

A Collective Impact Approach to Addressing Minor Homelessness

Planning Partners:

CT Dept of Education

CT Dept of Housing

CT Youth Services Association & Local Youth Service Bureaus

Center for Children's Advocacy

Court Support Services Division of the Judicial Branch

The Housing Collective

Local Homeless Services Providers

Partnership for Strong Communities

Collaboration Overview

- Decrease the likelihood that minors experiencing homelessness/housing instability become involved with the juvenile justice system
- Prevent homelessness/housing instability among justice -involved youth and youth at risk of involvement
- Generate policy & practice recommendations
- Amplify the voices of youth with lived experience of homelessness
- Community impact: Provider collaboration

Defining Homelessness

For purposes of this collaboration, youth homelessness is defined as:

- “individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence (within the meaning of the McKinney Vento Act section 103(a)(1));
- This includes, those who are doubled up, couch surfing, living in motels, living in cars, parks, and abandoned buildings, and those who are not in the physical custody of their parent or guardian.

Youth Homelessness

- **1 in 10** young adults ages 18 to 25 endures some form of homelessness in a year. Half of the prevalence involves couch surfing only.
- **1 in 30** adolescent minors ages 13 to 17 endures some form of homelessness in a year (A quarter of the prevalence involves couch surfing only)



Youth Homelessness

- Youth with less than a high school diploma or GED had a **346%** higher risk
- Black or African American youth had an **83%** higher risk
- Hispanic, non-White youth had a **33%** higher risk

Youth Homelessness & Juvenile Justice

Multiple studies:

- ~ 50 to 75% of youth experiencing homelessness had been arrested, while 50 to 60% had been incarcerated
- Drug abuse, mental health issues, and lack of access to services associated with increased criminal activity for homeless youth
- Length of time homeless/disconnected = more frequency and likelihood of being involved with the criminal justice system



Review of 10 quality peer reviewed studies 2006-2014:

Arrests

Ferguson et al. 2011 - 72%

Thrane et al. 2008 - 55%

Chen et al. 2006 - 57%

Yoder et al. 2014 - 78%

Data: What We Know & Don't Know

Minor Homelessness Data:

- Multiple sources of data
- Multiple methods of counting/collecting data
- Using Best Available Data
- Hopeful that outreach and these collaborative pilots will help to improve the data

2020 Youth Count



Source: CT Coalition to End Homelessness, 2020 Youth Count, p 36,
available at: <https://cceh.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Youth-Count-FINAL.pdf>

Minors, Homelessness & the Law

“A public or private agency serving children and youth may provide services to a homeless child or youth, as defined in 42 USC 11434a, unless the parent or guardian does not consent to such services or withdraws such consent. Such agency shall make all reasonable efforts to contact the parent or guardian for consent and shall be immune from liability, civil or criminal, which might otherwise be incurred or imposed, provided the agency provided such services in good faith and not negligently.”

CGS § 17a-62b

Minors, Homelessness & the Law

- This law does create an affirmative obligation on the part of human services providers to make reasonable efforts to contact a parent/guardian for consent.
- At the same time, the law allows providers to continue with services after reasonable efforts have been made to contact a parent/guardian so long as the parent/guardian does not refuse or withdraw consent.
- This does not apply to school districts who are bound by McKinney-Vento laws which do not require parental consent.

Community Care Team for Minors- Workflow

Identification & Referral: Unaccompanied Homeless Minor identified by community partners:

- schools
recreation staff
youth service bureaus (YSB)
 - probation (CSSD)
mental health agencies
 - child welfare (DCF)
runaway & homeless youth providers
 - police
- Referred to Youth Service Bureau/CAN Manager for Mnors

Community Care Team Meeting

- Regularly scheduled meeting of relevant providers
- YSB/CAN Manager for Minors email de-identified information to group ahead of time
- Purpose: discuss available resources for identified minors, authorize release of resources where necessary, identify points of contact for provision of services; meetings can also present topics of interest re minors & homelessness

Case Planning Meeting

- Meeting with youth, identified supports, YSB/CAN Manager for Minors & Case Lead
- Purpose is to present array of services, youth determines appropriate services & plan for next steps

What do you think?

- What are the issues/gaps in services you're seeing among minors?



Thank you!

Questions, comments, thoughts or ideas?

Contact: