



# Themes from the Second White House Policy Briefing on Ending Youth Homelessness on June 3, 2016

## *Input from Group Discussions*

### Background

In 2016, the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness and its member agencies will release criteria and benchmarks to guide community-level efforts to achieve the federal goal to prevent and end youth homelessness in 2020. Criteria describe the system that is needed to address the needs of youth experiencing homelessness while benchmarks can serve as critical measures indicating how that system is working to resolve homelessness and help identify where gaps exist.

As part of the second White House Policy Briefing to End Youth Homelessness held last month, youth, service providers, researchers, advocates, philanthropists, community-based organizations, and federal agencies had the opportunity to inform the initial development of criteria to end youth homelessness during a group discussion. The discussion posed two questions to stakeholders: 1) how will we know when a community has achieved the goal of ending youth homelessness; and 2) what components or indicators should we consider to determine how well a community's response to prevent and end homelessness is working?

USICH has since captured and compiled feedback and recommendations from the discussion, which is provided in greater detail below.

#### 1) How will we know when a community has achieved the goal of ending youth homelessness?

- When a youth experiences a housing crisis, it is rare, brief, and non-recurring.
- All youth achieve safe and stable housing in a specified amount of time (30 days).
- There are no children aging out of the foster care or juvenile justice systems into homelessness.
- There is a robust system in place that is able to anticipate and address recurring homelessness for youth.
- Youth have access to not only housing, but jobs, education, social supports, health care, and transportation.
- Through robust prevention and early intervention, there are fewer overall youth in the community who are pregnant and parenting, living with HIV, incarcerated, chronically absent or disconnected from school.

#### 2) What components or indicators should we consider to determine how well a community's response to prevent and end homelessness is working?

- There is no pipeline into homelessness; targeted discharge planning for kids aging out of foster care and juvenile justice systems.

- Prevention and early intervention are implemented in the community, as well as diversion from shelter and family reunification services.
- Youth that have self-selected out of system are identified using early outreach.
- There is a coordinated system in place with “no wrong door,” and youth know where to seek assistance.
- There are low barriers to an array of housing options and youth have choice about their housing placements/service provisions.
- Youth in crisis have immediate access to trauma-informed screening and housing assessment and emergency shelter.
- The community has standardized metrics/indicators in place to assess youth needs and prioritizes youth based on need — those with the greatest need have access to permanent housing and wrap-around supports.
- The community evaluates its resources and weaves together mainstream and targeted funding streams to serve youth experiencing homelessness.
- Youth receive age and developmentally appropriate services and supports.
- Communities are able to share and coordinate data.
- The community conducts a youth count and uses multipliers to approximate the annual number of youth experiencing homelessness.
- The community has a way of tracking youth once they exit the homelessness system for a specified amount of time (60-90 days).

### **Next Steps**

- The Interagency Working Group on Ending Youth Homelessness will incorporate stakeholder feedback into a preliminary draft of criteria and benchmarks for achieving the goal of preventing and ending youth homelessness.
- USICH will identify additional opportunities for external stakeholders to provide input on the preliminary draft of criteria and benchmarks over the next several months.
- By the end of 2016, the criteria and benchmarks will be published by USICH and disseminated to partners in the field.