



KING COUNTY

1200 King County Courthouse
516 Third Avenue
Seattle, WA 98104

Signature Report

May 10, 2016

Ordinance 18285

Proposed No. 2016-0156.4

Sponsors Kohl-Welles

1 AN ORDINANCE relating to the best starts for kids youth
2 and family homelessness prevention initiative
3 implementation plan.

4 STATEMENT OF FACTS:

5 A. Ordinance 18088 submitted to the voters of King County a proposition
6 known as the "best starts for kids levy," authorizing a regular property tax
7 levy in excess of the levy limitation for six consecutive years,
8 commencing in 2016, at a rate not to exceed fourteen cents per one
9 thousand dollars of assessed value in the first year and with an increase of
10 up to three percent in the five succeeding years, for the purpose of funding
11 prevention and early intervention strategies to improve the health and
12 well-being of children, youth and their communities.

13 B. The levy included nineteen million dollars to plan, provide and
14 administer a youth and family homelessness prevention initiative.

15 C. Ordinance 18088 also directed the executive to submit to the
16 metropolitan King County council for review and approval an
17 implementation plan relating to the youth and family homelessness
18 prevention initiative by March 1, 2016, which, to the maximum extent

19 possible, shall be developed in collaboration with the oversight and
20 advisory board.

21 D. The oversight and advisory board, referred to in this statement of facts
22 as the children and youth advisory board, under the guidance of the
23 department of community and human services, provided input on the
24 development of the implementation plan, which is Attachment A to this
25 ordinance. Before that input, the executive convened a planning group of
26 citizens and stakeholders, several of whom are members of the children
27 and youth advisory board, to help shape the plan.

28 E. The growing homelessness crisis shows the need for this youth and
29 family homelessness prevention initiative. During the 2016 annual One
30 Night Count of people who are experiencing homelessness, which was
31 held on January 29, 2016, four thousand five hundred five people were
32 unsheltered.

33 F. Executive Constantine declared a state of emergency for homelessness
34 on November 2, 2015.

35 G. The Homeless Management Information System, the database of
36 people accessing homeless services and housing, shows that fifty percent
37 of all people accessing homeless services are homeless for the first time.
38 For 2014, the most recent year for which detailed data are available, forty-
39 six percent of families accessing homeless services were homeless for the
40 first time and sixty-four percent of homeless youth were homeless for the
41 first time.

42 H. The data in the Homeless Management Information System also show
43 that people of color and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered and queer
44 ("LGBTQ") youth are also disproportionately represented in the homeless
45 youth population. Young people of color make up fifty to sixty percent of
46 the homeless youth population, although people of color make up only
47 twenty-nine percent of King County's overall population. At least twenty
48 percent of the youth accessing homeless services identify as LGBTQ,
49 while only four percent of Washington's general population identify as
50 LGBTQ.

51 I. The Homeless Management Information System data showed that for
52 newly homeless families, of those who report their race or ethnicity,
53 thirty-one percent report that they are white and forty-seven percent report
54 that they are black or African American. The remaining twenty-two
55 percent report another ethnic or racial group, with the largest group
56 reporting multiple races or ethnic groups.

57 J. The services outlined in the youth and family homelessness prevention
58 initiative implementation plan will provide services to youth and families
59 before they become homeless through client-centered, outcomes-focused
60 case management and flexible financial assistance.

61 K. The services identified in the implementation plan will address the
62 disproportionality in race, ethnicity and LGBTQ orientation in people who
63 are newly homeless by allocating funds to provider organizations and

64 agencies that will easily be able to identify families and individuals who
65 are at imminent risk of homelessness.

66 L. In 2010, Ordinance 16948 transformed the county's work on equity and
67 social justice in order to achieve equitable opportunities for all people and
68 communities. The services identified in the implementation plan are
69 intended to meet the goals of King County's Equity and Social Justice
70 Plan.

71 BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF KING COUNTY:

72 SECTION 1. For the purposes of this ordinance, "youth and family homelessness
73 prevention initiative" means an initiative intended to prevent and divert children and
74 youth and their families from becoming homeless.

75 SECTION 2. The family and youth homelessness prevention initiative
76 implementation plan, Attachment A to this ordinance, is hereby approved.

77 SECTION 3. One year from the effective date of this ordinance, the executive
78 shall submit to metropolitan King County council a report describing the people served
79 and outcomes of the youth and family homelessness prevention initiative. Thereafter, the
80 executive shall include reporting for the youth and family homelessness prevention
81 initiative in any annual report for the entire best starts for kids levy ordinance. Any
82 report required by this section shall be filed in the form of a paper original and an

83 electronic copy with the clerk of the council, who shall retain the original and provide an
84 electronic copy to all councilmembers.
85

Ordinance 18285 was introduced on 3/7/2016 and passed as amended by the Metropolitan King County Council on 5/9/2016, by the following vote:

Yes: 9 - Mr. von Reichbauer, Mr. Gossett, Ms. Lambert, Mr. Dunn,
Mr. McDermott, Mr. Dembowski, Mr. Upthegrove, Ms. Kohl-Welles
and Ms. Balducci
No: 0
Excused: 0

KING COUNTY COUNCIL
KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON



J. Joseph McDermott, Chair

ATTEST:



Anne Noris, Clerk of the Council

RECEIVED
2016 MAY 17 PM 3:51
CLERK
KING COUNTY COUNCIL

APPROVED this 17 day of MAY, 2016.



