Comprehensive Plan to Prevent and End Youth and Young Adult (YYA) Homelessness in King County by 2020

- 2015 Comprehensive Plan Refresh –
May 2015

Committee to End Homelessness in King County

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introduction

Any young person sleeping outside because they lack a safe home is unacceptable. Yet on any given night in our community, our best available data show that at least 800 young people are homeless or unstably housed- including over 100 sleeping in parks, abandoned buildings or under bridges.

This is unacceptable and we believe that it is solvable: our community is uniting to make youth and young adult (YYA)[1] homelessness rare and, when the crisis of homelessness does occur, to ensure that it is a brief and one-time occurrence.

Since 2011, nonprofit organizations, local governments, including the City of Seattle and King County, our local housing authorities, the United Way of King County, and private funders in our region have been working together to ensure every young person has a place to call home.

In 2013, the Comprehensive Plan to Prevent and End Youth and Young Adult (YYA) Homelessness in King County by 2020 was issued and adopted by our region's Continuum of Care, the Committee to End Homelessness. The Plan puts young people at the center and surrounds them with essential supports: stable housing, encouraging adults, emotional support, education, and opportunities to gain work experience. Over the past 18 months, our community has implemented the recommendations of the 2013 Comprehensive Plan (*see Appendix A)* and invested in data and learning projects to deepen our understanding of the needs of young people experiencing homelessness so that we can make smarter decisions about how to make YYA homelessness rare, brief, and one-time.

This 2015 Plan Refresh updates our community's 2013 Comprehensive Plan based on what we have learned over the past 18 months. The Plan Refresh articulates our direction for the next 2 years in:

- ✓ Making YYA homelessness **rare & brief;**
- ✓ Making YYA homelessness, when it does occur, a **one-time** occurrence;
- ✓ Supporting **YYA of color;**
- ✓ Supporting **LGBTQ young people;** and
- ✓ Improving **access to housing and matching housing** with YYA needs.

The Comprehensive Plan Refresh was developed in late 2014 and early 2015 by over 100 community leaders including the CEH YYA Advisory Group, YYA Evaluation Team, Youth Advocates Ending Homelessness (YAEH), and other community partners *(see Appendix B*).

Committee to End Homelessness (CEH) community plan

Our regional Committee to End Homelessness will adopt the CEH Strategic Plan, our community plan to end the experience of homelessness among residents of King County, in mid-2015. The plan articulates goals and strategies in the following areas:

1. Advocate and act to address the true causes of homelessness to make homelessness **rare;**

2. Address crisis quickly, and align resources to meet the needs and strengths of people experiencing homelessness to make homelessness **brief and one-time;** and

3. **Engage and activate the entire community** to end homelessness.

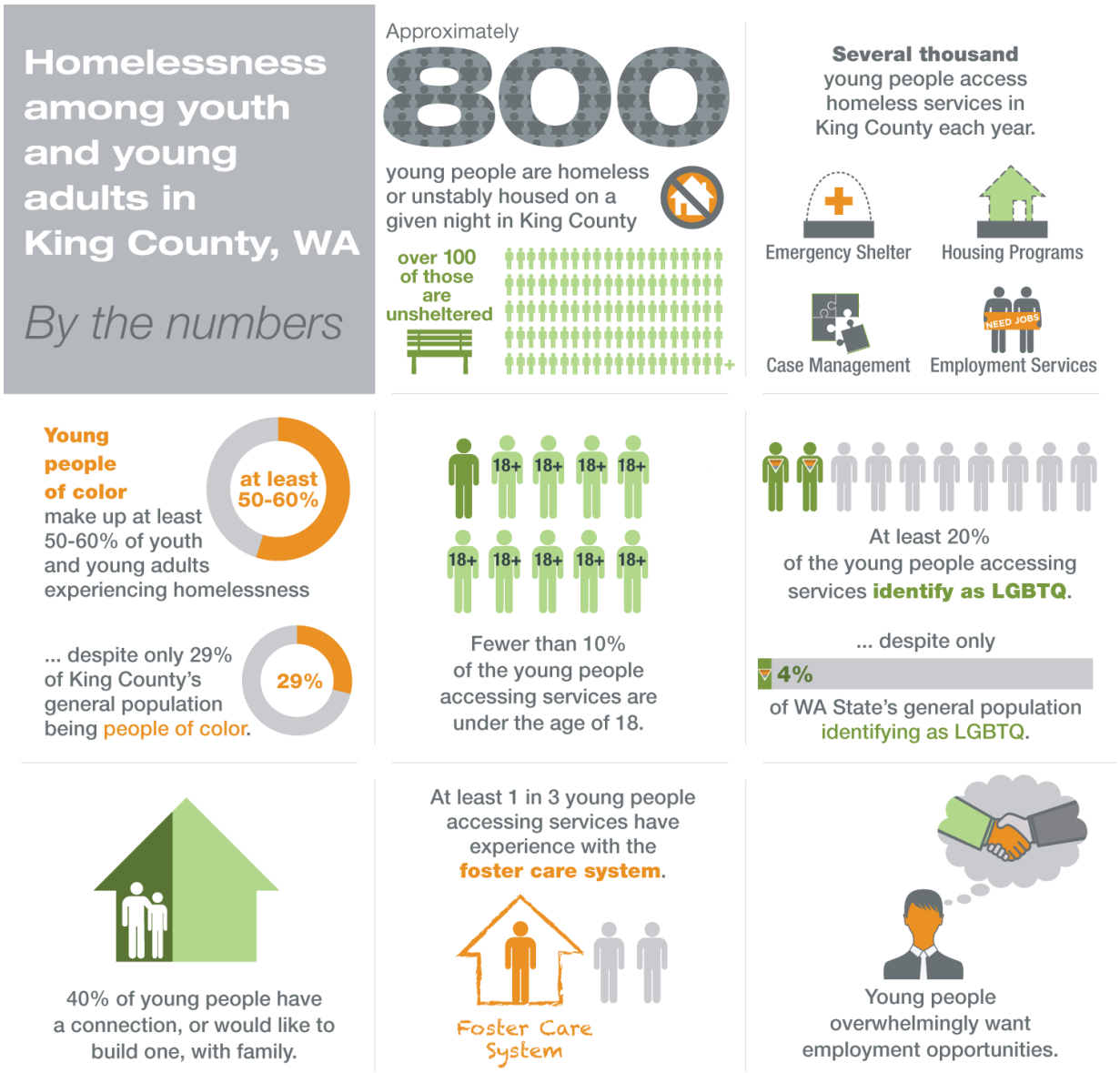
The CEH Strategic Plan offers the framework and overarching vision for making homelessness rare, brief, and one-time for all populations in King County. The YYA Comprehensive Plan Refresh has been developed within this broader context, and provides YYA population-specific strategies.

We have a critical opportunity to make youth and young adult homelessness rare, brief, and one-time. We know more than ever about the needs of young people experiencing the crisis of homelessness and what works in serving them. We are using evidence to drive our decision-making and make improvements as we go. Energized and committed partners are investing in this effort, and there are strong champions at the local, state, and national levels. Young people who have experienced homelessness are sharing their perspective and recommendations, and policymakers and funders are listening.

[1] Throughout this plan, the term *YYA* is used to refer to youth and young adults ages 12-25. The term *young people* is used interchangeably with YYA. The term *young adult*, or *YA*, refers to young people ages 18-25. When referring to youth under age 18, we specify *under-18 youth*.

what do we know about young people experiencing homelessness?

Across multiple data sources and several years, we have a strong baseline picture of the characteristics and demographics of young people experiencing homelessness in King County.[2]



While this is a useful baseline, it is not a complete picture. We know, for example, that there is a population of young people, primarily in South Seattle and South King County, who are not yet accessing services or even identifying as "homeless" despite not having a safe place to sleep at night. Efforts are underway to expand our community's YYA point-in-time count, Count Us In, to identify more of the young people who are not accessing services and better understand the size and characteristics of this population.

In addition, we know that not all YYA experiencing homelessness have the same needs; the YYA typology project (*see Appendix D*) suggests that there are distinct groups of young people with different patterns of homelessness and profiles of risk. Understanding these differences creates opportunities to better target services to meet the needs of YYA.

[2] Summaries of numerous YYA data and evaluation projects can be found in Appendix C.

comprehensive plan refresh- cross-cutting priorities

The following principles apply across all strategic areas of the plan, and will be considered in all aspects of implementation.

maintain and strengthen our system

- ✓ ***Maintain safety net*:** Shelters and street outreach are foundational services that keep young people safe and connected to additional support and prevention. Maintaining this safety net is critical to ensuring the success of our prioritized strategies.
- ✓ ***Target based on typology:*** Making YYA homelessness rare, brief, and one-time will require that our housing and services are more effectively and efficiently targeted to meet the differing needs of young people experiencing homelessness.
- ✓ ***Support and train staff:*** The activities outlined on the following pages will be implemented by staff with varying levels of experience and training to meet the often challenging needs of YYA experiencing homelessness. Our collective success requires that we offer skill building and strong workplace support to these staff.

focus on specific regions and populations

- ✓ ***LGBTQ YYA and YYA of color****:* LGBTQ young people and young people of color are overrepresented among homeless YYA; these populations face unique and critical challenges. We believe that if we improve our ability to meet the needs of these young people, services for all young people experiencing homelessness will improve.
- ✓ ***South Seattle & South King County***: The gap between the need for services and the availability of resources is particularly wide in South King County and South Seattle. As we move forward, we will focus on the critical needs in these regions.
- ✓ ***Under-18 youth:*** Unaccompanied youth under age 18 face unique needs, and providers are subject to special requirements in serving this population. New activities and programs must consider the special needs of under-18 youth.

coordinate with other regional efforts

- ✓ ***Committee to End Homelessness strategic plan****:* Our efforts- and the services of providers, dollars managed by public and private funders, and experiences of young people- do not exist in a silo of youth and young adult homelessness. Our work must be informed by the lessons of other efforts and populations. The CEH vision of making homelessness rare, brief, and one-time in our region can only occur through collective action across all populations and partners.
- ✓ ***King County Youth Action Plan***: Similarly, our work must connect to other local efforts to improve futures for young people in our community. The Youth Action Plan's emphasis on prevention, families, disproportionality, youth voice, and connections among youth-serving systems resonates with our work; our efforts are synergistic.

invest in continuous learning

Our community is committed to using data to learn and make improvements in our work as we go. We will monitor progress on a quarterly basis and redirect our strategies where data shows that we have not been successful.

Youth voice

We believe that young people who have experienced homelessness should have a voice in the civic and policy discussions to make YYA homelessness rare, brief, and one-time.

We know that developing an effective response to homelessness among young people requires that we ask these young people to help us identify solutions.

Since 2013, The Mockingbird Society's **Youth Advocates Ending Homelessness (YAEH)** program has given youth and young adults age 13-24 who are experiencing or have experienced homelessness a chance to speak up, tell their stories, and advocate for programs and services they think will improve the lives of homeless and unstably housed young people throughout King County.

YAEH members have provided leadership in the development of the 2013 Comprehensive Plan and this Comprehensive Plan Refresh (*see Appendix B*). Additionally, they continue to advocate on behalf of homeless young people with legislators and Council members in Olympia and Seattle, meet with leaders such as Governor Inslee and Seattle Mayor Murray, and support Count Us In, King County's annual effort to count YYA who are homeless or unstably housed.

comprehensive plan refresh recommendations

Our direction moving forward builds on what we have learned through the implementation of the 2013 Comprehensive Plan over the past 18 months.

The following pages detail activities in the following strategic areas:

Making YYA homelessness **rare & brief;**

Making YYA homelessness, when it does occur, a **one-time** occurrence;

Supporting **YYA of color;**

Supporting **LGBTQ YYA;** and

Improving **access to housing and matching housing** with YYA needs.

Each section includes:

What we've done: an overview of what our community has implemented in the past 18 months years as a result of the 2013 Comprehensive Plan.

What we've learned: key lessons and findings related to the issue.

What we're doing next: recommendations for the next two years, including priority activities (including estimated costs)[3] and system activities. Partners are also identified.[4]

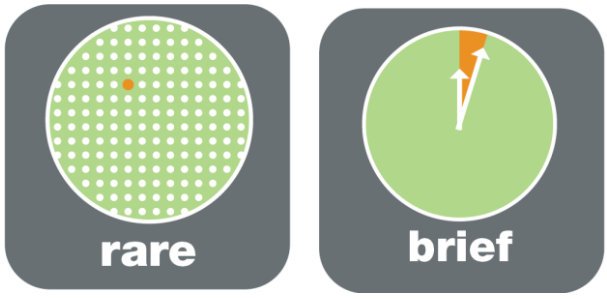
How we'll know it worked: how we will measure whether we are making progress in each area, including annual benchmarks and quarterly measures.

[3] Appendix F provides a summary of costs and timelines for the implementation of priority activities.
[4] Key partners in each area are identified; however, these lists are not comprehensive or exhaustive. The CEH and YYA Advisory Group are assumed to be partners throughout, and additional partners will be identified during implementation.

comprehensive plan refresh—plan overview

	rare / brief	one time	ensuring equal support for YYA of color	ensuring equal support for LGBTQ YYA	housing and access
what we're doing next	**Prevention, diversion, and family engagement** **Pathways out of shelter:** - Rapid Supportive Housing - Host homes **Sustain housing investments from 2013 Comprehensive Plan:** - Next Step - Arcadia Young Adult Shelter **Prevent system exits to homelessness** from child welfare, juvenile justice and schools	**Clear Path to Employment** **Housing Stability** **Learning Community to understand returns to homelessness** **Explore shared data across agencies** **Coordinate with Opportunity Youth effort**	**Rental assistance in South Seattle** **Racial equity toolkit** **Input from communities of color**	**Project Elevating Queer and Trans Youth (EQTY)** **LGBTQ equity toolkit** **Regional standard around collection of information** on gender identity and sexual orientation	**Improve access by strengthening Youth Housing Connection (YHC) functioning** **Refine prioritization and matching** **Increase capacity of housing programs to support YYA who are prioritized for housing** **Increase and diversify housing options aligned to YYA needs** **Align with CEH coordinated entry for all populations**
how we'll know it worked	*No YYA are sleeping outdoors or in places not meant for human habitation.* *Length of time YYA are homeless is short.*	*Few YYA return to homelessness.*	*YYA of color and LGBTQ YYA have outcomes and access on par with their peers.*		*Coordinated entry provides timely access to housing consistent with community prioritization.* *YYA are served in housing programs aligned to their needs.*
page in plan	**6**	**11**	**14**	**16**	**18**

making homelessness rare and brief



On any given night, over 100 young people are sleeping outside in unsafe and dangerous situations because they simply have no other places to go. Once in shelter, the average length of stay is nearly two months.

Our goal is to decrease the number of unsheltered young people in our community, as measured through our annual point-in-time count of youth and young adults, Count Us In. We also want to reduce the number of cumulative days in shelter. To accomplish this, we will:

- ✓ Collaborate with other systems to target interventions to prevent homelessness;
- ✓ Strengthen our work with families to make YYA homelessness rare, brief, and one-time; and
- ✓ Develop additional pathways out of shelter, resulting in increased shelter capacity such that no young person is forced to spend the night outside.

what we've done

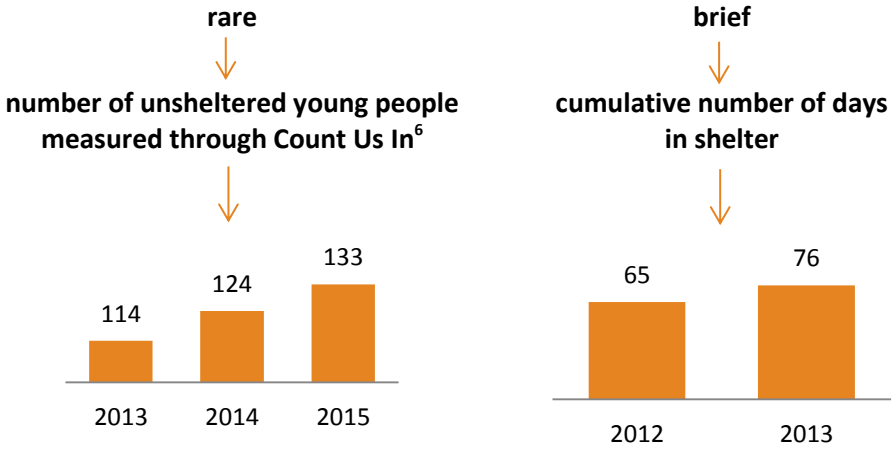
We have sought to make YYA homelessness rare and brief by implementing the following priority activities of the 2013 Comprehensive Plan:[5]

- ✓ **Strengthening prevention and early intervention services**: Through *Project SAFE* (YouthCare) and the *Family Reunification Pilot* (Catholic Community Services), new services are being provided to YYA and their families to prevent young people from running away and to reunify young people with families and natural supports when it is safe and appropriate.
- ✓ **Strengthening family engagement capacity**: Through the *Family Reunification Pilot*, agencies across King County are participating in training and learning communities with a focus on engaging families.
- ✓ **Filling regional gaps in emergency shelters and housing for youth with high needs**: The *Arcadia Young Adult Shelter* (Auburn Youth Resources), a new 12 bed shelter in Auburn, opened during 2014. New housing options are also available or in development for high needs young adults: *Independence Bridge (*NAVOS), providing housing for 24 young adults, opened in late 2014. *Phoenix Rising* (Valley Cities) will also provide housing for 24 young adults when it opens in late 2015. All of these programs are in South King County, an area that has lacked resources for young people experiencing homelessness.
- ✓ **Offering rental assistance with supports**: The *Next Step* program, a partnership between the YMCA, local housing authorities and private dollars is providing 30 young adults across King County with time-limited, graduated rental assistance with support services.
- ✓ **Preventing exits to homelessness for youth in care**: The United Way of King County is leading a two year *Youth At Risk of Homelessness* federal planning grant focused on identifying youth in foster care at greatest risk of experiencing homelessness and designing strategies to prevent homelessness within this population. In mid-2015, our community is applying for funding to implement and evaluate these strategies. Learning what works with this population will be a critical focus of this effort. In addition, our community has offered strong advocacy for the passage of the recently enacted *Homeless Youth Act*, which includes a goal that Washington state systems such as juvenile justice and foster care will not discharge young people into homelessness.

[5] Throughout this Plan Refresh, items identified under "what we've done" relate to the recommended priority activities of the 2013 Comprehensive Plan. Our community has also implemented numerous related programs and activities not specifically mentioned in the 2013 Comprehensive Plan, including but not limited to the development of two Friends of Youth group homes in Kirkland in 2014, providing housing for 10 high needs young adults, and the expansion of National Safe Place to a regional model.

what we've learned

Under the 2013 Comprehensive Plan, our community adopted the following benchmarks to measure progress toward making homelessness rare and brief.



The number of unsheltered young people counted has increased over the past few years, which is largely attributable to a significant increase in the number of locations participating in Count Us In. Average length of stay in shelter showed an increase between 2012 and 2013; data are not available for later years to show whether any change has taken place since the implementation of the 2013 Comprehensive Plan. **Still, we know that homelessness among young people is not yet rare and brief in our community.**

In addition, **too many young people served by public systems fall into homelessness**:

- ✓ 34% of YYA who age out of foster care in King County become homeless within the first 12 months;[7]
- ✓ 26% of youth released from the State of Washington's juvenile rehabilitation facilities are homeless within 12 months of being released;[8] and
- ✓ Over 6,000 students in King County public schools are homeless, defined under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Education Assistance Act as lacking a fixed, adequate place to sleep; approximately 15% of these are not accompanied by a parent.[9]

Finally, **we have learned additional lessons related to our efforts to make homelessness rare and brief:**

- ✓ Family engagement is critically important, but needs to be better coordinated and supported across the continuum;
- ✓ Shelter is an important safety net, but shelters are consistently full and there are not adequate pathways out; and
- ✓ We are learning more about the typology of YYA experiencing homelessness (*see Appendix D*). We know we have opportunities to more effectively and efficiently target interventions.

[6] Count Us In occurs in January of each year, making 2015 data for our "rare" benchmark available by the time of this report. Homelessness Management Information System (HMIS) data for "brief" were available only through 2013.
[7] Shah, M.F. et al. (2015). "Youth At Risk of Homelessness," Olympia, WA: DSHS Research and Data Analysis Division, https://www.dshs.wa.gov/sesa/rda/research-reports/youth-risk-homelessness
[8] Shah, M.F. et al. (2013). "Impact of Homelessness on Youth Recently Released from Juvenile Rehabilitation Facilities," Olympia, WA: DSHS Research and Data Analysis Division, https://www.dshs.wa.gov/sesa/rda/research-reports/impact-homelessness-youth-recently-released-juvenile-rehabilitation-facilities
[9] Columbia Legal Services (2014). Analysis of Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction data. http://www.schoolhousewa.org/HomelessStudentsinWA2014210.pdf and http://www.schoolhousewa.org/Unaccompanied_youth_estimate.pdf.

what we're doing next

priority activities	Details
Continue and strengthen prevention and diversion activities Refine existing **family-based investments** (Family Reunification Pilot and Project SAFE) into a coordinated model that includes: • *Individualized family engagement services* available to YYA who express interest in connecting with family • *Flexible funding* to help YYAs live at home or with natural supports; and • *Family engagement training and consultation*. Assess success of family engagement model against measurable targets; expand services as appropriate in mid-2016.	**Use current resources and secure new funding:** Refocus resources already allocated by King County for Family Reunification Pilot and Project SAFE through 2016; total of $300,000 per year. Need for additional funding in mid-2016 to expand model. **Partners:** King County, providers throughout continuum
Develop additional pathways out of shelter, resulting in increased shelter capacity • Create **Rapid Supportive Housing (RSH)**[10] for long term shelter stayers. • Expand community housing options such as **host homes** for low needs YA over age 18. • Utilize **services-only programs** such as PRO Youth and Groundwork[11] to link YAs to new housing options.	**New funding needed**: $250,000 per year to serve 24 YAs. **Partners**: City of Seattle, YA Shelters, PRO Youth case managers **New funding needed**: $200,000, including start up costs, to serve at least 15 YAs in first year. **Partners**: To be identified; agency with housing capacity in collaboration with smaller agency with community connections **Use current resources**: Existing staff connect to new housing. **Partners**: City of Seattle, King County, PRO Youth and Groundwork agencies, other case management programs

priority activity highlight: YAEH recommends host homes

YAEH participants find that there are not enough shelter or transitional housing beds for youth and young adults in King County, extending the amount of time that they experience homelessness. Young people also want a wider range of housing options. Host homes provide supportive environments for young people to move off the streets.

YAEH representatives believe this program should:

- Provide up to 18 months of housing with a trained community member.
- Be available to youth and young adults aged 16-24.
- Allow young people to choose their host based on compatibility and an in-person meeting prior to placement.
- Allow the young person and host to mutually agree on house rules.
- Pay hosts a modest stipend to offset costs.
- Integrate youth voice throughout program implementation and delivery.

Host homes would not only provide young people experiencing homelessness a safe and stable place to live, but would also offer them the opportunity to build permanent connections and raise awareness about homelessness with the greater community.

[10] Rapid Supportive Housing (RSH) refers to rental assistance with supportive services. RSH adapts the concept of Rapid Re-housing and makes it developmentally appropriate for young adults. See more information on page 12 and in Appendix H.

[11] PRO Youth case management helps over 500 homeless YYAs annually transition to safe, permanent housing. The City of Seattle administers Housing and Urban Development McKinney funding for this countywide program. The Groundwork Project, led by Catholic Community Services, provides wraparound services to support homeless YYAs to accomplish their goals, including accessing safe housing, succeeding in school, and reuniting with family.

what we're doing next (continued)

priority activities (continued)	details
Explore <u>culturally appropriate emergency short term housing options</u> for YA in South Seattle	*Refer to rental assistance program in 'YYA of color' section; see page 15*
<u>Sustain housing investments</u> from 2013 Comprehensive Plan. • Continue **Next Step** rental assistance program.	**Use current resources and secure new funding:** Housing authority subsidies and King County funding committed through 2016. United Way of King County (UWKC) and Schultz Family Foundation funding committed through 2015. Additional service funding of approximately $100,000 needed for 2016. **Partners**: King County and Seattle Housing Authorities, UWKC, Schultz Family Foundation, King County, YMCA
• Maintain **Arcadia Young Adult Shelter.**	**Use current resources:** UWKC and King County have committed a total of $120,000 per year through 2016. **Partners**: UWKC, King County, Auburn Youth Resources

system activities	details
<u>Collaborate with other systems</u> to target interventions and prevent homelessness	
• **Child welfare:** Prevent homelessness among young people exiting foster care by applying for Youth At Risk of Homelessness implementation grant.	**Partners**: UWKC, Children's Administration, YMCA

• **Juvenile justice:** Prevent homelessness among young people exiting juvenile justice facilities by:
  ○ Identifying risk factors of youth most likely to experience homelessness;
  ○ Partnering with King County Juvenile Detention on administrative reforms and development of new programming related to the King County Children and Family Justice Center; and
  ○ Sustaining and expanding evidence-based services in transition planning, reentry and aftercare to reduce homelessness and recidivism.
	Partners: King County Juvenile Detention, Columbia Legal Services, Children's Administration, providers with presence at detention, public defenders, prosecutors, legal services

• **Schools:** Support school districts to improve:
  ○ *Existing infrastructure and integrated systems*, such as professionalizing and building Homeless Liaison Community of Practice and improving data quality in schools to assess homelessness among students and promoting shared data between schools and the homelessness system.
  ○ *Early identification*, such as using attendance data to identify young people who may be homeless.
  ○ *Services and early intervention* to connect homeless students directly to services.
	Partners: Puget Sound Educational Services District, school districts in King County, providers with school-based staff

• Align with and support annual **state level advocacy agenda** developed by the Washington Coalition for Homeless Youth Advocacy (WACHYA).	**Partners:** WACHYA
• Identify process to **collect data at assessment, entry and exit points** to understand exits from systems to homelessness.	**Partners:** Safe Harbors, Department of Commerce, Children's Administration, King County Detention, WACHYA

how we'll know it worked

Going forward, we are recommitting to our annual benchmarks in the areas of rare and brief. In addition, we have learned that assessing our progress once a year is not enough, and we need to ensure that our strategies and measures of success are tightly linked. We have outlined quarterly dashboard measures to monitor our progress with greater frequency.

annual benchmarks

Rare: Unsheltered young people on the night of Count Us In
Brief: Average cumulative number of days in shelter

quarterly accountability dashboard

- Shelter turnaways (agency report)
- Average length of shelter stay (HMIS)[12]
- Average of top 5 lengths of shelter stay (HMIS)
- Exits to safe and stable housing (HMIS)

additional learning activities

- System measures: number of young people entering homelessness from juvenile justice, child welfare, and schools (Data sources to be determined/ developed)
- Success of prevention/ diversion efforts (Data sources to be determined/ developed)

[12] The Homelessness Management Information System (HMIS) collects data on the needs of consenting individuals seeking homeless services and measures their progress towards stable housing and other outcomes.

making homelessness a one-time occurrence

Nearly ¼ of YYA who exit homelessness to permanent housing return to homelessness within two years. We need to get smarter about the characteristics of YYA returning to homelessness and invest in strategies to support young people's successful transitions.

Our goal is to reduce the number of YYAs returning to homelessness. To accomplish this, we will:

- ✓ Develop a better understanding of why some YYAs return to homelessness while others do not; and
- ✓ Strengthen and refine the types of supportive services needed to ensure that young people maintain their independence.

what we've done

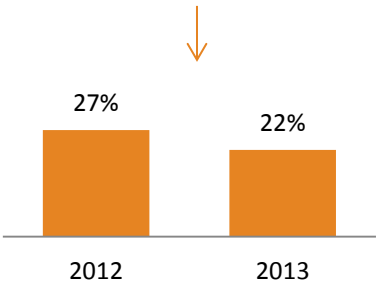
We have sought to make YYA homelessness a one-time occurrence through the following priority activities of the 2013 Comprehensive Plan:

- ✓ **Clear Path to Employment**- Through Clear Path to Employment services at the YMCA, Friends of Youth and YouthCare, over 100 young people are participating in pre-employment activities, job search assistance, internships, and placement in unsubsidized employment.
- ✓ **Housing Stability**- Through the YMCA's Housing Stability program, 50 young adults who have exited homelessness but are experiencing a "bump in the road" are receiving short-term help with rent or utility payments, case management, and connections to other services.

what we've learned

Under the 2013 Comprehensive Plan, our community adopted the benchmark below to measure progress in this area.

percent returning to homelessness within 2 years



The number of young people returning to homelessness decreased between 2012 and 2013, the most recent year for which returns data are available. It is still too soon to understand the impact of changes made since the implementation of the 2013 Comprehensive Plan on returns to homelessness. **Still, we know that too many young people return to homelessness after exiting to permanent housing.**

We have learned additional lessons related to our efforts to make homelessness a one-time occurrence:

- ✓ 92% of young adults seeking housing expressed interest in education and employment services.
- ✓ There is considerable work underway in our region to reengage Opportunity Youth – young people ages 16-24 who are currently disconnected from school and/or employment. While YYA experiencing homelessness are part of this population, our work has not been closely integrated with the Opportunity Youth sector.
- ✓ Housing stability resources are critical; all providers need to be aware of how to access these resources, since young people often seek support through the agency from whose housing they exited.
- ✓ Reducing returns to homelessness is a system-level goal; individual agencies are not able to know how many YYA are returning to homelessness or whether a particular young person has been homeless before.
- ✓ To more effectively understand returns to homelessness, we need to look at data for intervals less than the standard two year period.

what we're doing next

priority activities	details
Continue Clear Path to Employment services • Focus toward YYA who are most likely to benefit.	**Use current resources:** King County has allocated funding through 2016; $250,000 per year. UWKC may continue additional investment. **Partners**: YMCA, YouthCare, Friends of Youth, King County, UWKC
Continue YMCA Housing Stability program • Ensure YYAs are able to obtain support through the agency from whose housing they exited.	**Use current resources:** King County has allocated funding for housing stability through 2016; $130,000 per year. **Partners:** YMCA, King County
Create learning community to discuss what is and is not effective in reducing returns to homelessness • Conduct quarterly case consultations, bringing together providers to look at situations in which young people returned to homelessness. Use this process to also explore successful permanent exits.	*Refer to recommendation to provide clinical support to housing providers; see page 20 of Housing and Access section*

priority activity highlight: YAEH recommends rapid supportive housing (RSH)

YAEH participants find that there are not enough pathways out of homelessness in King County that help young people experiencing homelessness transition successfully to independence. Rapid Supportive Housing has been shown to balance increased responsibility with supportive services to meet the individual needs of young people.

YAEH representatives believe this program should:

- Tailor support services on a case-by-case basis to help YYA find their motivating passions. These could include mental health therapy, chemical dependency treatment, case management, education and employment training, and transportation support.
- Provide approximately 18 months of rental subsidy, with 3-6 additional months of case management and other services to support the young person's transition.
- Be available to young adults, aged 18-24, who are utilizing shelter or transitional housing.
- Integrate youth voice throughout program implementation and delivery.

This program would change lives by giving young people the support they need to only experience homelessness one time.

Note that this activity was also recommended under the rare and brief strategy area. YYA and Advisory Group members agree this model could have many positive outcomes across all measures of success.

system activities	details
Strengthen providers' ability to improve services and measure YYA success by collecting and sharing data • Explore possible data collection and sharing mechanisms, with special attention to confidentiality, scope of information collected, and funding implications.	**Partners:** Safe Harbors, YYA providers
Promote education and employment opportunities by connecting homeless YYA work to the regional Opportunity Youth (OY) effort led by the Community Center for Education Results (CCER)	**Partners:** CCER, King County Education and Employment Resources

how we'll know it worked

Going forward, we are recommitting to our annual benchmark with respect to returns to homelessness. In addition, we have learned that assessing our progress once a year is not enough, and we need to ensure that our strategies and measures of success are tightly linked. We have outlined quarterly dashboard measures to monitor returns with greater frequency.

annual benchmarks

Returns to homelessness within 24 months after an exit to permanent destination

quarterly accountability dashboard

Returns to homelessness in the previous quarter (within 24 months after an exit to permanent destination)

additional learning activities

Success of case consultation process

- Aggregate information to understand reasons young people returned to homelessness

supporting YYA of color

Young people of color are overrepresented among homeless YYAs. Historically, services for homeless YYA have not been located in South Seattle and South King County, where many YYA of color live. In addition, our programs do not always serve these populations competently.

Our goal is that young people of color will have parity in access and outcomes when compared with their peers. To accomplish this, we will:

- ✓ Expand the availability of housing options in South Seattle and South King County, where many young people of color reside; and
- ✓ Improve the responsiveness of all programs and providers to young people of color.

what we've done

The 2013 Comprehensive Plan identified disproportionality for YYA of color as a critical foundational concern. However, while there is strong work underway at individual agencies, our community has not implemented system-wide strategies to better engage and serve young people of color. This is a critical focus of our work ahead.

what we've learned

We have learned the following about the experience of homelessness for young people of color in our community:

- ✓ Young people of color are overrepresented among homeless YYA, representing 50-60% of those accessing services despite making up only 29% of King County's total population.
- ✓ Data for metrics such as returns to homelessness, length of stay in programs, and exits to permanent housing suggest that outcomes in these areas are comparable for YYA of color and their peers; however, we are committed to ongoing monitoring to better understand this issue and ensure parity of outcomes.
- ✓ Youth Housing Connection data suggest that young people of color who receive a housing assessment are slightly more likely than white young people to be referred to housing programs, a positive sign that there is not disproportionate access to programs once young people receive an assessment.
- ✓ Many young people of color who are homeless or unstably housed do not identify as homeless. Providers and YYA report that young people of color may not feel comfortable in many existing programs for homeless young people and/or may not be eligible if they are "couch surfing" and do not meet funder definitions of homeless.
- ✓ There are few services for homeless YYA in the areas in which most young people of color live: South Seattle and South King County.

what we're doing next

priority activities	details
Develop culturally relevant pathways out of homelessness for African American YYA in South Seattle. Create a rental assistance program administered by a community-based agency with demonstrated experience providing culturally relevant services to YYAs of color • Allow support for family/ community based placements and unconventional "landlords."	**New funding needed:** $315,000 per year to serve 30 YYA (20 in rental assistance, 10 in family/ community placements). **Partners:** City of Seattle, community-based agency to be determined
Use racial equity toolkit at the system and agency levels throughout the continuum • At the system level, use toolkit to review implementation of Comprehensive Plan Refresh activities. ○ *Ensure that perspectives of all racial and ethnic groups represented in the homeless YYA population are considered through this process.* • At agency level, provide technical assistance and support to providers in using toolkit to review programs, policies, and assessments	**New funding needed:** $15,000 to provide technical assistance in use of toolkit. **Partners**: City of Seattle Office for Civil Rights and King County Office of Civil Rights

system activities	details

Incorporate input from communities of color to inform the development and implementation of YYA Initiative activities including but not limited to the South Seattle rental assistance program. Gather input on at least a quarterly basis by:
• Improving representation of communities of color on YYA Advisory Group.
• Ongoing involvement of independent community stakeholders, including but not limited to:
  ○ The Mockingbird Society's Youth Advocates Ending Homelessness program.
  ○ Providers working with young people of color in South Seattle and South King County.
	Partners: City of Seattle, Youth Advocates Ending Homelessness, South Seattle and South King County providers

how we'll know it worked

Going forward, we are changing how we look at disproportionality. Our previous goal was reducing the proportion of young people accessing services who are YYA of color. However, while we want to reduce the number of YYA of color who *experience* homelessness, we do not want to reduce the number of YYA of color we *engage in services*. We have adopted a system-wide goal of parity in access and outcomes for YYA of color.

annual benchmarks

All other benchmarks disaggregated by race/ ethnicity; goal is parity

quarterly accountability dashboard

All other quarterly dashboard measures disaggregated by race/ ethnicity; goal is parity

Homeless YYAs disproportionately identify as LGBTQ. These young people may be victimized on the streets and are often not well-served in homeless programs. Our goal is that LGBTQ young people will experience parity in access and outcomes when compared with their peers. To accomplish this, we will:

- ✓ Ensure that services throughout the continuum are culturally competent and welcoming to young people of all gender identities and sexual orientations; and
- ✓ Enhance our ability to collect data on gender identity and sexual orientation.

