

Feasibility Plan: Okanogan County Youth Homelessness Services

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Prepared for:



I. Executive Summary

Room One sought guidance on the most appropriate and effective housing model to address the challenge of youth homelessness in Okanogan County. Based on prior planning conducted in partnership with the Okanogan County Youth Homelessness Coalition, Room One was particularly interested in exploring three models:

Model A. A youth homelessness drop-in service center plus a host home program

Model B. Dispersed youth housing including:

- Two to four crisis shelter homes serving five or fewer minors per night
- A Rapid Rehousing project for 18-25 year olds

Model C. A centralized youth shelter with 10-25 beds for minors and young adults

The domains considered in reviewing these models and developing recommendations included:

- Cost and scalability
- Timeline to implementation
- Level of state regulation and oversight
- The effectiveness of various housing models, particularly for Native and pregnant and parenting youth
- Availability of funds for capital projects and service delivery
- The needs identified by young people with lived experience of homelessness

Methodology

To develop recommendations on the most appropriate model, we completed:

1. A review of regional data
2. Stakeholder interviews
3. A literature review of evaluations and best practices
4. Collection and assessment of budget information from comparable programs
5. Review of relevant state-level licensing requirements
6. Analysis of available funding for capital and service delivery

Based on the many factors considered through this process, **Model A, a drop in center and host home program, stood out as the best fit for the community and for Room One at this time.** Key recommendations and rationale are as follows:

1. Develop a youth drop-in center in the Okanogan/ Omak region.

- The establishment of a place to go to participate in activities, access resources and build connections was the primary need identified by the vast majority of youth with histories of housing instability surveyed in the recent Okanogan County Youth Housing Testimony project.
- There are no licensing or staffing requirements imposed on drop-in centers by the state.
- Current data suggests the Omak/Okanogan region contains both the highest concentration and volume of unaccompanied students experiencing homelessness.
- After startup costs, a drop-in could operate for approximately \$170K per year. Services are easily scaled, and do not require commensurate budget increases. Rod's House, the drop-in center in Yakima, served 380 individual youth in 2018 on a budget of \$175K.

- There are also opportunities to reduce fixed costs and engage the community through meal and supply donations, volunteerism, etc.
- Additional services can be incorporated into the drop-in, including both those run by Room One and those overseen by community partners.
- Although youth do not achieve a stable housing outcome with this intervention, a well-run drop-in can affect some of the collateral determinants of wellbeing, as well as indicators that support eventual housing stability, like social inclusion and connectedness.
- Housing or shelter components could be built out above or integrated into the drop-in structure (see #3 below).
- Depending on location and capacity, a social enterprise, such as a coffee shop, could be part of the drop-in to provide youth with employment training and further community engagement.

2. Pilot a host home program in the Methow Valley.

- The state does not require licensing and has minimal requirements for host home programs.
- Host homes are not permitted to house child-welfare involved youth. Due to a shortage of foster homes in the state, many youth group care facilities (such as those considered in Model B) are quickly filled with child-welfare involved youth for whom DCYF cannot find a placement. While these are certainly youth in need of services, a host home program can focus exclusively on those youth experiencing homelessness outside of the child welfare system.
- Key elements are already evolving in the Methow Valley: potential host families have expressed interest and Room One has a developing partnership with the school district.
- Host home programs have track records of effectiveness in supporting housing stability, family reconciliation and high school graduation.
- If Room One oversees a local model it could provide leadership and technical assistance to organizations outside of the Methow that are considering launching similar programs. Projects can be adapted to meet local need.
- Host homes are considered one of the most cost effective housing models, at roughly \$9,000 per youth with no startup costs.

As with any model, there are a few reasons host homes are not perfect. First, they are generally not used for pregnant and parenting youth. Second, building up a host program can be labor intensive and time consuming: many programs reported taking over a year to place their first youth. Host home programs are also low-volume, particularly if they focus on longer-term outcomes like graduation, where young people tend to stay with hosts for six months or more. Third, there are not economies of scale with host homes, as program costs track the number of youth served. Finally, although the popularity of this model is growing in Washington and federal funds may be used for host homes, there are currently no local or state funding streams available to support host home services.

3. Offer 5-10 beds above or within the drop-in center to youth ages 16-24, including pregnant and parenting youth.

Even with a host home program, the need for crisis shelter and longer-term housing options for youth will persist in the community. If financially feasible, our recommendation is to build 5-10 separate housing units above the drop-in center. One to three beds would serve minors, including youth with child welfare involvement, and could be partially funded by HOPE bed funding from the Office of Homeless Youth. Due to state regulations on licensing and staff ratios, these beds would cost approximately \$21,000 per bed per year to operate. The additional units, which would need to be physically separated from those serving minors, should serve as transitional living units for youth 18-24. These beds could also receive Office of Homeless Youth service funding, and would collectively cost approximately \$200,000 per year to operate. The inclusion of these affordable housing units for young adults above the drop-in would increase the options for capital financing through the Low Income Housing Tax Credit program and the Washington State Housing Trust Fund.

Alternatively, if the service costs associated with the HOPE bed/ transitional housing model are prohibitive, the drop-in could be designed to serve as a nighttime shelter with mats on the floor. This could be a Phase II, after the drop-in has operated for some period of time, but should be considered in the design of the Service Center if it is new construction. To begin sheltering youth at night, the drop-in will need to secure a Group Home- Overnight Youth Shelter license from the state, which takes approximately four months (though the licensing process cannot start until all staff are hired). An overnight shelter for minors is licensed to serve either 13-17 or 16-20 year olds. Operating an overnight shelter would add roughly \$150K per year to the drop-in service budget. Floor mats are not an ideal or long-term solution to any young person's housing instability, though they could effectively address short term crises.

Room One could of course provide both the transitional housing/ HOPE beds above the drop-in and emergency night shelter, as needed, if capacity allows.

Although it would be ideal to establish each of these three elements to launch a continuum of services in Okanogan County, the addition of any of these projects on a standalone basis would represent a significant step forward for the community. Because youth homelessness is such a multi-faceted challenge, any solution will also need to be multi-faceted, and some housing models are responsive to certain challenges while failing to address others. If it is necessary to choose between these options, it will be necessary for Room One to prioritize among its many goals.