Dow Constantine, County Executive

Attachments: A. Best Starts for Kids Youth and Family Homelessness Prevention Initiative Implementation Plan, Updated May 9, 2016, as amended



King County

Best Starts for Kids Youth and Family Homelessness Prevention Initiative Implementation Plan

Response to Ordinance 18088

May 9, 2016

Department of Community and Human Services

Updated May 9, 2016

The Best Starts for Kids (BSK) Levy includes \$19 million for a Youth and Family Homelessness Prevention Initiative that is intended to “prevent and divert children and youth and their families from becoming homeless.” The BSK ordinance approved by the voters of King County, Ordinance 18088, directs the King County Executive to submit to Metropolitan King County Council for review and approval, an implementation plan relating to the Youth and Family Homelessness Prevention Initiative by March 1, 2016, which to the maximum extent possible, shall be developed in collaboration with the oversight and advisory board, referred to in this report as the Children and Youth Advisory Board.

The Youth and Family Homelessness Prevention Initiative is based on a highly successful pilot program implemented by the Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence and funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the Medina Foundation.

This implementation plan provides: (I) the background showing the need for a homelessness prevention program in King County, (II) a description of potential linkages to existing programs, to demonstrate how this initiative could leverage and supplement existing efforts, (III) a description of the proposed model for the initiative, the Washington State Domestic Violence Housing First Initiative, (IV) the proposed BSK Youth and Family Homelessness Prevention Model and (V) the community process for developing the plan.

The plan may be amended by ordinance.

I. The Need: Youth and Family Homelessness in King County

During the 2016 annual One Night Count of people who are homeless in King County held on January 29, 2016, 4,505 people were found to be unsheltered, that is, living in places unfit for human habitation such as the streets, cars or Metro buses. Although the detailed demographic data from the 2016 One Night Count are not yet available, the 2015 detailed data are available

through the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). The HMIS is the county-wide database that collects data on individuals and families receiving homeless services (e.g., shelter, case management and housing).

The 2015 One Night Count data reported that over 2,000 of the 9,776 people who access shelter or other homeless services were under age 17. Twenty-eight percent of the homeless population is families with children (approximately 2,800 people). Count Us In 2015, the survey of homeless youth and young adults, counted 134 unsheltered homeless young people and 824 who were unstably housed. These numbers represent young people who were staying in places unfit for human habitation, such as in cars or abandoned buildings; who were unstably housed, such as those who are staying on friends' couches; and who were in shelters or transitional housing.

The federal government uses a broader definition for counting homeless youth in the schools. In addition to defining homelessness as living in a place unfit for human habitation, shelter or transitional housing, under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act, homelessness is defined as lacking a fixed, adequate place to sleep. This broader definition would include families or youth who are doubled up or couch surfing. (In King County's definition, young people who are couch surfing are defined as being unstably housed, but not literally homeless, and, as such, would be eligible to be served through the Youth and Family Homelessness Prevention Initiative.) Under the more expansive federal definition for counting homeless youth in schools, more than 6,000 students in King County public schools are homeless. Approximately 15 percent of these are not accompanied by an adult.

According to the 2013 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress:¹

- 83 percent of homeless children have witnessed a serious violent event
- 47 percent have anxiety, depression or withdrawal

¹ The 2013 Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress
<https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/ahar-2013-part1.pdf>

- 43 percent have to repeat a grade
- Homeless children are far more likely to have significant health issues.

Local research by Dr. Debra Boyer and others also indicates that youth and young people who are being sexually exploited or physically abused are at risk for homelessness, among other serious concerns.² Among youth who were released from Juvenile Justice and Rehabilitation Administration facilities in Washington, a recent study found that 26 percent are homeless within 12 months of being released. This same study also found that recidivism rates were higher for these youth than for youth having stable housing upon their release.³

The HMIS also showed that half of all people who become homeless were homeless for the first time, which is the case for 46 percent of all homeless families.⁴ An even higher number of unaccompanied youth were homeless for the first time, 64 percent.⁵ Accordingly, if homelessness can be prevented, the number of people who are homeless would decline substantially.

Demographic data from the HMIS demonstrate that there are several issues that must be addressed in developing a youth and family homelessness prevention program – the need to identify youth and young adults who are at risk of running away and subsequently becoming homeless due to sexual or physical abuse; the disproportionate numbers of people in racial and ethnic communities, including Native American/Alaskan Native, Native Hawaiian/Asian Pacific Islanders and African Americans, who become homeless; and the disproportionate risk of homelessness for youth who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered and queer (LGBTQ). Native Americans are seven times more likely to become homeless. African Americans are five times more likely to become homeless and Native Hawaiians/Asian Pacific Islanders three times more likely. Of the youth who are homeless, at least 20 percent of young

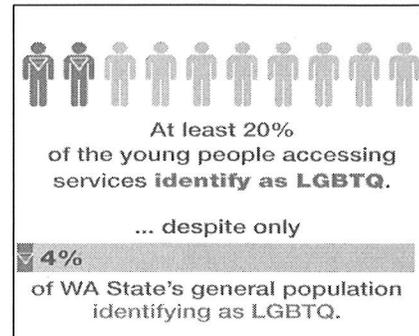
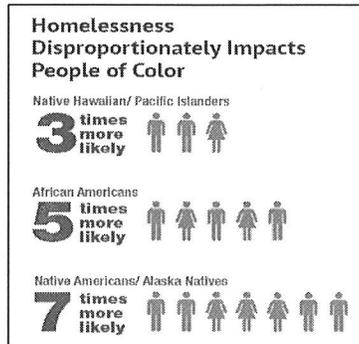
² Debra Boyer, PhD, City of Seattle Human Services Department, Who Pays the Price? Assessment of Youth Involvement in Prostitution in Seattle, June – 2008, <http://www.prostitutionresearch.com/Boyer%20Who%20Pays%20the%20Price.pdf>

³ DSHS Research and Data Analysis Division, *Impact of Homelessness on Youth Recently Released from Juvenile Rehabilitation Facilities*, June 2013, RDA Report No. 11.191.

