

WEST TENNESSEE

BACKGROUND: WHY AND WHY NOW?

The Jackson/West Tennessee CoC embarked on its 100-Day Challenge as a way to bring awareness to youth homelessness, to find new ways to help youth experiencing unstable housing in Jackson/Madison County and the bordering counties of Haywood, Gibson, Carroll, Chester, and Hardeman, and to bring together a local committee (consisting of providers from the adult, chronic, and veteran homeless services, as well as youth with lived experience of homelessness) focused on keeping youth off the streets. The 2018 Point-in-Time (PIT) Count identified 52 unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness in West Tennessee; however, there are currently no youth service providers specifically targeting youth experiencing homelessness in the region. System leaders in West Tennessee saw the 100-Day Challenge as an opportunity to leverage local action already underway to better meet the needs of youth experiencing homelessness and address gaps in the youth homeless response system.

The Jackson/West Tennessee CoC is currently working to update its strategic plan to align with the State's Strategic Plan to End Homelessness. Part of this plan will address preventing and ending youth homelessness, including continuing to improve outreach efforts begun during the 100-Day Challenge and encouraging participating CoC agencies to target youth experiencing homelessness. The CoC has also participated in the Rural Youth Initiative, where the community learned about rural homeless PIT techniques from across the country that can improve outreach and identification of youth experiencing homelessness. In addition, system leaders from West Tennessee learned about the success of the Miami 100-Day Challenge in identifying and helping homeless youth. West Tennessee took on their 100-Day Challenge with inspiration from this work happening locally and nationally and set out quickly on their Challenge with a clear vision of improving outreach, identification and services for youth experiencing homelessness throughout the region.

100-DAY CHALLENGE PRIORITY AREAS

West Tennessee identified the following priority areas to address during their 100-Day Challenge:

- Increase youth housing placements;
- Identifying and assessing youth experiencing homelessness; and
- Identifying innovative housing solutions.

100-Day Goal

In 100 Days, we will house 50 youth and young adults in safe and stable housing.

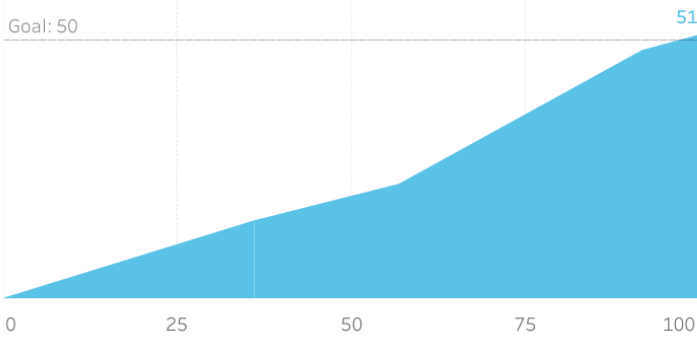
PROGRESS, SUCCESS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

100-DAY CHALLENGE | TENNESSEE | DAY 100 | AUG 10 2019

In 100 Days, we will place 50 youth and young adults in safe and stable housing.

YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS SAFELY & STABLY HOUSED

51 youth and young adults have been safely and stably housed as of Day 100.



Of the youth and young adults who exited homelessness, 90% went to non-time-limited destinations and 6% to time-limited destinations.

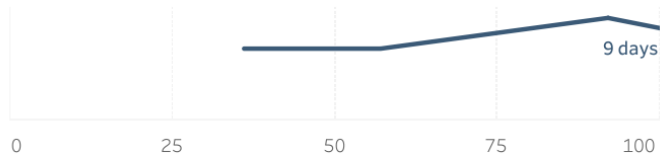


YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

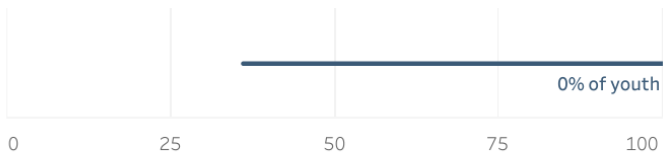
43% of youth and young adults report most frequently sleeping outdoors or places not meant for habitation.



As of Day 100, youth and young adults have been on the BNL for an average of 9 days.

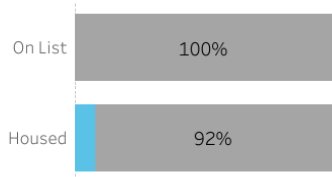


As of Day 100, no youth and young adults have been on the BNL for over 90 days.

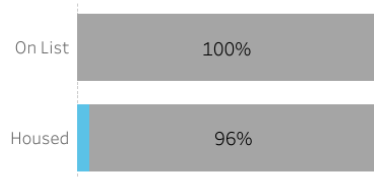


FOCUS ON POPULATION PROPORTIONALITY

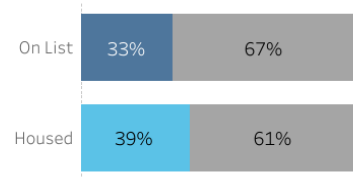
Of youth and young adults on the by-name lists, 0% are LGBTQ+, but 8% of those housed are LGBTQ+ youth and young adults.



