

# PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MD

## BACKGROUND: WHY AND WHY NOW?

In 2011, Prince George's County Department of Social Services (PGCDSS) commissioned a study with Johns Hopkins University into the nature and scope of the local population of youth under age 25 experiencing homelessness and unstable housing. Survey evidence found that among youth experiencing or at-risk of homelessness, 41.7% had less than a high school education, 30.6% had been arrested, only about half those in need of behavioral or somatic health services were linked to those services, and only 35.3% reported receiving food stamps or other mainstream agency assistance.

In response to the findings from the study, the County began building the core elements of a system to serve youth who are homeless or unstably housed, which has included:

- Development of a strategic plan to end youth homelessness;
- Implementation of annual youth counts;
- Increased bed capacity for youth who are homeless or unstably housed, including 24 beds of emergency shelter (20 dormitory and 4 host home), 18 beds of transitional housing, and a small pilot rapid re-housing program;
- Development and implementation of a training methodology for delivering youth specific Evidence Based Practices for providers,
- Acquisition of 60 youth housing vouchers and an opt in to HUD's Family Unification Program - Youth (FUP-Y) demonstration pilot, extending the voucher time limit to 60 months; and
- Appointment to a statewide task force to study housing and supportive services for unaccompanied homeless youth, which resulted in:
  - The addition of two questions regarding housing instability and homelessness to the State's annual survey of all high school students,
  - The passage of legislation for "Youth REACH MD", a statewide youth homelessness enumeration effort, and
  - The inclusion of homeless and unstably housed youth among eligible students to receive tuition waivers for state colleges and universities in Maryland.

With this work to develop a robust system of care for youth experiencing homelessness already underway, Prince George's County undertook the 100-Day Challenge with a goal of taking on system-wide initiatives, building capacity, and expanding community involvement and will to prevent and end youth homelessness.

**100-DAY CHALLENGE PRIORITY AREAS**

In addition to increasing housing placements, Prince George’s County identified the following priority areas to address during their 100-Day Challenge:

Ensuring that we all know who to call and how to help by focusing on the sub-population of 18-24 year old unaccompanied homeless youth and building a coordinated community response by connecting systems. This focus included connections between intake points serving homeless and unstably housed youth and ensuring that what grows from the 100-Day Challenge is sustainable.

The Prince George’s County 100-Day Challenge Team also identified coordination and integration with higher education institutions as priority for serving the target population of 18-24 year old unaccompanied homeless youth.

**100-Day Goal**

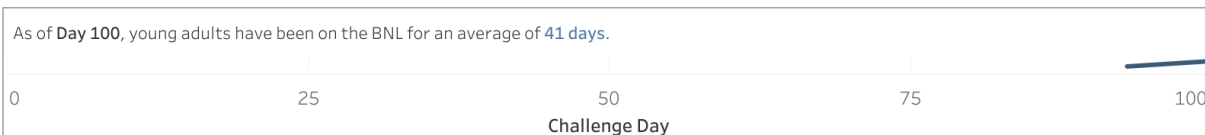
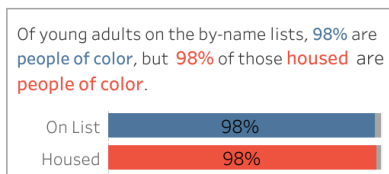
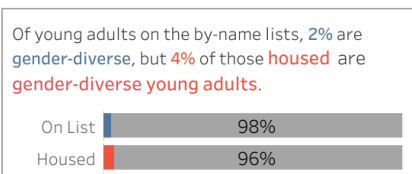
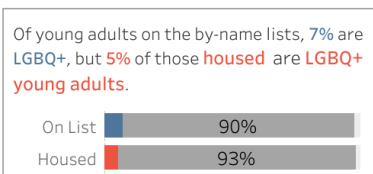
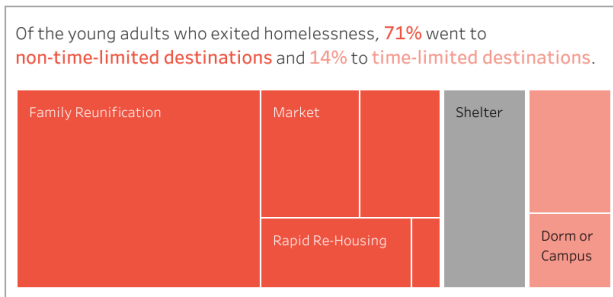
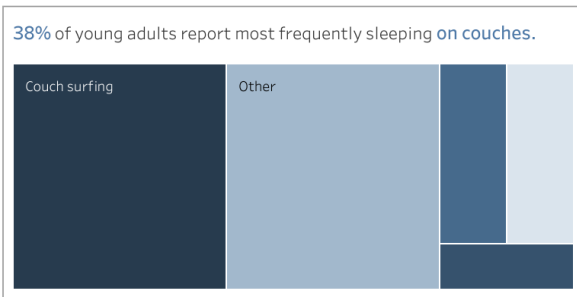
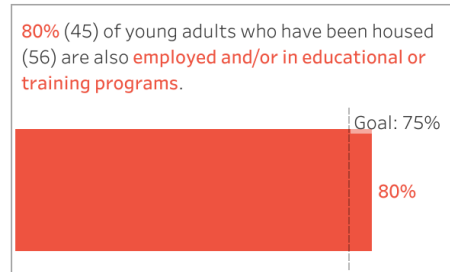
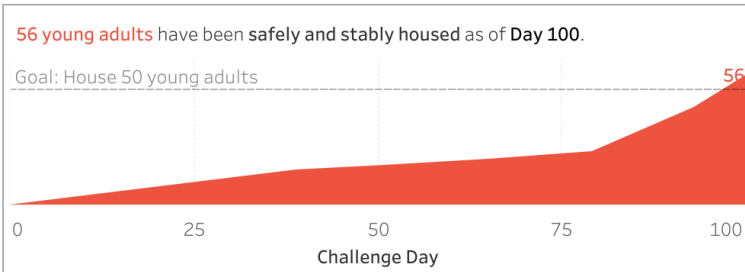
During 100 days, 100% of students at three 2- and 4-year institutions who identify as homeless will be housed or who identify as at-risk of homelessness will remain housed. 50 young adults (18-24) who are homeless will be housed (safe and stable), of which 75% will be employed and/or in educational or training programs.