⁴ Homelessness in King County: Who, Why and What Can I Do? All Home, January 2016, <http://allhomekc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/AllHomeInfographicFull.png>

⁵ Count Us In 2016, King County's Point-In-Time Count of Homeless & Unstably Housed Young People, All Home, March 2016, <http://allhomekc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Count-Us-In-2016-Report-final-1.pdf>

people accessing services identify as LGBTQ, compared to 4 percent of the general population.⁶ Immigrants and refugees and survivors of commercial sexual exploitation and human trafficking are also at high risk of becoming homeless.



As discussed in more detail in the program model section, the Youth and Family Homelessness Prevention Initiative must address the disproportionality in race and ethnicity, as well as LGBTQ identification of people who become homeless.

II. Coordination with Existing Programs

Under state law,⁷ a levy lid lift proposition, such as Best Starts for Kids, may only supplement, but not supplant existing, funded programs.⁸ The Youth and Family Homelessness Prevention Initiative has been designed following the law, to supplement existing programs but not to supplant them. The initiative's focus on prevention for people who are at risk of homelessness, rather than on intervention for people who are already homeless, is a new service area for King County, and thus will not supplant any existing programs.

While it will not supplant existing programs, the initiative has been designed to coordinate with a number of existing, regional and County-funded programs. In particular, the initiative will

⁶ All Home Strategic Plan, June 2016, <http://allhomekc.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/All-Home-Strategic-Plan.pdf>

⁷ RCW 84.55.050

⁸ Existing funding is determined based on spending in the year in which the levy is placed on the ballot: in this case, County spending in 2015.

coordinate with emergency resource and referral programs, providing a way to identify people who are imminently at risk of homelessness, including youth who are being sexually or physically abused, or are at risk because they identify as LGBTQ. Listed below are several examples of existing programs that may be able to coordinate with the Youth and Family Homelessness initiative. These examples include, but are not limited to:

- **Safe Place.** Safe Place⁹ is an outreach program that provides immediate help and safety for youth in crisis. Local businesses and community organizations, including Metro buses, libraries and community centers, display a Safe Place logo to indicate they are part of the program. When a youth in crisis asks for help, the bus driver, librarian, or business staff quickly connect the youth to counselors at Auburn Youth Resources (South King County), YouthCare (Seattle), or Friends of Youth (North and East King County). The youth stays safely in place until the counselor arrives.

Coordinating the Youth and Family Homelessness Prevention Initiative with Safe Place could provide both a way to identify youth who are at imminent risk of homelessness and also expand the range of services the Safe Place counselors have available to provide to the youth they assist. Part of the training for agencies selected to participate in the Youth and Family Homelessness Prevention Initiative will be information about Safe Place, and how their local agencies can, in a geographically-focused way, coordinate with the Safe Place counselors to provide additional services to youth who are at imminent risk of homelessness.

- **Crisis Clinic.** King County's 2-1-1 service¹⁰ provides comprehensive information and referral for people in need of health and human services. The 2-1-1 staff are familiar with local and countywide programs and are able to refer people in need to appropriate programs.

The 2-1-1 system will be incorporated into the Youth and Family Homelessness Prevention Initiative in two ways. First, existing call volumes to 2-1-1 from different parts of the county will be used to inform the design of the Request for Proposals for agencies interested in participating in the initiative, to ensure that resources have been

⁹ <http://www.friendsofyouth.org/safeplace.aspx>

¹⁰ <http://crisisclinic.org/find-help/2-1-1-resources-and-information/>

allocated in the context of where need has been identified. Second, 2-1-1 staff will add the Youth and Family Homelessness Prevention Initiative to the list of available services and will be able to refer youth and family callers who are at imminent risk of homelessness to geographically and culturally appropriate providers.

- **Count Us In.** Count Us In is an annual survey conducted in collaboration with nearly 100 local youth-serving organizations, libraries, and community centers to identify youth and young adults who are either homeless or unstably housed (for instance, youth staying with a friend who fear they may be kicked out of their home). Youth and young adults who are identified as being unstably housed can be referred to the Youth and Family Homelessness Prevention Initiative for resources to avoid becoming homeless.
- **Project EQTY.** The Elevating Queer & Trans Youth Project (Project EQTY) works to build the capacity of homeless youth service providers in King County to meet the needs of LGBTQ homeless youth. The project was funded by the Pride Foundation with a grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and is being implemented by the Northwest Network of LGBT Survivors of Abuse. Project EQTY is currently working to assist organizations with training regarding sexual orientation and gender identify intake policies, practices, and procedures; the intersection of violence and homelessness for LGBTQ youth; confidentiality best practices around sexual orientation, gender identity, and domestic and sexual violence; and connections to LGBTQ organizations and providers. Project EQTY will be a resource to agencies around the county assisting youth and young adults at risk of homelessness.

III. The Proposed Model: Washington State Domestic Violence Housing First Initiative

As King County explored approaches to prevent youth and family homelessness, staff reviewed a local model, the Washington State **Domestic Violence Housing First Initiative**.¹¹ This model, which was funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and the Medina Foundation, has been rigorously evaluated and found to have successfully prevented family homelessness. This

¹¹ More information about the model can be found at <http://wscadv.org/projects/domestic-violence-housing-first>.

model was attractive to local funders because domestic violence is a leading cause of homelessness for families.

The Domestic Violence Housing First Initiative is a homelessness prevention program for survivors of domestic violence and their children, including survivors actively fleeing a domestic violence situation, and those who are on the brink of homelessness. At program entry, many program participants were facing unemployment and a lack of income due to the domestic violence situation they were experiencing. The Domestic Violence Housing First Initiative was piloted from September 2011 through September 2014 in Washington state with two cohorts (groups of clients). One cohort was in King County and the other was comprised of program participants located in the balance of the state. In King County, LifeWire and InterImCDA participated in the pilot.

Components of Domestic Violence Housing First model. The Domestic Violence Housing First Initiative had two basic components, which would be applied in the Youth and Family Homelessness Prevention Initiative. They are:

- **Case management/advocacy.** Each client who participated in the Domestic Violence Housing First Initiative received ongoing assistance from a case manager/advocate, who worked to help the client identify his/her needs and next steps to become more stable. Case management support provided through the Domestic Violence Housing First Initiative could be very narrow and temporary or somewhat longer term to meet the true needs of program participants, using a type of case management called progressive engagement (see below).
- **Flexible funding.** The Domestic Violence Housing First Initiative also provided flexible funding to participating clients to help them address the emergency needs that led to their risk of homelessness. Financial assistance could be used for a range of needs such as clothing for a job, cost of an employment-related license, a variety of housing and/or moving costs, cost to repair a car, urgently needed groceries and other expenses that may be impacting the safety and security of a family.

The experience of the Domestic Violence Housing First Initiative was that clients in general required very little financial assistance per household (average cost of \$1,250 per household) but that this financial assistance, combined with the case management support contributed to the safety, stability and well-being of clients and their families.

Evaluation of the Domestic Violence Housing First Initiative¹² found successful outcomes related to clients' ability to get and keep safe and stable housing. Nearly all program participants, including those with very low incomes, maintained permanent housing for a prolonged period of time:

- 96 percent were still stably housed 18 months after entering the program, allowing survivors to become self-sufficient quickly and without need for ongoing intensive services
- 84 percent reported an increase in safety for their family
- 76 percent requested minimal services from the domestic violence program at final follow-up
- Participants also expressed that housing stability had a profoundly positive effect on their children, improved the health and well-being for themselves and their children, and restored their dignity and self-worth.

The pilot program also focused on ensuring that services were culturally appropriate and delivered by a case manager/advocate who was from the same culture and spoke the same language as the participants. According to the evaluation, clients reported that working with an advocate who culturally and linguistically understood them was critical to getting the support they needed to become stable and enabling them to feel understood, accepted and comfortable telling their stories.

While some of the clients who participated in the Domestic Violence Housing First Initiative programs were youth, the program was focused primarily on adults fleeing domestic violence,

¹² <http://wscadv.org/resources/the-washington-state-domestic-violence-housing-first-program-cohort-2-agencies-final-evaluation-report-september-2011-september-2014/>

some of whom had children living with them. There is less research on successful programs preventing youth from becoming homeless. Nonetheless, the All Home Youth and Young Adult (YYA) Plan Refresh (May 2015) recommends prevention as a strategy to make youth homelessness rare, brief and one time. One of the strategies outlined in the Plan Refresh is “flexible funding to help YYAs live at home or with natural supports.”¹³ Applicability of this model to different population groups will be evaluated as the initiative is implemented.

IV. Proposed Youth and Family Homelessness Prevention Model

The Best Starts for Kids Ordinance 18088 provides the following guidance for the Youth and Family Homelessness Prevention Initiative:

"Youth and family homelessness prevention initiative" means an initiative intended to prevent and divert children and youth and their families from becoming homeless.

It is the intent of the council and the executive that funding for the youth and family homelessness prevention initiative will allow the initiative to be flexible, client-centered and outcomes-focused and will provide financial support for community agencies to assist clients.

Out of the first year's levy proceeds: 1. Nineteen million dollars shall be used to plan, provide and administer a youth and family homelessness prevention initiative.

Based on this guidance, stakeholder input and research on successful prevention models, King County's Department of Community and Human Services (DCHS) staff worked with a Youth and Family Homelessness Prevention Model Planning Committee (Planning Committee) and the Children and Youth Advisory Board (CYAB) to develop the framework for the King County Youth and Family Homelessness Prevention Initiative. This section discusses both the overall program model, as well as specific implementation details that were recommended by the Planning Committee and the CYAB.

¹³ <http://allhomekc.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Comp-Plan-Refresh-final-050515-with-appendices.pdf>

The proposed Youth and Family Homelessness Prevention Initiative will be based on the Washington State Domestic Violence Housing First Initiative. It will have a strong client-centered focus, including mobile **case management/advocacy** coupled with **flexible financial assistance** that is intended to address the immediate issue that is placing the family or youth at imminent risk of homelessness and build trust with the client. Key components to the Youth and Family Homelessness Prevention Model include:

- **Case management/advocacy** that is client-centered and uses a progressive engagement approach
- **Flexible funding** to address clients' immediate needs to prevent homelessness

Implementation of the initiative will be targeted to address the root causes of homelessness among youth and families.

Case Management/Advocacy

The agencies that demonstrated successful outcomes in the Washington State Domestic Violence Housing First Initiative understood the importance of supporting and advocating for clients through case management, and successfully made the shift to having a client-centered focus. That is, the family or youth must be asked, "What do you need so that you do not become homeless?"

This is a significant cultural shift for agencies, because many government assistance programs are based on a distrust of clients. For most programs, clients must prove that they meet program criteria and then are told what specific assistance they are eligible to receive even if they know something else will help them more. Because successful implementation of the proposed Youth and Family Homelessness Prevention Initiative model will entail changing organizational culture, training and learning circles will be part of the initiative's implementation.

Case management will be carried out through a method known as progressive engagement. Progressive engagement is a nationally-recognized best practice that provides customized levels of assistance to participants – providing the services needed, but not more than is needed to

achieve housing stability.¹⁴ Progressive engagement reserves the most expensive interventions for households with the most severe barriers to housing success, and offers less extensive support to those who need less assistance. Progressive engagement is a strategy to enable service delivery systems to effectively target resources and to enable the case manager/advocate to work with the client on the underlying issues that caused them to be at imminent risk of homelessness.

Under the Best Starts for Kids Youth and Family Homelessness Prevention Initiative, case manager/advocates will be mobile, meeting the clients at locations of their choice. This approach is different than other models where the case manager/advocate tends to be place-based.

Flexible Funding

The second major component of the proposed model is flexible funding to address clients' immediate needs. The Best Starts for Kids ordinance specifically states, "It is the intent of the council and the executive that funding for the youth and family homelessness prevention initiative ... will provide financial support for community agencies to assist clients."

In order to ensure that agencies administering the proposed initiative are equipped with the resources they need to be successful, sufficient funds will be provided to assure that agencies both have flexible funds available to meet client needs and also have the resources to hire experienced case manager/advocates.

In terms of the amount of flexible funding and case management needed, the Domestic Violence Housing First Initiative evaluation found that about one-third of the families served needed minimal support, one-third needed a medium touch, and one-third needed more intensive help. In recognition of the successful Domestic Violence Housing First program model, the goal to be achieved in the annual spending of funds by provider agencies shall be to split their funds 50/50, with half of the funding going to case managers and administrative costs and the other half going to flexible funds for clients. The County recognizes that this allocation will vary among

¹⁴ <http://www.endhomelessness.org/page/-/files/4.3%20Financial%20Assistance-Using%20a%20Progressive%20Engagement%20Model%20Kay%20Moshier.pdf>

agencies and therefore the intention is that this goal be achieved by looking at the aggregate spending of all provider agencies. The County further recognizes that this goal may be difficult to achieve in the first year of the program due to higher start-up costs. Consequently, this goal will start with the 2017 fiscal year.

Need for Adaptation and Flexibility for Preventing Youth Homelessness

While the Washington State Domestic Violence Housing First Initiative was successful with youth who were parenting and who were at risk of homelessness due to domestic violence, national research shows that other factors are more predictive of a youth becoming homeless, e.g., identifying as LGBTQ; being involved with the juvenile justice or foster care systems; or experiencing problems at school, such as suspensions or truancy (that may, over time, result in legal proceedings related to the Becca Bill).¹⁵ As a result, the CYAB and the Planning Committee recommended targeting the initiative to address these predictors of homelessness by collaborating with schools, organizations that work with LGBTQ youth, and organizations that work with youth involved in the juvenile justice system.

While these are the target areas for identifying youth at imminent risk of homelessness, this does not mean that the Youth and Family Homelessness Prevention Model would be administered by schools or the juvenile justice system. Rather, it is likely that nonprofits, community agencies or faith organizations would provide assistance and administer the funds, because they could provide services any time of day or night and be able to leverage additional supports. Any organization receiving the funds would have to show strong partnerships with the schools, the juvenile justice system and the juvenile dependency system.

Because the Domestic Violence Housing First Initiative was not tested on youth and young adult, the success of this model at assisting youth and young adults at risk of homelessness will be carefully monitored and evaluated, and adjustments proposed as needed.

In addition to providing feedback on the overarching program model, the Planning Committee and the CYAB both provided feedback on the specific program implementation details outlined below.

¹⁵ <http://www.kingcounty.gov/courts/JuvenileCourt/truancy.aspx>

Who is Eligible?

The program is intended for youth and families who are at *imminent* risk of homelessness. It is not intended for youth or families who are already homeless, nor is it intended for youth or families who are at risk for homelessness, but not facing *imminent* risk. An example of imminent risk of homelessness is a young person or family who has been staying on friends' or families' couches, but may have exhausted all welcomes and will be on the street next week. Additional examples might be a youth who the school counselor knows will be thrown out of their parents' house if they come out, a young person who contacts Safe Place or another resource because of sexual or physical abuse, a young person who has been identified as being at risk by a librarian, school staff or community center staff, a youth exiting the justice system whose family refuses to take the youth back home, or a young person who may be aging out of the foster care system and has no housing or employment plans in place. The case manager/advocate will have to utilize judgment and experience in making the determination.