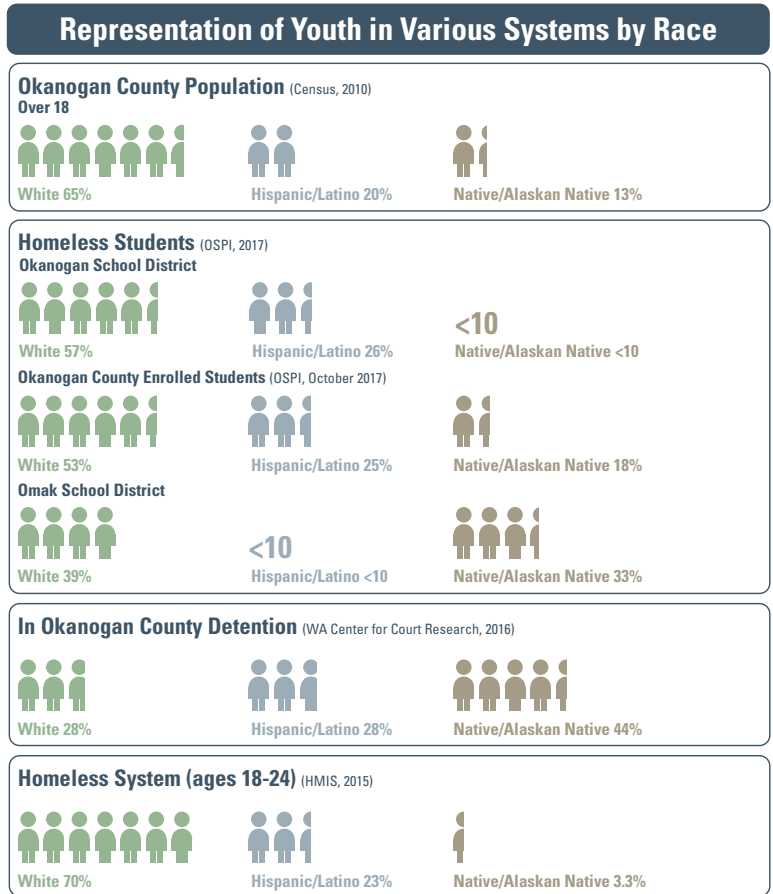
Priority	Key Service to Pursue
Engaging hidden or disengaged homeless youth	Drop-in
Minimizing service costs	Drop-in
Minimizing capital costs	Host homes
Helping homeless students graduate	Host homes
Serving the largest number of youth	Drop-in
Local control over programs	Host homes
Serving youth in the Methow	Host homes
Long term transitional support	Housing units
Engaging youth with most intense service needs (behavioral health/ chemical dependency)	Crisis shelter beds within drop-in
Helping youth outside the child welfare system	Host homes
Longer term housing stability	Transitional living beds
Housing for pregnant and parenting	Transitional living beds
Connecting youth with other services (parenting, healthcare, childcare)	Any

II. Background

a. Scale

Local and state data, alongside national research, suggest that approximately **92 unaccompanied minors and 289 young adults experience homelessness in Okanogan County each year**. Among the young adults, approximately 54% are explicitly homeless and 46% are couch surfing. Other key data points to consider in developing a housing intervention include:

- In the 2016-2017 school year 22 unaccompanied homeless youth were identified by Okanogan School District, and 13 were identified by the Omak School District. There was vast variation among the graduation rates for homeless students in 2017, from 78% at the Okanogan School District (vs. statewide average of 53.4% for homeless students) to 33% in Omak.
- Native youth are overrepresented among the unaccompanied students experiencing homelessness in the Omak school district.
- In a reverse of national trends that may be a reflection of the small number of young adults accessing homeless services in Okanogan County, Native youth are underrepresented in HMIS, and Hispanic/Latino youth are slightly overrepresented.
- Young parents are at elevated risk for homelessness, and this risk factor increases when combined with child welfare or justice system involvement (Shah et al., 2015). Okanogan County has among the highest rates of teen pregnancy and girls in county detention in the state (WA Center for Court Research, 2017).



b. Provider Capacity

Room One has been leading much of the coordinated work to address youth homelessness in Okanogan County, alongside the Okanogan County Youth Homelessness Coalition, which is made up of stakeholders from education, foster care, tribal and juvenile justice systems, the housing authority, caseworkers serving the Colville tribe's native youth, others from the provider community and youth themselves. While Room One was a natural leader for this work given the agency's background working directly with pregnant and justice-involved girls, Room One is still developing its long term strategy in this space. In the short term, the agency is committed to increasing service options for youth experiencing homelessness in the region, but may transition the work to another provider, form a new organization or step back from the leadership role on youth homelessness in the long term.

Potential Program Models

The Okanogan County Youth Homelessness Coalition identified three housing models of potential interest to consider as part of this analysis:

A. Youth Homelessness Service Centers with Host Home Program

- An inclusive drop-in center where youth could receive case management and access to resources such as drug and alcohol treatment, mental healthcare, food, clothing, emergency support funds, and diversion support. Initially, this would not be a shelter space, with the possibility of 1-2 beds hosted in these centers in the future.
- Localized Host Home Programs in neighboring towns, with mobile case management connected to the support centers.
- Homes purchased by Room One that could be rented to families or individuals who would then serve as host homes.

B. Dispersed Youth Housing/Shelter/RRH

- Purchasing 2-4 homes located in the Methow Valley, Okanogan/Omak, and somewhere either/and in the Northeast (Oroville/Pateron) or Southeast (Brewster/Pateros).
- Serving no more than five youth per night and adhering to the minimum licensing requirements and staffing needs.
- Providing 24 hour staffed care using state reimbursement sources for youth shelter beds.
- Serving 13-17 year olds, while looking into Rapid Rehousing options for 18-25 year olds.
- Incorporating one Master Lease option where Room One purchases a home to be rented to young adults, incorporating a Rapid Rehousing subsidy for young adults.

C. Centralized Youth Shelter

- Drop-in service space
- Overnight emergency shelter that can serve between 10-25 youth per night
- Space for administrative staff to work
- Serving minors and young adults

Room One subsequently indicated it was less interested in Rapid Rehousing or Crisis Residential Center (CRC) beds options. They also clarified that they'd like the ability to serve pregnant and parenting youth in any of these models.

III. Analysis

An overview is below; see subsequent sections for related details.

Model	Cost (per year, post startup)	Potential funding streams (capital and services)	Licensing Burden	Potential Outcomes	Youth served per year/ scalability
Model A: Service Center and Host Homes (*Recommended)					
Service Center	\$170K	Multiple state and federal	None	Moderate	60; easily scaled at little cost
Host Homes	\$130K	Limited	Low	High	15; costs track growth
Model B: Dispersed Housing					
Transitional Living Group Homes	\$200K	Multiple state and federal	High	High	7; costs track growth
RRH/Master Leasing	\$350K	Some state and federal	None	High	25; costs track growth
Model C: Shelter					
Youth and/or young adult shelter	\$330K-\$570K	Multiple state and federal	Moderate (minors)	Moderate	100; some economies of scale
			Low (young adults)		

a. Youth Homelessness Service Center with Host Home Program

This model is the best fit for the region and for Room One at this juncture. Offering drop-in services is one of the best ways for a program to establish itself in the community, building trust with youth and referral partners, while developing collateral support service arrangements as required. Both Rod's House in Yakima and YES in Pend Oreille began as small drop-in centers, and have grown to now offer case management, host homes and, in Yakima, severe weather shelter. At roughly \$170K per year, drop-ins are relatively low cost to operate, and can use many state and federal funding streams to do so. A drop-in can also scale up without significantly increasing costs.

There are no state licensing or staffing requirements for a drop-in. Best practices dictate a drop-in center should be easily accessible for youth, both geographically and by offering minimal behavior requirements. As data suggest the Omak/Okanogan region has the highest concentration of youth experiencing homelessness, it makes sense to site the Service Center in that zone, and there may be financial incentives to do so in the form of Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC).

It would be ideal to include some housing resources with the drop-in, which could be achieved in three ways:

1. Building one or two rooms into the space that could serve as crisis beds for minors, potentially funded through state HOPE bed resources. This would require additional licensing, staffing and service dollars.
2. Offering mats on the floor of the drop-in, either year round or during extreme weather. This would also require additional licensing, staffing and service funding.
3. Building two beds for minors and 8-10 transitional units for young adults above the Service Center. This could help attract capital dollars like LIHTC for residential projects, and is the recommended course of action, if potential service dollars can be identified.

Like a drop-in center, host homes are low-cost, and longitudinal evaluations and local data suggest the programs can be effective in supporting family reconciliation, high school graduation and housing stability. Offering host homes in the Methow Valley would allow Room One to build on its local connections with the school district and potential host families, then expand its role to the rest of the County on terms that work for the agency. Room One could provide support and technical assistance to encourage other local host home programs, which would allow for the level of local control and cultural specificity that is necessary for a host home program to be successful. While it makes sense to launch the program in the Methow, the graduation rates for unaccompanied homeless students in the Omak School District suggests that area would also benefit from a school-based host home intervention.

The innovation of leasing agency-owned host homes back to families was explored. Unfortunately, this would undo one of the primary advantages of host homes, which is their cost effectiveness. Discussions with providers who used this model with foster families also revealed the intensity of engagement required by the agency, in that they become both the service provider and the property maintenance team for the family residing in the agency-owned home.

Weaknesses: Drop-ins don't produce housing outcomes. Host home programs are labor-intensive and time-consuming to launch, and no state funding streams are currently available to support them. Identifying public capital and service dollars to support beds that are part of the Service Center will add to the timeline and expense of the project. Host homes are not traditionally used for pregnant and parenting youth, though no law or license prevents it.

b. Dispersed Youth Housing/Shelter/RRH

Of the potential options for Room One, this model was promising in its ability to cover a vast geographic region through a network of group homes. However, in conversations with providers and state partners, it became clear that establishing a group home would require a state Group Care Facility license and that, due to a statewide crisis

in foster care placement options for adolescents, such homes would fill up quickly with youth in the child welfare system, including those from outside of the county. Although this would certainly fill a need, it may not align with Room One's goal of serving local youth experiencing homelessness. The cost of running just one of these homes with five beds, post startup, would be approximately \$150K-\$200K per year, and low turnover would be expected. Although a significant portion of the operating costs could be reimbursed through state contracts if the home houses foster youth, it would take a significant capital expense to scale this model to multiple homes to serve more than about 20 youth per year.

The second component of this model, a Rapid Rehousing or master lease option for young adults experiencing homelessness, is a promising approach for the community, with available funding streams and strong outcomes. A partner agency is pursuing the lead role in Rapid Rehousing programming for youth in the community at this time.

Weaknesses: Cost, scalability, licensing burdens, fidelity to goals.

c. Centralized Youth Shelter

A shelter with 10-25 beds is a fairly low-cost model that could potentially serve up to 100 youth per year in Okanogan County for \$330-\$550K. State licenses are granted for overnight shelters for either 13-17 year olds or 16-20 year olds. The shelter could also serve 18-24 year olds, or a combination of age groups, provided there was a physical separation or staff supervision between minor and young adult populations. Youth may be unlikely to travel from dispersed parts of the county to a centralized shelter, however, and the beds may not be consistently filled. Although the Office of Homeless Youth now provides cost reimbursement regardless of utilization rates, having unfilled beds, at least initially, has historically been a problem in rural communities. Developing a drop-in center with the potential to shelter youth at some point in the future is a way to gauge the emergency overnight need before investing in that capacity.

Shelters can provide short term solutions to a young person's housing crisis. Without investments in other system components such as transitional housing or family reconciliation, however, youth will find it difficult to exit a shelter to a permanent housing situation. For this reason, among others, we do not recommend a standalone shelter as a critical investment at this time.

Weaknesses: Some licensing burden, outcomes, uncertainty re: utilization, limited geographic reach.

IV. Licensing Requirements

The state defines the circumstances in which a facility that receives children outside of a child's own home is required to pursue a group care facility license. There are eight categories of group care facility license, and the type of license an agency needs is typically dictated by the type of service contract the agency has with the state. For example, if a provider has a contract with the Office of Homeless Youth to deliver shelter services to minors, it will require a Group Care Facility Overnight Youth Shelter License. Some funding streams, like HOPE beds, do not require service-specific licensing and can operate simply under a Group Care Facility license. Complicating things further, there is a grey area as to whether an agency that is serving youth without a state contract (so exclusively through private funding) would be required to receive a license at all, AND, if they are required to receive a license, the state would grant that license, or would require the agency to accept youth in foster care into the facility.

a. Licensing

Overview: Model A would not require state licensing, whereas pieces of Models B and C would require a Group Care Facility license. All programs would need to comply with local ordinances, as well as state health and fire requirements.

Model	Base License	Additional License	Other
Model A: Drop-In + Host Homes			
Service Center	-	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipal zoning codes and housing ordinances • State Department of Health Certification • State Fire Code Compliance
Host Homes	-	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Registration with the Secretary of State
Model B: Dispersed Housing			
HOPE	Group Care Facility	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipal zoning codes and housing ordinances • State Department of Health Certification • State Fire Code Compliance
CRC	Group Care Facility	CRC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipal zoning codes and housing ordinances • State Department of Health Certification • State Fire Code Compliance
Transitional Living Group Home	Group Care Facility	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipal zoning codes and housing ordinances • State Department of Health Certification • State Fire Code Compliance
RRH/Master Leasing	-	-	-
Model C: Shelter			
Youth Shelter (ages 13-17 or 16-20)	Group Care Facility	Overnight Youth Shelter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipal zoning codes and housing ordinances • State Department of Health Certification • State Fire Code Compliance
Young Adult Shelter (18-24)	-	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipal zoning codes and housing ordinances • State Department of Health Certification • State Fire Code Compliance

Timing: The Division of Licensed Resources (DLR) aims to complete the licensing process within 120 days, and providers confirm it generally takes three to four months. However, to commence the process all program staff need to be hired and have completed background checks, so there is often a waiting period between staffing up and starting services. For most providers in rural regions the delay has been in hiring appropriately credentialed staff (see next section), rather than in working with DLR. To launch the licensing process Room One would submit an application to its regional licensor, along with the completed background checks on all agency staff. DLR staff is available to provide guidance and support to agencies as they consider and embark on the licensing process.

Host Homes: Host homes can serve any youth, as long as they are not in the custody of DCYF. There are some data and reporting requirements that a program must fulfill, in partnership with the Office of Homeless Youth. The program must screen potential homes, and run background checks on individuals over age 18 residing in the homes through the Washington State Patrol or equivalent law enforcement agency, and perform physical inspections of host homes. The program must also obtain written and notarized permission from the youth's parent or written guardian, and obtain insurance for the program.

b. Staff Ratios and Training

In any residential program serving minors, the agency must meet state requirements on staff training, background checks and ratios. Staff can have multiple roles or responsibilities, as long as ratios are maintained.

Model	Ratios	Number/Type of Staff Required	Education of Staff
Model A: Drop-In + Host Homes			
Service Center	N/A	N/A	N/A
Host Homes	N/A	Case management required; no ratio specified.	N/A
Dispersed Housing			
HOPE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1:8 direct care • 1:15 case management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-site Program Manager • Case manager ("Placement and Liaison Specialist") 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Executive Director: 4+ years of experience • Program Manager: MA + 1 year experience working with youth or BA + 2 years or 5 years experience • Case Manager: MA or BA in related field. If BA only must consult with person with MA. • Direct Care: 21+, High school or GED, 1 year experience working with children. May be 18-21 in some circumstances. • Preference must be given to person cross-credentialed in MH and CD
CRC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1:4 direct care • 1:6 case management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-site Program Manager • 2 awake direct care when youth are awake • 2 direct care when youth are asleep (1 staff may sleep) 	As above. In addition, at least 50% of direct care staff must have a BA or at least 2 years college + one year experience in group residential care with adolescents.
Transitional Living Group Home	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1:8 direct care • 1:25 case management • 1:15 case management if pregnant and parenting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-site Program Manager • When more than 8 parents, at least 2 staff including at least 1 direct care at all times • Must provide 24 hour care to expectant or new mothers • Must have an awake staff person during sleeping hours if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - more than 6 youth in care; - focus of program is behavioral rather than developmental; or - behavior of any youth poses a risk to self or others • When only 1 staff is required, a 2nd person must be on call and available to respond within 30 minutes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program Manager: MA + 1 year experience working with youth or BA + 2 years (or equivalent) • Case Manager: MA or BA in related field. If BA only must consult with person with MA. • Direct Care: 21+, High school or GED, 1 year experience working with children. May be 18-21 in some circumstances.
RRH Master Leasing	N/A	N/A	N/A
Model C: Shelter			
13-17	1:8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain ratios while youth are asleep, and at least one staff must be awake • When only 1 staff is required, a 2nd person must be on call and available to respond within 30 minutes 	Program Manager: MA + 1 year experience working with youth or BA + 2 years or 5 years experience. Experience must be with adolescents.
16-20	1:6		
18-24	N/A	Discretionary (must ensure health and safety of all shelter residents)	Must comply with training & background check requirements.

All staff in programs serving minors must undergo background checks, as must host families in a host home program.

Staff training and requirements include:

- First Aid/CPR
- HIV/AIDS/Bloodborne Pathogens (BBP)
- TB test within past 12 months

An agency must provide a minimum of **16 hours of pre-service training** before staff can have unsupervised contact with children. Such training typically includes:

Overview of agency policies and procedures and job responsibilities	
Mandatory Reporting Training	Incident Reporting
Accessing community resources	Client confidentiality
Family dynamics/family intervention techniques	Licensing regulations specific to your facility
Child development	Grief and loss
Cultural needs of children in care	Sexually exploited youth
Behavior management/Crisis intervention techniques	Conflict resolution and problem solving
Substance abuse	Sexually aggressive and physically assaultive training
Effects of trauma on children	Youth supervision requirements
Fire safety and emergency planning	NOTE: New staff and volunteers must work shifts with fully trained staff until the required training is completed.

c. Structural Considerations

The state has some requirements on the physical structures housing youth that Room One would want to be mindful of in planning any capital project.

Model	Beds	Baths	Common Spaces
Model A: Service Center and Host Homes			
Service Center	N/A	N/A	N/A
Host Homes	N/A	N/A	N/A
Dispersed Housing			
HOPE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Own or shared room • Window to outside • Enough floor space 	Washable, water resistant floors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handrails • Emergency lighting • Working landline
CRC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Own or shared room • Window to outside • Enough floor space 	Washable, water resistant floors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adult must be on same floor within easy hearing distance and access to where children are sleeping • Handrails • Emergency lighting • Working landline
Transitional Living Group Home	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents and infants must have own room, with at least 80 ft. of floor space • Only one parent in room • No more than 4 per room 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bathtub if serving youth under 6 • Minimum 1 bath if 5 or fewer beds • For 6+ beds 2 minimum baths, 1:8 ratio • If serving expectant mothers need to have bath on same floor as bed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If 6+ youth need housekeeping sink • Handrails • Emergency lighting • Working landline
RRH/ Master Leasing	N/A	N/A	N/A
Model C: Shelter			
13-17	Youth of different genders can be in common sleeping areas if a visual barrier of at least 5 ft high separates them	N/A	Shelter may serve under and over 18 populations if there is a physical barrier or staff/volunteer supervision between sections
16-20			
18-24	N/A		

Although not required by the state, best practices for any youth facility include communal spaces for comfort and opportunities for youth to interact, both indoors and outdoors. The space should also include showers (either single use or two separated facilities so youth feel comfortable and safe using the facility of their choice), a kitchen and dining area, staff offices, secure space for intake procedures, as well as private/confidential meeting spaces. Design should also consider the need for accessible features for youth with disabilities.

Zoning, Land Use, Design and Environmental Review. When shifting from a planning/ feasibility phase to a design phase, Room One will want to consult with development and planning partners to determine the appropriate siting and funding processes. City or town zoning, density, setback, lot coverage and residential zone restrictions will come into play for any new construction or renovation project.

V. Program Costs and Funding

a. Costs

Cost Analysis Summary For Program Models

Model	Startup costs	Program costs per year	Youth served per year	Estimated cost per youth per year post startup
A: Service Center + Host Homes	\$1.2 million	\$131K-\$161K for host homes \$166K for service center	15 in host homes 60 in service center	\$9,000 for host homes \$3,000 for service center
B: Dispersed housing + RRH	\$380,000	\$179K-\$212K for dispersed housing \$340K-\$400K for RRH	7 in dispersed housing 25 in RRH	\$25,000 for dispersed housing \$14,000 for RRH
C: Shelter	\$1.2 million	\$331K - \$570K	100	\$3,000 - \$6,000 per youth OR \$30,000 per unit

Detailed Cost Analysis For Program Models

	Resources Needed	Estimated Annual Costs
A. Service Center + Host Homes		
Necessary Costs: Host Homes	0.25 FTE Program Supervisor	\$16,676 (based on \$25.57 per hour + benefits @ 25%)
	1.0 FTE Host Home Case Manager (serving up to 15 youth)	\$56,270 (based on \$21.57 per hour + benefits @ 25%)
	0.5 FTE Data Collection and Reporting	\$28,135 (based on \$21.57 per hour + benefits @ 25%)
	Travel for Host Home program	\$15,000
	Staff training	\$600 (\$200 per staff)
	Flexible Host Home program funds (food, clothing, move-in costs)	\$6,000
	Insurance	\$5,000 ¹
	Technology, cell phones and printing	\$3,500
Total Necessary		\$131,181
Additional Costs: Host Homes	Host stipends (\$200/month for average 12 months*10 youth) ²	\$24,000
	Youth stipends (\$50/month for average 12 months *10 youth) ³	\$6,000
Total Additional		\$30,000
Necessary Costs: Service Center ⁴	0.5 FTE Program Supervisor	\$33,352 (based on \$25.57 per hour + benefits @ 50%)

	1.0 FTE Case manager, BH and Family Reconciliation Coordinator for Service Center (serving up to 40 youth)	\$56,270 (based on \$21.57 per hour + benefits @ 25%)
	1.0 FTE Service Center Support Staff ⁵	\$12,500 (assuming AmeriCorps or equivalent)
	Staff training	\$600 (\$200 per staff)
	Service Center food ⁶	\$15,000
	Service Center supplies (clothing, hygiene items, medication, etc.)	\$25,000
	Technology and cell phones	\$3,500
	Maintenance and janitorial	\$9,000
	Utilities	\$5,000
	Insurance	\$3,300
Total Necessary		\$166,022
Total Additional		\$-
Startup Costs: Service Center	Cost of land and new building (includes appliances, furniture, equipment, land) ⁷	\$1.2 million
Total Startup		\$1.2 million
Total Startup Costs	Host Homes: \$0 Service Center: \$1.2 million	
Total Est. Annual Costs	Host Homes: \$131,181 - \$161,181 Service Center: \$166,022	
Est. Cost Per Youth Per Year Post Startup	Assuming 15 youth use HHs and 60 youth use Service Center: ⁸ Host Homes: \$8,745 - \$10,745 Service Center: \$2,767	
B. Dispersed Housing + RRH		
Necessary Costs: Dispersed Housing	1 FTE Resident Manager	\$56,270 (based on \$21.57 per hour + benefits @ 25%)
	0.5 FTE House Case Manager	\$28,135 (based on \$21.57 per hour + benefits @ 25%)
	0.5 FTE Data Collection and Reporting	\$28,135 (based on \$21.57 per hour + benefits @ 25%)
	0.25 FTE Program Supervision	\$16,676 (based on \$25.57 per hour + benefits @ 25%)
	Administration and facilities ⁹	\$34,000
	Food and Entertainment and Activities for Youth	\$15,000
	Staff training	\$800
Total Necessary		\$179,016
Additional Costs: Dispersed Housing	0.5 Licensed Mental Health and Substance Abuse Case Manager for shared home	\$33,352 (based on \$25.57 per hour + benefits @ 25%)
Total Additional		\$33,352
Startup Costs: Dispersed Housing	House Purchase (1 home @ 5 beds)	\$300,000 ¹⁰
	Renovations and improvements	\$50,000
	Furnishings	\$30,000
Total Startup		\$380,000
Necessary Costs: RRH	1 FTE RRH Case Manager (for 15 youth)	\$56,270 (based on \$21.57 per hour + benefits@25%)

	0.5 FTE On-Call Case Manager	\$28,135 (based on \$21.57 per hour + benefits @ 25%)
	0.25 FTE Program Supervision	\$16,676 (based on \$25.57 per hour + benefits @ 25%)
	RRH Rent Subsidies	\$210,000 (\$700 per youth for 12 months)
	Flexible RRH program funds (food, clothing, move-in costs, utility assistance)	\$10,000
	Staff training	\$600
	Travel for RRH program	\$20,000
Total Necessary		\$341,681
Additional Costs	1 FTE Housing locator for RRH	\$56,270 (based on \$21.57 per hour + benefits @ 25%)
Total Additional		\$56,270
Total Startup Costs	Dispersed Housing: \$380,000 RRH: \$0	
Total Est. Annual Costs	Dispersed Housing: \$179,016-\$212,368 RRH: \$341,681- \$397,951	
Est. Cost Per Youth Per Year Post Startup	Assuming 7 youth in shared housing per year + 25 youth in RRH per year: ¹¹ Dispersed Housing: \$25,573- \$30,338 RRH: \$13,667- \$15,918	

C. Centralized Youth Shelter (10 Beds)

Necessary Costs	1 FTE Program Supervisor	\$66,705 (based on \$25.57 per hour + benefits @ 25%)
	0.85 Case Manager (15 person caseload)	\$47,830 (based on \$21.57 per hour + benefits @ 25%)
	4 FTE Youth Counselors (2 per overnight; 1 per day)	\$156,524 (based on \$15 per hour + benefits @ 25%)
	Office space	\$2000
	Staff training and professional development	\$1200
	Staff travel	\$4000
	Supplies (medication, clothing, hygiene)	\$4000
	Utilities	\$5000
	Maintenance and janitorial	\$9000
	Phone and internet	\$6600
	Insurance	\$3300
	Food and other supplies	\$25,000
Total Necessary		\$331,159
Additional Costs	4 Peer Counselors	\$156,524 (based on \$15 per hour + benefits @ 25%)
	0.85 FTE Activities Coordinator	\$47,830 (based on \$21.57 per hour + benefits @ 25%)
	0.5 FTE Licensed Mental Health and Substance Abuse Case Manager	\$33,352 (based on \$25.57 per hour + benefits @ 25%)
Total Additional		\$237,706
Startup Costs	Cost of land and new building (includes appliances, furniture, equipment, land)	\$1.2 million
Total Startup		\$1.2 million

Total Startup Costs	\$1.2 million
Total est. Annual costs	\$331,159- \$568,865
Est. Cost per youth per year post startup	\$3,312- \$5,689 (Assuming 100 youth served in shelter per year)¹²

(Footnotes)

1 Insurance type: full coverage professional liability for staff; general liability for directors and officers; homeowners insurance for hosts.

2 Most but not all host home programs provide stipends to help offset increased costs of food and utilities. The stipend is voluntary and varies in amount from \$0 on Whidbey Island to \$100 in Mason County to \$400 in urban programs. While some programs reviewed serve youth for an average of 5 months, providers indicate longer host placements are more effective. We therefore assume 12 months placements and stipends for these calculations.

3 Some programs provide stipends to youth who participate in the program.

4 Assuming service center is open 30-40 hours per week.

5 Providers indicated that many drop-in Service Center guests already have case managers through other programs, so it's not necessary to have Service Center Case Manager capacity for each client.

6 Many drop-in centers also receive large in-kind food donations.

7 Some programs have drop-in center space donated. The effective Mason County HOST program receives donated space in an alternative high school.

8 WA rural regions estimate of cost per unit for host homes is \$6,000. Estimate for drop-in is \$3,500.

9 If youth were expected to pay some portion of income as rent this amount could be slightly lower.

10 Based on current listings for 5+ bedroom homes across the county.

11 Per-youth costs for RRH ranged by program from \$6,250-\$20,000. WA state rural estimate per unit is \$9,000. Program budget info was collected from Seattle, rural Connecticut, Austin and Alaska. Per-youth costs for shared housing ranged from to \$18,000- \$21,428. Program budget info was collected from rural Washington and Seattle.

12 Per-unit costs for adolescent shelter are \$7,131 in Seattle to \$21,250 in rural Washington.

Staffing: Although staff ratios associated with some types of programs serving minors are more intense, they likely wouldn't significantly increase program costs in small programs serving five to six youth. Keeping a group housing program under six minors does decrease costs because you can avoid having multiple overnight staff.

Training: High staff turnover, evolving practice models, unique client needs and the overall need for highly specialized services all contribute to the need for ongoing training. Each budget includes approximately \$200 per staff person a year to assist in continued training costs.

Scalability: While our illustrative modeling has been informed by required caseloads, cost structure is substantially variable:

- Support service costs are largely staff-related. Since support services are designed around a staff-to-client ratio, caseload directly drives support service cost. Programs without mandated case manager ratios, or that support youth in ways outside of case management, can be scaled at lower cost than licensed programs with mandated ratios.
- RRH rent subsidies and host home stipends are directly tied to the caseload and there are no scale economies.
- Fixed costs are limited in most programs.

Low and No Barrier Programs: A low or no barrier program will likely serve higher needs clients requiring more staff support, thereby driving up costs. Understanding trade-offs in light of the intended objectives of a potential intervention and intensity of services is critical. When Rod's House transitioned from serving minors to serving young adults in their drop-in program the agency experienced an increase in both the intensity of youth's needs and associated staffing costs.

b. Funding Overview

Available funding for a capital project is somewhat contingent on the design of the project. If the project includes residential space, such as transitional housing units for young adults above a drop-in space, or the rehabilitation of a home to master lease to young adults, there are more capital funding streams to consider. If the project includes non-residential space (such as a drop-in or office space), capital funding must be secured for non-residential uses or be divided between residential and non-residential uses.

Model	Capital Funding (residential)	Capital Funding (non-residential)	Service Funding
Model A: Service Center and Host Homes			
Service Center	If young adult units are above: • LIHTC • Housing Trust Fund	• WA State Building Communities Fund • LIHTC Community Facilities • Dept. of Agriculture	• OHY: Street Youth Services • RHY: Street Outreach and Basic Center Programs
Host Homes	N/A	N/A	• HUD: YHDP
Dispersed Housing			
HOPE	N/A	• WA State Building Communities Fund • LIHTC Community Facilities • Dept. of Agriculture	• OHY: HOPE beds
CRC	N/A	• WA State Building Communities Fund • LIHTC Community Facilities • Dept. of Agriculture	• OHY: CRC beds
Transitional Living Group Home	• LIHTC • Housing Trust Fund	• WA State Building Communities Fund • LIHTC Community Facilities • Dept. of Agriculture	• RHY: Transitional Living Program • DCYF: Child welfare reimbursements
RRH/ Master Leasing	• LIHTC • Housing Trust Fund	N/A	• HUD/ State Continuum of Care • HUD YHDP
Model C: Shelter			
13-17	N/A	• WA State Building Communities Fund • LIHTC Community Facilities • Dept. of Agriculture	• OHY: Street Youth Services • RHY: Street Outreach and Basic Center Programs
16-20			
18-24	N/A		• OHY: Young Adult Shelter

c. Capital Funding

Residential Funding Sources

Washington State Housing Trust Fund (HTF). The state Department of Commerce manages the Housing Trust Fund, which provides capital funding for low income housing projects. The funding level for the Trust Fund is established by the Legislature as part of the biennial budget, and the staff reviews applications and awards the funding. The stage 1 applications are generally due in December so that they can be used as part of the budget discussions when the Legislature is in session in the spring. After the budget is adopted, stage 2 applications are invited, usually in August or September with awards in early December. The state's capital budget for July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2019 included \$62.7M for the HTF. In the 2018 Supplemental Capital Budget the HTF received an increase in funding totaling \$106,770,000.

The Washington Department of Commerce has received a total of 124 HTF Applications for 2019 and 2020. They are reviewing a total of \$244,388,054 stage 1 applications. The per project limit for the HTF is \$3M per multi-family rental project. The Housing Authorities of Okanogan County and City of Oroville have successfully competed for HTF resources in the past, and should be consulted as potential partners if Room One chooses to pursue this option.

The Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program (LIHTC), 9%. The 9% LIHTC program is the largest source of capital funding in the United States for affordable housing. In the 9% LIHTC program, a project receives an allocation of tax credits for 10 years in exchange for a commitment to provide affordable housing that would not be possible without that incentive. The 9% LIHTC program is highly competitive with applications released by the Washington State Housing Finance Commission as early as October and typically due by late January with announcements following in early to mid February. The developers typically plan on closing their project within one year of the commitment and start construction immediately. In order to submit for the application, the project must have a high degree of readiness, including sufficient architectural work, cost estimates, capital funding commitments, site security, demonstrated property management capacity and a letter of interest from an equity investor.

The LIHTC program is split into three areas of competition to ensure that there is a fair geographic representation across the state. Okanogan County projects compete in the rural area category. While the LIHTC program is highly competitive, in Washington the highest priority is developing housing for homeless households. The LIHTC program also gives a financial incentive to developers to invest in areas that have lower income households or that are otherwise difficult for the development of affordable housing. These areas are 'difficult to develop areas' (DDA) and 'Qualified Census Tracts (QCT)'. A portion of Okanogan County that includes Okanogan, Omak and Nespelem are in a QCT, which would mean tax credits could be claimed for 130% of the project basis (vs. 100%), which could provide a major financial incentive to the project.

In the latest round of LIHTC allocations in June 2019, the Housing Authority of Okanogan County was granted \$958K to develop 46 units of affordable housing in Omak, 36 of which will be dedicated to individuals experiencing homelessness (about \$20K per unit). This application received the highest score of any project (in both urban and rural regions) so, again, the Housing Authority should be consulted if Room One is considering pursuing LIHTC funds. In 2019 there were 26 LIHTC applications, 16 of which were funded.

The Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program (LIHTC), 4%. The 4% LIHTC program has the advantage of being a less competitive program than the 9% program, and it can pay for roughly 25% of the cost of a project. However, it comes with all of the demands of the 9% LIHTC program along with the expense and complication of issuing a tax exempt bond. The 4% credits can be used for rehabilitation projects without requiring a bond.

Non-Residential Funding Sources

Washington State Building Communities Fund. The State has funded non profit owned community facilities for many years. The funds are generally allocated directly by the State Legislature as part of its biennial budget process. Program staff in the Department of Commerce publish an application packet and program guidelines, collect applications and review the applications for consistency with the program criteria and then an Advisory Committee submits a recommended list to the Legislature. In the current biennium the program was funded at \$21M. This program will fund 25% of the eligible capital expenses. Applications are generally available the summer before the legislative session that passes the biennial budget. The 2018 application round was in the summer of 2018 for consideration during the spring 2019 legislative session.

US Department of Agriculture. The Dept. of Ag offers low interest direct loans and grants to rural regions to purchase, construct and/or improve essential community facilities (including community centers and transitional housing). These resources are made available through a competitive process, and communities may apply at any time throughout the year.

LIHTC – Community Facility. While low income housing tax credits' purpose is to produce affordable housing, in some communities congress allows 'Community Facilities' to be included in the tax credit eligible basis, which can pay for a very significant portion of the development costs of the project.

d. Operating/Service Funding

Office of Homeless Youth Funding

Funding Title	Source/Type	Purpose	Total budget (annual)
Street Youth Services	State OHY// Discretionary	Identification and engagement of youth under 18 living on the street, followed by linkages to appropriate community resources.	\$1.3 million (median grant: \$116,928 per year)
HOPE beds	State OHY// Discretionary	Temporary (up to 30 days) residential placements for street youth under the age of 18. Youth may self-refer, or courts may order truant youth to placement if there is family conflict or a health and safety concern. Entry is voluntary except when court-ordered.	\$1.9 million (median grant: \$276,566 per year)
CRC beds	State OHY// Discretionary	Crisis Residential Centers are short-term facilities for runaway youth and adolescents in conflict with their families. Can be secure or semi-secure. There are plans to merge or streamline the HOPE and CRC programs at some point in the near future. OHY does not want oversight of secure facilities.	\$5.1 million (median grant: \$237,513 per year)
Young Adult Shelter	State OHY// Discretionary	Funding for shelter beds for young adults ages 18 to 24.	\$420,000 (median grant: \$170,000 per year)
Integrated Services	State OHY// Discretionary	Onsite family reconciliation and behavioral health services.	\$838,000
Young Adult Housing Program	State OHY// Discretionary	Rental assistance and case management for young adults 18-24. New program in 2016 modeled after IYHP, below.	\$787,000 (median grant: \$188,000 per year)
Independent Youth Housing Program	State OHY// Discretionary	Rental assistance and case management for youth who have aged out of the state foster care system. Must be 18-23 years old with priority given to young adults who were dependents of the state for at least one year.	\$900,000 (median grant: \$212,113 per year)
Responsible Living Skills Program	State DCYF// Discretionary	A placement option for foster youth who are dependent aged 14-18 (may extend to age 21 if the youth is in Extended Foster Care) who have not had success in other, traditional, state placements.	\$725,000
Anchor Community Initiative	State OHY// Discretionary	Services in Anchor Communities. Although Okanogan County is not an Anchor Community, future resources may become available.	\$4 million

Federal Funding

Funding Title	Source//Type	Purpose
Housing and Urban Development (HUD)		
Continuum of Care	HUD// Formula	Provides funding for permanent housing, transitional housing, supportive services, rental assistance, HMIS, and homelessness prevention. Administered through a Continuum of Care.
Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project	HUD// Discretionary	Funds for a community to create and implement a plan to address youth homelessness. The WA Balance of State Continuum of Care (which includes Okanogan County) was awarded \$4.63 million for a two-year period. These funds are in the process of being allocated and can then be renewed.
Administration for Children and Families (ACF)		
FYSB- Runaway and Homeless Youth Act	ACF// Discretionary	Drop-in, outreach, shelter and housing support for youth under 18/21. Called Street Outreach, Basic Center Program, Transitional Living Program, and Maternity Group Homes for Pregnant and Parenting Youth. WA agencies receive \$3.1 million in these funds per year, which are highly competitive.

VI. Emerging Research and Program Considerations

Youth-identified Needs. While there are growing bodies of research around the most effective means to intervene in a young person's homelessness, the expertise of young people themselves is critical in crafting an appropriate response. Housing unstable young people recently interviewed as part of the Okanogan County Youth Housing Testimony project prioritized the establishment of a place to go to participate in activities, access resources and build connections.

Shelter and/or Drop-in.

- **Location.** In identifying a location for a shelter or drop-in center, the community should consider where the greatest concentration of homeless young people exists, along with costs and proximity to services and amenities. The shelter should be easily reached by youth experiencing homeless and near amenities that may be needed such as public bus lines, high schools, alternative schools, health clinics and mental health providers. Once a site is identified, outreach, education, and marketing to the local residential and business community should be done immediately. For many reasons, including how youth self-identify, a drop-in center should not be marketed or described as a homeless shelter, but as a youth drop-in or support center.
- **Hours.** Many youth drop-in centers in urban areas operate on a 24/7 model, allowing youth to come and go throughout the day. In communities with fewer resources or where many clients are engaged in school, shelters primarily serve to provide a safe sleeping environment and only operate from 5 PM or 8 PM to 7 or 8 AM.
- **Accessibility.** Consistent with best practice low-barrier principles, the shelter or drop-in should not have any preconditions to entry such as sobriety or participation in mental health treatment, or requirements for service participation. Low barrier drop-in centers are demonstrated to engage youth who may not be connected to services or may be hiding their homelessness.
- **Length of Stay.** Although some funding streams mandate maximum lengths of stay, in general time limits are not considered effective in promoting effective service engagement or transitions. The length of stay should be flexible, with clear expectations that the shelter is a temporary resource that connects people to permanent housing. The shelter should never discharge a youth into a continued homeless situation, except where the continued presence of a guest threatens the safety of other guests or staff.

- **Referrals.** Referrals should be made by an outreach team that includes outreach workers, McKinney Vento liaisons and first responders/police officers. Room One should develop referral policies and procedures including clearly identifying referral access points and agencies. When being welcomed to a shelter or drop-in, youth should meet with staff trained in diversion, who can discuss alternative safe housing options for youth, and who can provide flexible financial support in pursuing these options.
- **Employment.** Hiring peer mentors is one way to reduce program costs and create employment opportunities for youth with lived expertise but, more importantly, can facilitate positive outcomes for youth accessing the shelter or drop-in. Drop-in centers have been shown to facilitate change in the lives of young people experiencing homelessness by creating a relationship of trust between youth and staff.

Host Homes. A host home program should be youth-centered and give youth the agency to decide which host they stay with, if possible. Host homes allow young people to stay in their communities, remain in school, and stay connected to their families and natural supports. In some cases, the stay may be short and case management light, if young people or their families simply need a ‘time out’. In other cases, where the situation is more complex, the level of support and length of stay will increase.

Host families should reflect, or at least be supportive of, the youth's identity. While some local host programs don't provide stipends, most host home programs provide funds to hosts to help offset the increased costs of food and utilities while hosting youth. Providing the option for stipends may allow for a more diverse group of hosts who may otherwise not be able to host a youth due to financial constraints. In many communities this has resulted in agencies having more hosts with identities that align with the identities of youth they are serving.

Information on the intensity of service needs among youth experiencing homelessness in Okanogan County is primarily anecdotal, so we are not able to specifically quantify the number of youth experiencing homelessness who may need intensive behavioral health or chemical dependency supports. Host homes are generally not effective for youth with severe unaddressed needs in those domains. Host homes are also not typically used for youth who are pregnant and parenting. This may be because it adds complexity to the host-youth arrangement, or because of historical connections between the host home or “shepherding home” model and the pro-life movement. This is not to say it can't be done, however, and there may be many hosts who, with proper training and support, could offer excellent and supportive placements for pregnant and parenting youth. There are no legal or licensing restrictions that would prevent it.

