



# MEANINGFUL CHANGE IN 100 DAYS

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## 2017/18 100-Day Challenges on Youth Homelessness Summary Report



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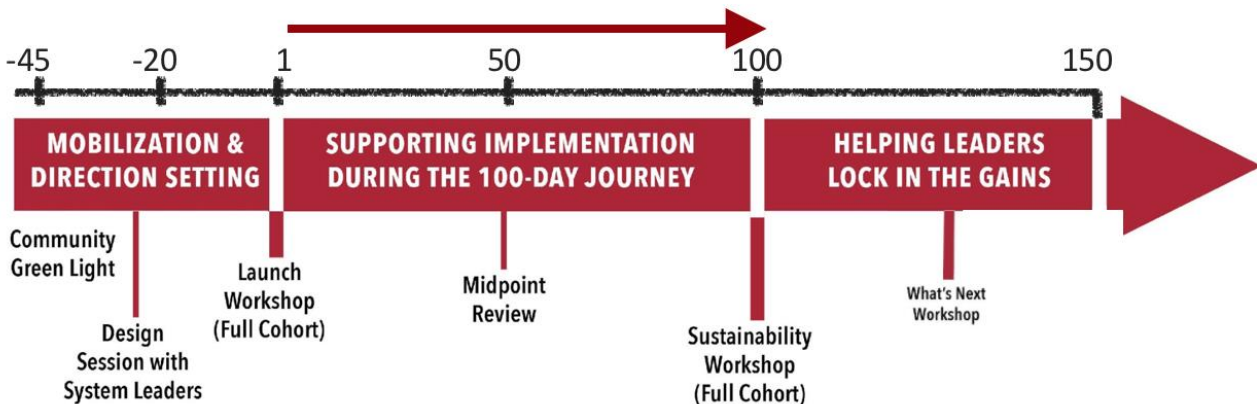
## 100-Day Challenges on Youth Homelessness

In fall 2017, four rural communities – Franklin County, ME; Gulf Coast, MS; Marion County, OR; and Mendocino, CA – launched 100-Day Challenges to accelerate the response to youth homelessness in their communities. The purpose was to help catalyze community action to establish bold, creative, and innovative ways to prevent and end youth homelessness.

100-Day Challenges provide an opportunity for communities to assess their local efforts and set ambitious goals to help youth and young adults find a safe and stable place to live. The intentionally short timeframe generates an urgency to act among communities and cross-system partners, encouraging communities to work differently, change systems, and innovate to make rapid progress toward their goals.

The 100-day initiative also provides an opportunity for cross-system stakeholders to come together, make new connections, share information and best practices, and create a common vision for preventing and ending youth homelessness.

### *100-Day Challenge Journey*



## 2017/18 100-Day Challenge Communities

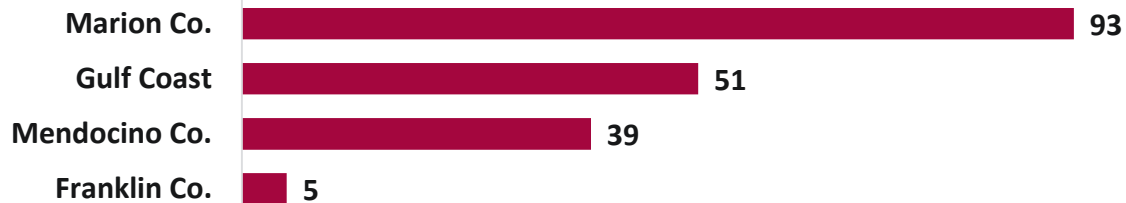
Franklin County, ME; Gulf Coast, MS; Marion County, OR; and Mendocino, CA were selected through a competitive process based on their demonstrated commitment to preventing and ending youth homelessness, their capacity for innovation, and their ability to build a collaborative system to meet the needs of youth at-risk of and experiencing homelessness. The four 100-Day Challenge communities represent diverse geographies with unique needs, challenges, and strengths.



## 100-Day Challenge Goals

Each of the four 100-Day Challenge communities established ambitious goals during a launch workshop. The 100-day goals were locally-driven and developed by teams in response to the needs of youth in their communities. Goals represented cross-system collaboration around a collective local vision for preventing and ending youth homelessness.