The outcomes measurements will be critically important in determining if the targeting was done appropriately. If people who are at imminent risk of homelessness are prevented from becoming homeless, we will see a decrease in the number of people who are newly homeless.

Should the Money Be Divided Between Youth and Families?

The Planning Committee and CYAB advised that the money should not be divided among population groups. Many youth are parenting, and it is these young families who are often at imminent risk of homelessness. Because this program is intended to step away from rigid requirements, dividing the money and creating definitions and funding formulas for youth and families did not seem prudent.

What are the Eligible Uses of Funding? Should Anything be Excluded as Eligible from the Flexible Funds?

Any expenditure that will prevent someone from becoming homeless should be an eligible use of the flexible funds that will be part of the proposed initiative. As noted in both the ordinance and discussion above, case management and flexible funding combine to create the model that

will be used for the Youth and Family Homelessness Prevention Initiative. Agencies will employ rigorous financial oversight to track where flexible funds are applied. The County will evaluate whether certain types of expenditures are more or less successful in preventing a family or youth from becoming homeless.

How Much Money Should Be Awarded in 2016?

A total of \$3,166,667 is anticipated to be allocated for the remainder of 2016. For future years, there has been discussion about potential options to spend the funds down at a rate that would exhaust the \$19 million total prior to the end of the levy (so as to make as large an impact as possible given the high level of need); or to allocate the funds evenly over time. Rather than address this issue at the moment, the Council will make decisions about allocation for future years within the context of the budget process, with the expectation of a minimum appropriation of \$3,166,667 each year. This will enable the Council to consider initial implementation of the initiative and make decisions through the budget process.

Building organizational capacity and creating the organizational culture change will take time. As a result, the Planning Committee and CYAB recommended that the funding awards be three-year contingent commitments to agencies, meaning the agency will receive the money for all three years provided that the agency is achieving outcomes, participating in the learning circles and implementing the evaluation. It is hard for agencies to staff up and plan with annual commitments, and a three-year commitment will enable better staff recruitment and continuity for the agency and individuals seeking assistance. Finally, by making the three-year commitment contingent on achieving outcomes, the County will be able to reallocate the money if necessary, and the Council will have the opportunity to review program outcomes and evaluate both the amount of money to be appropriated and the program model to be used.

Extensive training, ongoing learning circles and a rigorous evaluation will be part of the program design assuring agency and program success. Therefore, it is anticipated that reducing the commitment will be a rare occurrence.

In the initial stages of the program, it is likely that the domestic violence organizations that have been operating this program successfully for several years with the Gates and Medina

Foundation money will be able to be up and running before organizations for which this initiative is new. Rather than awarding those agencies more money, the Planning Committee recommended that not all of the money be awarded at once in the first year, since the initiative will begin midyear anyway. Some of the funds from the first year will be reserved to grant additional funds to agencies that run out of the flexible funds before the next year's allocation.

The CYAB provided extensive feedback on how to assure that funds will truly address racial, ethnic and LGBTQ disproportionality in homelessness. Their advice included:

- For many communities, including Native Americans and Asian Pacific Islanders, County staff making personal contacts and going to community leadership will be important.
- Meet with faith community leaders in the African American community.
- Ask that culturally-specific communities include funding/grant/RFP announcements in their newsletters.
- Send information to leadership tables for targeted populations and ask that they disseminate information.
- Use social media.
- The frequency of the ask is as important as where and to whom the ask is made.
- Use the CYAB to disseminate information.

In addition to these suggestions from the CYAB, outreach should also be conducted to engage immigrant and refugee populations, as well as provider agencies that serve survivors of commercial sexual exploitation and human trafficking.

Should All Recipients Have Data Entered into a Database that can be Matched with the Homeless Management Information System?

All agencies receiving money will be required to enter client data into a database that will enable data matching with the HMIS. The County's Department of Community and Human Services (DCHS) has been working with the vendor for the HMIS system to create a separate module for the data from the Youth and Family Homelessness Prevention Initiative. DCHS has

confirmed with the King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office that the prevention module will not be subject to the state HMIS consent requirements. By entering client data into a system that can match with the HMIS system, the County will know if a youth or family who receives services from the Youth and Family Homelessness Prevention Initiative successfully avoided homelessness. Some agencies will need to be trained on the prevention database module and the County may need to provide additional funding for computers or other information technology support.

To protect the safety of domestic violence survivors, agencies serving survivors will not be required to enter individual identifiers in the prevention database module (e.g., name, social security number), though the agencies will retain this information in their own databases. The County will be working with an outside entity, potentially the current evaluator for the Domestic Violence Housing First Initiative, to match the domestic violence agency prevention module data with data in the HMIS. During implementation of the Domestic Violence Housing First Initiative, agencies were able to successfully evaluate whether domestic violence survivors became homeless after receiving intervention, while at the same time protecting survivors' data.

Should a Common Client Intake and Assessment Form Be Utilized?

A common intake form will be utilized for program participants so that there is consistent information collected for evaluation purposes. In addition, it is likely that the common assessment form used for Coordinated Entry for All (a new approach adopted by the All Home Coordinating Board) to access homeless housing will also be utilized.

How Will Initiative Success Be Measured?

The Youth and Family Homelessness Prevention Initiative will measure success in three ways:

1. The individuals served do not show up in HMIS for homeless services in the future (meaning they have been able to avoid homelessness).
 2. There is a reduction in the number of youth and families who are newly homeless.
- It is essential that both outcomes are measured because if the program measures only whether individuals show up in HMIS for homeless services or not, there is no way of

knowing whether those individuals ever would have become homeless. However, if there is also a reduction in the number of newly homeless youth and families, it is clear that agencies are targeting the right individuals and families.

3. In addition, the CYAB and the Planning Committee recommended that the County evaluate at least one other factor besides “not becoming homeless.” This third measure will be developed as part of the overarching dashboard that is developed for the Best Starts for Kids Levy general implementation plan.

Some of the suggestions for a third measure include additional outcomes for youth such as no further engagement with criminal justice system or increased educational attainment. For families, additional factors suggested include safety and self-determination. The Department of Community and Human Services evaluation team will analyze which factors are measurable and work with other BSK evaluation teams to have consistent measures of success. Additionally, several CYAB members recommended training so that all fund recipients understand LGBTQ issues and are able to provide equitable and competent care to LGBTQ clients.

To ensure success in meeting the diverse needs of the youth and families seeking assistance, the Executive will transmit a report on program outcomes to the Council by June 1, 2018. Program outcomes, as summarized in that report, will be used to determine appropriation amounts to be included in the 2019-2020 biennial budget, as well as whether the model used for the initiative should be changed for some or all population groups. This report will also include information about how the implementation of the initiative is addressing disproportionality in the risk of becoming homeless.

How Will Providers Be Trained?

Training will be provided to agencies receiving money under this initiative. The experience of the Washington State Domestic Violence Housing First Initiative was that developing a client-centered and outcomes-focused agency culture took extensive training and intentional organization effort and buy-in. For that reason, learning circles for agencies administering the funding will also be part of the program.

What Type of Agencies/Organizations Should Be Targeted for the RFP?

Since the goal of the Youth and Family Homelessness Prevention Initiative is to identify and intervene with youth or families who are at imminent risk of homelessness, the agencies receiving funding should be those most likely to already be working with families or youth most at risk of homelessness. When directly asked, the CYAB provided significant advice regarding the best way of assuring that the model funds were placed in agencies, organizations and geographic areas that would be able to identify families and youth *before* they became homeless and address the racial, ethnic and socioeconomic disproportionality in family homelessness, and the racial, ethnic and sexual orientation disproportionality in youth homelessness.

Both the Planning Committee and the CYAB recommended targeting the issues and systems that lead to homelessness, e.g., domestic violence, juvenile justice and the populations that are disproportionately likely to become homeless, e.g., Native Americans, African Americans, Asian Pacific Islanders and LGBTQ youth. It will be imperative for any agency receiving the funds to be able to demonstrate how the organization will administer the funds in a way that will address the extreme disproportionality of people of color who enter homelessness at a rate significantly greater than the general population. Similarly, organizations will have to show how they will address the disproportionality of LGBTQ youth who are at imminent risk of homelessness.

The Children and Youth Advisory Board also emphasized that small cultural or ethnic organizations should be targeted for the initiative. Suggestions ranged from partnering large and smaller organizations during the Request for Proposal (RFP) process, assuring application support. The Department of Community and Human Services has already been working toward implementing some of the suggestions to reduce barriers for small organizations. For example, staff have been partnering with the county's Risk Management Division to reduce insurance barriers for small agencies.

Examples of types of agencies that the CYAB suggested would be appropriate fund recipients or partner entities included:

- Domestic violence agencies
- Agencies serving youth, including youth homeless agencies
- Schools (particularly school counselors and those addressing absenteeism, expulsions and suspensions)
- Public utilities agencies, since delinquent utility payments can be a predictor of housing loss
- Culturally-competent/focused organizations
- Organizations serving LGBTQ youth
- Public Health and other health facilities and clinics
- King County education and employment programs
- Faith-based organizations
- Youth clubs and recreation centers
- Agencies serving families, particularly new moms
- Agencies serving youth who are involved in the juvenile justice system
- Food banks
- Regional Access Points for accessing housing/homelessness services
- “Natural helpers” in community, e.g., libraries, first responders as referral sources.

In addition to targeting specific types of organizations, the CYAB also discussed the need to recognize the difference between delivery of services in rural versus urban contexts. The County will pay special attention through the allocation process to geographically isolated areas that have limited access to wrap-around services, including developing strategies to coordinate with existing local providers. In order to make funds available to all areas of the County, County staff are considering releasing separate regional RFPs so that the initiative will be available county-wide and to account for the differences in how services may be delivered in an urban versus a rural area. If the County does not issue regional RFPs, the County will still ensure regional availability of the program and consider potential differences in service delivery between urban and rural areas. The chair of the Council shall appoint up to three persons to serve on each RFP scoring panel for this initiative. Each person appointed shall be a council district staff designated by a council member.

In addition, the County will hold regional bidders' conferences for interested providers to help them learn about the initiative and the program model. During 2016, the County will expend up to \$100,000 to contract with a consultant to provide targeted assistance on the Domestic Violence Housing First program model, LGBTQ awareness and to provide technical assistance to small organizations to help draft RFP responses. Training will be focused on small organizations, particularly those that serve disproportionately-affected populations, to help them prepare proposals that are responsive to the RFP. All successful bidders will receive training to implement the initiative with fidelity to the model as well as to understand what resources currently exist for families and youth so that connections can be made to those programs. Within six weeks after each RFP process under this initiative has been concluded, agencies and allocation amounts have been determined and contracts with provider agencies selected are signed, the executive must transmit to the council a report listing the provider agencies to receive funding allocations, as well as the amount of funding allocated to each agency, and a motion accepting the report.