Support Services and Program Design. The pathway out of homelessness is non-linear for most young people, and several recent studies have shown that simply being housed is not a positive indicator of well-being, nor a strong predictor of healthy living, safety, workforce participation, or social inclusion (Gaetz et al., 2018). Even when a youth is motivated and housed, they face significant structural and systemic barriers that can lead to great variability in mental health and quality of life (Kidd et al., 2016). Some of the systemic factors that lead to homelessness also make it difficult to exit out of homelessness, including lack of affordable housing, limited social capital, inadequate education, and limited employment histories. Factors that appear to support sustainable exits from homelessness include (Mayock & Corr, 2013; Milburn et al., 2009; Frederick et al., 2014):

- Exiting from homelessness rapidly
- Contact with positive social relations
- School engagement and support from family, particularly maternal support
- Seeking mental health support
- High school completion
- Connections to mainstream social systems including healthcare, education and medical care
- Access to income supports and housing subsidies

The review of research suggests that to achieve housing stabilization for youth and young adults who have experienced or are at risk of homelessness, it is necessary to consider a broader range of outcomes beyond housing status, considering instead well-being, building assets, strengthening resilience, and enhancing social inclusion. Research suggests program elements like seamless and integrated transitional case management, and access to mental health interventions and peer support can positively influence these outcomes. It is also important that young people are able to reconnect with services they previously withdrew from, without facing consequences. This may be critical given evidence that a young person's sense of personal control in service delivery directly impacts housing stability (Slesnick et al., 2017).

Social Inclusion. Enhancing social inclusion is particularly complex and deeply involved work. Limited evidence exists on effective strategies for increasing social inclusion amongst youth within housing stabilization programs, even though longitudinal studies on youth indicate that housing stability is greatly improved when youth are able to connect with others, reconnect with family, and access a range of sustainable supports (Kidd et al., 2016). Some strategies include offering opportunities for reconnection and reunification with family, creating space to engage with communities of choice and extend social networks, facilitate the development of social capital (e.g., mentorship programs), engage in cultural and spiritual traditions and receive opportunities to pursue interests and participate in meaningful activities such as arts, sports, or volunteering, in order to learn new skills, develop relationships, and socialize.

Native American Youth. Native youth are overrepresented in our homeless, justice and foster care systems as a direct result of centuries of colonization and racism that have attempted to erase their social, economic, and governance systems, as well as family structures, spiritual practices, and cultural traditions. Yet against all odds, in some research Indigenous youth report higher rates of resiliency than other groups of youth experiencing homelessness (Gaetz et al., 2016). All services should strive towards providing age-appropriate supports that are culturally appropriate and grounded in a commitment to anti-oppression and positive youth development.

While there is no evidence that a particular program or housing model is more effective in serving Native American youth experiencing homelessness, research demonstrates a particular need for Native-focused services and supports that are culturally sensitive and embed Native worldviews, Indigenous cultural and spiritual practices, and Native leadership and self-determination at every level. It is possible to adapt and infuse any service model with Indigenous ways of knowing to make them more culturally relevant. For example, hybrid approaches to therapy and healing bring together the knowledge, techniques, and practices that reflect both Native and mainstream approaches.

Migrant Youth. Studies have demonstrated an overrepresentation of Hispanic/Latinx youth in hidden homeless populations and that migrant youth are more likely than other groups to have multiple experiences of homelessness (Gaetz et al., 2018). While youth may be able to access public services or supports, these do not always adequately account for a youth's needs, unique circumstances or background, developmental stage, or self-identified priorities or goals. Migrant youth may experience public system services as hostile or risky, particularly if they are undocumented, and some communities may prefer to disengage from these supports as a result.

As with Native American youth, there is no evidence that a particular program model is more effective for serving Hispanic, Latinx or migrant youth experiencing homelessness, though any program should be culturally appropriate and inclusive. Anecdotally, providers reported it is easier to engage youth some Hispanic/Latinx youth in programs that are low barrier and require minimal disclosures of identifying information (such as a shelter or drop-in).

Pregnant and Parenting Youth. Pregnancy and parenthood are critical junctures at which homeless youth, even those with negative views of service providers or a strong sense of self-reliance, might be open to engage in services or reunite with families. To capitalize on this moment, any housing program should serve both youth and families, recognizing the fluidity between the two groups. It is possible from both a licensing and design perspective to establish a housing program that accommodates both youth and young families. In implementation, Room One should

also recognize the importance of the relationships pregnant and parenting youth have with partners, and create opportunities and spaces for them to cohabitate and co-parent.

Some research suggesting housing unstable parenting youth have significantly higher rates of risk indicators, including past traumatic events and mood disorders, than their peers (Narendorf et al., 2016). This suggests a need for trauma-informed care and trained therapists, especially for young mothers, who have higher risk of postpartum mood dysregulation. Pregnant and parenting youth were also more likely to report being homeless due to inability to pay rent than other youth (Narendorf et al., 2016). This indicates that integrated program supports for generating legitimate, living-wage income are important consideration for this population. Youth also need interventions to assist with parenting costs in the short term- accessing WIC, health insurance, childcare subsidies, etc.

In some research fathers demonstrate more risk indicators than unstably housed young mothers, including substance abuse and justice involvement (Narendorf et al., 2016). They needed housing supports with low demands (housing first, addressing substance abuse). Services should include positive parent training and housing policies that support visitation or full custodial situations.

VII. Timeline of Next Steps

Months 1-6 (July- December, 2019)

Host Homes:

- Identify program funding
- Hire program manager
- Determine program goals and geographic boundaries
- Develop and begin executing host recruitment plan
- Begin training hosts, inspecting homes and conducting background checks on hosts
- Develop program handbook
- Formalize referral relationship with school district for youth in need of host placements
- Establish data collection infrastructure; hire staff as needed
- Secure appropriate insurance
- Register with secretary of state

Service Center:

- Complete internal decision-making around pursuit and scale of this approach

Months 6-12 (January-June, 2020)

Host Homes:

- Begin accepting youth into host homes
- Collect data and monitor progress
- Share program data with Office of Homeless Youth

Service Center:

- Approach potential partners (Housing Authorities) re: LIHTC/HTF applications
- Identify capital campaign strategies
- Select location
- Complete initial architectural work

Months 12-18 (July-December, 2020)

Host Homes:

- Continue to monitor progress
- Consider expansion plan for other school districts or regions

Service Center:

- * If not pursuing public financing for construction, begin construction or retrofitting. Otherwise:
- Prepare application for Washington State Building Communities Budget
- Submit stage 1 HTF application (December)

Months 18-24 (January - June, 2021)

Host Homes:

- Work with regional programs to expand host options in other communities

Service Center:

- Submit stage 1 LIHTC application (January)
- Construction phase
- Staffing and licensing (if providing overnight shelter)
- Begin serving clients late 2021

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