Of youth and young adults on the by-name lists, 0% are gender-diverse, but 4% of those housed are gender-diverse youth and young adults.



Of youth and young adults on the by-name lists, 33% are people of color, but 39% of those housed are people of color.



GOAL	RESULTS
<p>In West Tennessee, in 100 days:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 50 youth and young adults will be housed in safe and stable housing. 	<p>As of Day 100:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 51 youth and young adults were safely and stably housed.

SUCCESES IN INNOVATION AND COLLABORATION

INCREASED PARTNERSHIPS & EDUCATION AROUND YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

With no youth service providers in the region, the West Tennessee 100-Day Challenge Team recognized the importance of strengthening partnerships with adult-serving providers and building provider education and capacity to serve youth experiencing homelessness. Providers from the adult, chronic, and veteran homeless services sectors contributed to the community’s efforts to establish a focus area for the 100-Day Challenge and remained engaged throughout the entire process, along with youth with lived experience of homelessness. The West Tennessee 100-Day Challenge Team was dedicated to building the region’s network of informed adult providers who wanted to contribute to a more directed youth effort. They worked towards this goal by creating informational materials and conducting meetings with providers and agencies in the community, incorporating a focus on providing youth-specific, trauma-informed care into their provider outreach efforts.

West Tennessee also worked to identify champions in the community to support the 100-Day Challenge and increase local understanding and focus on youth homelessness. The team was able to work with local elected officials to spread the word about the 100-Day Challenge and increase visibility around youth homelessness. Additionally, the Team worked hard to strengthen and build relationships with landlords who are open to housing unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness. During the 100-Day Challenge, West Tennessee was also able meet with admission counselors for a number of local community colleges to share information on youth homelessness and on providing safe, stable housing through a Housing First model to unstably housed youth. Admissions coordinators shared this information with others working in the higher education system and were able to identify a small source of funding to help house some of their unstably housed students.

OUTREACH & IDENTIFICATION OF YOUTH EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS

One of the primary areas of focus for West Tennessee's 100-Day Challenge was to improve outreach and identification processes to better understand the scope of youth homelessness regionally. West Tennessee utilized the 100-Day Challenge to improve its ability to meet youth where they are, both physically through expanded outreach and engagement efforts and through more targeted utilization of resources in response to youth needs. The 100-Day Challenge Team created flyers to begin educating youth at risk of or experiencing homelessness of the services and housing options available to them. West Tennessee is looking to sustain momentum around youth outreach and identification through the development of a text-based information dissemination and identification system that can be run by the CoC.

HOUSING PLACEMENT

West Tennessee exceeded its 100-Day Challenge goal by placing 51 youth and young adults into safe, stable housing, successfully housing 100% of identified youth and young adults into appropriate housing options. The 100-Day Challenge helped build momentum around diversion and family reunification as appropriate interventions for youth experiencing homelessness. Additionally, new partnerships with adult providers in West Tennessee supported the targeting of housing and services for youth that had never before been utilized for this population, including Rapid Re-Housing options. For youth experiencing homelessness who could not be immediately housed or reunited with family, the West Tennessee 100-Day Challenge Team was able to provide hotel and motel vouchers so youth and young adults had a safe space to stay until housing could be secured, ensuring that no youth experiencing unsheltered homelessness went unsheltered once they were identified by the CoC.

COORDINATED ENTRY FOR YOUTH

At the onset of West Tennessee's 100-Day Challenge, the community recognized that youth and young adults were not being appropriately prioritized for housing and services because assessment tools and prioritization schemes heavily weighted factors (such as length of time homeless, presence of chronic health conditions, etc.) that were less frequently applicable to youth, by virtue of their age. As a result, West Tennessee reviewed existing assessment tools and prioritization factors to ensure that the most vulnerable youth were prioritized for housing and services, altered the Coordinated Entry assessment process to ensure that it adequately captured information related to prioritization factors, and thus improve prioritization and referral to housing and services through CoC and ESG funded programs.

MAINTAINING 100-DAY MOMENTUM

To preserve the progress made during the 100 days and maintain momentum around preventing and ending youth homelessness, West Tennessee plans to carry out the following activities:

TEAM'S ACTION PLANS FOR ONGOING WORK

1. Improving outreach to youth, including developing digital communication materials.

2. Reshaping existing views
 - a. Establishing and maintaining an environment of agency and mutual respect
 - b. Ensuring program participant staff interactions are based on equality and minimizing power differentials
3. Apply for funding through the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP)
4. Create a youth subcommittee of the CoC
5. Host Landlord Luncheon to thank and educate members of the community and to encourage availability of more units for youth