what we've done

The 2013 Comprehensive Plan identified disproportionality for LGBTQ young people as a critical issue. In 2014, the Northwest Network of Bisexual, Trans, Lesbian & Gay Survivors of Abuse (Northwest Network) launched *Project EQTY* (Elevating Queer and Trans Youth), a three year capacity building project focused on improving agencies' work with LGBTQ homeless young people.

what we've learned

We have learned the following about the experience of homelessness for LGBTQ YYA in our community:

- ✓ At least 20% of homeless and unstably housed YYA counted through Count Us In identify as LGBTQ, compared to 4% of adults in Washington State.
- ✓ We do not systemically collect data on sexual orientation through our Homelessness Management Information System (HMIS), making it difficult to understand the experiences and outcomes of LGBTQ young people in our programs. Although we now have the ability to document this data in HMIS, we are challenged as a community with how to responsibly collect this information.
- ✓ Youth Housing Connection data suggest that LGBTQ young people who receive a housing assessment are equally as likely to be referred to housing programs as their straight peers.

what we're doing next

priority activities	details
<u>Continue Project EQTY</u> and disseminate learnings	**Use current resources and secure new funding:** $40,000 per year has been committed; additional investment of $40,000 per year is sought. **Partners**: Pride Foundation, Northwest Network
<u>Develop a LGBTQ Equity Toolkit</u> • Learn from the City of Seattle's Racial Equity Toolkit and other national work	**New funding needed:** $95,000 is needed for development of toolkit and training; it may be possible to connect this to related national work to reduce costs and align with best thinking across county. **Partners**: Northwest Network, 40 to None, Seattle Office for Civil Rights, YAEH
<u>Use LGBTQ Toolkit</u> at the system and agency levels throughout the continuum • At the system level, use toolkit to review implementation of Comprehensive Plan Refresh activities. • At agency level, informed by the lessons of Project EQTY, provide technical assistance and support to providers in using toolkit to review programs, policies, and assessments.	

system activities	details
Create a <u>regional standard and plan regarding the collection and reporting of demographic information</u> related to gender identity and sexual orientation	**Partners:** Northwest Network, providers, Safe Harbors

how we'll know it worked

Going forward, we are changing how we look at disproportionality. Our previous goal was reducing the proportion of young people accessing services who are LGBTQ. However, while we want to reduce the number of LGBTQ YYA who experience homelessness, we do not want to reduce the number of LGBTQ YYA we engage in services. We have adopted a system-wide goal of parity in access and outcomes for LGBTQ young people. At the same time, since we do not systemically collect data on gender and sexual orientation, we have identified several process measures to track our success in this area.

annual benchmarks

"Rare" benchmark (unsheltered YYAs identified through Count Us In) disaggregated by sexual orientation/ gender identity; goal is parity

additional learning activities

Process measures

- Develop LGBTQ Equity Toolkit by spring 2016
- Issue Project EQTY recommendations for support for all agencies by May 2016
- Report on regional standard/ plans around collection of data on gender identity and sexual orientation by spring 2016

improving access to housing and matching housing with YYA needs

Our vision is that King County will have a strong **array of housing resources designed to meet the needs of YYA experiencing homelessness** and a **well-functioning system of coordinated entry**[13] that directs young people to the housing or alternative services most likely to meet their needs.

This foundation is essential to making homelessness rare, brief, and one time. An efficient and effective coordinated entry system helps divert young people who can be prevented from entering the homeless system to find other stable housing options and ensures equitable and prioritized access to housing for those most in need of housing supports. It also ensures that YYA are placed in housing that is best able to address their needs. An array of housing tailored to YYA needs and more effective targeting of housing will also reduce length of time homeless and returns to homelessness.

Coordinated entry is more than a program or a waiting list: it is an essential foundation of our system. A strong, functioning coordinated *entry* system requires a coordinated *housing and service* system into which to provide entry.

We understand that a strong, functioning coordinated entry system that provides access to housing and services is only successful when there are adequate housing and supports for young people. We must more effectively deploy existing resources by creating an organized coordinated entry system **and** improve the array of housing available to YYA by addressing gaps in housing[14] and strengthening the capacity of existing programs to serve young people prioritized for housing.

what we've done

In 2013, our community implemented Youth Housing Connection (YHC), a system of coordinated entry into young adult housing programs. Coordinated entry directs young people's access to housing by coordinating their applications and applying a common strengths-based assessment. YHC prioritizes the most vulnerable young people for housing and places them in programs for which they are eligible.

In addition, through the 2013 Comprehensive Plan, our community identified a need for additional housing resources to serve homeless young adults. As noted on page 6, new housing programs including NAVOS's *Independence Bridge* (housing for 24 young adults), Valley Cities' *Phoenix Rising* (housing for 24 young adults) and Friends of Youth's two new group homes in Kirkland (housing for 10 young adults) have opened or will open in 2015. In addition, a new rental assistance program, the *Next Step* program, provides 30 young adults with time-limited, graduated rental assistance and support services.[15]

[13] Coordinated entry, a mandate of both Washington State and federal homeless and emergency assistance funds, refers to a standardized access, assessment, and referral process for housing and other services across agencies in a community. Coordinated entry is an opportunity to streamline access to housing and services and place clients, rather than programs, at the center of the system.

[14] See recommendations for Rapid Supportive Housing, host homes, and rental assistance in South Seattle on pages 8 and 15.

[15] All of these housing options have been developed in partnership with our local housing authorities, who have used federal resources to create 80 new housing subsidies dedicated to serve homeless young adults. Seattle and King County Housing Authorities both have Moving to Work status with the US Department of Housing and Urban Development, allowing them to use federal funding for innovative, locally-designed strategies to more effectively address homelessness in the community.

what we've learned

Our community has learned a number of lessons through the first two years of implementing coordinated entry for YA:

- ✓ The YHC system and processes are complex, resulting in long referral timelines and significant system delays between assessment and moving into housing. There are many points in our process at which young adults can and do get "lost."
- ✓ More vulnerable YAs are more likely to be referred to housing, but these referrals are not necessarily accepted by housing programs and often do not lead to the young adult moving in.
- ✓ Many young people waiting for housing have low vulnerability scores and are unlikely to be referred to housing based on our community's prioritization policies. Some of these YAs are living with family and friends and/ or indicate that they feel safe where they are living at the time of their housing assessment. Our current system does not have a mechanism to divert these young people to family reunification and other services.
- ✓ Our system places young people in programs for which they are eligible, but does not yet match YAs with housing programs that have been shown to be successful with young people with similar needs or experiences.
- ✓ Many young adults are waiting for housing, underscoring that our system does not have adequate housing to meet the demand.
- ✓ Our current array of housing programs is not adequate to serve high needs YYA. Housing providers need support and expertise to better serve young people with high needs, and program models may need to be modified.
- ✓ We are grappling as a community with how to balance adherence to Fair Housing requirements with the benefits of culturally tailored housing programs.
- ✓ Our coordinated entry database is not integrated with our HMIS, which means we are not able to see the whole picture of a young person's experience from assessment to housing to exit, and, in some cases, to housing again.

what we're doing next

priority activities	details
Improve access by strengthening YHC functioning • **Standardize eligibility criteria** for YYA housing programs. • **Streamline and decentralize housing assessment process**. • **Increase successful referrals through the coordinated entry system**, eliminating the need for work-arounds and fallback strategies to fill units.	**Use current resources and secure new funding**: Funding is allocated for YHC through June 2016. As part of our community's conversations about coordinated entry for all populations, we are working to determine the costs of a well-functioning coordinated entry system and to identify sustainable funding. **Partners:** CEH, funders, housing providers
Refine prioritization and matching • Develop community-wide agreement on **prioritization** of YYA most in need of housing supports. • Refer young adults to housing programs based on YYA **typology**. • Ensure **matching in culturally specific programming for special populations** where possible, consistent with Fair Housing requirements and prioritization.	

what we're doing next (continued)

priority activities (continued)	details
Support YYA who are in and waiting for housing • **Increase capacity of housing programs to support YYA who are prioritized for housing,** beginning with training to strengthen clinical capacity to serve young people with high needs. • Increase case management and other capacity to **support YYA who are not able to immediately move into a housing program.**	**Use current resources and secure new funding**: $13,500 to pilot training for housing providers and begin case consultations **Partners:** To be determined; community partner with clinical expertise

system activities	details
Align with and support the Committee to End Homelessness vision for coordinated entry for all populations	**Partners:** CEH, Safe Harbors, funders, housing providers
Strengthen prevention and diversion to keep those we can from entering the homeless YYA system	
Increase and diversify community-wide YYA housing stock • Direct resources to address regional gaps, align with the needs of YYA based on typology analysis, and build on local and national best practice models.	
Integrate YHC database with HMIS • Continue working on additional database functionality	

how we'll know it worked

continuous improvement

Metrics to track the impacts of these changes are in development and will be monitored on a monthly or quarterly basis, as appropriate. We will use the principles and concepts of improvement science to know if the changes we make have positive impacts on young people and we will implement strategic adjustments as needed.

We will be monitoring to determine whether or not:

- The number of assessments completed meets the needs of homeless and unstably housed young adults across the county.
- Assessment data quality remains high.
- Timelines for young adults at all stages of the YHC process are decreased.
- Occupancy rates in YYA housing programs are high.
- Mobility requests are decreased.[16]
- An increased percentage of YHC referrals are successful.
- YYA of color and LGBTQ YYA are referred to and enter housing programs at the same rate as their peers.

[16] Our goal is that young people will be better matched to housing programs, increasing retention rates. This cannot be measured until HMIS and our coordinated entry database are linked; tracking mobility requests is intended as a proxy.

how will we work together to make YYA homelessness rare, brief, & one-time?

We know that making YYA homelessness rare, brief, and one-time for all will require more than a patchwork of new services. It will take strengthening the key system and foundational changes we've already put in place in King County.

community to end homelessness

Echoing the CEH Strategic Plan, we know that **it will take the entire *Community to End Homelessness***. Our regional effort is characterized by unprecedented levels of collaboration and dialogue across a diverse group of stakeholders and we are collectively committed to engagement across all partners:

- ✓ **Young people**: We will continue to work with active guidance from YYA who are experiencing or have experienced homelessness (*see page 5*).
- ✓ **Providers:** Agencies are working together in unprecedented ways, and our regional effort will continue to support service providers as they collaborate to make homelessness rare, brief, and one-time.
- ✓ **Funders:** YYA homelessness is a community issue requiring a mix of public and private funding coordinated toward interventions and strategies that work. An active *YYA Funders Group* made up of private and public funders continues to come together regularly to better understand YYA issues and coordinate investments. At least $5 million in new public and private funds have been dedicated to prevention, data collection and coordination since 2011. Funders have also collaborated to *align outcomes*. Future work across funders needs to include closer coordination of funding and outcomes, outreach to additional funders, and stronger advocacy and communications.
- ✓ **Other systems:** We know we need to do more to collaborate with other systems including education, juvenile justice, foster care, and mental health to address the urgent issue of YYA homelessness.

Improvement science

In 2014, a team of local providers, funders, and system planners was trained in Improvement Science, a methodology for testing and making intentional changes to advance the work we do.

Principles:

- ✓ Every system is perfectly designed to achieve exactly the results it gets. If you don't like the results, you need to change the system.
- ✓ Systems have to account for human interaction and error.
- ✓ All improvement requires change, but not all change is an improvement.
- ✓ You can't improve what you can't measure.

We are moving from a being community that plans for a long time and then implements a big change, to one that follows a cycle of "plan, do, study, act" with the goal of constantly improving how we serve young people experiencing homelessness.

creating a learning community

Our community is committed to using data to inform decisions, bringing providers and funders together to learn, and making continuous improvement in how we serve young people experiencing homelessness. In this next phase of our work, our community will continue to learn together and strengthen our use of data.

The measures we will use to assess progress in each of the strategic areas have been detailed in the previous section. In each of these areas, we have outlined:

✓ **Annual benchmarks**: We are recommitting to the annual benchmarks in the 2013 Comprehensive Plan, with changes in how we look at disproportionality. These annual benchmarks are the overall measures by which the success of our plan will be measured.

✓ **Quarterly dashboards**: *We have learned that assessing our progress once a year is not enough*, and we need to ensure that our strategies and measures of success are tightly linked. Quarterly dashboards will allow us to assess the progress of our strategies under the Comprehensive Plan Refresh with greater frequency and focus. By reviewing data quarterly, we will be able to more quickly identify areas of progress and challenges and modify our strategies as appropriate in a more timely way (*see draft quarterly dashboard in Appendix G).*

✓ **Additional learning activities:** In some areas, additional learning activities have been identified. These include measures to be developed and those we hope will provide us a deeper understanding of system dynamics and trends.

how will we work together to make YYA homelessness rare, brief, & one-time? (cont)

In addition to measuring our progress regularly, we will continue to work toward becoming a learning community in the following ways:

- ✓ **Use Evaluation Team for ongoing learning:** A group of YYA providers, funders and community partners convenes on a regular basis to review emerging data, provide feedback to the CEH on opportunities for improvement in data collection, and synthesize learning for the YYA Advisory Group. Beginning in 2015, the YYA Evaluation Team will review quarterly dashboards to identify areas of progress and concern.
- ✓ **Invest in evaluation and learning labs:** Over the past two years, new projects including the *Street Outreach Project* and the *Family Reunification Pilot* have created "*learning labs*" as forums in which providers are able to share data and best practices. In some areas, funders have also supported external program evaluations. Going forward, we will invest in learning more about the services provided across our community, the most effective way to target the young people most in need, and how to match needs with appropriate services and housing. We will create opportunities for learning among both providers and funders.
- ✓ **Share data transparently and frequently:** In order to enable learning and the use of data at both the system level and for providers across the community, we will work on increasing opportunities for data sharing and transparency. This increased openness will be balanced with careful consideration of the privacy rights of the young people we work with and the value of what is shared. The YYA Initiative has a track record of sharing data whether or not the story it tells is positive; we believe this is critical to improving our efforts to end YYA homelessness and commit to this ongoing transparency.
- ✓ **Use new tools to project improvement and set goals:** The CEH Strategic Plan sets a goal of ten percent annual improvement for each outcome, and local funder contracts with providers include annual program targets in line with our system goals. Across CEH, these goals will be refined by year-end 2015 through analysis at the population level and use of a new National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH) System Wide Analytics and Projection (SWAP) suite of tools.[17] The tools model program and population changes to assist communities with projecting improvements to system outcomes. The tools will provide us with information we will use to realign our funding and programming to identify resource gaps, by program type and population, and set implementation plans to achieve our goals.

[17] Focus Strategies, under contract with NAEH, developed a suite of tools they call System Wide Analytics and Projection (SWAP) Tools. CEH will be using these tools to project what policy changes will make the most impact.

Appendix A: Overview of Priority Activities of 2013 Comprehensive Plan to Prevent and End Youth and Young Adult Homelessness by 2020

The 2013 Comprehensive Plan outlined the following priority activities designed to address key gaps in the areas of prevention and early intervention, housing and supportive services. Our community—public and private funders, and providers from across King County—has come together to implement these priority activities as outlined below.

prevention and early intervention		
strengthen family reunification →	*Family Reunification Pilot* (Catholic Community Services)	50 young people receiving services to strengthen connections with their families and natural supports and exit stably housed. Family engagement training across the continuum.
	Project SAFE (YouthCare)	Phone-based clinical consultation for parents and caregivers of 50 youth ages 12-17 at risk of running away or who have already run. Family engagement case management to 25 young people ages 12-24 and their families.
Housing		
address housing gaps →	*Arcadia Shelter* (Auburn Youth Resources)	12 bed shelter in Auburn, the first young adult shelter in South King County.
	Independence Bridge (NAVOS)	Housing for 24 high needs young adults (opened late 2014).
	Phoenix Rising (Valley Cities)	Housing program for 24 high needs young adults (under construction; opening late 2015).
offer rental assistance with supports →	*Next Step* (YMCA)	30+ young adults receiving time-limited, graduated rental assistance with support services through partnership between local housing authorities and private dollars.
supportive services		
create clear paths to employment →	*Clear Path to Employment* (YMCA)	Employment services, including pre-employment activities, job search assistance, internships, and placement in unsubsidized employment for 32 young people.
	Clear Path to Employment (Friends of Youth and YouthCare)	Employment services for 80 YYA, addressing a critical gap by making employment services available to homeless young people in East King County.
create housing stability teams →	*Housing Stability* (YMCA)	50 young adults who have exited homelessness but are experiencing a "bump in the road" can receive short-term help with rent or utility payments, case management, and connections to other services.

This appendix, as well as sections in the body of the plan entitled "what we've done", report on the implementation of the priority activities of the 2013 Comprehensive Plan. Our community has also implemented numerous programs and related activities not specifically mentioned in the 2013 Comprehensive Plan, including but not limited to the development of two Friends of Youth group homes in Kirkland in 2014, providing housing for 10 high needs young adults, and the expansion of National Safe Place to a regional model.

Appendix B: Comprehensive Plan Refresh Planning Process

The calendar below details the Comprehensive Plan Refresh planning process in late 2014 and early 2015. On the following pages, the key groups involved in the planning process [the YYA Advisory Group, the YYA Evaluation Team, the YHC Transition Team and Youth Advocates Ending Homelessness] are described and individuals who contributed to the Plan Refresh are identified.

	COMMITTEE TO END HOMELESSNESS INITIATIVE	YOUTH ADVOCATES ENDING HOMELESSNESS (YAEH) PROGRAM
September – December 2014	**Evaluation Team** • Synthesis of relevant data **Advisory Group planning meetings (including additional stakeholders)** • What we know • How we measure progress • Initial ideas for solutions	**U-District YAEH Chapter meeting** • Pick benchmark to focus on • Initial brainstorming **Downtown YAEH Chapter meeting** • Pick benchmark to focus on • Brainstorm 3-5 possible topics **YAEH staff meeting** • **CEH staff gives an update on the Advisory Group's next steps**
January 2015	**Advisory Group planning meetings (including additional stakeholders)** • Continued brainstorming • Prioritization • **Update on the YAEH process**	**U-District YAEH Chapter meeting** • Brainstorm 3-5 possible topics **YAEH Leadership Team meeting** • **Meet with CEH staff** • Discuss emerging Advisory Group proposals • Begin strategic thinking and prioritization • Understand the process **Downtown YAEH Chapter meeting** • Solidify one idea
February 2015	**Advisory Group meeting** • Share workgroup recommendations • Receive input • Clarify process	**U-District YAEH Chapter meeting** • Solidify one idea **YAEH Leadership Team meeting** • **YAEH leaders present their ideas to Advisory Group leads and CEH staff** • Hear feedback and discuss **Downtown YAEH Chapter meeting** • Work on presentations
March 2015	**Advisory Group meeting** • Preliminary endorsement of the recommendations	**U-District YAEH Chapter meeting** • Work on presentations **Systems Reform Workshop** • Community partners provide strategic feedback on YAEH proposals before participants give final presentations
	Community Conversation **YAEH participants present proposals alongside Advisory Group leaders at forum on March 12, 2015**	
		Downtown YAEH Chapter meeting • Debrief and celebrate involvement in Community Conversation
April 2015	**Advisory Group meeting** • Endorse remaining recommendations • Understand timeline for review and finalization **YHC Transition Team meetings** • Review of housing and access recommendations **Public comment via CEH website**	**U-District YAEH Chapter meeting** • Review and discuss Advisory Group proposals for Priority Activities **YAEH Leadership Team meeting** • **Meet with CEH staff** • **Invite YAEH endorsement** of Priority Activities, benchmarks, and measures
May 2015	**Advisory Group meeting** • Formal endorsement of final, written plan **Plan for implementation of Comprehensive Plan Refresh recommendations,**	**Continue providing input for implementation of Comprehensive Plan Refresh recommendations.**
Key: **points of collaboration and communication between CEHKC and YAEH**		

Youth Advocates Ending Homelessness (YAEH)

The Mockingbird Society's Youth Advocates Ending Homelessness (YAEH) program gives young people who have experienced homelessness a chance to speak up, tell their stories and advocate for programs and services they think will improve the lives of young people who do not have a stable home in King County.

Between September 2014 and April 2015, YAEH participants have been meaningfully engaged in the Comprehensive Plan Refresh. Mockingbird and CEH staff collaborated to design a parallel process to ensure that members of the Homeless Youth and Young Adult Initiative's Advisory Group and the young people had equal opportunities to inform decisions.

Alongside the Advisory Group, YAEH participants have brainstormed, developed, refined, and presented their proposals for making youth and young adult homelessness a rare, brief, and one-time occurrence in King County. YAEH participants came up with many innovative ideas. Their process was strategically designed so that their final proposals were thoroughly researched and substantiated.

YYA Advisory Group

The YYA Advisory Group advances, guides, and monitors the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan to Prevent and End Youth and Young Adult Homelessness by 2020, including leading the development of this Comprehensive Plan Refresh. Advisory Group "champions" were identified in the areas of rare and brief, one-time, disproportionality for YYA of color, and disproportionality for LGBTQ YYA. These champions were charged with bringing additional community stakeholders into planning discussions and ensuring that the Comprehensive Plan Refresh recommendations reflect our community's best thinking.

YYA Evaluation Team

The YYA Evaluation identifies and prioritizes key learning questions for the YYA Initiative, reviews emerging data, identifies questions and makes recommendations related to data and evaluation activities for review and discussion by the YYA Advisory Group, responds to questions and concerns raised by the Advisory Group, and determines methods for dissemination and sharing of lessons learned. YYA Evaluation Team members synthesized data in the areas of making homelessness rare, brief and one-time and addressing disproportionality for LGBTQ young people and young people of color as part of the Comprehensive Plan Refresh planning process.

Youth Housing Connection (YHC) Transition Team

The YHC Transition Team advises CEH and the YYA Advisory Group on the transition of YHC and the future of coordinated entry. The YHC Transition Team provided feedback on the housing and access recommendations of this Comprehensive Plan Refresh.

Participants in Comprehensive Plan Refresh process

(includes members of YAEH, YYA Advisory Group, YYA Evaluation Team, YHC Transition Team, attendees at the YYA Initiative March 12,2015 community conversation, and additional stakeholders who participated in planning and document reviews)

Name	Affiliation	Name	Affiliation
Robin Amadon	Washington Low Income Housing Alliance	**Aaron Fox**	YMCA
Kristina Aremnakis	The Northwest Network of Bisexual, Trans, Lesbian and Gay Survivors of Abuse	**Ellen Gardner**	Schultz Family Foundation
Christopher Zahyeer Atkins	The Mockingbird Society, Youth Advocates Ending Homelessness program	**Greg Gardner**	Year Up Puget Sound
Anthony Austin	Therapeutic Health Services	**Charlotte Gavell**	United Way of King County
Malcolm Baber	Therapeutic Health Services	**Jenna Gearhart**	United Indians of All Tribes
Ashley Baird	Seattle Education Access	**Megan Gibbard**	Committee to End Homelessness
Anand Balasubrahmanyan	Committee to End Homelessness	**Jesse Gilliam**	Seattle City Council
Susan Barkan	Partners for our Children	**Melinda Giovengo**	YouthCare
Michael Barnes	Lifelong AIDS Alliance/ HEYO	**Bill Goldsmith**	King County Evaluation
Ashley Barnes	The Mockingbird Society	**Brandy Grant**	Teen Feed
Kim Beeson	Puget Sound Educational Services District	**Bill Hallerman**	Catholic Community Services
Alaric Bien	City of Redmond	**Lisa Hanscom**	New Horizons Ministries
Jim Blanchard	Auburn Youth Resources	**Rowena Harper**	Street Youth Ministries
Mary Bourguignon	King County Council	**Matt Harper**	UW Evans School
Holly Braun	City of Seattle	**Emily Harris-Shears**	Catholic Community Services
Kristen Brennan	YMCA	**Erin Hatheway**	The Mockingbird Society
Gretchen Bruce	Committee to End Homelessness	**Clayton William Hefley**	The Mockingbird Society, Youth Advocates Ending Homelessness program
Shallamar Campbell	The Mockingbird Society, Youth Advocates Ending Homelessness program	**Carrie Hennen**	Committee to End Homelessness
Nature Carter	POCAAN/ CURB	**Kris Hermanns**	Pride Foundation
Paul Cavanaugh	Giddens Foundation	**Liz Hernandez**	The Mockingbird Society, Youth Advocates Ending Homelessness program
Sarah Christiansen	Auburn Youth Resources	**Jennifer Hill**	King County Department of Community & Human Services
Hillary Coleman	Seattle/King County Coalition on Homelessness	**Tracey Hilliard**	City of Seattle
Amy Crawford	YouthCare	**Katie Hong**	Raikes Foundation
Kristine Cunningham	ROOTS	**Gwenn Hosea-Mimms**	Landlord Liaison Project
Marci Curtin	City of Seattle	**Steve Ice**	US Department of Health and Human Services
Tim Dyk	Street Youth Ministries	**Roger Iino**	Therapeutic Health Services
Natalie Ellington	Individual	**Tabitha Jensen**	Teen Feed
David Fine	Cardea	**Mary Johnson**	City of Seattle
Susan Fox	Peace for the Streets by Kids from the Streets	**Mary A. Johnson**	City of Seattle
		Kristy Johnson	King County Housing Authority

Participants in Comprehensive Plan Refresh process - continued

(includes members of YAEH, YYA Advisory Group, YYA Evaluation Team, YHC Transition Team, attendees at the YYA Initiative March 12,2015 community conversation, and additional stakeholders who participated in planning and document reviews)

Name	Affiliation	Name	Affiliation
Kirei Johnson	The Mockingbird Society, Youth Advocates Ending Homelessness program	**Kate Phillips**	Street Youth Ministries
Donte "Tyrell" Jones	The Mockingbird Society, Youth Advocates Ending Homelessness program	**Angela Pierce**	Seattle Education Access
Fred Kingston	The Mockingbird Society	**Terry Pottmeyer**	Individual
David Kroman	Crosscut	**Mark Putnam**	Committee to End Homelessness
Ann Ku	King County Evaluation	**Matthew Ridgeway**	United Way of King County
Renee Lamberjack	Safe Harbors	**Rebecca Roy**	Seattle/King County Coalition on Homelessness
Amanda Launay	Friends of Youth	**Sarah Salomon**	Cardea
Catherine Lester	City of Seattle	**Greg Sigrist**	Valley Cities
Sara Levin	United Way of King County	**Anthon Smith**	Seattle Education Access
Vitoria Lin	Building Changes	**Jenna Smith**	Seattle Housing Authority
Olivia Lutz	Cardea	**Margaret Soukup**	King County Mental Health and Chemical Dependency Services Division
Erin Maguire	Catholic Community Services	**Kate Speltz**	King County
Jason Maier	Raikes Foundation	**Damian Spence**	United Way of King County
Courtney Markle	YouthCare	**Emily Stanfield**	Gay City Health Project
Vince Matulionis	United Way of King County	**Mary Steele**	New Horizons Ministries
Erin Shea McCann	The Mockingbird Society	**Chelsea Stevenson**	ROOTS
Council Member Joe McDermott	King County Council	**Samantha Stork**	United Way of King County
Hedda McLendon	Individual	**Jeanea Stroud**	Therapeutic Health Services
Sara Metz	Community Psychiatric Clinic	**Wendy Tanner**	Valley Cities
Courtney Millan	The Mockingbird Society	**Ken Taylor**	Valley Cities
Jennifer Miller	Seattle Education Access	**Jennifer Teunon**	Medina Foundation
Katy Miller	United States Interagency Council on Homelessness	**Jim Theofelis**	The Mockingbird Society
Dwight Mizoguchi	City of Seattle	**Amanda Thompkins**	King County Evaluation
Wendy Nakatsukasa-Ono	Cardea	**Mary Tott**	NAVOS
Ximena Narvaja	Teen Feed	**Casey Trupin**	Columbia Legal Services
Nhan Nguyen	City of Burien	**Amy Twito**	Seattle Public Libraries
Lan Nguyen	King County Council	**Chad Vaculin**	UW Evans School
Nancy Nicholas	Friends of Youth	**Michelle Valdez**	Committee to End Homelessness
Courtney Noble	United Way of King County	**Mary VanCleve**	Columbia Legal Services
Jennifer Pargas	Compass Housing Alliance	**Susan Vaughn**	Catholic Community Services
Shannon Perez-Darby	The Northwest Network of Bisexual, Trans, Lesbian and Gay Survivors of Abuse	**Catherine Verrenti**	YouthCare
Claire Petersen	Auburn Youth Resources	**Liz Wall**	YouthCare

Participants in Comprehensive Plan Refresh process - continued

(includes members of YAEH, YYA Advisory Group, YYA Evaluation Team, YHC Transition Team, attendees at the YYA Initiative March 12,2015 community conversation, and additional stakeholders who participated in planning and document reviews)

Name	Affiliation	Name	Affiliation
Sean Walsh	YMCA	**Danielle Winslow**	Catholic Community Services
Richard Watkins	Giddens Foundation	**Amanda Winters**	Cardea
Pat Wells	City of Seattle	**Margaret Woley**	Building Changes
Derek Wentorf	Friends of Youth	**Lisa Wolters**	Seattle Housing Authority
Samantha Wiese	Committee to End Homelessness	**Josephine Wong**	King County
Montrai Williams	The Mockingbird Society, Youth Advocates Ending Homelessness program	**Declan Wynne**	Building Changes
Kristin Winkel	King County Housing Authority	**Hatlo**	Teen Feed
Danielle Winslow	Catholic Community Services	**Anonymous**	The Mockingbird Society, Youth Advocates Ending Homelessness program

Appendix C: Overviews of Youth and Young Adult (YYA) Data and Evaluation Projects

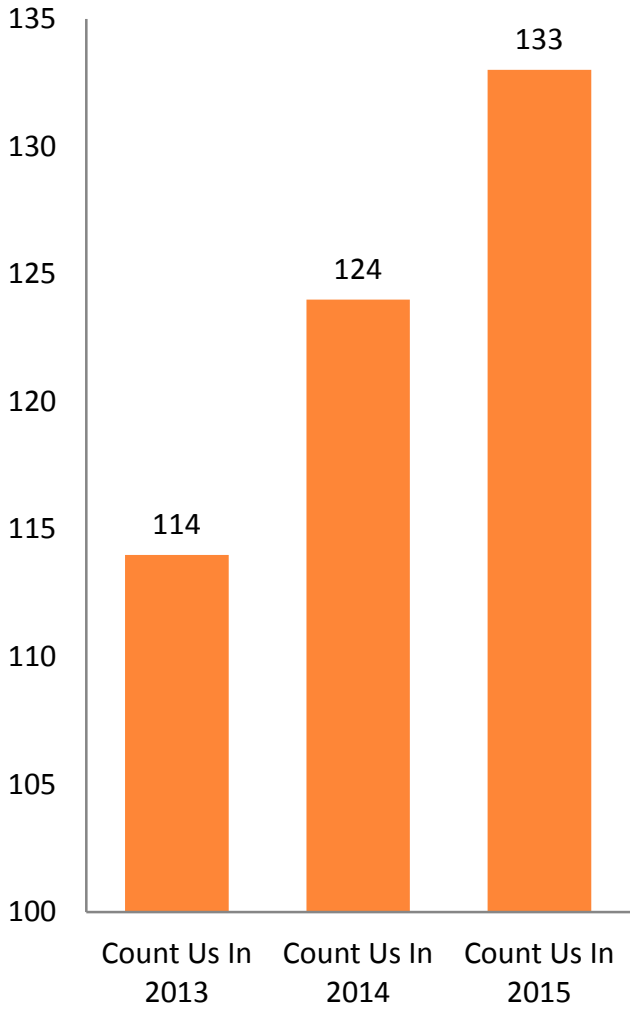
In developing this Comprehensive Plan Refresh, the YYA Advisory Group, YYA Evaluation Team, and other community members reviewed data from a variety of sources. This appendix provides an overview of data reviewed through this process.

- Data related to the 2013 Comprehensive Plan Benchmarks and Outcomes
  - Rare
  - Brief
  - One-Time
  - Youth-Level Outcomes
- Emerging King County data
  - Count Us In
  - Community Sign In
  - Youth Housing Connection
- External data analyses and learning projects
  - Youth At Risk of Homelessness
  - National Safe Place
  - Street Outreach Program
  - Groundwork/ PRO Youth
  - Project SAFE

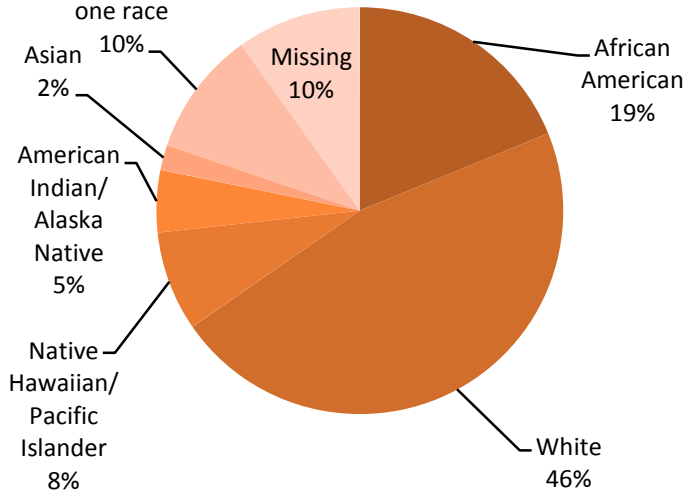
Comprehensive Plan Benchmark: Rare

Background: Making homelessness RARE is one of the annual benchmarks by which the success of the Comprehensive Plan is measured. Benchmark is based on the number of youth and young adults (YYA) sleeping outside measured through Count Us In.

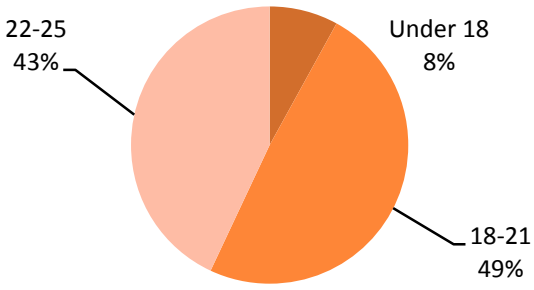
How many young people in our community are sleeping outside?



Race of unsheltered YYAs (Count Us In 2015)



Age of unsheltered YYAs (Count Us In 2015)



How many young people in our community access homeless YYA services?

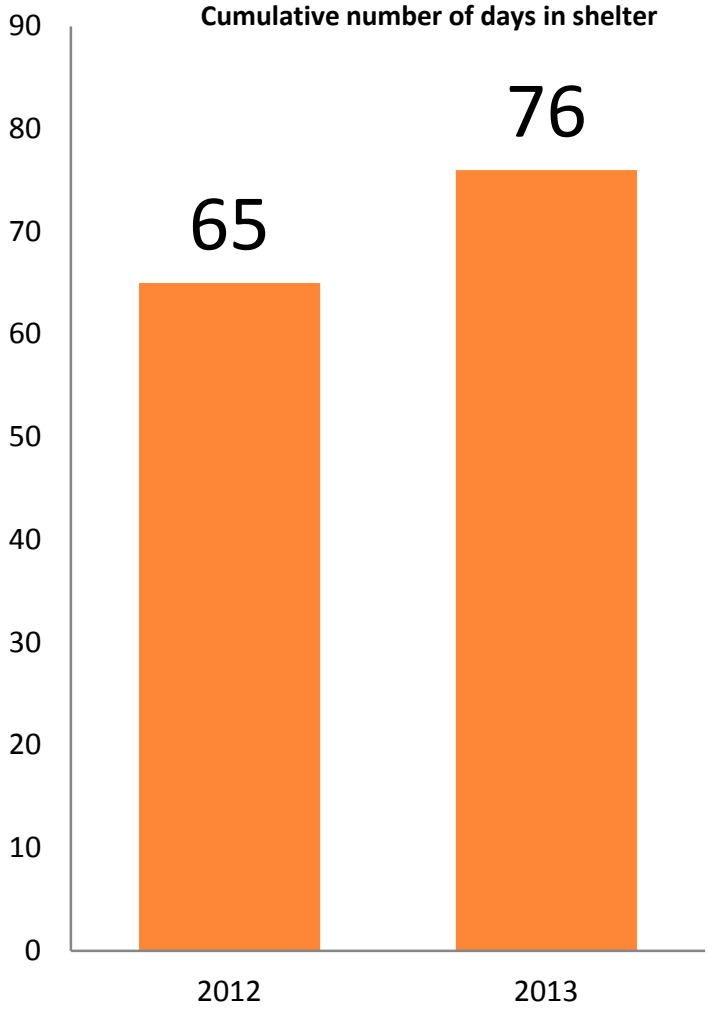
5229 Total YYAs accessing homeless services during a year (HMIS, 2012)

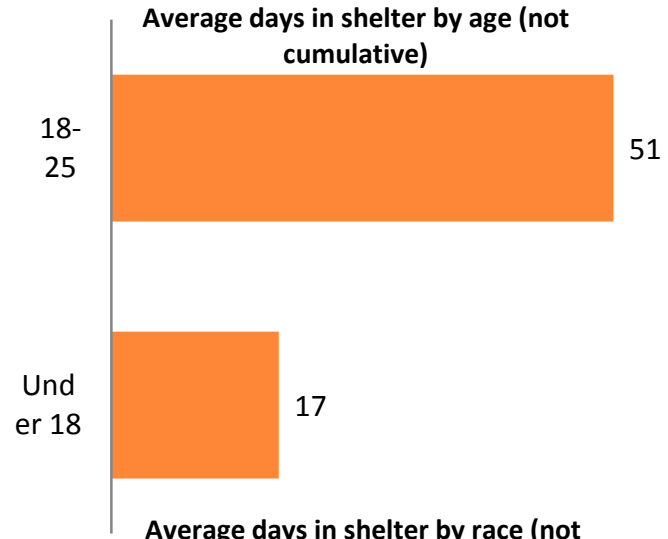
1466 Young people accessing the front doors of homeless YYA programs for the first time (Community Sign In, 2014)

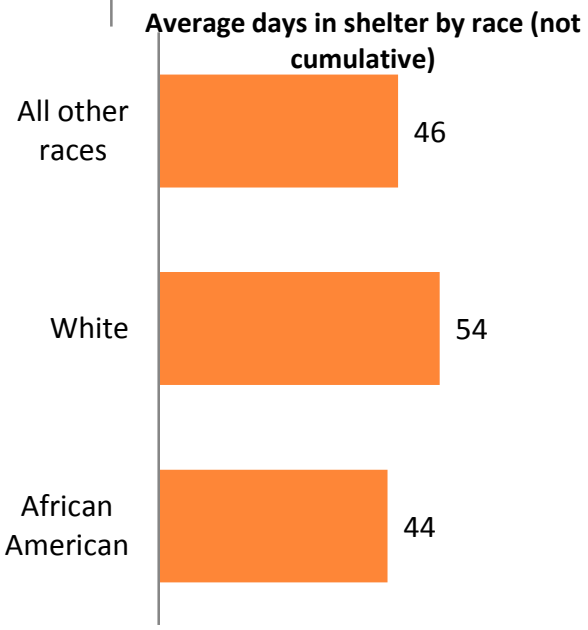
Comprehensive Plan Benchmark: Brief

Background: Making homelessness BRIEF is one of the annual benchmarks by which the success of the Comprehensive Plan is measured. Benchmark is based on length of time youth and young adults (YYA) spend in shelter based on Homelessness Management Information System (HMIS) data.

How long are young people in our community homeless?







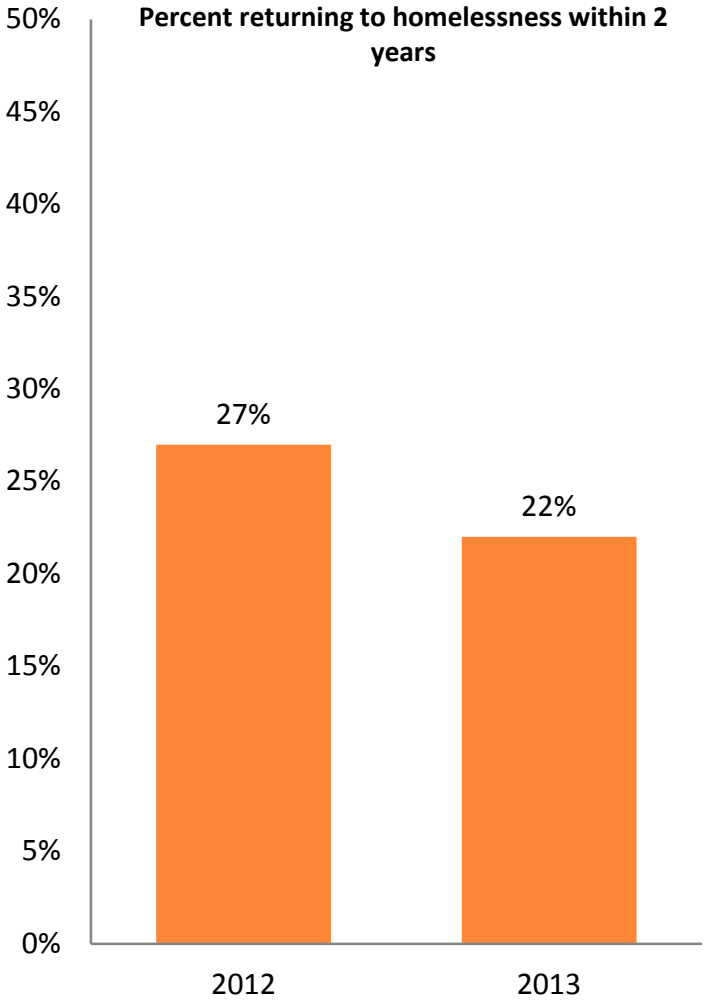
What else do we know about how long young people are homeless?

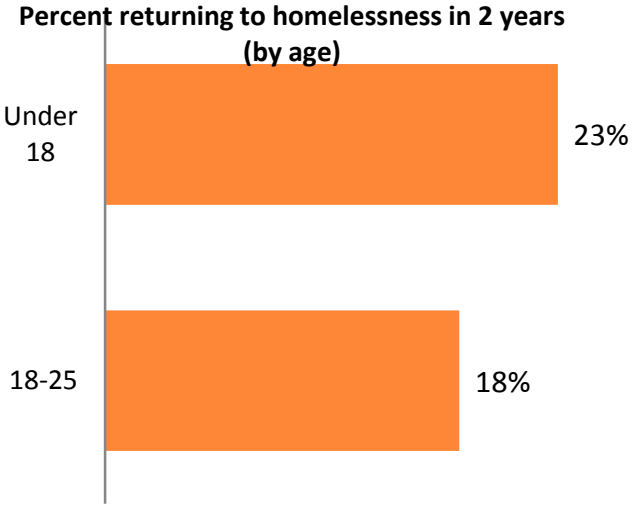
171 Average number of days YYA are homeless including both shelter and transitional housing (rather than just shelter as above)

Comprehensive Plan Benchmark: One-Time

Background: Making homelessness a ONE-TIME experience is one of the annual benchmarks by which the success of the Comprehensive Plan is measured. Benchmark is based on the proportion of youth and young adults (YYA) who exit to a permanent destination and return within 2 years measured using Homelessness Management Information System (HMIS) data.

What proportion of YYA return to homelessness?





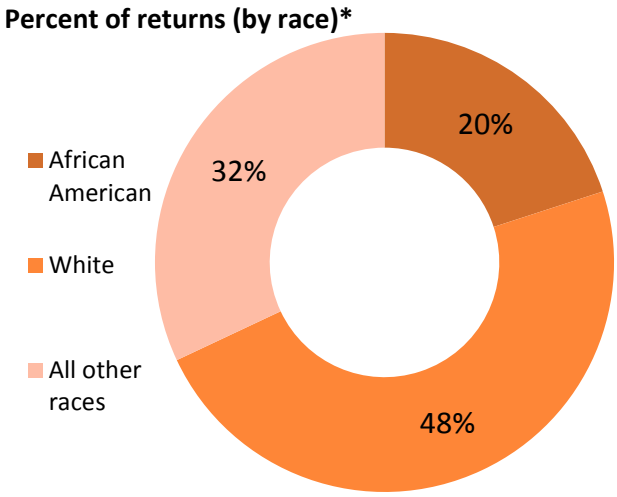


*Chart denotes percentage of all returns by race, not the percent of YYA of each race that returned to homelessness

What else do we know about returns to homelessness?

24% Percent of young people completing Youth Housing Connection (YHC) assessments who report that they have been in homeless housing programs before

49% Percent of young people completing YHC assessments who report that they have experienced housing instability more than 3 times

Comprehensive Plan: Youth-Level Outcomes

Background: The Comprehensive Plan sets forth youth-level outcomes aligned with the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness youth framework domains of stable housing, education and employment, permanent connections, and well-being.

		2012	2013
Stable Housing	*Young people exiting to permanent destinations (or exiting shelter to transitional housing)*	28% ⇨	29%
Permanent Connections	*Young people exiting to live permanently with family or friends*	10% ⇨	7%
Education & Employment	*Under 18 youth employed, in school or both at program exit*	36% ⇨	49%
Emotional Well-Being	*Young people reporting their health is very good or excellent at program exit*	31% ⇨	34%

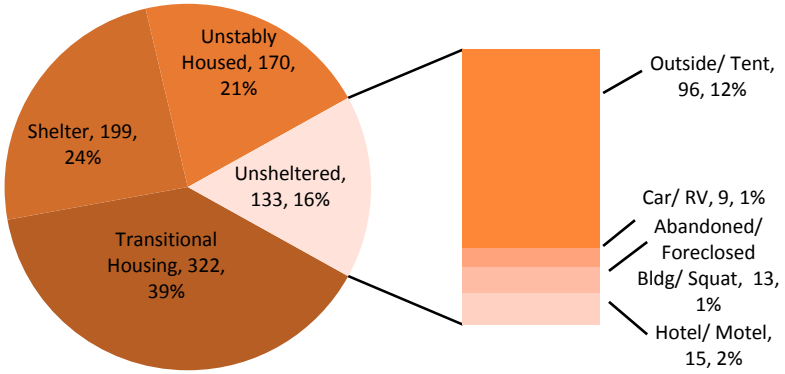
Count Us In 2015

Background: Count Us In is King County's annual effort to count youth and young adults (YYA) ages 12-25 who are homeless or unstably housed. Count Us In documents the nature and extent of homelessness, and builds better understanding about this unique population. On January 22, 2015, King County held its fifth annual Count Us In.

824 → The number of homeless and unstably housed YYA identified through Count Us In.

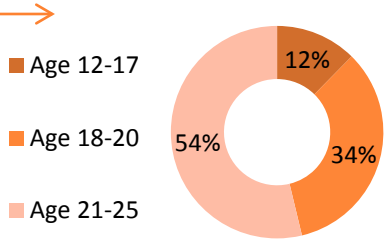
This number includes YYA identified through the Count Us In survey *(administered by partner locations throughout King County)* and **YYA staying in shelter or transitional housing** *(identified through Safe Harbors/Homelessness Management Information System)*.

Housing Status of Youth and Young Adults on January 21, 2015 (n=824)



Most homeless and unstably housed young people are between the ages of 21-25

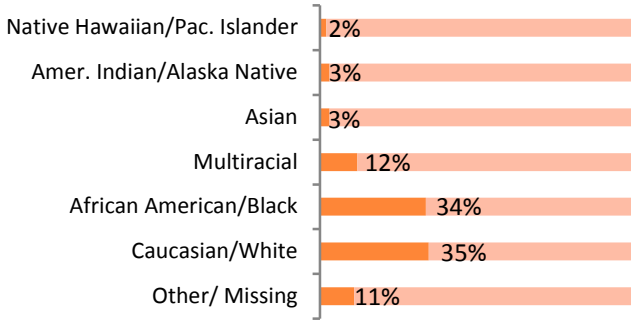
Age Distribution of Homeless and Unstably Housed YYA



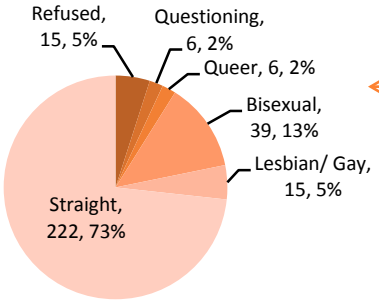
Homeless and Unstably Housed YYA are **Disproportionately Youth of Color and LGBTQ**

At least 54% of homeless and unstably housed YYA were youth of color. This compares to 29% of all King County residents. *This is consistent with data from 2014.*

Race of Homeless and Unstably Housed YYA

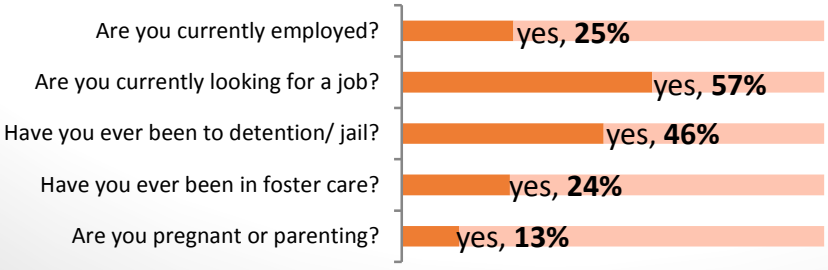


Sexual Orientation of Homeless and Unstably Housed YYA



22% of homeless and unstably housed YYA identify as LGBTQ. *This is consistent with data from 2014.*

Additional Characteristics of Homeless and Unstably Housed YYA

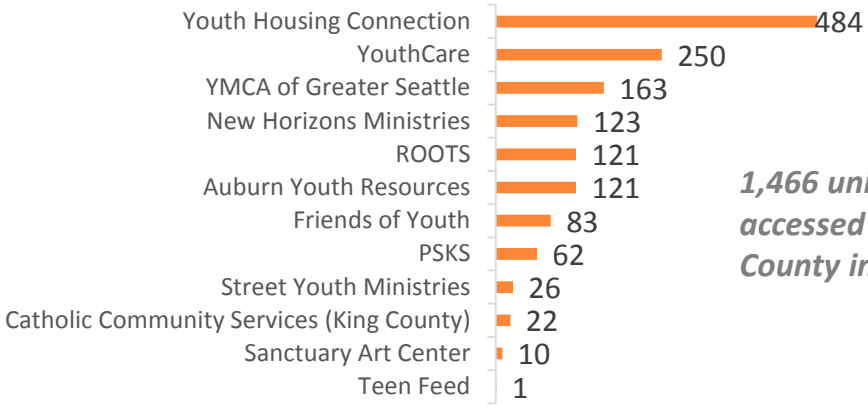


COUNT US IN
United Way

Community Sign In

Background: Youth and young adults (YYA) complete Community Sign In the first time they arrive at any drop- in center, meal program, or young adult shelter in the homeless YYA continuum. The information collected is intended to help us obtain a more comprehensive number of the YYA accessing services in our community, gain baseline knowledge of their housing situation, and potentially engage them in diversion from the system.

2014 CSI Entries

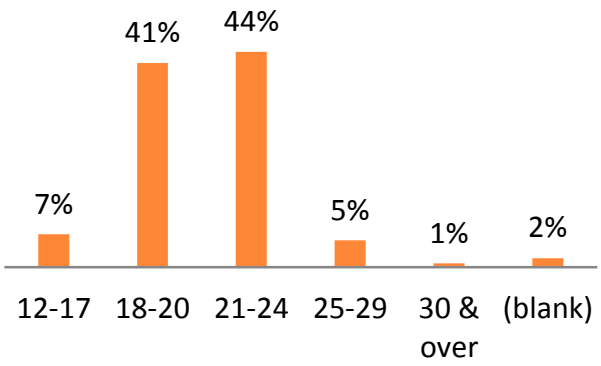


1,466 unique youth and young adults accessed services for the first time in King County in 2014.

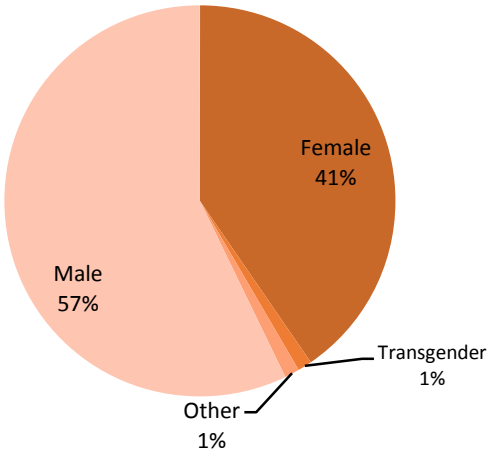
Demographics

The vast majority of YYA entered in CSI are between the ages of 18 and 24 years old. Over half of the YYA identify as males. Very few identify as transgender or another gender at CSI entry.

Age

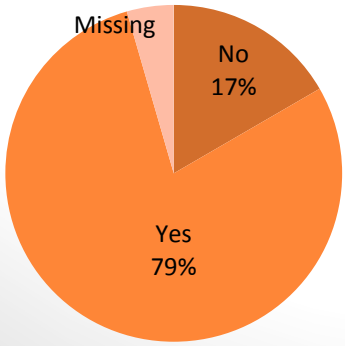


Gender Identity



YYA Engagement

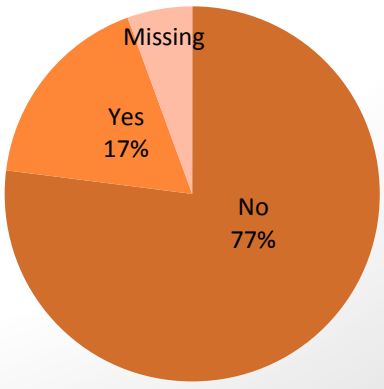
Identify as Homeless



79% of YYA entered in CSI identify as experiencing homelessness

17% of YYA entered in CSI express interest in family reunification services

Interest in Reunification

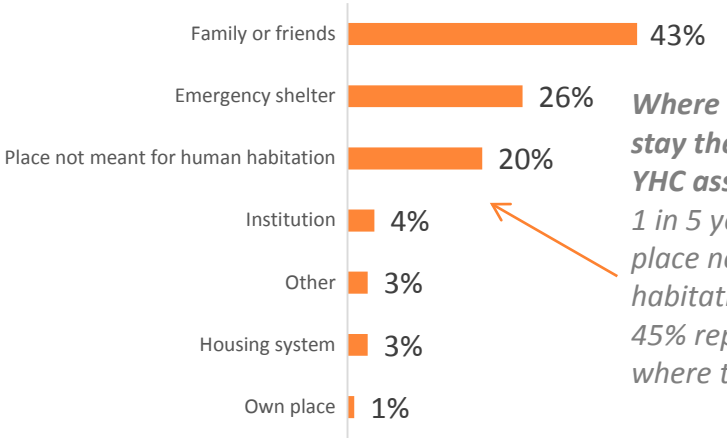


Youth Housing Connection

Background: Since YHC launched in July 2013 we have had the opportunity to learn much more about the young people who are seeking housing in our community.

July 2014 – January 2015	
1569	Housing assessments completed
487	Young adults active in the housing applicant pool
253	Young adults moved into young adult homeless housing programs

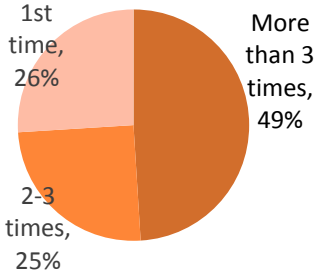
Housing Status



Where did young people stay the night before their YHC assessment?

1 in 5 young people slept in a place not meant for human habitation; of those, only 45% report feeling safe where they are staying.

History of housing instability

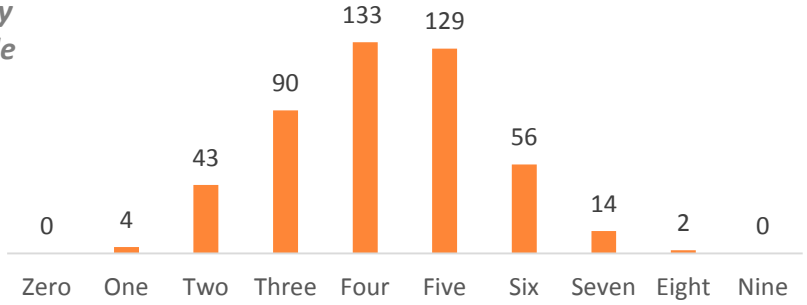


Vulnerability

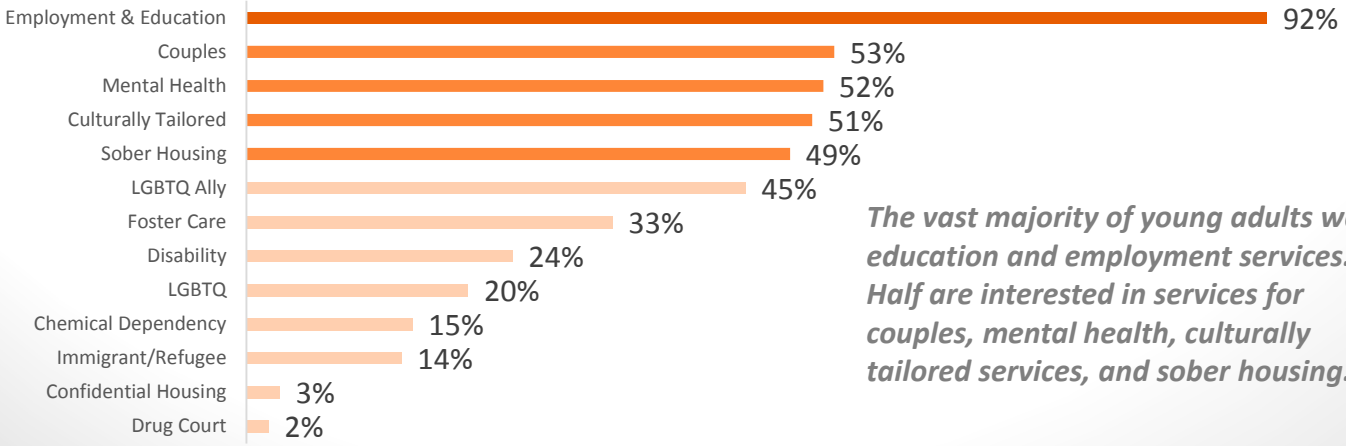
Youth Housing Connection is assessing young people on a wide spectrum of vulnerability. The normal distribution of the curve indicates some degree of reliability of this measurement.

Young people who have fewer vulnerability factors look at least marginally more stable than their more vulnerable peers.

- *More are employed and in-school*
- *More have support from family and can connect with them*
- *Fewer are in a place not meant for habitation*



Service Requests



The vast majority of young adults want education and employment services. Half are interested in services for couples, mental health, culturally tailored services, and sober housing.

Housing stability, vulnerability and service request data based on analysis done by King County Evaluation Unit in March 2014. At that point in time 646 young people had completed housing assessments.

Youth At-Risk of Homelessness

Background: DSHS Research and Data Analysis Division (RDA) used administrative data to determine what factors are most predictive of a foster youth becoming homeless after aging out of care.

34% of young adults who aged out of foster care in King County became homeless within the next 12 months

Race and household composition are associated with risk of homelessness

Being a parent and being African American both place youth at increased risk of homelessness following exit from foster care

Where youth live and how much they move while in placement matters

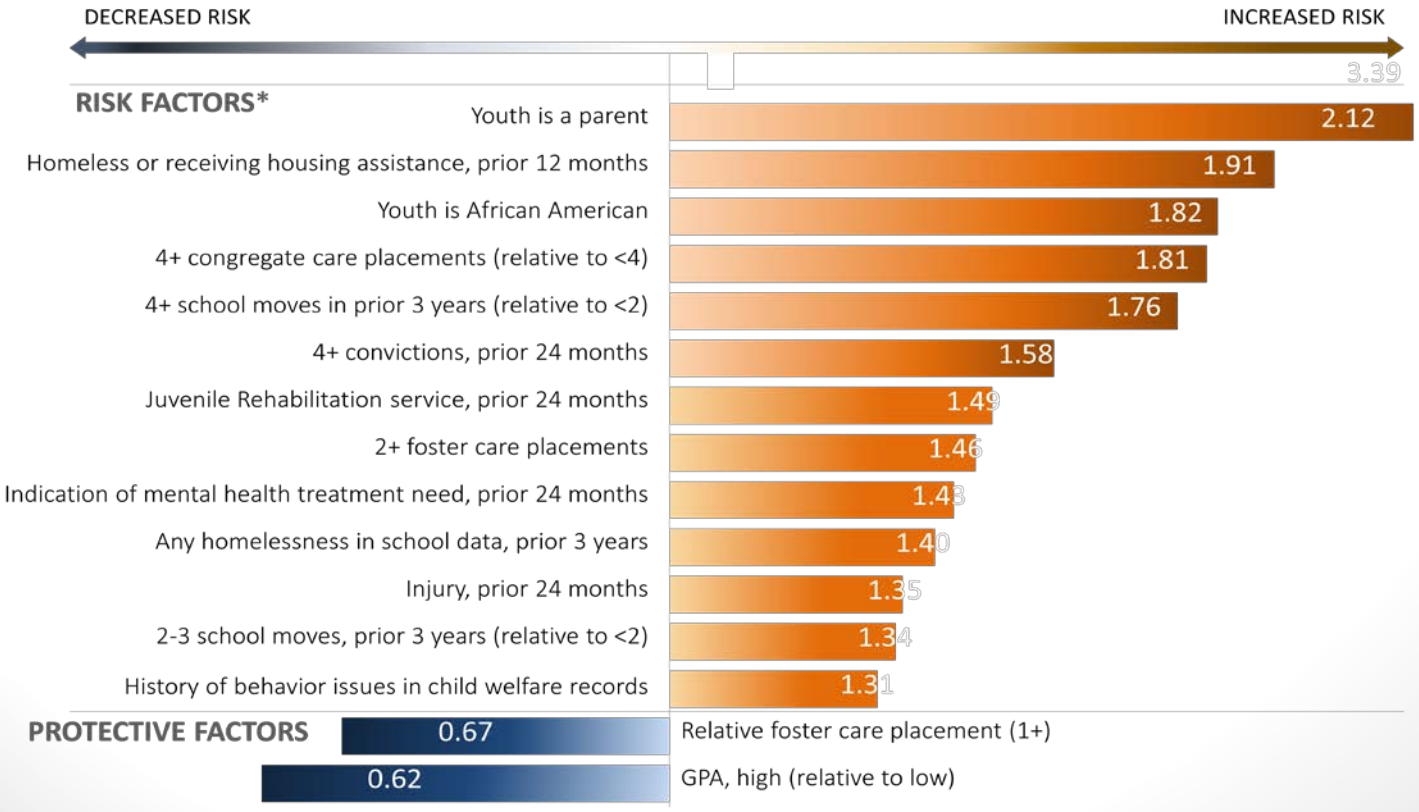
Youth who had been homeless recently, had changed schools a lot, or had two or more foster care placements were at increased risk

Those who had ever been placed with a relative while in foster care had a *decreased* risk of homelessness

"Cross-over youth" –those involved with both the foster care and the juvenile justice system—are at increased risk

Youth who had multiple convictions and those who had been Juvenile Rehabilitation clients were more likely to experience homelessness

Similarly, youth with multiple placements in congregate care, as well as prior evidence of behavior issues recorded by child welfare caseworkers were at increased risk



Shah, M.F. et al. (2015). "Youth At Risk of Homelessness," Olympia, WA: DSHS Research and Data Analysis Division, https://www.dshs.wa.gov/sesa/rda/research-reports/youth-risk-homelessness.

National Safe Place

Background: Cardea was contracted to perform an independent evaluation of the first two years (2011- 2013) of National Safe Place implementation in King County, using existing data collected by Safe Place program staff.

What is Safe Place?

National Safe Place provides crisis intervention and prevention services, including emergency shelter and family reconciliation, to youth ages 12-17.

Safe Place in King County reaches youth through direct outreach and by partnering with 28 local businesses and nonprofit organizations. Together, these partners provide over 1,800 Safe Place sites throughout King County where youth can be connected and receive support through Safe Place staff at Auburn Youth Resources, Friends of Youth and YouthCare.

Who is served?

From August 2011- August 2013, Safe Place provided services to 74 clients in King County. These clients face multiple, serious challenges:

- Many were kicked out by their parents or guardians.
- Over 60% have suffered physical, sexual, or emotional abuse.
- One in four comes from a family that is impoverished and/or lacks stable housing.
- One in five struggles with mental health challenges.

Evaluation Results

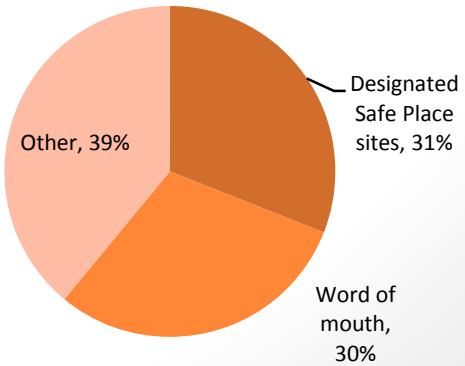
	Goal	Actual	
Youth opting for phone-only consult for whom safety plans were created	80%	87%	✓
Youth opting for in person-consult placed in immediate safe housing/ shelter	70%	86%	✓
Clients reporting feeling safe at 48 hour follow up	85%	100%	✓
Clients reporting they would use the service again	85%	94%	✓

Access to Safe Place

- The large number of young people learning about Safe Place through word of mouth suggests that Safe Place is successfully building relationships with youth in King County.

- There has been ongoing growth in the number of Safe Place sites since the program began. As of April 2015, there are over 200 stationary sites (including King County Library System and Seattle Public libraries branches, Seattle Parks and Recreation facilities, schools, and youth/ family organizations) and over 1700 mobile sites (King County Metro buses).

Where clients heard about Safe Place



YOUTHCARE Homeless youth ◆ Off the streets ◆ Preparing for life
Auburn Youth Resources
Friends of Youth
United Way United Way of King County
Thomas V. Giddens Jr. Foundation
MEDINA FOUNDATION
CARDEA Training, Organizational Development and Research

Street Outreach Program Learning Lab

Background: Cardea was contracted to perform an independent evaluation of the Street Outreach Program Learning Lab in 2014. The purpose of this project was to improve and standardize data collection during street outreach and drop-in services provided by Auburn Youth Resources, YouthCare, and Friends of Youth.

What are outreach services?

Outreach services refers to both street outreach and drop-in centers. During street outreach, agency staff visit different locations throughout King County, engaging youth and young adults (YYAs) and offering supplies and resources.

Drop-in centers are physical locations where YYAs can go to get a meal, get connected to services, or simply have a safe place to hang out.

Outreach engages hard-to-reach YYA

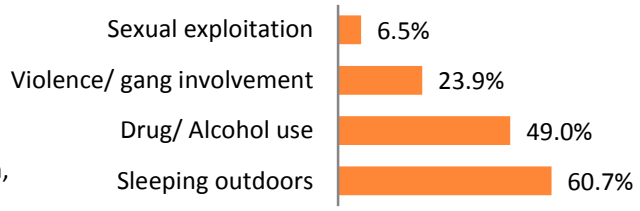
Outreach staff are connecting with a wide range YYA across the region. Street outreach reaches new and highly vulnerable clients who may not otherwise access services. Drop-in provides a place where youth can access basic services.

During a 3 month pilot period in mid-2014, street outreach staff connected with 1,538 YYA in 247 outreach events across at least 19 cities in King County.

YouthCare data revealed that half of all clients who entered services via drop-in were living outside or in a place not meant for habitation, and nearly half had been living on the streets for ≥1 year.

YYA engaged during street outreach are highly vulnerable

Risky Behavior/ Situational Factor
(n= 247 street outreach encounters)



Outreach staff provide direct services

Regardless of whether they access additional services, youth benefit directly from drop-in and street outreach. They receive supplies such as food, sleeping bags, and hygiene kits, and receive services such as resumé help and referrals.

Youth meet basic needs through drop-in services

Reasons for visit (all visits– n=7,616)	#	%
Meals	5,762	75.7
Drop-in (safe place to hangout)	4,299	56.4
Resume/ job help	1,634	21.5
Shower/ Laundry	210	2.8
Other	390	5.1
Missing	264	3.5

Outreach facilitates entry into the continuum of services

Outreach connects YYAs to additional services. During street outreach, staff made nearly 800 referrals during the pilot period. Between 2013-2014, about one-third of clients who accessed drop-in services at YouthCare's Orion Center later enrolled in another YouthCare service.

Key informant interviews and focus groups revealed that street outreach and drop-in services help YYA gradually build relationships that facilitate transition to stability– once youth have meaningfully engaged with staff through outreach, about ¾ of youth receive supplies (such as food and hygiene packs) and referrals to services, and more than ½ are directly linked to services.

Outreach connects YYAs to other programs/services

Number of youth referred to services during street outreach (n= 1,539 youth encountered)	#	%
Case management	202	13.1
Shelter	164	10.7
Drop In	132	8.6
Meals	72	4.7
Employment	52	3.4
Transitional Living	40	2.6
Drug or alcohol treatment	31	2.0
Education	24	1.6
Clinic or medical	16	1.0
Other	45	2.9

Collecting data during outreach is valuable but challenging

Outreach is about building relationships and rapport. Data collection must be carefully designed so as not to compromise this. Additionally, drop-in is a high intensity environment, which makes data collection challenging. Methods to streamline data collection and analysis are critical.

Despite these challenges, valuable data documenting the impact of outreach services were collected during this project. Investments in improved data systems are needed to link outreach to long-term outcomes.

YOUTHCARE Homeless youth ✦ Off the streets ✦ Prepping for life
Auburn Youth Resources
Friends of Youth
Ballmer Family Giving
Thomas V. Giddens Jr. Foundation
RAIKES FOUNDATION
CARDEA Training, Organizational Development and Research

Project SAFE

Background: Cardea was contracted to perform an an independent evaluation of the development and implementation of the Project SAFE pilot by YouthCare in 2014. The Project SAFE pilot in King County began in 2013 and is modeled after Cocoon House's Project SAFE in Snohomish County.

What is Project SAFE?

Project SAFE is a partnership between YouthCare and the King County Sexual Assault Resource Center (KSARC) designed to enable parents and caregivers of at-risk youth to seek support and services in advance of their youth running away or becoming homeless.

PROJECT SAFE
provided by YouthCare in partnership with KCSARC

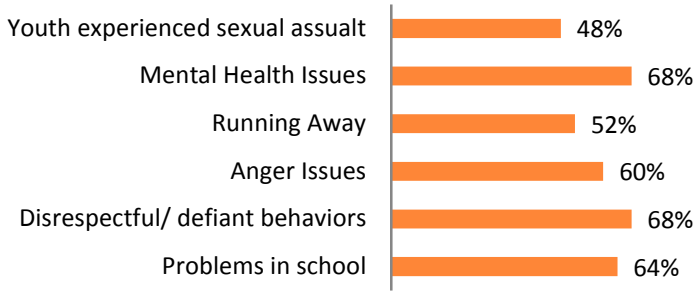
Components include:

- A **90-minute clinical phone consultation** during which a counselor and parent/caregiver create an action plan to support the parent/ caregiver in strengthening family management and parenting skills, understanding adolescent development, and improving communication skills.
- A **brief follow-up call** a week later to assess progress on the action plan, including follow-through with referrals.
- **Family engagement and case management services** that support family reunification and housing stabilization for at-risk youth
- Psycho-educational **parenting classes**.

Who is calling Project SAFE?

- From April 2013- September 2014, **41 callers contacted Project SAFE**. Of these, 25 completed the 90 minute phone consultation and, and 8 completed the follow up phone call.
- **88% of callers were female**, and most were mothers calling with concerns about one of their children.
- About half of callers for whom data were available were **people of color**.
- 71% of calls pertained to a youth who had already **run away or left home at least once**.

Callers' concerns about youth (n=25)



Key Findings

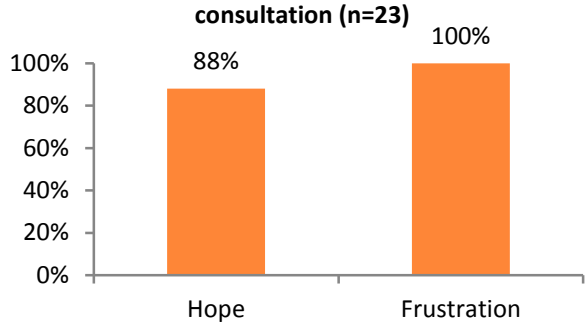
Despite ongoing concerns, callers have positive aspirations for their youth

Aspiration (n=25)	
Happy and healthy relationships	72%
School success	52%
Stop defiant behaviors	48%
Mental health evaluation and treatment	44%
Return home	32%

Callers and their youth were referred to a variety of supportive services available at KCSARC, YouthCare, and other local agencies*. Referrals included mental health services, drug and alcohol assessment/treatment, extracurricular activities, and parenting classes.*

The phone consultations helped to improve callers' hope and reduce their frustration

Percent of callers who reported improvement during the phone consultation (n=23)



Continued outreach and marketing are critical

Project SAFE is still in a developmental phase in King County. YouthCare's Project SAFE pilot provided 25 consultations in the first 1.5 years. Data suggests that investments in outreach resulted in increased call volumes.

By comparison, Cocoon House has offered Project SAFE services for more than a decade and now provides about 300 consultations per year to Snohomish County families. With continued outreach and marketing, Project SAFE is positioned for success in King County. .

YOUTHCARE Homeless youth ✦ Off the streets ✦ Preparing for life
King County Sexual Assault Resource Center
King County
MEDINA FOUNDATION
Thomas V. Giddens Jr. Foundation
COCOONHOUSE Because Every Child Needs A Home
CARDEA Training, Organizational Development and Research

Assessment of Groundwork and PRO Youth

Background: Cardea was contracted to conduct an independent evaluation of the Groundwork and PRO Youth programs in King County. Key questions included: who each program currently serves, what outcomes are achieved, at what cost, and how youth and young adults should be referred to each of these programs in the future. Cardea analyzed Homelessness Management Information System (HMIS) and agency data, interviewed key informants, and performed cost-effectiveness analyses.

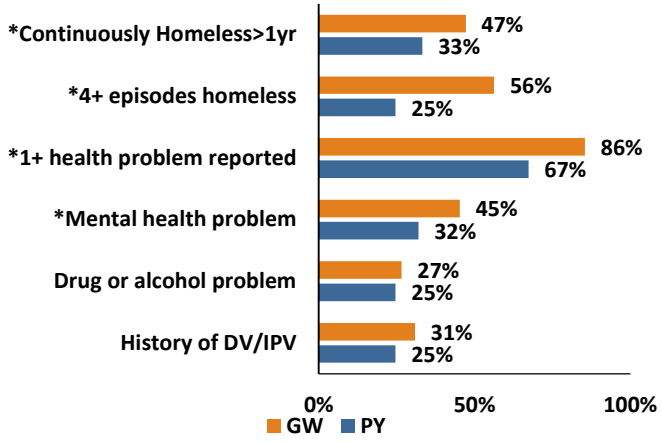
What are Groundwork and PRO Youth?

Groundwork is a wraparound program launched in 2010 that supports homeless youth to accomplish their goals, which often include: accessing safe housing, becoming successful in school and reuniting with their families. King County has two Groundwork providers.

Launched in 1994, PRO Youth is a five-agency, county-wide program coordinated by the City of Seattle that helps homeless youth transition to safe, permanent housing. Trained case managers support youth in accessing housing and other critical resources.

Programs serve diverse youth & show positive outcomes

Both programs serve diverse youth facing serious challenges. Groundwork clients report more challenges.



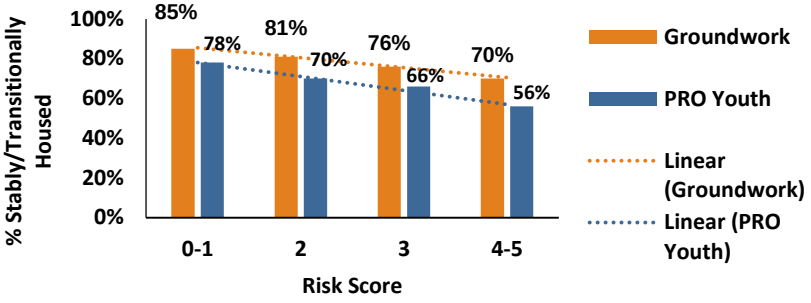
Both programs show positive outcomes for youth. Most youth enter stable/transitional housing and few return to documented homelessness.

Program Outcomes	GW N=205	PY N=1,556
Median program duration	239 days	166 days
Exit to stable housing (HUD-defined)	63%	43%
Exit to stable/transitional housing	77%	65%
Employed at program exit	31%	40%
In school or working on a degree at exit	30%	26%
Return to HMIS-documented homelessness	6%	6.50%

Adjusting for differences, Groundwork clients had twice the odds of exiting to stable/transitional housing, compared to PRO Youth clients.

Data identify youth who might benefit from intensive services

A "risk index" was developed to identify clients that may need additional support to successfully obtain housing.
The higher a client's risk score, the less likely that client was to obtain stable housing. Screening youth at intake may identify youth likely to need some additional support.



Programs are cost-effective in different ways

The programs' relative cost-effectiveness depends on the outcome of interest. Groundwork was more cost-effective per stable housing outcome, while PRO Youth was more cost-effective per stable/transitional housing outcome. Overall, PRO Youth was more cost-effective per youth served, but daily cost per youth for Groundwork was lower than that for PRO Youth.

Programs work best side-by-side

Key informants saw both Groundwork and PRO Youth as important resources and suggested capitalizing on program synergies to support youth in entering housing and achieving stability. Despite differences, both programs strive toward similar goals and have positive outcomes for a diversity of youth.

"The relationship between programs could be strengthened….Both programs are excellent resources that serve homeless youth well."

RAIKES FOUNDATION

CARDEA
Training, Organizational Development and Research

Appendix D: YYA Typology Project

The 2013 Comprehensive Plan outlined the following priority activities designed to address key gaps in the areas of prevention and early intervention, housing and supportive services. Our community—public and private funders, and providers from across King County—has come together to implement these priority activities as outlined below.

what is a typology? why is it useful to our work with YYA experiencing homelessness in King County?

A typology is a tool for identifying distinct profiles of people experiencing homelessness, in order to better understand and meet their needs. CEH is working to move toward a system in which young people are matched to programs based on their needs rather than program eligibility. In order to do so, we must better understand the ideal housing and service continuum to meet the needs of young people in our community. Having a typology of young people enables us to better scope services and interventions, as well as to match young people to housing in coordinated entry. While typologies are widely used for both single adults and families experiencing homelessness, there is not yet an accepted typology of YYAs experiencing homelessness.

background and approach

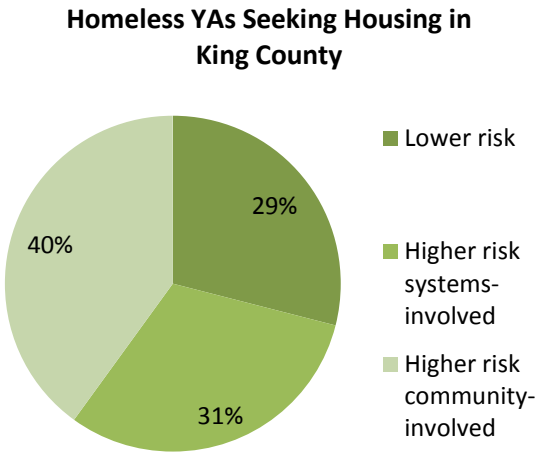
In 2014, King County Evaluation worked with the University of Southern California (USC) on an iterative series of analyses to develop a typology of homeless YYAs. This project extended and replicated existing work on typologies of homeless single adults (Kuhn & Culhane), families (Culhane, Metraux, Park, Schretzman, & Valente), and youth under 18 (Toro, Lesperance, & Braciszewski). The project utilized data from three complementary data sources to give a more complete picture of homeless YYAs: USC's survey research project data on street-connected YYAs in Los Angeles, Safe Harbors HMIS data on YYAs receiving homelessness related services in King County, and Youth Housing Connection data on homeless young adults seeking housing in King County.

The project took place in two phases:

1. A core set of variables with substantial overlap across all three data sets was identified. The core set of variables included risk factors such as substance use and mental health problems, protective factors such as support from friends and family, and information about histories and patterns of homelessness. In each data set, the core variables were used to create cluster profiles of homeless YYAs and post-hoc analyses of variance were performed to validate cluster membership.
2. Safe Harbors Homelessness Management Information System (HMIS data) were used to explore linkages between cluster membership and YYA outcomes in existing homeless housing and services programs.

findings

Cluster analysis revealed that homeless YYAs appear to cluster into three distinct groups:



- The first is a group of lower risk YYAs, who report lower levels of risk factors, higher levels of protective factors, and who are typically homeless only once and for a short period of time. Among YAs seeking housing in King County, just under one-third (29%) are lower risk.
- There are also two distinct groups of higher risk YYAs, with differing risk patterns and profiles depending on analysis. 71% of YAs report higher levels of risk factors, but fall into two groups.
    - One group (31% of YAs seeking housing) is characterized by high levels of systems connections, including higher levels of foster care involvement, greater interest in substance abuse and mental health services, and a greater likelihood to identify a case manager as an important source of support.
    - The last group (40% of YAs seeking housing) is characterized by stronger community connections. They are more likely to report that family is an important source of support, and are more likely to be couch-surfing.

Results of analysis of variance by cluster membership showed that **currently young people are not served by types of programs their cluster membership would suggest**. Both short, light touch and longer more intensive interventions serve young people of a variety of risk levels. Analysis of outcomes for emergency shelter programs revealed that many lower-risk YYAs successfully exit shelter quickly and do not return. Conversely, higher-risk YYAs are unlikely to exit shelter successfully, indicating that shelter alone is likely not enough for higher risk youth.

These findings create opportunities for better targeting our programs based on the differing needs of individual YYAs. We will use the findings of what has been effective for different groups of YYA to inform how we refer young people to housing and services.

references

Culhane DP, Metraux S, Park JM, Schretzman M, Valente J. (2007). Testing a typology of family homelessness based on patterns of public shelter utilization in four U.S. jurisdictions: implications for policy and program planning. Housing Policy Debate, 18(1):1–28

Kuhn R, Culhane DP. (1998). Applying cluster analysis to test a typology of homelessness by pattern of shelter utilization: Results from the analysis of administrative data. American Journal of Community Psychology, 26(2):207–232

Toro, P., Lesperance, T., &Braciszewski, J. (2011). The Heterogeneity of Homeless Youth in America: Examining Typologies. Washington, D.C.: National Alliance to End Homelessness.

VISION

Prevent & End Youth Homelessness by 2020: *Every youth and young adult in King County has a safe place to live and thrive.*

GOALS

RARE & BRIEF	ONE-TIME	DISPROPORTIONALITY
No YYA are sleeping outdoors or in places not meant for human habitation.	*Few YYA return to homelessness.*	*Youth of color and LGBTQ youth have outcomes and access on par with their peers.*
Length of time YYA are homeless is short.		

STRATEGIES

• Center queer and trans youth and youth of color • Strengthen provider capacity • Culturally appropriate housing and services	• Prevention and diversion • Improve housing alignment and access • Pathways out of shelter • Increase young adult stability

CROSS-CUTTING PRIORITIES

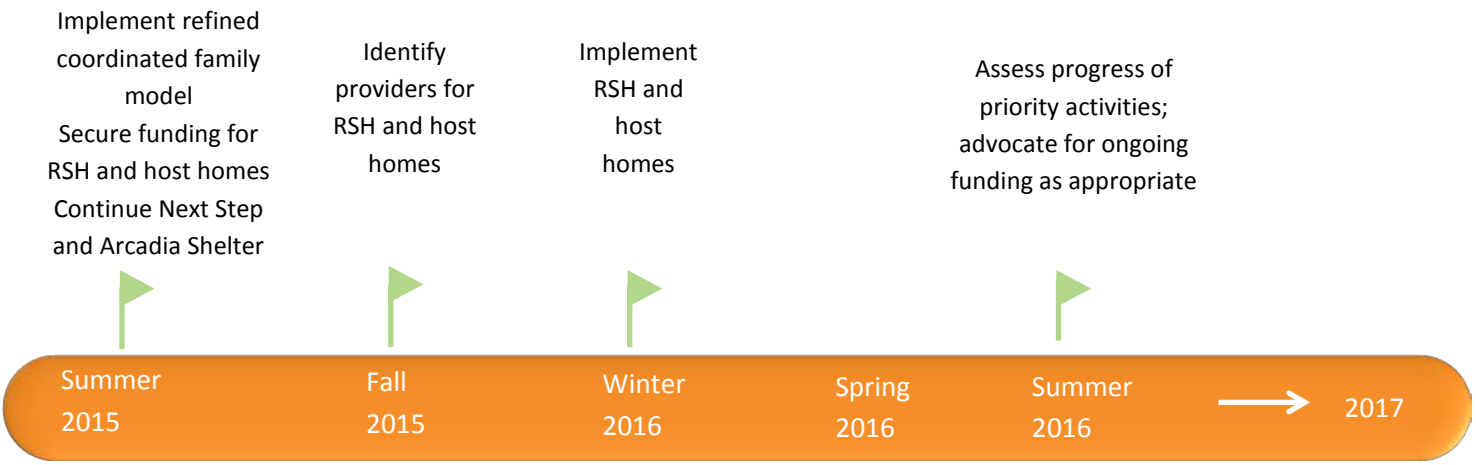
Maintain and strengthen our system	Focus on specific regions and populations
Coordinate with other regional efforts	Invest in continuous learning

making homelessness rare and brief

*summary of costs of priority activities**

priority activity	*costs*	*explanation*
Prevention—family engagement	Refocus existing resources committed through 2016 ($300,000 per year); additional resources needed for expansion in mid-2016	Community wide family engagement model
Rapid Supportive Housing (RSH) for long-term shelter stayers	$250,000 per year (new funding needed)	Serve 24 YAs
Host homes	$200,000 per year (new funding needed)	Serve at least 15 YAs, including start-up costs
Emergency short-term housing in South Seattle	*Refer to rental assistance recommendation, YYA of color section*	
Next Step program	Use existing resources committed through 2016 (housing authority subsidies and King County funding). United Way of King County (UWKC) and Schultz Family Foundation funding committed through 2015. Additional service funding of approximately $100,000 needed for 2016.	Continue current program serving 30 YAs
Arcadia Young Adult Shelter	Use existing resources committed through 2016 ($120,000 per year)	Maintain 12 bed shelter

timeline for priority activities



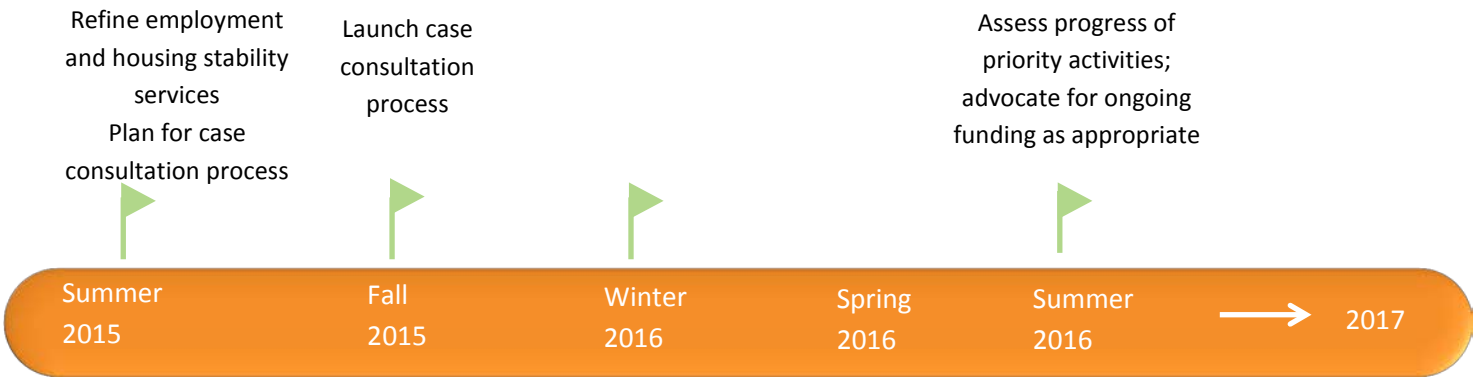
*Shaded boxes denote activities for which new funded is needed.

