Proposed Okanogan County Youth Homelessness Action Plan

Prepared for the Okanogan County Youth Homelessness Coalition

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ROOM ONE

Background

As a strategy to prevent teen pregnancy and violence, Room One staff have been facilitating Girls Groups within Okanogan County juvenile detention for the last two years. Many of the girls in the facility name a lack of safe, stable housing as a primary precursor to incarceration and barrier to future wellbeing. In response, in August of 2017 Room One brought together partners from across the county who work with homeless youth to better understand the problem and build solutions. An ad hoc Okanogan Youth Homelessness Coalition formed and determined that new, bold strategies are necessary to meet the needs of homeless youth and address underlying health disparities that lead to youth homelessness. The **Okanogan Youth Homelessness Coalition** includes a diverse group of stakeholders including leadership from juvenile detention and probation, schools, the housing authority, caseworkers serving the Colville tribe's Native youth, youth advocates, and youth themselves.

For the last year, our Coalition has met monthly to complete systems mapping, a needs analysis, and a review of best practices for serving homeless youth, and compile and share data. Our Coalition's first step was to build a shared understanding to guide our work. We coalesced around the following goals:

- **Forming a community around the problem**
- **Centering the voices of youth and the people who work with youth**
- **Naming, framing and leading with race**
- **Bringing in funding and setting up long-term strategies and sustainability**
- **Prioritizing long-term housing for the most vulnerable youth**

After identifying these values, the Coalition engaged two consultants, one with local expertise and one with national youth homelessness perspective, to develop this **Youth Homelessness Action Plan for Okanogan County**. This Plan includes **(i) a summation of available local data; (ii) recommended best practice service interventions, and (iii) potential resources for the implementation** of the Plan.

The absence of existing resources and programming for homeless youth in Okanogan County can be seized as an opportunity rather than a deficit. We have nascent infrastructure, including the right people

fully invested in our Coalition, the strong youth leadership, the commitment to racial equity, the desire for innovation and flexibility in our approaches to resolving housing crises, and dedication to end or reform failing systems or strategies. These strengths make us uniquely positioned and committed to take on the challenge of youth homelessness. We are poised and ready for change, and feel the urgency of young people whose futures hang in the balance. We hope this Plan can help continue the Coalition's momentum, and that together we can keep more young people housed, safe and moving towards their futures.

For the purposes of this report, we will align with the most commonly adopted definition of youth homelessness, which includes **individuals, aged 13–25, living in places not meant for human habitation, in shelters or transitional housing (or other temporary housing arrangements), or staying with others while lacking a safe and stable alternative living arrangement**. Couch surfing, which involves moving from one temporary living arrangement to another without a secure place to be, is included in the definition of homelessness. When relevant, we distinguish between **minors, aged 13-17, and young adults, aged 18-24**. This report focuses mainly on **unaccompanied** youth. Unaccompanied means the absence of a parent or legal guardian.

Methodology:

Data Analysis
Multiple sources of data on the prevalence and characteristics of homeless youth in Okanogan County (see right).

Literature Review
Analysis of data around homeless and high-risk youth previously published by DSHS-Research Data and Analysis; guidance and program evaluations produced by HUD; homeless youth plans produced by Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program grantees; notes from Coalition meetings; homeless funding audits; etc.

Interviews
Interviews with rural homeless youth service providers and policy experts.

Acronyms:

BNL: By Name List
CoC: Continuum of Care
CE: Coordinated Entry
HMIS: Homeless Management Information System
RDA: Research, Data and Analysis division of DSHS
OBHC: Okanogan Behavioral Health Care
OHY: Office of Homeless Youth
OSPI: Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction
VOYC: Voices of Youth Count

Data Sources:

Data sources referenced in this report:

1. Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) data
2. OSPI Education system data: numbers of accompanied and unaccompanied homeless students required to be reported under the McKinney Vento Act
3. 2010 Census data for Okanogan County
4. ACES data: used by DSHS caseworkers to determine eligibility for public assistance
5. OBHC intake data: information on housing status collected at intake by Okanogan Behavioral Healthcare
6. Okanogan County Juvenile Detention: numbers, race and gender of youth in detention compiled by the WA State Center for Court Research, 2016
7. DSHS data on clients in in-patient mental health facilities by county, 2015

Data sources that were solicited but not available:
1. Okanogan County Juvenile Detention: data on housing status at admission
2. Tribal Behavioral Health: data on admissions and housing status
3. Tribal Foster Care: data on admissions and youth running from care

See Section I for additional detail.

I. Data

Key Takeaways:

- National research indicates approximately **92** minors and **289** young adults experience homelessness in Okanogan County each year (Chapin Hall, 2018).
- Among the young adults, roughly **155 (54%) are explicitly homeless and 135 (46%) are couch surfing**.
- **305 homeless students, 35 of whom were unaccompanied,** were identified by Okanogan schools in 2017 (OSPI, 2017).
- Approximately **8** youth from Okanogan County experience homelessness within 12 months of exiting state foster care and state juvenile rehabilitation each year (DSHS RDA, 2017).
- We lack good data on the number of youth experiencing homelessness after leaving **juvenile detention**, but anticipate this is the largest population of youth who will subsequently experience homelessness in our region.
- Statewide, about **20% of youth 'churn'** in the homeless system each year, while **80% of homeless youth are entering the system for the first time**.
- **Young parents and Hispanic and Native American** youth are at disproportionately elevated risk of

homelessness in our region. Outreach and services should be designed to reach these special populations.

Prevalence of Homeless Youth in Okanogan County

In spite of community concern, efforts to address youth homelessness are often constrained by the absence of credible data on the size and characteristics of the population of homeless young people. Data collected through the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), annual Point In Time counts, the school system and other traditional methods have limitations and do not reflect the experiences of those youth who are not connected with services or who may be hiding their housing instability. This is particularly relevant in counties like ours, where there are limited services and no dedicated spaces for unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness, as service providers and shelters are the key suppliers of homeless population data. Nonetheless, we can develop a representative picture of youth homelessness in Okanogan County by braiding together county and state data alongside national research. This allows us to scope the size of the challenge we confront and begin to define an appropriate response.

Okanogan County Homeless Minors
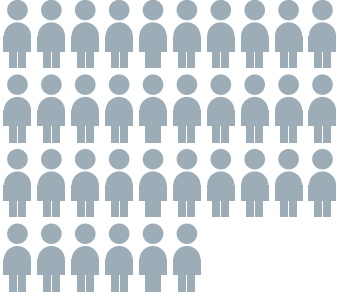
VOICES OF YOUTH COUNT ESTIMATE:

92 homeless minors per year[1]

ENGAGED IN SCHOOLS[2]: 49

Omak School District (2017): 13

Okanogan School District (2018): 36

LIKELY TO EXPERIENCE HOMELESSNESS WITHIN 12 MONTHS OF EXITING A STATE SYSTEM EACH YEAR: 10

Juvenile Rehabilitation (State): 4.3[3]

Aging Out of Foster Care: 1[4]

Behavioral Health Inpatient Care: 2.5

Running from Foster Care: 2.3[5]

HOUSING UNSTABLE MINORS IN COUNTY AND TRIBAL SYSTEMS: ?

Juvenile Justice (Okanogan County Detention): unknown

?

Okanogan Behavioral Healthcare[6]

Tribal Foster Care: unknown

?

Tribal Behavioral Health: unknown

?

Youth may be counted more than once.
1 Chapin Hall, 2018; 2010 Census Data
2 OSPI, 2017 and 2018
3 WA State Center for Court Research 2016 Annual Report; RDA Report: Housing Status of Foster Care, Behavioral Health and Criminal Justice Systems, 2017
4 FY 2015, data provided by CA; estimate for housing instability from RDA Report: Housing Status of Foster Care, Behavioral Health and Criminal Justice Systems, 2017
5 Estimate based on DSHS Region 1 data, Fiscal Year 2016; Braam Performance Report Fiscal Year 2017
6 OBHC, 2016

Okanogan County Homeless Young Adults

VOICES OF YOUTH COUNT ESTIMATE:

289
homeless young adults per year[1]

30
entering homeless system[2]

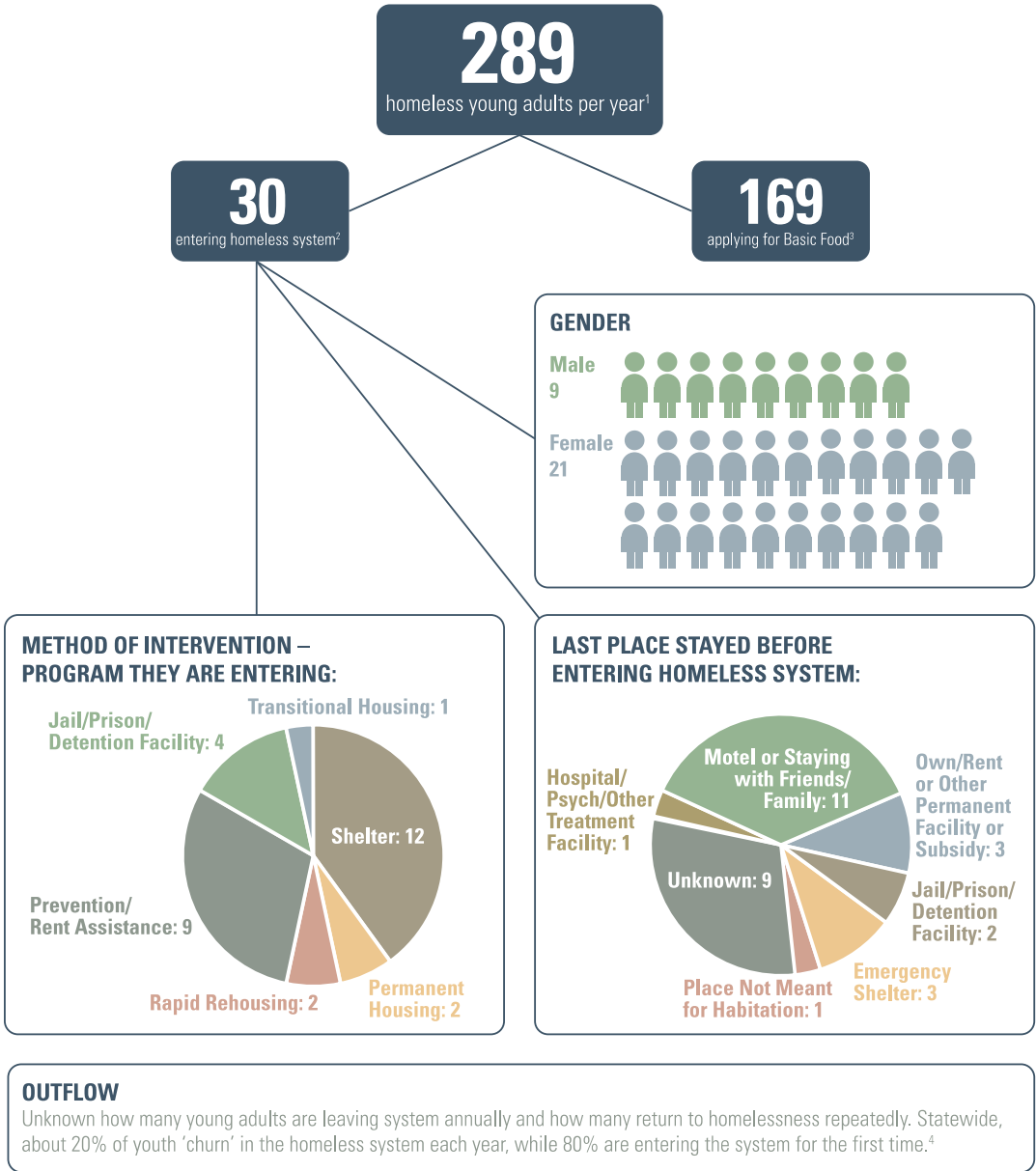### 169
applying for Basic Food[3]

GENDER

Male
9

Female
21

**METHOD OF INTERVENTION –
PROGRAM THEY ARE ENTERING:**

- Jail/Prison/Detention Facility: 4
- Transitional Housing: 1
- Shelter: 12
- Prevention/Rent Assistance: 9
- Rapid Rehousing: 2
- Permanent Housing: 2

**LAST PLACE STAYED BEFORE
ENTERING HOMELESS SYSTEM:**

- Hospital/Psych/Other Treatment Facility: 1
- Motel or Staying with Friends/Family: 11
- Own/Rent or Other Permanent Facility or Subsidy: 3
- Unknown: 9
- Jail/Prison/Detention Facility: 2
- Place Not Meant for Habitation: 1
- Emergency Shelter: 3

OUTFLOW
Unknown how many young adults are leaving system annually and how many return to homelessness repeatedly. Statewide, about 20% of youth 'churn' in the homeless system each year, while 80% are entering the system for the first time.[4]

1 Chapin Hall, 2018; 2010 Census Data
2 HMIS, 2015
3 RDA HAU HMIS Snapshot, 2016 (excludes parenting young adults)
4 HMIS, 2015

Voices of Youth Count

Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago recently undertook the Voices of Youth Count (VOYC) research initiative, designed to produce replicable national prevalence and incidence estimates of youth

homelessness, as well as data on the population's needs and characteristics.[i] The project was inspired in part by inconsistent definitions of youth homelessness at the federal level, which complicated previous efforts at quantification. The VOYC used a mixed methodology of surveys and interviews to capture youth who were both explicitly homeless and couch surfing, or otherwise staying with others while lacking a home of their own. Previous research has shown that **couch surfing generally takes place early in people's struggles with homelessness**, with sleeping more on the streets happening at later stages.

The VOYC showed that, over a 12-month period, approximately 4.3% of households with 13- to 17-year-olds reported explicit youth homelessness (including running away or being asked to leave) or couch surfing. The 12-month population prevalence estimates for 18- to 25-year-olds were 5.2% for explicitly reported homelessness, 4.5% for couch surfing only, and 9.7%, overall. **Applying these prevalence estimates to the Okanogan County population** (using 2010 Census data), **approximately 92 youth ages 13-17 and 289 young adults ages 18-24 experience homelessness (broadly defined) in our region each year. Roughly 155 (54%) of the young adults are explicitly homeless and 135 (46%) are couch surfing.** Given the multitude of risk factors for homelessness that are elevated in Okanogan County (poverty, teenage pregnancy, domestic violence), it is probable that actual rates of homelessness exceed these estimates.

The VOYC also concluded that youth homelessness is equally prevalent in both rural and non-rural areas, but that tailored policies and programs are necessary to address the unique needs of homeless youth in rural communities- such as service infrastructure and outreach to lower visibility populations (see Section II for more detailed program recommendations).

OSPI Data

The Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction's (OSPI) Comprehensive Education Data and Research System contains K-12 public education data, including housing status data collected under

the McKinney-Vento Act. In the 2016-2017 school year, **305 homeless and doubled-up students** were identified in Okanogan County. **35 homeless youth were unaccompanied**, and **57 were in high school**. 22 of the unaccompanied homeless youth were identified by Okanogan School District, and the remaining 13 were from the Omak School District. Though they have not been publicly released yet by OSPI, we anticipate numbers for the 2017-18 school year will surpass this number: Okanogan School District alone identified **42 unaccompanied youth**. 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**.

However, OSPI data does not typically capture students who are disengaged from school or in private schools (e.g., students attending Pascal Sherman Indian School), and is generally incomplete for reasons including a lack of dedicated resources for school districts in our county, and changes in staffing of the liaison position. Indeed, for 2016-2017, six of our nine school districts in Okanogan County reported 0 unaccompanied homeless youth to OSPI. Analysis by DSHS in 2012 showed **over half (56%) of homeless students statewide were identified by DSHS caseworkers or local housing providers (in the HMIS database) but <u>not</u> by the school system**.[ii]

HMIS Data

Due to the absence of youth-oriented homeless services, HMIS data is minimal for our region. In 2015, **30 young adults and 0 minors** were recorded in Okanogan County's HMIS database. A report produced by RDA to supplement local PIT Counts indicated that, based on applications for Basic Food, **169 young adults in Okanogan County were homeless or unstably housed** in January, 2016. This number *excluded* young adults who were parenting.[iii]

Characteristics of Homeless Youth and Service Needs of Priority Subpopulations
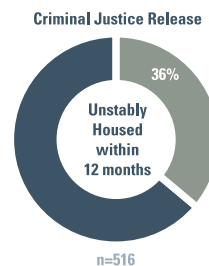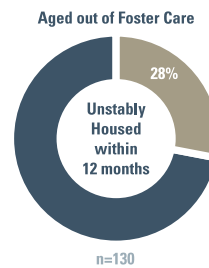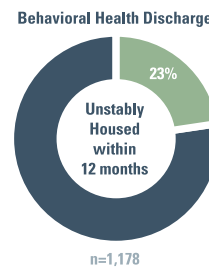
Youth Involved in Multiple Systems

Research has established the numbers of youth who identify as homeless in HMIS or ACES (the database used by DSHS caseworkers when determining eligibility for public assistance) within 12 months of exiting other state systems. Statewide, the largest numbers of homeless youth come from behavioral health facilities (in-patient mental health and substance abuse programs), followed by criminal justice then foster care. Rates are similar in both rural and urban settings.[iv]

Applying the RDA findings that 23%, 28% and 36% of young people experience housing instability within 12 months of exiting state behavioral health, foster care and criminal justice systems, respectively, to our populations of youth in these systems, we estimate that in Okanogan County approximately **8 youth per year experience homelessness after exiting a state system**. This is both a conservative estimate, and lowered by the absence of in-patient substance abuse treatment programming within the county (as DSHS currently reports participants by county of treatment rather than county of origin). It's further lowered by the absence of integrated data from the tribal foster care and behavioral health systems.

In 2017, Okanogan Behavioral Healthcare (OBHC) identified **1 homeless youth of 129** youth intakes for ages 13-24. For 2018, OBHC reports **6 homeless youth of 280** youth intakes. However, roughly 13% of the population of Okanogan County is Native-American and many Native American youth that receive behavioral health services are

Youth experiencing housing instability (including homelessness) statewide
within 12 months of discharge from state custodial systems

Behavioral Health Discharge

23%

Unstably Housed within 12 months

n=1,178

Aged out of Foster Care

28%

Unstably Housed within 12 months

n=130

Criminal Justice Release

36%

Unstably Housed within 12 months

n=516

RDA Report: Housing Status of Foster Care, Behavioral Health and Criminal Justice Systems, 2017
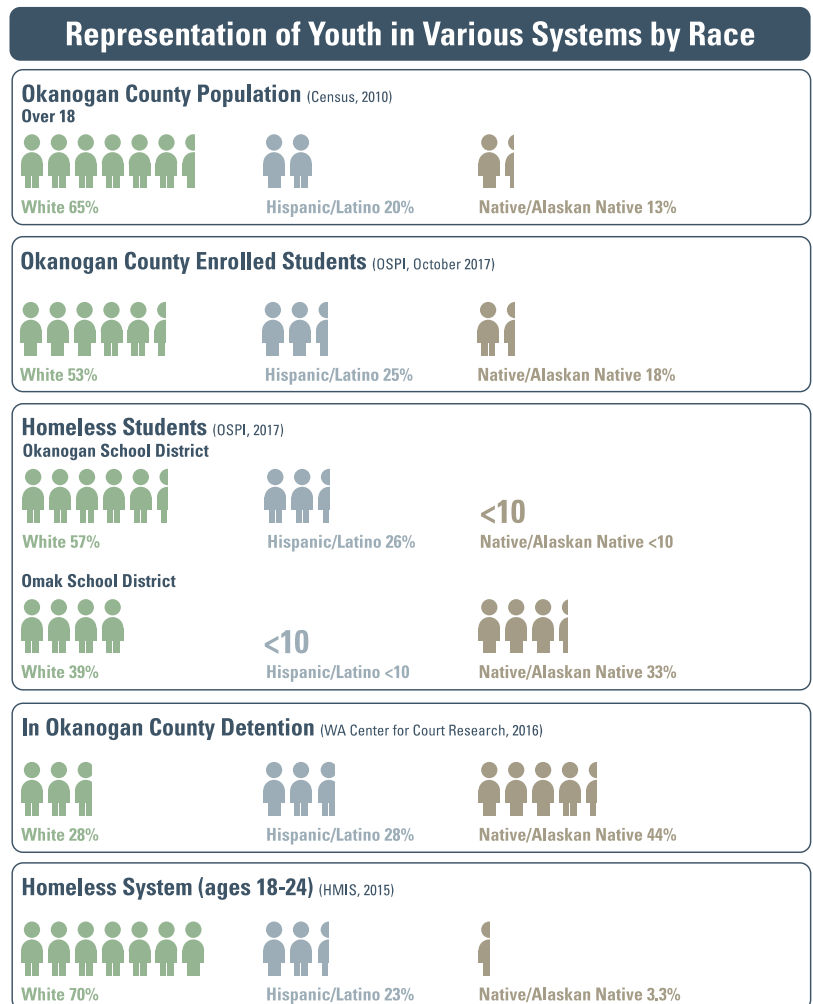
served by the Colville Tribes' Behavioral Health Program. A count for youth exiting tribal behavioral health is not readily available and information regarding housing upon release is not tracked, making this behavioral health estimate highly conservative.

Some data is currently collected on the rates at which youth experience housing instability before or after admission to county detention in Okanogan County, but this data was not available for purposes of this report. In 2016, 152 youth ages 10-18 were admitted to Okanogan County detention.

Cultural Background and Disproportionate Risk of Homelessness

Disproportionality of homelessness experiences among Hispanic and Native American youth mirrors racial disparities documented elsewhere, such as juvenile justice involvement and sentencing, negative health outcomes and poverty. This research highlights a need to address root causes of homelessness for youth at greater risk, as well as the need to target interventions and provide services that are accessible and responsive to the unique needs of youth marginalized due to their race or ethnicity. Nationally, although Hispanic youth are at higher risk than non-Hispanic youth of experiencing homelessness (34% of young adults reporting homelessness in the VOYC), they tend to be underrepresented in homeless services (19% of youth

Representation of Youth in Various Systems by Race

Okanogan County Population (Census, 2010)
Over 18
White 65% Hispanic/Latino 20% Native/Alaskan Native 13%

Okanogan County Enrolled Students (OSPI, October 2017)
White 53% Hispanic/Latino 25% Native/Alaskan Native 18%

Homeless Students (OSPI, 2017)
Okanogan School District
White 57% Hispanic/Latino 26% Native/Alaskan Native <10

Omak School District
White 39% Hispanic/Latino <10 Native/Alaskan Native 33%

In Okanogan County Detention (WA Center for Court Research, 2016)
White 28% Hispanic/Latino 28% Native/Alaskan Native 44%

Homeless System (ages 18-24) (HMIS, 2015)
White 70% Hispanic/Latino 23% Native/Alaskan Native 3.3%

served by federally funded runaway and homeless youth programs in FY 2014).[v] This is not consistent with the limited HMIS data we have for Okanogan County, though this could be due to the small sample size. The significant overrepresentation of Native youth in the county detention system, and their underrepresentation among clients receiving homeless services in 2015 suggests upstream interventions and Native-led services are key programmatic considerations for this special population. In addition, it is important to emphasize that low numbers of minority youth in state systems (besides detention) could reflect native youth being served by tribal systems that do not report data publicly, and a lower rate of Hispanic/Latino youth seeking or obtaining treatment for services like mental health.

LGBTQ Youth

Various state sources suggest that **between 22% and 24% of homeless youth identify as LGBTQ**.[vi] Social stigma, discrimination, and, in many cases, experiences of rejection by their families of origin and/or licensed foster homes, may add to the physical, logistical, and social/emotional challenges of homelessness for this population. The absence of sheltering systems specifically for youth in Okanogan County means that there are no services designed for and protective of the diverse psycho-social needs of homeless LGBTQ Okanogan youth. Specific strategies for inclusively and competently serving this population are necessary, even if they are not currently an openly visible presence in our community.

The VOYC showed common notions of LGBTQ youth being evicted by families into homelessness after "coming out" are overly simplistic and that the young person's sexual orientation or gender identity is only one factor involved in household tensions.[vii] Most families also faced broader issues of instability, including poverty, loss, violence, addiction, mental health problems, or housing troubles. These dynamics preceded, or coincided with, the youth's identity or coming out process. These findings suggest that intervening around other stressors that families face (like poverty, single parenthood, parental addiction, and mental health) could have direct positive implications for addressing this subpopulation's homelessness, and that there is often more time and opportunity to intervene than was previously assumed.

Parenthood

The VOYC confirmed our local knowledge that young parents are at high risk for homelessness relative to their non-parenting peers. Washington **foster youth who become parents are more than twice as likely to become homeless** within 12 months of aging out of care than their non-parenting peers.[viii] These findings indicate a marked need for coordination among youth and family homelessness service providers, as well as interventions designed with the unique needs of young parents and their children in mind. Given that **Okanogan County has one of the highest teen pregnancy rates in the state (Washington State Department of Health Report, 2013 - 36.8%), and the highest proportion of girls (43.4%) in county detention in the state in 2016** focusing on justice system involved youth and at-risk females may represent the most significant opportunity to mediate this risk factor. [ix] The VOYC research also indicated that 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. We should develop outreach and service arrays to capitalize on this moment, including:

- Providing pregnancy prevention programs, contraception plus prenatal and postpartum care in shelters, drop-in centers, and outreach locations. Healthcare providers must be credible, trauma informed, and respectful of youth's reproductive choices.
- Ensuring collaboration between any homeless service providers and providers in early childhood, early intervention, education and welfare. Federal programs like Head Start and the Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program prioritize children experiencing homelessness, and providers should ensure that young homeless parents and their children can access them.
- Developing housing that is developmentally appropriate for young parents**.** Housing programs often serve youth OR families, without a recognition of the fluidity between the two groups. If possible from licensing and space perspectives, and housing should accommodate youth and young families. These programs should also recognize the importance of the relationships pregnant and parenting youth have with partners.

- Assessing risk for homelessness. School personnel, health care professionals, and other service providers who work with pregnant and parenting youth could routinely ask about the stability and safety of their living arrangements, other risk factors for homelessness, and any unmet needs.

Social Supports

The last place youth report staying before entering shelter reveals a young person's most recent trajectory, as well as the network that might be available to support an alternative living situation, if resources were available to sustain it. Local, state and national research all suggest high rates of couch surfing among youth in Okanogan County. **45% of homeless youth in Washington outside of King County report staying with friends and family or at a motel the night before entering shelter; for the small sample of young adults in Okanogan County in 2015 this number was 37%.**[x] A similar pattern was found by DSHS-RDA when looking at homeless students in urban versus rural regions.[xi] Students who were living in shelters, homeless housing, or in places unfit for human habitation were more likely to live in high density urban areas, and youth in rural regions were more likely to be in doubled-up situations (living with friends or family due to economic hardship, family turmoil, incarceration, hospitalization, etc.). A young person's experience couch surfing or doubled-up could include a wide range of vulnerability, from lower-risk experiences of leveraging social networks during periods of housing instability to high-risk or exploitative arrangements. Trying to **formalize and support youth in the safe informal networks**, when they exist, is one of the most efficient and cost-effective approaches to homelessness prevention.

Education

At the national level, one of the strongest risk correlates for homelessness is a lack of a high school diploma or GED.[xii] Those with learning impairments are also at a higher risk of homelessness. State-level research in Washington has shown that a high GPA is a protective factor for youth aging out of foster care, and that youth with a GPA of a B or above were **0.62 times *less* likely** to experience homelessness

within 12 months of aging out of foster care than their peers.[xiii] Although we cannot make causal inferences, these findings reinforce the possibility that education, and underlying factors that support educational success, might protect youth from becoming homeless, and that school-based strategies that help young people persist and graduate are invaluable.

Incidence

The VOYC revealed that about half of the young people in the study, ages 13 to 25, who were homeless during the 12-month period experienced homelessness for the first time in their lives. Similarly, of Washington youth using homeless services in 2015, **81% were new to the system**.[xiv] This dynamic suggests that, while there is a significant group of young people who can get stuck in a cycle of recurring homelessness, the problem cannot be fully addressed with reactive policies and programs alone, and prevention and early intervention solutions are necessary to stop the flow of youth into homelessness. While many youth exit the homeless system to independent housing and unknown destinations, most studies and providers estimate ⅓ to ½ of homeless youth do or could return home with support.

Family Conflict and Economic Hardship

The connections between family economic hardship and conflict and youth homelessness are assumed but have not been evaluated or quantified locally. In the VOYC, **the majority of young adults (ages 18-25) interviewed had experiences of homelessness or housing instability that started in childhood or adolescence**. Over one-third of youth experienced the death of a parent or caregiver, underscoring early trauma and disruptions that can contribute to paths of instability and, ultimately, homelessness. This factor suggests that systemic school-based interventions for the broader population of 305 homeless students identified in Okanogan County for 2016-2017 (both accompanied and unaccompanied) would positively impact the number of unaccompanied students in years to come.

Recommendations for Strengthening Data and Tracking Progress

Challenges

While we have some strong analytical resources to help us quantify the scale of the homeless youth challenge in Okanogan County, several significant blind spots exist:

- HMIS data is very limited due to an absence of any shelter beds or homeless services;

- Data from county juvenile detention on housing instability was not available;

- Current questions surrounding housing instability from behavioral health centers do not align with the McKinney Vento definitions of homelessness;

- OSPI counts are not comprehensive due to staffing and resource limitations;

- No point in time count of homeless youth is conducted and the countywide PIT is inadequate; and

- Relevant data from tribal programs are not consistently collected, or if they are, are not shared publicly or integrated with other planning efforts.

We currently also lack consistent, valid methods of measurement to monitor progress addressing homelessness against countywide, cross-system benchmarks.

Paths Forward

A few approaches could mediate the challenges laid out above:
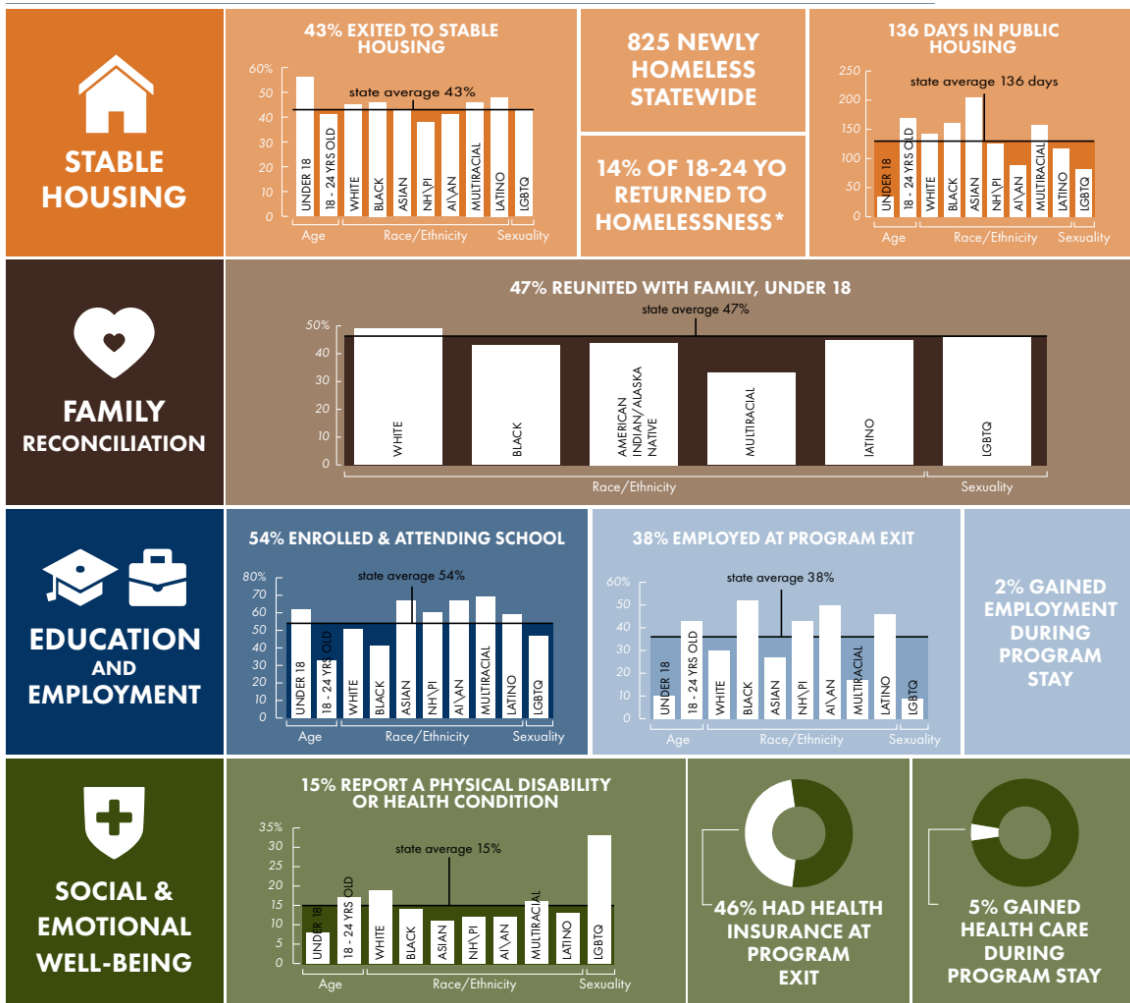
- Ensure that all collaborating partners are using the same definition of homelessness.

- Include housing status questions on local detention center intake and release processing, and establish a data-sharing agreement or service MOU so housing unstable youth can be identified and provided with intensive transitional support at exit.

- Include additional housing status questions on OBHC intake and release processing that align with a standard definition of homelessness.

- Offer data collection support and training to school districts that do not have devoted liaisons or sufficient financial resources.

- Improve homelessness identification for at-risk groups (e.g.: Hispanic/ Latino students and teen parents) by identifying key staff at K-12 schools in the county who have proven

histories of connecting with these youth. If no such contact exists in the school, increase outreach for that school.

- Present to the Colville Tribal Business Council to establish a partnership to end youth homelessness and to encourage tribal programs to collect and share information about at-risk youth.

- Begin collecting LGBTQ status data for youth in services in safe and affirming ways. LGBTQ data should be collected at intake and at follow-up points (given that identification can change over time) in line with best measurement practices on this issue. Critically, LGBTQ youth should be engaged as full partners in interpreting data to inform smarter systems and services to address their needs.[xv]

- Improve Coordinated Entry access points and assessment process for youth. Once housing resources are available being using "By Name List" protocol. (See Section II for additional details.)

- When homeless youth housing and services come online, ensure that all providers use HMIS and, as possible, collect common key outcomes selected by the Coalition.

Data collection is only valuable to the extent that data is actually reviewed and acted upon. One effective means to track progress is to establish a dashboard that compiles and shares information on Plan implementation. Although much more complex than what would be necessary for Okanogan County, the state's youth homelessness dashboard is below as one example.

State Office of Homeless Youth Outcomes Dashboard

STABLE HOUSING

43% EXITED TO STABLE HOUSING — state average 43%
(Age: Under 18, 18-24 yrs old; Race/Ethnicity: White, Black, Asian, NH\PI, AI\AN, Multiracial, Latino; Sexuality: LGBTQ)

825 NEWLY HOMELESS STATEWIDE

14% OF 18-24 YO RETURNED TO HOMELESSNESS*

136 DAYS IN PUBLIC HOUSING — state average 136 days
(Age: Under 18, 18-24 yrs old; Race/Ethnicity: White, Black, Asian, NH\PI, AI\AN, Multiracial, Latino; Sexuality: LGBTQ)

FAMILY RECONCILIATION

47% REUNITED WITH FAMILY, UNDER 18 — state average 47%
(Race/Ethnicity: White, Black, American Indian/Alaska Native, Multiracial, Latino; Sexuality: LGBTQ)

EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

54% ENROLLED & ATTENDING SCHOOL — state average 54%
(Age: Under 18, 18-24 yrs old; Race/Ethnicity: White, Black, Asian, NH\PI, AI\AN, Multiracial, Latino; Sexuality: LGBTQ)

38% EMPLOYED AT PROGRAM EXIT — state average 38%
(Age: Under 18, 18-24 yrs old; Race/Ethnicity: White, Black, Asian, NH\PI, AI\AN, Multiracial, Latino; Sexuality: LGBTQ)

2% GAINED EMPLOYMENT DURING PROGRAM STAY

SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

15% REPORT A PHYSICAL DISABILITY OR HEALTH CONDITION — state average 15%
(Age: Under 18, 18-24 yrs old; Race/Ethnicity: White, Black, Asian, NH\PI, AI\AN, Multiracial, Latino; Sexuality: LGBTQ)

46% HAD HEALTH INSURANCE AT PROGRAM EXIT

5% GAINED HEALTH CARE DURING PROGRAM STAY

*Data for prior years not available due to change of ....all risk of incidents in HMIS

# II. Program Recommendations

Key Takeaways:

To establish an effective youth homelessness response system that minimizes system entrants while effectively managing the housing crises of unsheltered youth, the Okanogan County Homeless Coalition should:

1. Establish **youth-specific infrastructure** for governance and coordinated entry
2. Stop **discharges** from public systems into homelessness
3. Strengthen **schools** as a first point of contact
4. Support **family resilience and reunification**
5. Offer safe and immediate **shelter** to any unsheltered youth

Specific action steps, indicators, potential leaders, timelines and funding streams for each of these goals are identified below.

System Vision

As we move ahead, a guiding principle should be to minimize housing needs by controlling inputs and maximizing diversions from an emergency homeless system. So, ideally, unlike many systems that operate entirely reactively to youth in crisis, Okanogan County's youth homelessness system should be designed to look like this:
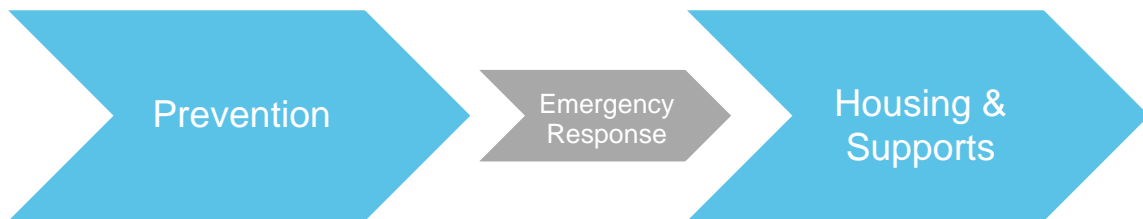
- Early identification &
- Diversion for youth exiting
- public systems
- Family resilience and
- reunification programs
- School-based supports

Goal 1: Establish youth-specific infrastructure for governance and coordinated entry

A few best practices that we should incorporate at multiple points in the system and its development:

- Focus on cross-agency outreach and relationship-building. Establish as many points of entry as possible into services for youth, which means building trust with other providers and systems.

- Adequately compensate youth who experienced homelessness as subject matter experts in all aspects of system development.

- Design interventions to support youth that are individualized, flexible, choice-based, trauma-informed, developmentally appropriate and culturally competent.

Problem Statement	**Coalition Structure**: As the Coalition pivots from planning to service-delivery, we need to design leadership and governance structures to increase capacity and support ongoing performance. **Coordinated Entry**: Due to an absence of youth-specific housing options, our Coordinated Entry (CE) system was not designed with the specific needs and vulnerabilities of youth in mind. In the first two months of operation, only three applicants ages 18-24 have used the Coordinated Entry portal operated by OCCAC, and youth under 18 are not eligible to use the portal at all.
Response	**Coalition Structure**: Potential options include: 1. Creating a **role within Okanogan County government** to lead or facilitate the Coalition's work 2. Establishing a **new, countywide organization** dedicated to serving homeless youth 3. Creating a youth-specific branch of an existing organization 4. Continuing to function as a Coalition, with decision-making by group and using an existing organization as a fiscal sponsor for any funding requests Experts who have worked with many rural communities to address youth homelessness strongly recommend the first model, in which a dedicated staff person inside government supports a coalition of stakeholders. Having local government behind our Coalition would add capacity, and provide credibility to pursue federal, state and local funding. If the will exists, or could be cultivated, at the county level to engage and support the growth and ongoing efforts of the Coalition, it could create the most significant long-term results. Given that this may not be a realistic pathway for our Coalition and county government at this time, continuing to work under option 4, with plans to move into option 2, once funding and services have been established, is also a viable path forward. What this organization looks like and where it is established should depend on the service priorities from this Plan that are ultimately pursued. **Coordinated Entry**: As we move ahead, we should: 1. Establish **comprehensive outreach and access points** that collectively identify young people experiencing homelessness, and seamlessly feed those identified into the CE process. We should also work with OCCAC to reach agreement on **how to prioritize youth** within the adult and family systems. We should contemplate whether the internal tool currently used to gauge vulnerability in CE is the

	appropriate **assessment tool** to triage a youth's immediate housing needs. Many experts recommend youth-specific vulnerability assessment or triage tools, like the VI SPDAT-TAY.[xvi] Finally, **youth should be integrally involved** in designing or improving any youth-specific CE processes. Youth can illuminate barriers to access and help determine how to support youth choice in the assessment and referral processes.
	2. Establish a "**by-name list protocol".** This best practice generates a community-wide by-name list identifying young people in need of housing. This puts service providers in the position to strategically track the demand for housing resources, analyze why specific youth and young adults remain on a housing waitlist, and find different options based on individuals' needs.
Indicators	Number of youth accessing Coordinated Entry
Leaders	All Coalition, OCCAC, Youth Leadership Council
Timeline	Year 1
Program Cost	Some setup costs for both efforts
Potential Resources	N/A

Expanded Networks to Support Governance and Infrastructure

While time-consuming, ongoing active membership in these external groups by Coalition members will likely support the development of local resources, opportunities and best practices for homeless youth.

- The **Washington Coalition of Homeless Youth Advocates (WACHYA).** This statewide group of service providers supporting homeless youth has monthly meetings and is the best single place to learn about what is happening across the state in terms of practices, policies and funding. All funding announcements from the Office of Homeless Youth (and other relevant state agencies) are dispersed through WACHYA.
- **A Way Home Washington**, a statewide advocacy movement around youth homelessness that is a partnership between the Office of Homeless Youth, philanthropy and local communities. Our Coalition recently applied to be an "Anchor Community", which would allow us to build resources and capacity through a coach and participation in a learning community. The first four anchor communities will be selected in August 2018, with up to 11 additional communities selected in upcoming years.

- The Washington **Balance of State Continuum of Care (CoC) Youth Subgroup**. A CoC is a network of organizations responsible for coordinating the local response to homelessness for HUD. Our CoC was recently awarded a Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project grant of $4.63 million which will be allocated to rural regions in upcoming months.

Goal 2: Stop discharges from public systems into homelessness

Problem Statement	A large number of housing unstable youth are exiting juvenile detention and aging out of foster care without transitional support. Anecdotally we know many youth exit detention to chemical dependency in-patient treatment outside of the county and return without supports. Our detention system can identify youth experiencing housing instability as they are admitted and/or released, but currently has no way to support them post-exit.
Response	Develop actionable plans for housing and appropriate supports for all youth leaving custodial care; provide intensive transitional case management for housing unstable youth exiting juvenile detention (year 1) and foster care (year 2).
Indicators	Number of youth experiencing homelessness within 12 months of exiting foster care or county detention.
Leaders	Coalition, Okanogan County Detention, DSHS-CA, Tribal Foster Care, Room One, Tribal caseworkers, Peacemaker Circle
Timeline	Years 1-2
Program Cost	Sample program costs (see boxes below for program descriptions): YV LifeSet: $12,000 per youth to move through the program
Potential Resources	State Office of Homeless Youth Innovation fund dollars, County sales tax funds; unknown whether other justice or legal system funds may be available.

Model Early Intervention Program: Juvenile Court and Detentions Transition Program

Provider: Community Youth Services (Mason and Thurston Counties)

Program Description: Through the Juvenile Court and Detentions Transition Program (JCDT), CYS provides case management and mental health services for juvenile justice involved-youth at high risk for homelessness. Youth can be referred into the program by detention staff, probation officers, parents or school staff. A CYS transition therapist helps identify the youth's needs, and develops a plan to address these, communicating next steps to probation. The transition therapist meets with the youth regularly while in detention, and when the youth exits detention the transition therapist will help coordinate with family members, the probation officer, and other service agencies that might be involved with the youth.

Funding: Originally funded through the Thurston-Mason RSN, the program recently received funds through county sales tax treatment funds to double in size.

Outcomes: CYS serves over 150 youth per year in this program, with a goal of enrolling 30% of clients in Medicaid Mental Health services post-release.

Model Early Intervention Program: YV LifeSet

Provider: Accelerator YMCA (King County) and Youth Villages (National)

Program Description: YV LifeSet is an intensive, individualized and clinically focused model of Independent Living services for youth aging out of foster care. In several other states, including Tennessee, Youth Villages delivers the program to both foster-care and juvenile-justice involved youth.

Funding: Currently funded with private resources; Youth Villages has seed money to support launch in new communities.

Outcomes: In a randomized trial of 1,300 18-24 year olds who received the LifeSet intervention in Tennessee, the program produced statistically significant effects in three domains, including a 22% decrease in homelessness, a 17% increase in earnings from employment, and a 13% decline in mental health problems versus a control group.

Goal 3: Strengthen schools as a first point of contact

Problem Statement	Schools are not able to identify or adequately support all students who are homeless and/or unstably housed. 305 homeless students were identified in Okanogan County in 2017, 35 of whom were unaccompanied. We know this number is an undercount, and McKinney-Vento liaisons in schools indicate they cannot adequately support those students they know to be homeless.
Response	Establish a mobile family resource center serving schools with the highest prevalence

	of homeless youth. Provide resources (both tangible and fiscal) to intervene and prevent a family or youth from becoming homeless and experiencing the hardship associated with housing instability. Work closely with liaisons and housing agencies to stabilize families and youth with eviction prevention funds, flexible dollars, clothing, food, etc. Lead staff should be available to connect with both high-risk Latino and Native youth and families. The should receive office space in schools to show consistency and availability.
Indicators	Numbers of homeless youth engaged in school; attendance, graduation and transfer rates of these students
Leaders	Coalition, McKinney Vento liaisons, Room One
Timeline	Pilot at 1-2 middle and high schools in Year 1, expansion in Year 2
Program Cost	Vancouver, WA spends $1.7 million district-wide on their programming, or $73 per student in the district (not all of whom access the service)
Potential Resources	State Office of Homeless Youth Innovation fund dollars; State Homeless Student Stability Act grants; Tribal TANF (Native Youth); Tribal Youth Development Program

Model School Support Program: Family-Community Resource Centers

Provider: Vancouver School District

Program Description: As student poverty rates soared in Vancouver, WA, school officials converted more than half of the district's campuses into one-stop shops for low-income and homeless families. Family-Community Resource Center coordinators connect students and their families with the basic goods and services they can't afford: backpacks of food, rent vouchers to avoid an eviction, free dental work, etc. The district also has two vans retrofitted with clothing racks and shelves filled with hygiene and baby products, nonperishable foods, school supplies — whatever the schools need that week. The vans serve schools where there are lower poverty rates but still a critical number of homeless and poor students.

Funding: The district spends about $1.7 million each year to staff the centers, though for every dollar the district invests it receives about $4 of value in in-kind and cash donations from partners.

Outcomes: Since 2013, in Vancouver graduation rates among homeless students have increased by 25.7% (vs. 8.5% statewide) and chronic absenteeism among homeless students has decreased by 9.8% (vs. a 0.1% increase statewide). Suspension rates have also declined, as has the number of students moving in and out of schools, a sign that families found some stability at home.

Goal 4: Support family resilience and reunification

Problem Statement

Unlike homeless adults whose housing instability is most often attributed to economic factors, youth consistently report familial conflict as one of the primary reasons of their homelessness. Studies suggest that most newly homeless youth return home even though the home environment remains the same. Family engagement services help youth develop, maintain, or strengthen connections whenever safe and appropriate so that they can remain or return home. Family engagement services can be a component of a housing focused project or can be a stand-alone service. Even for those who cannot return home, repairing familial relationships and remaining connected to natural supports can have indirect positive outcomes, including improved capacity to develop healthy relationships, thus preventing the recurrence of homelessness.

Response

Providers suggest early intervention, when youth have left home for the first time (or even sooner), provides the most hope of reunification. Most studies and providers estimate ⅓ to ½ of homeless youth do or could return home with support. Many rural providers believe this is a holistic approach that serves the entire family, which is necessary in distressed communities.

For pregnant/parenting youth: develop identification strategies, then provide tailored assistance to ensure stable housing and supports for both parent and child.
Three proven models with significant local applicability are:

- Mediation service programs that help to resolve conflict between parents and youth to ensure continued housing stability or reunification. Pregnant and parenting youth could be particularly receptive to these services. This could be a County-wide expansion of Room One's existing Strengthening Families program.
- Emergency financial assistance to homeless youth and/or their families identified and/or delivered through community□based outreach.
- Youth□oriented outpatient mental health and chemical dependency counseling to address behaviors which lead to housing instability.

	As a compliment to this programming we should provide support for relatives and friends to house youth when family reunification is not possible. (See Housing Stabilization services in next section).
Indicators	Number of pregnant/parenting youth diverted from homelessness; number of pregnant/parenting youth who are housed six months following housing placement through CE; proportion of youth with family reunification goals who achieve them
Leaders	Coalition, Room One
Timeline	Year 2
Program Cost	Wide variation. Evidence-based, clinical programs for family reunification are more intensive and costly but have proven outcomes. Mediation services delivered through case managers are less expensive but success rates vary.
Potential Resources	*Federal*: FYSB Basic Center and Maternity Group Home grants; Children's Bureau Promoting Safe and Stable Families and Chafee Funds *State*: OHY Integrated Services funds

Model Family Reunification/ Diversion Program: Family Intervention and Restorative Services (FIRS)

Provider: King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office (King County)

Program Description: Law enforcement takes youth involved in familial DV to a 24/7 center located on site of the existing detention facility. Instead of being booked into detention, youth are assessed by a Master's level social worker specializing in family violence. Youth receive respite care, a cooling off period, and are reconnected with family in a planned and structured manner designed to help change family dynamics. Youth who participate in these services will not have their cases referred to the Prosecuting Attorney's Office.

Outcomes: In the first nine months of FIRS, there was a 60% reduction in the number of youth in King County detention for Family Related Violence. Of the youth with signed FIRS agreements, 22.6% were re-referred back to juvenile court for another criminal matter within 12 months compared to 39.5% of the youth who did not sign a FIRS agreement.

Goal 5: Offer safe and immediate housing to any unsheltered youth

Problem Statement	There are no emergency shelter or transitional housing beds dedicated for youth in our community, despite documented need.
Response	Data on the scale and acuity of need among Okanogan's homeless youth population suggest three primary housing models are necessary to mediate the current crisis:

1. **Housing stabilization services** for minors and young adults (see box below).
2. At least **two flexible shelter beds for minors**. These could provide emergency, respite, or longer-term safe housing for minors with no safe place to stay.
3. **Longer term housing options, focusing on inclusivity for youth of color, LGBTQ youth and pregnant and parenting youth.** This could be a single building, co-located with the shelter beds for minors, scattered-site housing, a host home model or a rapid rehousing program in the private market. More information on the acuity of need among future users is needed to determine which model or models are most appropriate. Any of these models would be effective locally, so strategically seizing on existing funding opportunities or community will makes sense here.

Other necessary action steps tied to housing launch include: conduct outreach and community building; improve CE system's ability to attract and assess youth; create BNL; provide housing first, trauma-informed services; integrate existing employment and behavioral health services into housing and outreach services.

Indicators	System bed count capacity; length of time unsheltered or on housing waitlist; length of BNL
Leaders	Coalition, Room One and Housing Authority of Okanogan County (housing development); Youth Leadership Council (improvement of CE system and outreach design)
Timeline	Years 1-2
Program Cost	*Host homes:* Approximately $10,000 per year for staffing and host support per participant. *Transitional housing:* At least $20,000 per bed per year (excluding capital costs).

	HOPE beds: Transitional housing for minors are funded by the state at $175-$200 per day per bed ($64,000- $73,000 per year). *Emergency shelter:* Winter or emergency shelters tend to rely heavily on volunteer time and donated space, and are therefore less expensive to implement. A three month young adult winter shelter in Yakima cost $29,000
Potential Resources	*Federal:* FYSB Basic Center funds; Community Service Block Grants; SAMSHA, Community Development Block Grants; Medicaid *State:* HOPE and Young Adult Shelter funds

Model Housing Program: Youth Emergency Services Housing Stabilization Services

Provider: Youth Emergency Services (Pend Oreille County)

Program Description: YES addresses the housing needs of homeless youth with emergency, short-term and long-term housing in rural Pend Oreille County. Although YES has a host home program, staff use their host homes as an option of last resort, not because they question their quality but because they want to maximize other potential preexisting resources and preserve these precious beds for youth who truly have no other options. When a youth comes to them who is living in an informal arrangement, YES will work to formalize the housing situation, if appropriate. YES vets safety and conducts background checks. For minors, they partner with legal services to execute a CHINS petition and establish a guardianship for school purposes. They offer a $200 stipend to the caretaker, then work with youth and the caretaker to establish whatever referrals may be necessary (food, clothing, behavioral health support).

Outcomes: YES estimates they serve 5-10 youth per month with this service, with greater demand in the winter.

Model Host Homes Program: Ryan's House Host Family Program

Provider: Ryan's House for Youth (Island County)

Program Description: The *Host Family Program* addresses the housing needs of homeless youth ages 14 to 24 on Whidbey Island by connecting them with caring adults from their community who are willing to provide safe housing and support. Ryan's House provides case management services to the youth and host family to connect them with community resources. Referrals into the program come from many sources, primarily McKinney Vento liaisons. In 2015, Ryan's House expanded its programing to better serve LGBT youth, establishing a safety net and place for LGBT youth to be supported if they are at risk of being expelled from their home. The agency began a host family recruitment effort to both specifically recruit host families that could provide housing and support to LGBT youth, and to increase the visibility of the needs of homeless LGBT youth in the community. Ryan's House focused on

recruiting at least one host family for each of the three school districts on the Island to serve LGBT youth and also developed case management protocols and a resource guide for serving the homeless LGBT population. At the same time, agency staff developed resources to support family members in considering family reunification, including mediation and counseling.

Outcomes: In four years, the host family program has served 26 youth. 100% of youth participants who were eligible for graduation did so.

See Appendix 1 for additional program design details and best practices.

III. Resources

Key Takeaways:

While all discretionary government funds are competitive, federal funding, particularly Runaway and Homeless Youth Act dollars, require a significant track record and evidence of programmatic effectiveness, whereas some state dollars target under-resourced regions and new or innovative programs. The funding streams that are likely the best fit for Okanogan County youth homelessness efforts at this point are **federal Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project and state Office of Homeless Youth dollars**.

Federal and state funds are available for homeless youth services, both guaranteed by need (formula grants) and awarded through competition (discretionary grants), and other funding streams can be applied to serve this population. Many youth homelessness providers blend funding from multiple agencies, navigating funds that have been designed to serve either children (18 and under) or adults, which means accessing and reporting on public funding, to make no mention of private dollars, can be prohibitively time-consuming. Due to different eligibility thresholds and definitions of homelessness, agencies often spend valuable staff time identifying which youth is served by which funding stream, which does nothing to improve the actual services a young person receives.

Historically, funding options for cross-system prevention or early intervention services to help youth remain with family and avoid homelessness have been the hardest to identify. One of the primary reasons for this is that most jurisdictions struggle to appropriately define the different roles and responsibilities of local child welfare systems and private nonprofit agencies in supporting family preservation. This creates a gap through which many at risk youth fall, creating avoidable episodes of homelessness. **This year the Office of Homeless Youth (OHY) took a step to remedy this gap through "Integrated Services" funding and six "Innovation Grants."** The Integrated Services funds

support family reunification and behavioral health supports, and the Innovation Grants addressed the need for preventative services among youth exiting other systems.

Below is a snapshot of primary funding streams by service area, followed by additional detail on the funds at the federal and state levels to serve homeless youth. This analysis provides a high-level view, but is not a complete audit of all potentially available budget sources, particularly in the employment, justice and health sectors, where an array of funding streams could be used to serve homeless youth.

Funding Stream	Outreach	Drop-in	Family Engagement	Shelter	Host homes	Transitional Housing	Rapid rehousing/ rental	Long term housing
ACF: FYSB Runaway and Homeless Youth Act	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
HUD: Continuum of Care and Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
State Office of Homeless Youth: various grant programs	X	X	X	X		X	X	

Federal Funds

Generally federal funds become available on 3-5 year cycles, in addition to one-time or special funding projects. Some federal funds, like the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project grant, are allocated to a state-level body (for YHDP it is the Balance of State Continuum of Care), which then disperses the dollars at the local level through an additional allocation or RFP process. Although federal grants often require some performance data, members of our Coalition should sign up to receive relevant Notices of Funding Availability in case we are eligible for new funding opportunities as we begin implementing services.

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 recently awarded $4.63 million for a two-year period. These funds will next be allocated to local rural communities through an RFP process.
Family Unification Program (FUP)	HUD// Discretionary	Can be used for rapid rehousing and housing for youth with history of child welfare involvement. Administered by housing authorities.
Community Development Block Grants	HUD// Formula	Broadly used to preserve affordable housing and serve community's most vulnerable. Can be used for drop-in centers, shelters, transitional housing and supportive housing; more focus on urban areas. Current administration has called for elimination of these funds in future federal budgets.
Rural Housing Stability Assistance Program	HUD// Discretionary	Funding for rural housing programs. Can be allocated through CoC or separately.
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.
Children's Bureau- Promoting Safe and Stable Families	ACF// Formula and Discretionary	Supports prevention and family engagement. Primarily used for families with some child welfare involvement.
Chafee Foster Care Independence Program	ACF// Formula	Supports youth currently or formerly in foster care achieve self-sufficiency. Can be used for prevention, family engagement and housing.
Other Housing and Services Funding		
Office of Adolescent Health- Pregnancy	HHS// Discretionary	Supportive services including case management and parenting skills to pregnant and parenting teens. WA State Department of Health is a grantee, which it uses to encourage stable housing and school retention for pregnant and parenting youth. Focus is on 5

Assistance Fund		counties but not Okanogan.
Rural Housing Service	USDA// Discretionary	Variety of programs to build or improve housing and essential community facilities.
Low Income Housing Tax Credits		Tax credits for the acquisition, rehabilitation, or new construction of rental housing targeted to lower-income individuals.

SAMHSA, Health Resources Services Administration and Medicaid

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) has a number of grants available to states to fill gaps in behavioral health care capacity—both mental health care and substance abuse treatment. DSHS receives large block grants from SAMHSA for community mental health services, systems of care and substance abuse treatment, which are reallocated throughout the state. The funds available through SAMHSA are an important supplement to supports to homeless youth as they pursue stability, and should be considered an integral part of the array of support necessary to service this population. In recent years a handful of adult homeless service providers in Washington with intensive clinical programs have directly received SAMSHA discretionary grants for clinical services and research. Homeless youth providers have begun competing for SAMSHA funds to address funding gaps in mental health and homeless housing service integration, so it is worthwhile to stay attuned to these opportunities.

Funds from Health Resources Services Administration (HRSA) can also be applied to support homeless youth. HRSA's Office of Rural Health Policy has funds for prevention and response strategies for opioid abuse, and the Federal Home Visiting Program/ Tribal Home Visiting Program should be leveraged for parenting youth.

Communities with more sophisticated infrastructure also capitalize on Medicaid funding to serve homeless youth. When a homeless youth service provider either delivers clinical behavioral health services, or partners with a local health care provider, as in Yakima with Rod's House and Yakima

Neighborhood Health Clinic, Medicaid dollars can be drawn down to fund healthcare and supportive

housing services.

State Funds

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. OHY hopes to increase the age of the target population to 24.	$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
Homeless Student Stability Act	State OHY and OSPI// Discretionary	Grants to school districts to pilot increased identification of homeless students and increase capacity to provide support, and connect homeless students to stable housing.	$2 million
Young Adult Housing	State OHY// Discretionary	Rental assistance and case management for young adults 18-24.	$787,000 (median grant: $188,000 per

Program		New program in 2016 modeled after IYHP, below.	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 DSHS-CA// 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
Family Reconciliation Services	State DSHS-CA// Formula	Brief intervention or in-home counseling for youth who have run away and their families. Must be screened in by DSHS.	$1.1 million

OHY recently completed a procurement process, and existing resources are committed through June 30th of 2019. These contracts will likely roll over into a subsequent two-year period, so there are few existing state resources on the horizon for at least 2.5 years. However, OHY has requested additional resources through the legislature, and there appears to be the appetite and interest among legislators to allocate some additional funds for homeless youth services. **OHY has requested an additional $4 million this session that, if received, would be used to significantly expand existing OHY programs into new communities. These funds would be available as of July 1, 2019, with a procurement process some time in spring 2019.** OHY also requested $4 million to support Anchor Communities, which would assumedly be deployed to support the four anchor communities to be selected in August.

Finally, the newly constituted state Department of Children, Youth and Families may have funding opportunities in the future that reflect the agency's stated commitments to strengthening families, innovation and evidence-based practices.

Okanogan County Funds

Local funds are dependent on establishing strong relationships with local governments, Okanogan County and the Colville Tribes. Currently Okanogan County lists a county homeless fund. According to the county treasurer's office, most of this money is allocated to the Okanogan County Community Action Council (OCCAC). To ensure funds are allocated to youth services immediately, the coalition can continue collaboration with OCCAC. To ensure county funds are allocated to youth services in the long-term, the coalition should seek support from the County commissioner's office. In addition, the coalition could play a pivotal role in finalizing the county's Ten Year Plan to End Homeless to gain an award from the state through the homeless housing grant program.

Several of our proposals support Native-American youth. The Colville tribe has access to federal and private funds that are only available to Native communities. These include HUD Community Development and Housing grants and private grants meant to strengthen families and the economic stability of Native-American communities (First Nations Development Institute; Seeds of Native Health; Native Voices Rising). The Omak District of the Colville Tribe has Community Development funds that are meant to support Native-American Youth. Currently, these funds have not been allocated to any community projects and there are no current procedures in place to allocate these funds. Existing tribal programs have funding to support Native youth and families with meeting basic needs, improving academic achievement, and providing schools with cooperative agreements with flexible funds. A MOA between the Coalition and the tribe would be necessary to develop a relationship where the tribe would support the Coalition's efforts and the Coalition could support the tribe's efforts in supporting Native-American homeless youth.

Private Funds

A small group of private funders, including the Raikes, the Ballmers and the Campions, are philanthropic and thought leaders in the youth homelessness space. Through their respective foundations, these donors primarily support systems-change efforts rather than individual agencies or services. While it is

certainly worthwhile to cultivate these partners, their funds are most likely to be accessed through intermediaries, such as A Way Home Washington, the Office of Homeless Youth and the Washington Youth and Families Fund. The Washington Youth and Families Fund is a public-private partnership that serves to identify and spread effective, innovative strategies that reduce homelessness and achieve better educational, social and economic outcomes for families and youth. In 2017 the Fund, administered by Building Changes, allocated $1.6 million to homeless youth providers. These were three-year grants, so we anticipate the next cycle of funds will become available in 2019, but it's unknown whether these funds will target youth or families, and whether there will be geographic specificity.

Endnotes

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[xi] Shah, Melissa, et al. (2015). Homeless and Unstably Housed K-12 Students.

[xii] Chapin Hall, 2018.

[xiii] Shah, Melissa, et al. (2015). Youth at Risk of Homelessness.

[xiv] Analysis of 2014 HMIS data.

[xv] CCYJ's eQuality project is a good local resource for these efforts.

[xvi] See, for example: https://www.csh.org/2015/06/orgcode-community-solutions-csh-launch-next-step-tool-for-youth/

Appendix 1

Best Practices and Program Models

Prevention

Early Identification and Diversion

Description	A young person is most likely to succeed when they remain connected and housed with family whenever appropriate (or with other natural supports as defined by the youth), and, if this is not possible, when they are supported in a planned transition to stable housing. Coordination with mainstream partners (schools, juvenile justice and adult correctional systems, behavioral health and foster care) are critical in primary prevention efforts to help avert homelessness.

Best Practices	• Encourage Family Resiliency: targeted counseling, caregiver support, conflict resolution, respite, and behavioral health services can resolve family conflict and build family resiliency so that youth can safely remain or return home. Secure income and health benefits can alleviate financial pressures on the family. • Support Foster Care Transitions: young adults aging out of foster care have high risk of homelessness, and some individuals have even higher likelihood of homelessness based on risk factors like parenthood, multiple placements and school changes, etc. Targeted, intensive supports help these young people maintain stability. • School-Based Prevention: Local homeless liaisons in school are critical in keeping youth in school while coordinating community supports and stable housing. • Leaving Juvenile Justice or Adult Correctional Systems: Formal collaboration with law enforcement, diversion programs, probation officers, and after care programs can help identify at-risk youth early and support better outcomes.
Effectiveness	Prevention work is some of the most challenging but most critical piece of a youth homelessness system. Light-touch models are effective for youth with low acuity experiencing housing instability for the first time, and intensive models are necessary and effective for youth with multiple risk factors moving between systems.
Cost	Dependent on program model, but usually requires adding dedicated prevention staff to existing organizations or programs, with minimal collateral costs.
Potential Resources	Federal: ACF Promoting Safe and Stable Families; Chafee Funds; HRSA; Medicaid State: Most of the recent Office of Homeless Youth Innovation grants were for cross-system prevention Private funders in Washington are supportive of cross-system prevention work.

Local Applicability	Based on the elevated rates of pregnancy, justice involvement and substance abuse among youth in Okanogan County, and the cost-effectiveness of many prevention programs, several strategies would be effective locally: • Provide flexible diversion funds to homeless liaisons, drop-in center staff and other direct service staff. Often small investments can resolve or alleviate the immediate cause of an individual's homelessness.[xvi] • Strengthen truancy boards and restorative diversion models from juvenile detention for non-offender youth. • Use Juvenile Detention as an intermediary to get youth engaged in services as they exit. Deploy data collected on housing stability at entry to identify youth who will need family support services as they exit. • Establish local substance abuse/ chemical dependency treatment options for youth, with transition services for youth as they exit. If local services cannot be established, provide local transition support for youth exiting treatment programs in Yakima/Spokane. • Enhance presence of school-based mental health and substance abuse counselors to support homeless liaisons and students

Drop-in Centers

Description	Drop-in centers are a first point of contact and provide an informal atmosphere to attract and engage youth who are homeless. Drop-in centers typically operate in tandem with mobile street outreach programs, family engagement services, emergency shelters, and transitional housing.
Best Practices	• Choose easy and low-key access locations. • Low or no-barrier: place high importance on feeling safe and welcome, with limited rules or requirements. • Meet basic needs: provide easy access to food, laundry, shower, clothes, internet, phones, and lockers for storage of belongings. Regularly visiting medical staff can provide basic healthcare and first aid. • Provide easy access to education, work, and mental health/substance abuse recovery programs when ready. • Create a peer support network and activities. • Include youth voices in programming. • Continually assess for opportunities for family engagement.

Effectiveness	Drop-in centers are useful for identifying and engaging homeless youth, and are often a cost-effective first step in creating a continuum of services. The majority of rural communities in Washington with some infrastructure initiated homeless youth services through the establishment of a drop-in center, and built from there. Identifying a space that could also or later serve as a shelter would allow you to build services incrementally in a single location.
Cost	Dependent on hours of operation and facility. Many are primarily run by volunteers and have a shoestring budget.
Potential Resources	*Federal*: FYSB Street Outreach and/or Basic Center Programs; Community Services Block Grants; SAMHSA; HRSA; HUD Emergency Solutions Grant and Community Development Block Grants; Medicaid *State:* Street Youth Services
Local Applicability	A drop-in center would be a successful way to build community awareness and trust. It can also be cost-effective, with added hours in times of year when youth will be more available and looking for help (winter/summer). The geographic scale of the region will be a barrier to use. Some young adult shelters operate as a drop-in center in the day, then put mats or cots out at night for youth who do not have a safe place to sleep. Faith communities are often involved in the development of drop-in centers and shelters. These are key partners to engage, but should be considered in light of community youth's willingness to engage with these providers. Receipt of services should not be contingent on receiving or participating in religious activities.

Family Engagement

Description	Family engagement services help youth develop, maintain, or strengthen connections whenever safe and appropriate so that they can remain or return home. Family engagement services can be a component of a housing focused project or can be a stand-alone service. Even for those who cannot return home, repairing familial relationships and remaining connected to natural supports can have indirect positive outcomes, including improved capacity to develop healthy relationships, thus preventing the recurrence of homelessness. These services are different from Family Reconciliation Services (FRS) provided by the Children's Administration, in that they are available to a wider group of families and do not require CA involvement.
Best Practices	• Prefer family reunification when safe and appropriate. • Provide a comprehensive intervention: assessment; individual, family, and group counseling; caregiver support; conflict mediation and resolution; respite care; coordination with behavioral, mental health, and substance abuse services; and connections to community supports and activities. • Provide income and health benefits for youth and families. • Use a strengths-based approach with families. • Be culturally competent and pace expectations. • Aftercare: support youth and family following a housing choice and offer respite or caregiver support as needed to build resiliency and reconnection. Aftercare may be offered even in cases where the youth is staying in transitional, supportive housing or with extended family or friends.
Effectiveness	Providers suggest early intervention, when youth have left home for the first time (or even sooner), provides the most hope of reunification. Most studies and providers estimate ⅓ to ½ of homeless youth do or could return home with support. Many rural providers believe this is a holistic approach that serves the entire family, which is necessary in distressed communities.
Cost	Wide variation. Evidence-based, clinical programs are more intensive and costly but have proven outcomes. Mediation services delivered through case managers are less expensive but success rates vary.

Potential Resources	*Federal*: FYSB Basic Center and Maternity Group Home grants; Children's Bureau Promoting Safe and Stable Families and Chafee Funds *State*: N/A See notes in Resources section around challenges in identifying funding for these services.
Local Applicability	Three proven models with significant local applicability are: • Mediation service programs that help to resolve conflict between parents and youth to ensure continued housing stability or reunification. Pregnant and parenting youth could be particularly receptive to these services. • Emergency financial assistance to homeless youth and/or their families identified and/or delivered through community□based outreach. • Youth□oriented outpatient mental health and chemical dependency counseling to address behaviors which lead to housing instability.

Emergency Response

Street Outreach

Description	Street outreach programs are often a first point of contact with unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness and are especially effective at engaging youth who are hiding. Assertive outreach teams go to the places where youth keep themselves hidden: parks, cars, abandoned buildings, bus or train stations, parking lots and public storage lockers. To find youth, outreach teams draw on informal community contacts such as park rangers, gas station attendants, public librarians, and sanitation workers.
Best Practices	• Collaborate with law enforcement • Meet basic needs first (clothing, food, hygiene kits) then move on to critical service connections • Offer a hotline for youth to call for emergencies • Include youth in program planning and implementation • Build trust through regularity, predictability and follow-through • Field mobile medical vans or partner with health centers to provide basic primary health care, including testing for HIV, STDs, TB, counseling and advice regarding substance abuse

Effectiveness	Most providers believe outreach is an essential step to reach and identify high-risk youth sleeping outside. Rod's House in Yakima runs an effective outreach program in partnership with Yakima Neighborhood Health, where clinical services are available. Staff believe this outreach programming was critical in gaining the trust of Native youth, who would not otherwise participate in available drop-in services.
Cost	Outreach programs in rural Island, Pend Oreille and Skagit Counties cost $5,000-$7,500 per month.
Potential Resources	*Federal*: FYSB Street Outreach Program, SAMSHA, HRSA, HUD *State*: Street Youth Services
Local Applicability	In a rural area like ours, typical street outreach might be inappropriate or of limited utility. Street outreach targets areas where people experiencing homelessness are known to congregate, and in Okanogan County these clusters may be hidden, or are so dispersed across the region that it would burdensome to visit them all with any regularity. Due to the high incidence of youth who are couch-surfing or doubled-up with friends or family locally, street outreach may be particularly ineffective. Outreach can also be challenging if there are not available resources for youth to be referred into. Taking the time to build relationships with organizations, agencies and youth themselves would be most effective if the outreach was either a precursor to or coincided with the availability of another resource, like a drop-in center or shelter.

Shelter

Description	Youth shelters provide an immediate and short-term alternative to the dangers of the streets. Hours of operations can vary (24 hours/day or evening to morning) and crisis shelters may focus on younger youth under 18 or young adults ages 18-24 depending on funding and licensing. Extreme weather or cold-weather shelters operate during certain months or when the temperature drops to a certain level.

Best Practices	• Youth Focus: To attract youth who would otherwise choose to couch-surf or sleep on the streets, youth shelters should be low or no-barrier programs. They should also provide a connection to a community of peers, including those who have exited homelessness. • Safety and Harm Reduction: Focus on youth feeling and being safe and use a harm reduction model with screening for safe behaviors rather than substance use rules. • Support Family Connections: Offer opportunities for youth to connect to families, e.g., providing phone cards, postcards or postage, overnight visits, etc. This helps staff see if and when youth are interested in engaging with their families so that reunification conversations may begin. • Individual Case Management: In addition to meeting immediate basic needs, on-site staff provides crisis intervention, assessment, and individual case management. This may include connections to schools, caring and trusted adults, health care providers, and youth development organizations. • Focus on Transition to Stable Housing: The goal is quick exit planning by engaging and stabilizing youth through case management and counseling services, family reunification, or transition to other stable and safe environments. This may also include transitional supports for shelter graduates. • Short-Term Financial Intervention: In a few cases, youth may only need short-term or one-time financial assistance in order to secure stable and independent housing. This can be combined with a mentoring adult to co-sign a lease and encourage soft skills support as needed.
Effectiveness	While youth beds are a necessary resource in every community, many providers are quick to note that the severity of the needs of youth accessing shelters seems to be escalating, and that their staff have found themselves underprepared to manage the intensity of these needs. This can lead to high staff turnover, safety challenges and frequent calls to emergency services. While a low-barrier shelter is the right model for attracting youth and bringing those at highest risk inside, it needs to be paired with extensive staff-training and available chemical dependency and mental health resources.

Cost	HOPE beds (for youth under 18) are funded by the Office of Homeless Youth at $175-$200 per bed per day, which covers the full cost of the program.
	Shelter for young adults, is less expensive and less burdensome from a licensing perspective than shelters for minors. Cost will depend on qualifications and staffing of case managers. The median award of Young Adult Shelter grants from the Office of Homeless Youth works out to $14,166 per month, though the number of beds provided varies by grantee.
	Winter or emergency shelters tend to rely heavily on volunteer time and donated space, and are therefore less expensive to implement. A three month young adult winter shelter in Yakima cost $29,000.
Potential Resources	*Federal*: FYSB Basic Center funds; Community Service Block Grants; SAMSHA, Community Development Block Grants; Medicaid *State*: HOPE and Young Adult Shelter funds
Local Applicability	We recommend the establishment of at least two flexible shelter beds for minors in Okanogan County.

Host Homes

Description	Host homes are a flexible and cost-effective model for providing stable housing and supports. Host homes offer a home-like, non-institutional environment rooted in the community. Host homes are an arrangement between community members who act as volunteer hosts and a youth service provider. Hosts provide safe shelter and food. The service provider offers program coordination, host support, and case management services. Depending on service design, host homes can be used as emergency shelter or as longer term placements, and therefore can fall within the 'Emergency Response' and the 'Housing' categories of the homeless service continuum.

Best Practices	• Host homes may be used as short-term emergency shelter allowing youth to remain in their community, as respite care combined with family engagement services or as transitional housing. This model works especially well for unaccompanied youth who can build long-term and authentic relationships with caring adults. • Informal community networks (such as faith-based and LGBTQ networks) or a community advisory council can support host recruitment. • Hosts may receive financial assistance to defray the costs of hosting the youth or to compensate for loss of rental income. • Supporting Hosts: Hosts are screened (background check, 2- 3 interviews and references) and receive training and ongoing support, especially with boundary-setting, managing expectations, conflict mediation, and cultural competency. Programs may create support groups among hosts. • Positive Youth Development: Case management and services are individualized and focus on problem-solving, skill-building, communication, and goal-setting. Setbacks and mistakes are tolerated. • Youth participate voluntarily and are never "placed" in a home. The matching process should be driven by the youth with support from the case manager. • Formal Partnerships: Successful programs involve formal partnerships with schools, child welfare, justice, and behavioral and mental health service providers in order to collaboratively support youth.
Effectiveness	While it takes effort and time to establish a host network, Washington providers in rural regions including Island and Pend Oreille Counties are champions for this model. This model is the best fit for lower-needs youth, and those with health/behavioral/ substance abuse needs could struggle in host homes if supportive services are not readily available. Some providers also described tensions between the conservatism of particular regions or hosts and the need to provide services to LGBTQ youth.
Cost	Program costs of $60,000-$110,000 per year for staffing and host support to serve 6-12 participants. Most programs pay hosts $17-$30 per day per youth.
Potential Resources	*Federal*: Family and Youth Services Bureau (FYSB) grantees can implement host homes under a 21-day Basic Center Program (BCP) or 18-month Transitional Living Program (TLP). Others use Chafee funds and Community Services Block Grants. HRSA Federal Home Visiting Program funds, Medicaid dollars have also been used. *State*: None at this time (see below)

Local Applicability	There is a Washington-state host home workgroup (organized through WACHYA) that is supporting communities with evolving host programs and advocating for necessary changes at the state level (namely around licensing and funding) that would allow this model to grow. Given the support and organization underpinning this workgroup it seems likely they will be successful and new resources will become available for host homes in upcoming years. As noted in Section II, host homes could be an effective part of Okanogan County's housing continuum. A number of providers explained that the investment to recruit, train, and support host home families for a short-term stay could better be directed towards a longer-term living situation. For these communities, providing short-term host homes did not seem like the most efficient use of limited funds. On the other hand, if no other housing or shelter resources are available, host homes can provide a stop-gap solution. A host home project should likely not be viewed as an interim project while a shelter or transitional housing program is in development.

Housing

Transitional Housing

Description	Transitional Housing is time-limited (up to 24 months) supportive housing for youth who are not ready to live independently. This model has a focus on developing life skills and staying in school or securing work. Possible housing types include: congregate housing with overnight staff (especially for youth under 18), clustered units with or without a supervisor on-site, or scattered site apartments or shared units in which a youth may hold the lease.

Best Practices	• Individualized and Flexible Service Delivery: Intensity, duration, and array of services are customized and unique to each transitional housing program and youth population. • Housing First: offer low barriers and voluntary services (as opposed to offering housing contingent upon rules or requirements). • Vulnerable Populations: Provide specialized services and community supports for vulnerable sub-groups, such as pregnant and parenting youth, youth with mental and behavioral health difficulties, youth fleeing domestic violence or trafficking situations, transition-aged youth, those leaving juvenile justice, or LGBTQ youth. • Forge Community Connections: While in the program, connect youth with community-based services such as health and mental health care, support groups, life skills training, substance abuse treatment, employment, vocational, and educational services which youth can remain connected to once they leave the program. • Exit Planning: Requires formal partnerships with housing search staff and permanent housing providers and begins early to support a transition to independent living as soon as a youth can make an informed choice and feels ready. Many programs also provide aftercare case management for up to six months upon exit from the program. • Involve youth in creating house rules, program design, and planning activities. • Support transition to independence with adult mentors.
Effectiveness	All communities would like to provide transitional housing for youth: the challenges lie in funding these beds and determining which youth should be prioritized for them.
Cost	Significant variation between programs, but on average more than $20,000 per year per unit of housing (includes operating and service costs but excludes capital costs).
Potential Resources	*Federal*: FYSB Transitional Living Program, Maternity Group Homes; Chafee funds; Community Service Block Grants; SAMHSA funds; HRSA; HUD; Medicaid *State*: Young Adult Housing Program; Independent Youth Housing Program
Local Applicability	Transitional housing for youth is an essential component of any homeless youth system. Okanogan County should pursue funding for these beds, but may need to build infrastructure and data before successfully competing for public funding streams.

Rapid Rehousing

Description	Rapid re-housing is a promising strategy for older youth with greater independent living skills who cannot reconnect to family or who need time to do so. RRH provides case management and rental assistance to youth in market housing for up to 24 months. RRH can be offered as part of a suite of possible housing and service options that includes host homes and family engagement services.
Best Practices	• Housing First: A Housing First approach provides immediate access to stable housing, low-barriers to entry and to keep assistance, and voluntary but persistent services, with high expectations and high levels of engagement. • Age Appropriate and Individualized Case Management: Services are intensive (daily or 2-3 times per week) and may continue even after youth appear to have stabilized. Case managers (with a ratio of 8 or 10:1) foster independent living skills (budgeting, cooking, basic maintenance, setting boundaries, etc.), support youth with lease obligations, and coordinate clinical supports as needed. Case managers help mediate problems, and allow mistakes and learning in a supported environment. • Cultivate Landlord Base: Requires a trained and dedicated staff or partnership with a housing organization to cultivate and maintain relationships with property owners, (co)sign and oversee leases, oversee tenant move-ins, and handle the rent payment process. • Long-Term Housing Stability: RRH time frame is up to 24 months with the goal of achieving long-term housing stability. Rental assistance is structured with youth paying 30% of their income or less, building savings as income increases. Apartments should be appropriate for independent life beyond rental assistance. Alternatively, youth can be supported to find other independent affordable housing, to reunify with family or to secure non time-limited supportive housing, if needed.
Effectiveness	Rapid Rehousing for Youth is a fairly new model, and is offered primarily in more urban settings, where it's been effective for youth with fewer barriers. It's untested in rural regions in Washington.
Cost	Unknown, but less than transitional housing.
Potential Resources	*Federal*: FYSB Basic Center and Transitional Living Programs; Chafee Funds; Community Service Block Grants; SAMSHA; HRSA; HUD; Medicaid *State*: Local:
Local Applicability	This approach is recommended for low-acuity young adults in parts of the county where quality, affordable rental units are available.

Non-time-limited Supportive Housing

Description	Non-time-limited youth supportive housing is a specialized age- and service-appropriate version of permanent supportive housing for youth with complex needs. Models may be scattered site — using tenant-based or project-based rental assistance, project based units, or a sponsor-based set-aside within a mixed population building — or may be developed as a single site rental building.
Best Practices	• Highest Needs: Target youth experiencing homelessness likely to have the highest service needs — mental health, substance abuse disorders, trauma. Age range is typically 18 to 24 years old. • Housing First: Use a harm reduction and trauma-informed care approach, with voluntary comprehensive support services. On-site staff engages youth at their own pace and tailors services to their individualized needs. • Non-Time-Limited: This model includes a "moving on" culture that encourages youth, when and if they can, to move to independent or adult permanent supportive housing. Youth pay 30 percent of their income in rent and holds the lease. Access to tenant-based rental assistance and adult permanent supportive housing is critical to supporting transitions as youth become ready. • Housing and Service Operating Agreements: Youth Supportive housing requires strong formal operating partnerships among youth-serving organizations, affordable housing providers (such as public housing agencies, property owners, and housing developers), and coordinated community supports. • Work with a youth advisory council to foster peer community and inform programming and activities
Effectiveness	Extremely effective at stabilizing and supporting high-acuity youth.
Cost	High ($25,000+ per youth per year), though multiple studies have shown total cost to a community (emergency room visits, detention, etc.) decrease when high-utilizers of systems are provided with supportive housing.
Potential Resources	*Federal*: Community Services Block Grant; SAMSHA; HRSA; HUD; Low Income Housing Tax Credits; National Housing Trust Fund; Medicaid *State*: no youth-specific funds

Local Applicability	While necessary and life-changing to those youth who access these beds, the number of youth served would be much smaller than with other programs. The identification of long-term housing options for the most vulnerable youth in Okanogan County should be part of the Coalition's vision.

Much best practice information was found in HUD's Ending Youth Homelessness Promising Program Models guidebook, which can be found here:

https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/Ending-Youth-Homelessness-Promising-Program-Models.pdf