



Advancing an End to Youth Homelessness: Federal and National Initiatives

Since the launch of the [Federal Framework to End Youth Homelessness](#), there has been an unprecedented increase in collaboration both among federal agencies and between the government and locally-driven efforts to end homelessness among unaccompanied youth under age 25. This document highlights some of the significant efforts underway, and how they are contributing to local, state, and national progress. We encourage you to look for opportunities to participate directly in these initiatives, or follow their progress, as we learn and share best practices from across the country.

Key Federal Strategies

Federal Criteria and Benchmarks for Preventing and Ending Youth Homelessness

Collaboratively with communities across America, USICH and its federal partners have developed a national vision for what it means to end homelessness, ensuring it is rare, brief, and non-recurring. [The Criteria and Benchmarks for Achieving the Goal of Ending Youth Homelessness](#), released in January 2017, ensure all communities are working toward a coordinated response to youth homelessness. USICH is continuing to work with stakeholders across the country to refine the benchmarks that will serve as measurements that a community can use to evaluate its overall effectiveness.

Youth Homelessness Demonstration Projects (YHDP)

In January 2017, HUD [announced \\$33 million in funding](#) to 10 communities committed to ending youth homelessness. Over a three-year period, the communities will receive funding and intensive technical assistance to build comprehensive systems to prevent and end youth homelessness. As part of the demonstration project, remote technical assistance is also available to more than 50 communities that submitted applications under the YHDP to create and implement a coordinated community plan. In FY 2017, Congress allocated \$43 million to fund an additional 11 communities under the YHDP.



100-Day Challenges to End Youth Homelessness

Building off the success of a [first cohort of 100-Day Challenges](#) in Austin, TX, Cleveland, OH, and Los Angeles, CA, in 2016 that were funded in part by the Administration for Children and Families, and a second round [in Washington State](#), A Way Home America and [Rapid Results Institute](#) (RRI) have teamed up with HomeBase to launch ten additional 100-Day Challenges on youth homelessness. The 100-Day Challenge is designed to stimulate intense collaboration, innovation, and execution in pursuit of an ambitious 100-day goal. Baltimore, MD, Columbus, OH, Hennepin County, MN, Palm Beach County, FL, and Louisville, KY, are launching 100-Day Challenges to accelerate efforts to end youth homelessness in their communities in July 2017. A second group of rural communities will be selected in the fall. [Follow their progress.](#)

Transitional Living Program Special Population Demonstration Project: LGBTQ Runaway and Homeless Youth and Young Adults Who Have Left Foster Care After Age 18

The Family and Youth Services Bureau [funded nine organizations](#) in 2016 to implement, enhance, or support a framework or model that incorporates promising strategies for the effective transition of youth and/or young adults experiencing homelessness to self-sufficiency. This 24-month project targets LGBTQ youth experiencing homelessness between the ages of 16 and 21, and young adults who have left foster care after the age of 18 up to age 21, but may need alternative housing and services.

Transitional Living Program Evaluation

The Family and Youth Services Bureau launched the [Transitional Living Program Evaluation](#) to gain greater insight into how the program supports the lives of youth experiencing homelessness as they transition to adulthood. The study is designed to capture service dosage, program implementation and services, and youth outcomes around housing, protective factors, and well-being. The results will inform national policy, help local programs improve practices and service delivery models, and lead to better strategies for serving youth experiencing homelessness.



LGBTQ Youth Homelessness Prevention Initiative

To help address the overrepresentation of LGBTQ youth among youth experiencing homelessness, HUD supported, in partnership with HHS, DOE, DOJ, USICH, and the True Colors Fund, the [Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning \(LGBTQ\) Youth Homelessness Prevention Initiative](#) to identify successful strategies to ensure that no young person is left without a home because of their sexual orientation or gender identity and expression. Two pilot communities—Houston/Harris County, Texas, and Cincinnati/Hamilton County, Ohio—developed and implemented community-wide strategies to increase local collaboration between stakeholders working with youth and families, including local child welfare, education, and law enforcement agencies; runaway and homeless youth providers; LGBTQ organizations; and others. The pilots are currently being evaluated to determine what lessons can be learned and shared. [Review the LGBTQ Youth Homelessness Prevention Initiative Planning Phase report.](#)

Family Unification Program (FUP)/ Family Self-Sufficiency Demonstration Project (FSS)

[This HUD and HHS demonstration](#) is designed to test the efficacy of stable, subsidized housing and asset building in improving outcomes for at-risk youth aging out of foster care. Under the effort, child welfare directors and local public housing agencies work together to provide young people who exited the foster care system with housing and service supports for up to five years. Public housing agencies with an existing allocation of FUP vouchers who also operate an FSS program that can serve those on housing choice vouchers were eligible to apply.

Grants to Develop a Model Intervention for Youth/Young Adults with Child Welfare Involvement At-Risk of Homelessness

To build capacity within the child welfare system to prevent homelessness among youth with child welfare involvement, the Children's Bureau within HHS funded 18 grantees in 2013 to conduct intensive planning to design services and supports to best meet the needs of the youth determined to be most at risk. In 2015, CB funded [six of those planning grantees](#) to [refine and implement the models](#) they developed over the next 3 years. A subset of those grantees will then be selected to conduct a rigorous evaluation of their impact.

Initiatives Led by National Partners

American Bar Association

National Homeless Youth Legal Network

The American Bar Association, in partnership with the Family and Youth Services Bureau, launched an initiative focused on addressing the legal needs of youth experiencing homelessness. The [Homeless Youth Legal Network](#) helps attorneys and other advocates address existing gaps in legal services for youth and young adults experiencing homelessness—including those transitioning from the child welfare system and exiting the juvenile justice system. The ABA is creating a directory of legal services providers for youth experiencing homelessness, and has profiled 12 model programs to help highlight promising practices across the country.

A Way Home America

Community Dashboards

[A Way Home America](#), a national initiative to build the movement to prevent and end homelessness among young people, is launching a community dashboard to create a picture of how the homelessness system is functioning for young people across multiple communities. The purpose of the dashboard is to innovate around community-driven methods for measuring progress toward ending youth homelessness and to develop a norm of gathering comparable data on youth homelessness across the country in support of the federal criteria and benchmarks for preventing and ending youth homelessness. Communities volunteer to participate.



Chapin Hall

Voices of Youth Count

[Voices of Youth Count](#) (VoYC) is a national policy research initiative designed to address key knowledge gaps in efforts to end youth homelessness. The scope of VoYC includes: a national survey on prevalence and characteristics of youth homelessness and housing instability; youth counts and brief surveys in 22 diverse counties across the country; in-depth youth interviews; surveys with service providers and Continuum of Care lead agencies; analysis of administrative data; a policy and fiscal review; and a systematic evidence review of interventions for runaway and homeless youth or for preventing youth homelessness. The initiative aims to accelerate progress towards ending youth homelessness by informing the development of federal, state, and local policies, improving service provision, and building a foundation for future research.

MANY Network

Coordinated Entry Learning Collaborative (CELC)

MANY is working with a team of representatives from nine communities/states, HHS, HUD, USICH, and the Melville Charitable Trust to convene a [Coordinated Entry Learning Collaborative \(CELC\)](#) that develops knowledge and resources around implementation of coordinated entry processes for young people experiencing homelessness. Since January 2016, partners have been working together to: identify critical gaps in knowledge around coordinated community responses to youth homelessness; unearth emerging practices and opportunities for innovation at the local level; and, design and implement effective solutions to support coordinated entry. This work is driven by data aggregated through a multi-community dashboard. Phase II of this dashboard will help communities explore the correlation between assessment, housing and services interventions, and outcomes.

National Alliance to End Homelessness Rapid Re-Housing for Youth Learning Collaborative (RRH4YLC)

The Alliance is conducting regular online meetings of providers, system leaders, and technical assistance specialists from around the country to better understand best practices for using rapid re-housing (RRH) to end youth homelessness. The [Rapid Re-Housing for Youth Learning Community](#) provides an opportunity for peer learning and allows the Alliance to gather more knowledge about best practices and implementation challenges from experienced youth rapid re-housing providers. The Alliance is also building out a comprehensive [RRH for youth toolkit](#) with information and resources from learning community members and RRH experts. Contact [the Alliance](#) if you would like to participate in RRH4YLC.



National Alliance to End Homelessness and True Colors Fund National Youth Forum on Homelessness

In 2016, the Alliance and the True Colors Fund partnered to create the National Youth Forum on Homelessness to ensure that strategies to end youth homelessness are informed by youth and young adults with lived experience. The Forum works to uplift youth and young adults to positions of power through education and advocacy. In its first year, Forum members have provided extensive input to federal agencies and national organizations, helped to chronicle the 100-day challenges to end youth homelessness, and created a toolkit on authentic youth collaboration that they will use to provide technical assistance to communities across the country. To learn more about how your organization can engage with the Forum, contact [the Alliance](#) or the [True Colors Fund](#).

National Network for Youth National Youth Advisory Council

By virtue of their own experience, youth who have experienced homelessness have insights that complement traditional research. NN4Y established the National Youth Advisory Council (NYAC) to connect these individuals with the lawmakers, service providers, and community officials responsible for crafting policy solutions. If you would like to join, or nominate someone to join, [learn about the requirements and expectations](#). Additionally, NN4Y's [What Works](#) tools include guidance to support communities working to prevent and appropriately respond to youth and young adult homelessness.

True Colors Fund and National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty (NLCHP) State Scorecards on Youth Homelessness

The [True Colors Fund](#), in partnership with the [NLCHP](#), will create a 50-State Survey and Scorecard on Youth Homelessness, providing a comprehensive report that analyzes the survey results; details the legal, systemic, and environmental barriers and challenges facing youth experiencing homelessness; and makes specific recommendations for change. Contact the True Colors Fund or NLCHP to learn more about this project.

To learn more about how these efforts are working together in your community, contact your [USICH regional coordinator](#).