After 100 days, **188 youth and young adults were housed and/or connected with safe and stable place to stay across the four communities:**



## Successes in Collaboration and Innovation

### *New Tools and Processes*



#### **Spotlight on Marion County, OR**

During the 100-Day Challenge, Marion County strengthened its response to youth homelessness through the development of several new tools. For example, the community developed a by-name list for youth experiencing homelessness. Through this process, the community learned that some young people may have been failing to get resources from all the systems they need. The team identified a need for more intentional transition planning, including stabilization plans, that incorporate warm hand-offs and follow-through and include representatives from adult systems to be part of transition planning conversations. In addition, the Marion County team worked to create an HMIS form specific to their community and explored creative placement options for its newly identified and engaged young people, including host homes. The team also realized the need for additional analysis on whether and when minors can enter into legal contracts for housing.

### *Systems Change and Leadership*

As part of the 100-Day Challenge, each of the four communities identified strong system leaders who would be responsible for ensuring the sustainability and scaling of their efforts. System leaders were tasked by communities to carry their work forward, push through systems change, and help sustain enthusiasm and momentum generated by the 100-Day Challenge as they continue the work of preventing and ending youth homelessness.



#### **Spotlight on Gulf Coast, MS**

During the course of the 100-Day Challenge, the Gulf Coast Continuum of Care (CoC) dedicated an unprecedented amount of resources and attention to the issue of youth homelessness. Previously, few community resources had been dedicated to youth homelessness. The 100-Day Challenge provided an opportunity for homeless services providers and others to collaborate in the creation of a system with dedicated resources for meeting the needs of young people experiencing homelessness.

In **Mendocino County**, the 100-Day Challenge enhanced the community's understanding of system strengths and weaknesses, improved collaboration among leaders, and helped break down silos within the community's homeless response system. Mendocino County shifted the focus of providers from agency-specific goals to community-wide goals, thereby helping develop a culture of coordination of services around clients. A new TAYAction Team, which includes young people with

lived experience, will help create solutions that better meet the needs of youth experiencing homelessness.

**Marion County's** 100-Day Challenge success was due in large part to a shared vision, consistent messaging, and focused teamwork, including consistent communication. Strong team leadership, active youth engagement, team diversity, and supportive system leaders were key factors in the community's success. Intentional involvement of frontline staff in decision-making fostered a sense of trust and responsibility. The strong sense of team and leadership support gave the team confidence to push boundaries and to not fear failure as part of the process.

### ***Cross-System Partnerships***

The four 100-Day Challenge communities recognized the importance of cross-system partnerships in effectively identifying, engaging, and responding to the needs of youth at risk of and experiencing homelessness. These partnerships helped communities build and sustain a collaborative system through the use of the community's existing resources.



#### **Spotlight on Gulf Coast, MS**

Key to Gulf Coast's success was a partnership between homeless service providers and other mainstream youth service providers, including the juvenile justice and child welfare systems. Representatives from these systems joined the 100-Day Team from the outset. One of the team's goals was to develop housing transition plans for youth and young adults who are exiting these systems into unstable housing situations. The child welfare system agreed to test how their agency could better interact with housing providers to ensure exits to stable housing. The 100-Day Challenge team also worked with judges in multiple counties.

In **Mendocino County** the 100-Day Challenge promoted strong partnerships that did not previously exist among diverse stakeholders, including youth with lived experience, the CoC, homeless service providers, advocates, medical care providers, and the school district.

In **Marion County**, a Youth Council was created, and multiple cross-system partnerships were formed. Salem Housing Authority was very involved with the process, as was the Salem Police Department. The team conducted numerous community presentations, which served as education and access points for involvement by additional stakeholders that had not traditionally been involved in this work.

## *Coordinated Entry*

Communities took advantage of momentum created by the 100-Day Challenge to assess the effectiveness of their coordinated entry process for youth. This included identifying gaps and piloting solutions for ensuring that access, assessment, prioritization and referrals were appropriate and inclusive of all youth. With systems leaders at the table, communities were able to tackle challenges related to coordinated entry for youth and build a stronger, more effective system.

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### **Spotlight on Gulf Coast, MS**

During the 100-Day Challenge, the Gulf Coast team implemented a coordinated entry system dedicated to young people. As a result, the community met their goal of housing 50 youth and young adults. The team created a by-name list using HMIS and incorporating data from the local public health outreach team, child welfare, the youth court system, and other youth service providers. They conducted case conferencing as part of their weekly team meetings to coordinate housing placements and address service needs of the most vulnerable young people experiencing homelessness.