**PROGRESS, SUCCESSES, AND ACHIEVEMENTS**

<i>GOAL</i>	<i>RESULTS</i>
<p>In Prince George’s County, in 100 days:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 50 young adults will be safe and stably housed, of which 75% will be employed and/or in educational/training programs.</li> <li>● 100% of students at three 2- and 4-year institutions who identify as homeless will be housed.</li> </ul>	<p>As of Day 100:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● 56 young adults were safely and stably housed.</li> <li>● 100% of (11 out of 11) students at three 2- and 4-year colleges who were identified as homeless have been housed or remained housed.</li> <li>● 80% of young adults who were housed were also employed and/or in educational or training programs.</li> </ul>

## 100-Day Challenge | Prince George's Co, MD | Day 100 | Mar 6 2019

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### SUCCESSES IN INNOVATION AND COLLABORATION

#### CROSS-SYSTEM PARTNERSHIPS

One of the key accomplishments of the Prince George's County 100-Day Challenge was increased authentic networking and collaboration amongst cross-system community partners. There was strong representation from youth-serving systems, providers and organizations from the planning of the Challenge onward that helped establish a community-wide effort to prevent and end youth homelessness.

Representation included three post-secondary institutions – Prince George's Community College, Bowie State University, and the University of Maryland - who helped shape the Challenge's focus on serving 18-

24 year old unaccompanied youth, with a unique focus on students experiencing homelessness at these institutions. This intentional collaboration helped form working relationships between the Prince George's County homeless response system and the post-secondary educational system, allowing the community to leverage resources across systems and take on collaborative efforts to identify and engage youth experiencing homelessness. Higher education institutions were also able to form new relationships with each other to address youth homelessness collectively, including sharing information and resources to support students experiencing homelessness.

The Prince George's County 100-Day Challenge Team also developed new partnerships with property management companies and private landlords to help increase housing options available for youth. Additionally, new employer partnerships were cultivated through the 100-Day Challenge, resulting in the development of the inaugural Prince George's County Job and Resource Fair (featuring over 51 employers) to help connect youth to local employment resources, opportunities and programs.

#### **BY-NAME LIST AND CASE COORDINATION**

The Prince George's County 100-Day Challenge Team built a by-name list and conducted case conferences for every student identified as homeless or at-risk of homelessness during the Challenge, resulting in successful connections to community resources. Through case conferencing, community partners learned more about the systems and resources serving youth at-risk of experiencing homelessness, allowing them to identify the best and most appropriate resources to respond to each case and meet the student's individual needs. Prince George's County now considers the use of the by-name list and case coordination as part of their "new normal" and plans to continue building out an active By-Name List to drive future action around preventing and ending youth homelessness.

#### **BUILDING COMMUNITY UNDERSTANDING & AWARENESS**

The Prince George's County 100-Day Challenge tackled not only strengthening the local crisis response system, but also on bringing the higher education institutions to the table while working to minimize employment and training barriers. Many of the community partners representing housing and homeless services, education and employment did not work together regularly prior to the Challenge, nor were they coordinated around the goal of preventing and ending youth homelessness.

The Prince George's County 100-Day Challenge helped bring diverse programs and systems together in a new way, bringing attention to the prevalence of youth at-risk of or experiencing homelessness locally as well as raising awareness of the community resources available to help meet their needs. Prince George's County is working to leverage the work already accomplished during the 100-Day Challenge to establish a community-wide awareness campaign that can be used across all community organizations to identify youth experiencing homelessness and connect them to resources.

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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, Prince George's County plans to carry out the following activities.

### TEAM'S ACTION PLANS FOR ONGOING WORK

1. Strengthen authentic youth collaboration and development of a Homeless Youth Action Board (HYAB).
2. Increase housing options.
3. Increase awareness, use, and accessibility to tuition waiver and improve efficiency processes.
4. Continue to strengthen systems and structure to continue building momentum.

### RECOMMENDATIONS TO SYSTEM LEADERS

1. Continue and strengthen policy alignment to build momentum and advance the work on the ground.
2. Increase affordable housing options.
3. Continue integration with education.