In order to effectively meet the needs of youth and families who are at imminent risk of homelessness, King County will implement strategies to ensure that at-risk populations, including families and youth of color, immigrant and refugee families and youth, LGBTQ youth, and victims of domestic violence, commercial exploitation and human trafficking, have access to providers who are trained and competent in meeting the unique needs of these at-risk populations. Strategies shall include contracting with organizations with proven competency, as well as making training available to build capacity and competency of organizations. The annual report shall include an analysis of the strategies being implemented and the effectiveness of those strategies.

Administration, Fiscal Management, Monitoring and Evaluation

The Department of Community and Human Services will administer, monitor and evaluate the Youth and Family Homelessness Prevention Initiative. Monitoring will consist of both financial and programmatic audits.

Programmatic and fiscal audits of participating agencies will include a site visit to each provider at least once every two years. The site visits will examine both fiscal and programmatic aspects of program implementation. The fiscal component of each site visit will include, but not be limited to providers' internal controls, the analysis of audited financial statements and sample testing of specific expenditures related to King County-funded programs. The programmatic component will include, but not be limited to client eligibility, achievement of contracted outcomes, and client data quality. In addition, as part of annual audits conducted by the State Auditor's Office, the State has the authority to select specific pass-through entities for review.

With respect to data and evaluation, the data that will be collected will mirror what is being collected for other programs or strategies in the community so that this initiative will not introduce a new data set being collected in the community.

Reports on program outcomes will be transmitted to the Council at least annually, by June 1 of each year. In addition, County staff will provide the Council with regular status briefings at the relevant committee on the model, agency implementation, and client outcomes.

If the Best Starts for Kids general implementation plan approved by Council includes a provision requiring annual reporting, program outcomes for the Youth and Family Homelessness Prevention Initiative may be reported within that annual report. However, the initial program outcomes report for the Youth and Family Homelessness Prevention Initiative required to the Council by June 1, 2018, in an earlier section of this implementation plan, will be required to be transmitted as a stand-alone report to guide the Council in determining the efficacy of the Domestic Violence Housing First model for future funding.

While it is understood that evaluation of the Youth and Family Homelessness Prevention Initiative will be conducted through the general Best Starts for Kids evaluation, and that evaluation model has yet to be determined, DCHS may wish to consult with the Washington State Institute for Public Policy¹⁶ or similar research and public policy organizations to develop a model and protocols for evaluation. DCHS will seek to obtain philanthropic funding to secure outside evaluation on program outcomes and the effectiveness of the program model. It is the

¹⁶ <http://www.wsipp.wa.gov/>

intent of the County that an independent evaluation will be conducted for this initiative. The County anticipates that it will use funds from the Best Starts for Kids levy consistent with Ordinance 18088 Section 5.C.4. to support this independent evaluation. If philanthropic funds for an independent evaluation are secured, those funds will be used to supplement Best Starts for Kids levy funds used for evaluation. An evaluation on the first year and a half of program implementation will be completed no later than June 1, 2019, and will be transmitted to the King County Council as part of the required annual report.

IV. Collaboration with the Children and Youth Advisory Board and Homelessness Prevention Model Planning Committee

Ordinance 18088 directs the County Executive, to the maximum extent possible, to develop the Youth and Family Homelessness Prevention Initiative in collaboration with the Children and Youth Advisory Board (CYAB). The Children and Youth Advisory Board members were approved by King County Council and became official on January 25, 2016. The Executive convened the CYAB on February 9, 2016, for an orientation, at which time the CYAB reviewed the Youth and Family Homelessness Prevention Initiative in an unofficial capacity. The Children and Youth Advisory Board reviewed the initiative again at its first official meeting on February 23, 2016, at which time they made formal recommendations about the Youth and Family Homelessness Prevention Initiative.

Because of the short time between approval of the CYAB and the March 1, 2016, deadline to submit the Youth and Family Homelessness Prevention Implementation Plan, executive staff also convened a Youth and Family Homelessness Prevention Model Planning Committee (Planning Committee) to advise on the design for the plan. The Planning Committee met three times in January and February 2016 to help guide the implementation plan. Members of the committee (an * indicates that the individual is also a member of the Children and Youth Advisory Board) include:

Alison Eisinger	Seattle King County Coalition on Homelessness
Edith Elion	Atlantic Street Center
Melinda Giovengo	YouthCare

Terry Pottmeyer*	Friends of Youth
Kira Zylstra	All Home
	King County Department of Community and Human
	Services
Hedda McLendon	City of Redmond
Colleen Kelly	City of Seattle
Jason Johnson	Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence
Linda Olsen	Raikes Foundation
Katie Hong*	Public Health
TJ Cosgrove	LifeWire
Maria Williams	LifeWire
Barbara Langdon*	Kent School District
Calvin Watts*	City of Seattle
Isabel Munoz	City of Seattle
Leilani Della Cruz	King County Coalition Against Domestic Violence
Merrill Cousins	Medina Foundation
Aana Lauckhart	