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The **Mendocino County** team began building methods for capturing system-wide data and use of by-name lists. The community harnessed the momentum of the 100-Day Challenge to implement a youth-specific assessment tool and begin case conferencing for youth. To support these changes within the coordinated entry system, Mendocino County launched a training program for participating agencies.

## *Expanded Outreach and Authentic Youth Engagement*

With insight and support from the **National Youth Forum on Homelessness**, communities worked to establish stronger outreach practices and authentic partnership with youth.

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### **Spotlight on Mendocino County**

Mendocino County implemented a Street Medicine program to bring medical assistance directly to homeless encampments and also staffed weekly clinics for youth experiencing homelessness. The program adopted a client-centered approach and provided a meaningful opportunity for persons experiencing homelessness to accompany the medical teams and support their efforts. Mendocino County also created a youth resource center with computers, food, yoga and other classes, medical services and health insurance application assistance to engage youth and connect them to coordinated entry. The center is staffed with people trained in conducting assessments. Additionally, high school students were empowered to support peers experiencing homelessness through education on community resources.

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In **Gulf Coast**, the 100-Day Challenge team sought to incorporate youth with lived experience into their work from the day one. Several young people were recruited to join the team through a workforce development partner agency. The team worked with CoC leadership to establish a Youth Action Board to provide guidance on the community's response to youth homelessness.

## *Resource Awareness, Host Homes, and Tiny Homes*

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### **Spotlight on Franklin County**

The 100-Day Challenge provided an opportunity for Franklin County to organize its limited resources available to address the needs of homeless youth. The community developed a resource guide to assist youth experiencing homelessness, which detailed resources available, ranging from housing and case management to thrift stores and coffee shops.

Once existing resources were maximized, the community turned its focus to filling gaps for housing youth. In response to local offers of assistance, the community began the process of setting up a host home project. Given the complexity of the model, Franklin County was unable to fully implement host homes in 100 days, but it did lay the groundwork in order to launch a project.

The community also seized an opportunity to begin developing donated land with tiny homes to offer short and long-term housing for youth experiencing homelessness.

## **Beyond the 100 Days: Sustaining Momentum and Moving Forward**

The 100-Day Challenge begins with an intentionally short timeframe and limited scope of work in order to spur action, focus, progress, and innovation. The work in each community is not over when the 100 days are completed, as communities leave with new momentum and buy-in from cross-system partners to keep pushing forward toward the goal of preventing and ending youth homelessness.

Each 100-Day team identifies priorities and recommendations unique to their community and to their progress for their work beyond the 100 days. Teams are encouraged to adopt a monthly or quarterly meeting structure, ideally with monthly or quarterly targets, in order to sustain their momentum, lock in gains, and continue making system improvements.

## *100-Day Team Priorities for Sustainability*

### Franklin County, ME

- Continue to meet as a work group and coordinate service providers assisting homeless and at-risk youth.
- Operationalize the host home project, with plans to start housing youth in Fall 2018.
- Develop tiny homes on donated land in Spring 2019.

### Gulf Coast, MS

- Continue to house literally homeless youth and young adults through coordinated entry, and expand the services provided to housed clients through a multi-disciplinary service team that will join regular case conferencing meetings.
- Align the work of the Youth Advisory Board and case conferencing team to ensure that housing placements and service provision are executed with input from youth with lived experience.
- Write and execute a communication and outreach plan to target and recruit additional partner agencies to join the cause
- Work with system leaders to advocate for expanded transportation options for clients who have been housed or diverted to ensure that they can reach employment and education centers, and thus retain housing.

### Marion County, OR

- Continue to have community-wide events to educate the public and raise and maintain awareness by celebrating successes.
- Apply for a Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project grant.
- Provide Technical Assistance to other counties in the region.
- Continue to hold monthly meetings, while allowing flexibility for additional people to join and for people who need to step back to do so.



## Mendocino County, CA

- Educate anyone working with youth experiencing homelessness to positively engage LGBTQ+ youth and to provide culturally competent and trauma-informed care to all youth experiencing homelessness.
- Strengthen the Coordinated Entry System, ensure it is utilized by all service providers that interface with youth experiencing homelessness, and develop effective transition plans in collaboration with child welfare and juvenile justice.
- Foster capacity to collect, share, and analyze outcomes data across agencies and disciplines to more effectively serve youth experiencing homelessness.
- Strengthen youth involvement at all levels of decision-making and empower youth to advocate for system improvement on the community and government leadership levels.