-up or couch-surfing due to family conflict.

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#### MAINTAINING 100-DAY MOMENTUM

To preserve the gains made during the 100 days and maintain momentum around preventing and ending youth homelessness, Monroe County plans to carry out the following activities:

#### TEAM'S ACTION PLANS FOR ONGOING WORK

**1. Goal #1 – Shelter for Youth Under 18:**

- Ensure school liaisons are aware of Family Promise hotel vouchers as an immediate resource when shelters space is not available.
- Share information at Monroe County Homeless Advisory Board.

**2. Goal #2 – Launch Pad Mission:**

- Continue work with Launch Pad Mission, including encouraging recruited landlords and resources to input their information into the app.
- Work with 2030 Affordable Housing Strategic Doing Committee to arrange landlord engagement meeting.