making homelessness a one-time occurrence

*summary of costs of priority activities**

priority activity	*costs*	*explanation*
Clear Path to Employment	Use existing resources committed through 2016 ($250,000 per year)	Continue and refine existing contracts
Housing Stability	Use existing resources committed through 2016 ($130,000 per year)	Continue and refine existing contract
Learning community/ case consultations to understand returns	Refer to recommendation to provide clinical support for housing providers, housing and access section	

timeline for priority activities- one time

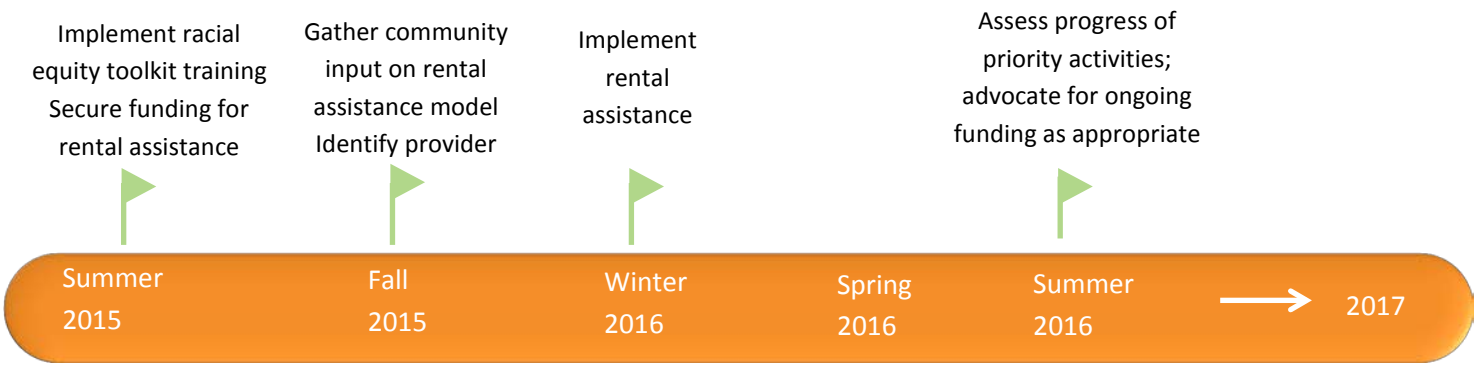


supporting YYA of color

*summary of costs of priority activities**

priority activity	*costs*	*explanation*
Rental assistance- South Seattle	$315,000 per year (new funding needed)	Serve 30 YAs
Racial equity toolkit	$15,000 (new funding needed)	Technical assistance to providers

timeline for priority activities



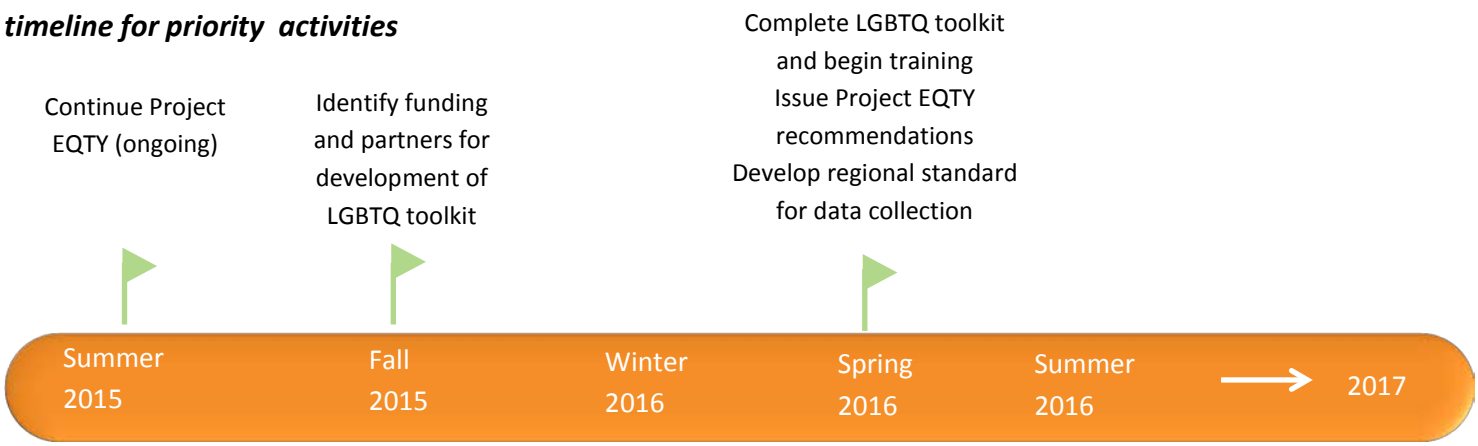
*Shaded boxes denote activities for which new funded is needed.

supporting LGBTQ YYA

*summary of costs of priority activities**

priority activity	*costs*	*explanation*
Continue Project EQTY	$40,000 per year (new funding needed) and $40,000 per year (existing resources committed)	Capacity building for 5 agencies
LGBTQ equity toolkit	$95,000 (new funding needed)	Development of LGBTQ equity toolkit and technical assistance to providers; it may be possible to connect this to related national work to reduce costs and align with best thinking across county

timeline for priority activities



*Shaded boxes denote activities for which new funded is needed.

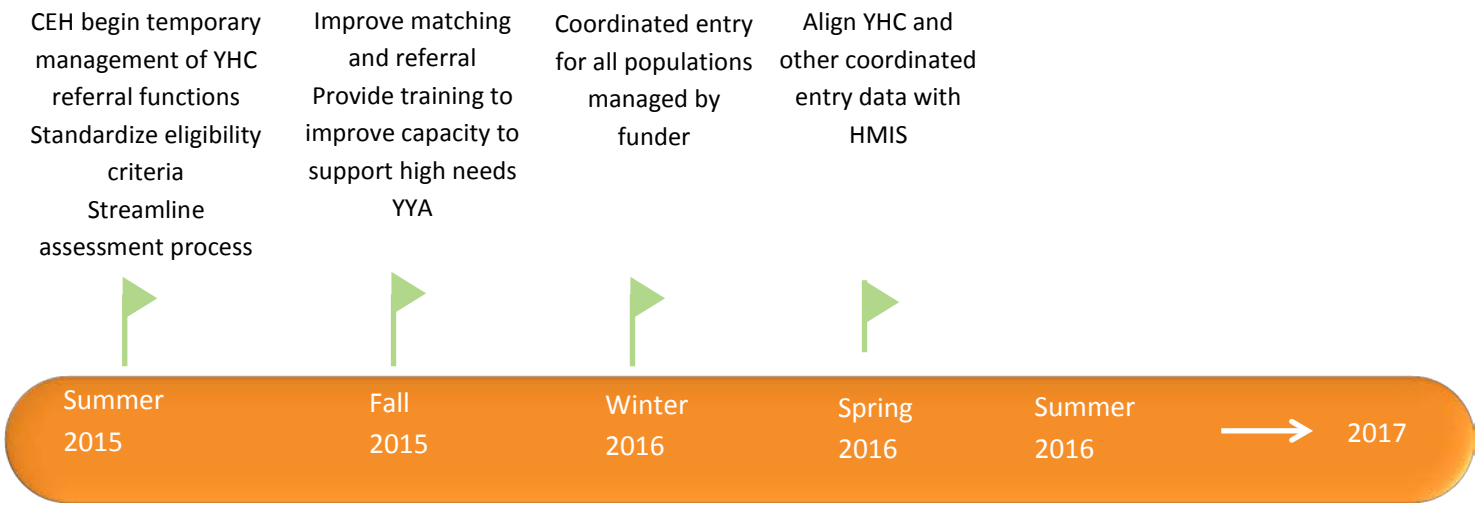
improving access to housing and matching housing with YYA needs

housing and access

*summary of costs of priority activities**

priority activity	*costs*	*explanation*
Improve YHC system functioning	Current resources and new funding will be required. Funding is allocated for YHC through June 2016. As part of our community's conversations about coordinated entry for all populations, we are working to determine the costs of a well-functioning coordinated entry system and to identify sustainable funding.	
Refine prioritization and matching		
Support YYA who are waiting for housing		
Increase capacity of housing programs to support YYA who are prioritized for housing	$13,500 (new funding needed)	Pilot training for housing providers to strengthen clinical capacity to serve young people with high needs; begin case consultation process

timeline for priority activities



*Shaded boxes denote activities for which new funded is needed.

Appendix F: Draft Sample Quarterly Dashboard

The 2013 Comprehensive Plan included annual benchmarks to measure our progress, and this Comprehensive Plan Refresh recommits to these annual benchmarks. However, w*e have learned that assessing our progress once a year is not enough*, and we need to ensure that our strategies and measures of success are tightly linked. Quarterly dashboards will allow us to assess the progress of our strategies under the Comprehensive Plan Refresh with greater frequency and focus. By reviewing data quarterly, we will be able to more quickly identify areas of progress and challenges and modify our strategies as appropriate in a more timely way.

A D*raft Sample Quarterly Dashboard* is attached. Quarterly dashboards will be refined in the coming months. The YYA Evaluation Team will review dashboards on a quarterly basis.

YYA Dashboard - Calendar Year 2013

Unaccompanied YYA Location in CoC Crisis Response System

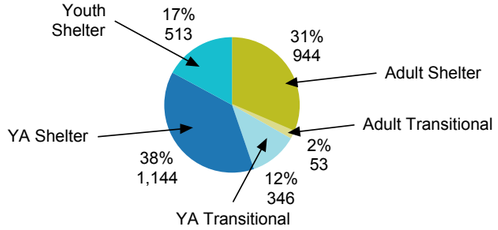


Chart shows proportion of youth and young adults, 12 to 25, entering the YYA or Adult Crisis Response system in calendar year 2013.

NOTE: Remainder of charts on sheet refer only to the YYA system and odo not include YYA served in the single adult or family systems.

Clients with Longest Stays in YYA Emergency Shelters

APPLICATI..	PROGRAM	RACE (gro..	ETHNICITY	GENDER	AGE	2013
23413274	YCOYoung Adult Shelter	White	Non-Hispanic	Male	22	282
26858605	YCOYoung Adult Shelter	White	Hispanic	Male	21	220
10401297	FOYLanding	White	Non-Hispanic	Male	24	195
17358975	FOYLanding	Mixed Black	Non-Hispanic	Male	21	189
26312951	ROSYoung Adult Shelter	White	Non-Hispanic	Male	19	189

Chart shows five clients with the longest length of stay in YYA shelters. For Emergency Shelters length of stay is based on number of bednights used in one homelessness episode.

Average length of stay for top five clients is 215 days.

Turnaways
Young Adult Shelters

PROGRAM	
AYRSouth King County Youth ..	Abc
FOYLanding	Abc
FOYYouth Haven Shelter	Abc
ROSYoung Adult Shelter	Abc
YCOAdolescent_Shelter	Abc
YCOYoung Adult Shelter	Abc

Table shows number of youth and young adults turned away from shelter in 2013.

SystemLocation
- Adult Shelter
- Adult Transitional
- YA Transitional
- Young Adult Shelter
- Youth Shelter

Average Number of Bednights in Emergency Shelters

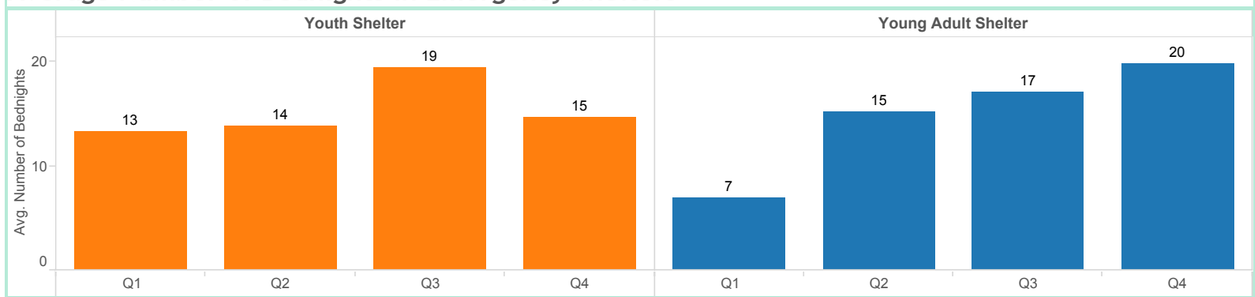


Chart shows average number of bednights per homeless episode in Youth and Young Adult shelters. For Emergency Shelters length of stay is based on number of bednights used in one homelessness episode. Each quarter includes YYA that exited shelter that quarter.

Average Length of Stay in Transitional Housing

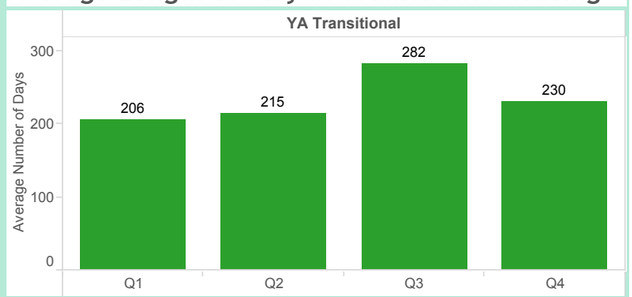
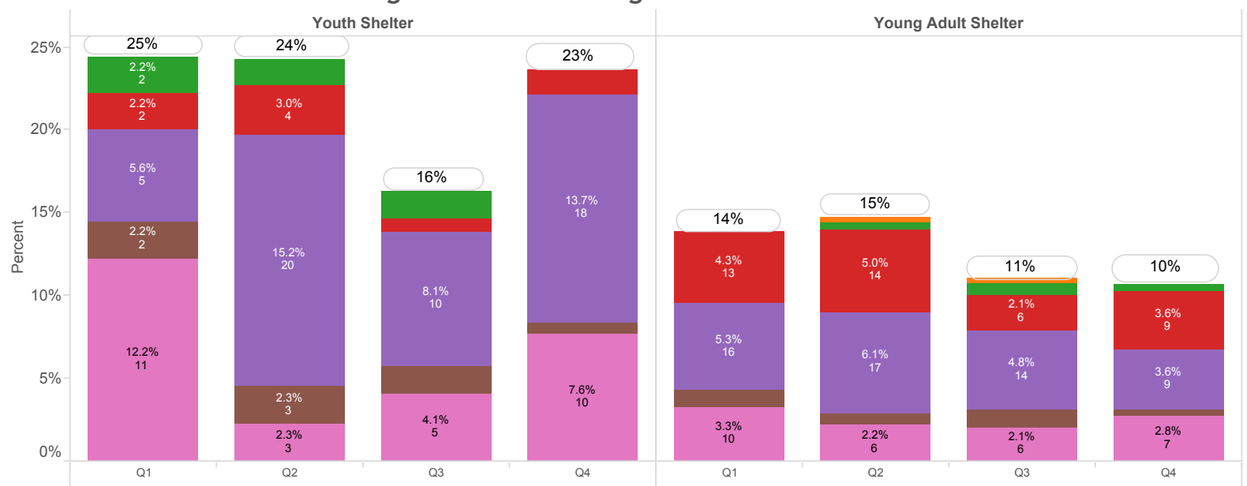


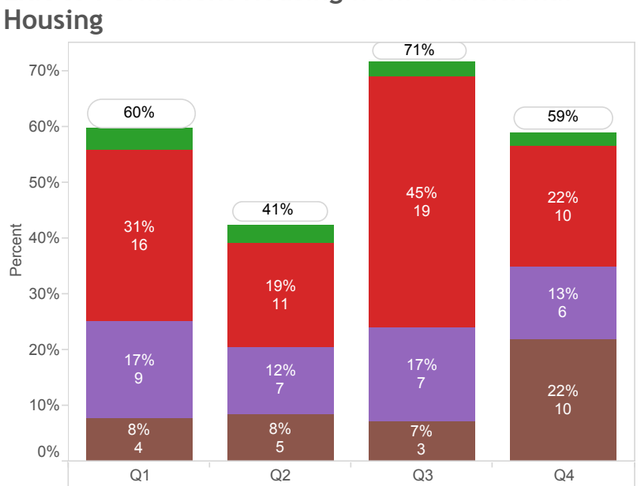
Chart shows average length of stay Youth and Young Adult transitional housing. Each quarter includes YYA that exited transitional housing that quarter.

Exit to Safe and Stable Housing - Youth and Young Adult Shelters



Exits to permanent housing or transitional housing from YYA crisis response system. Percent is of all exits, including those to unstable situations. Color indicates type of stable housing.

Exit to Permanent Housing from Transitional Housing



Destination
- Owned by client
- Permanent supportive housing
- Rental by client
- Staying or living with family, pe..
- Staying or living with friends, p..
- Transitional housing

Exits to permanent housing from YYA Transitional Housing Programs. Color indicates type of permanent housing.

What is Rapid Re-Housing?

Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) services are designed to transition homeless individuals or families into permanent housing. Components** include:

Housing Identification:

- Recruit landlords to provide housing opportunities.
- Address potential barriers to landlord participation such as concern about short term nature of rental assistance and tenant qualifications.
- Assist households to find and secure appropriate rental housing.

Rental Assistance and Subsidies:

- Provide assistance to cover move-in costs, deposits and the rental and/or utility assistance (typically six months or less) necessary to allow individuals and families to move immediately out of homelessness and to stabilize in permanent housing.

Case Management and Services:

- Case management is voluntary and client-directed.
- Identify and assist in the selection of various permanent housing options based on the program participant's unique situation.
- Address issues that may impede access to housing (such as credit history, utility or other debt, and legal issues) and connect with resources as needed and appropriate, including employment support.
- Negotiate manageable lease agreements with landlords.
- Make appropriate and time-limited supports available to allow program participants to stabilize quickly into permanent housing.
- Monitor participants' housing stability and be available to help resolve crises.

Tailoring Rapid Re-Housing to Young Adults

Provide approximately 6-12 months (up to 24 months total) of rental subsidy and case management.

- Tailor case management services on a case-by-case basis, including the following potential service referrals: mental health, chemical dependency treatment, education and employment training, and transportation support.
- Be available to young adults accessing shelter or transitional housing, aged 18-24.
- Integrate youth voice throughout program implementation and delivery.
- Additional considerations:
    - Young adults usually lack the rental and/or employment histories that older adults have, which can be both a disadvantage and an advantage. Introducing the risk of an eviction is a concern.
    - Aftercare follow-up may be more extensive for young adults than for older adults.
    - Young adult permanent housing outcome are more likely to include living with family, roommates, etc.

*Throughout the Comprehensive Plan Refresh, "Rapid Supportive Housing" is referenced, a term coined by YAEH, referring to YYA-appropriate rapid re-housing.

**NAEH, Core Components of Rapid Re-Housing, 2014. http://www.endhomelessness.org/library/entry/rapid-re-housing2

Literature Review

While ongoing research is needed, particularly with the young adult population, thus far rapid re-housing appears to have encouraging outcomes:

- decreased length of homelessness,
- fewer returns to homelessness,
- lower costs per household than other interventions, and
- decreased homelessness in communities.

RRH Programs by the Numbers

	Young Adult Programs	Family/Single Adult Programs	Notes
Age Range	18-26 yrs	>18 yrs	Some young adults are served in single adult/family programs
Clients per Case Manager	14-19	12-60	
Avg. Period of Engagement	532 days – 730 days	100-180 days	These numbers may change as more programs are surveyed
Funding Sources	Include city, state, federal, agency and private funding sources; varies by program.		

Programs Surveyed

Young Adult RRH Programs:

-Northwest Youth Services, Bellingham, WA
-Independent Youth Living Program, Washington State
-Next Step Housing Program, YMCA, Seattle, WA
-A New Leaf, Mesa, AZ

Family/Single Adult RRH Program

-Volunteers of America, Spokane, WA
-Direct Housing Program, Salvation Army, Central Ohio
-Job2Housing, Salvation Army, Central Ohio
-The Road Home, Salt Lake City, Utah
-Journey Home, Solid Ground, Seattle, WA

Information in this document is from NAEH documents,
input from young adults, service provider interviews and reports.
For further training and information:
http://www.endhomelessness.org/pages/rapidrehousing1
Prepared by Holly Braun for the City of Seattle.