

Rural Washington Balance of State Continuum of Care

YHDP Coordinated Community Plan

I. Background

Collectively, the rural counties of the Washington Balance of State Continuum of Care (CoC) are committed to developing a coordinated emergency response and permanent housing system that works effectively for our youth and young adults experiencing and at-risk of homelessness. Homelessness diminishes the lives and promise of young people in our region every day, yet many of our 23 rural counties currently have no dedicated beds, resources or services for our youth experiencing homelessness. Participation in YHDP has catalyzed our community to envision and establish meaningful access to services, policies, and strategies that promote self-actualization and could ultimately end recurring cycles of homelessness, poverty and inequity for our youth. Across the state, our YHDP team has strong youth leadership, a commitment to racial equity, a desire for innovation and flexibility in our approaches to resolving housing crises, and an unwillingness to support failing systems and strategies: all of which will be necessary to achieve our vision.

As a community, our CoC is working to impact the four core outcomes identified by the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness: 1) stable housing; 2) permanent connections; 3) education and employment; and 4) social-emotional well-being. Through the YHDP process, we are collaboratively designing a system that will:

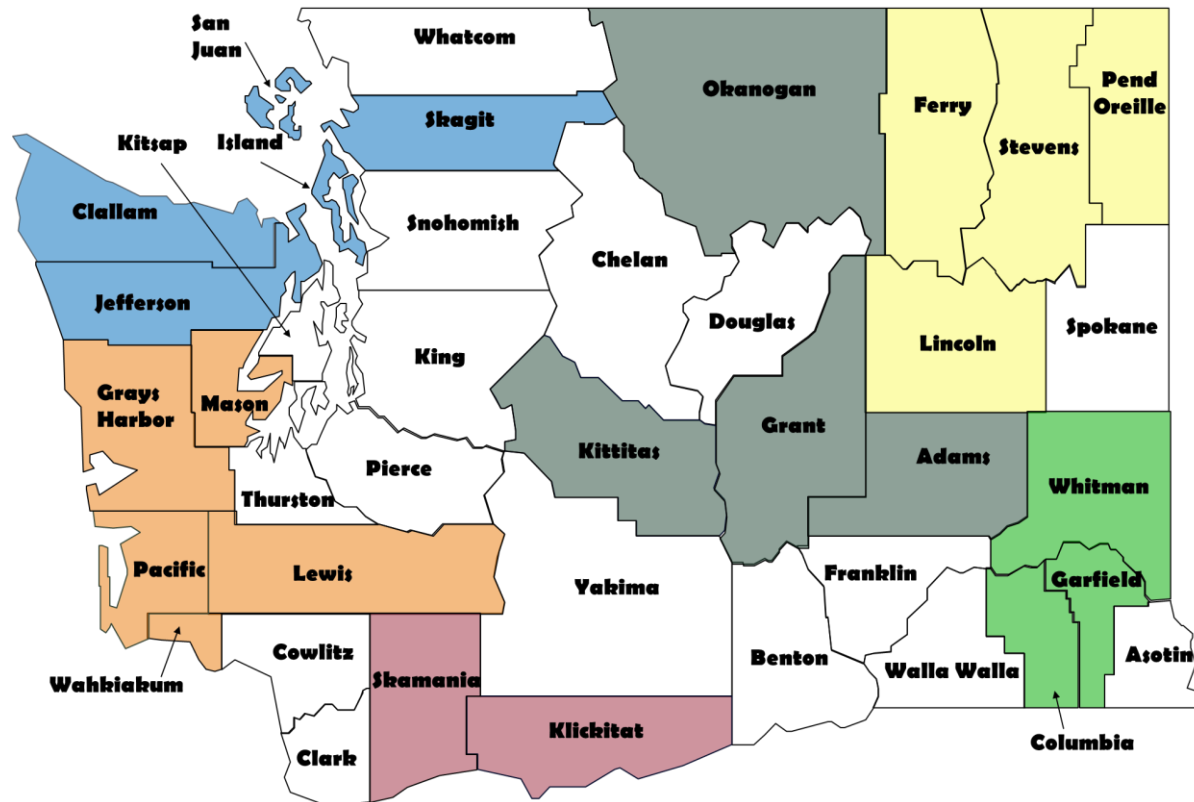
- Identify and engage youth and young adults at-risk of and experiencing homelessness;
- Minimize the inflow into the homeless system by intervening to prevent the loss of housing and diverting youth from the homeless system back to family and natural supports whenever possible;
- Provide immediate access to low-barrier shelter and crisis services; and
- Deliver effective housing assistance and services without preconditions that create sustainable solutions and avert cycles of recurring homelessness.

Participation in YHDP has also allowed our CoC to build on important accomplishments achieved over the past three years, which have already positioned Washington State at the forefront of the nation in the fight against youth and young adult homelessness. The establishment of the state's Office of Homeless Youth (OHY) in 2015 created a focused effort within state government to prevent and end youth and young adult homelessness. OHY manages \$25 million each biennium for outreach, shelter, and housing programs for youth. OHY guides the state's policy to address youth homelessness and produced a comprehensive plan in 2016 on the changes to policy, funding, and practice necessary to solve youth homelessness.

In 2018, the state legislature passed a reform mandate that has the potential to transform the current connection between state systems of care and youth homelessness. [SSB 6560](#) dictates that youth and young adults who exit state systems of care will be discharged into safe and stable housing. This legislation has required both community-level and state-level leadership to focus on potential solutions to the housing crises of this special population of youth experiencing homelessness. Many providers in the CoC, including those active in YHDP, are also OHY grantees and are working closely with OHY to implement

these efforts.

To execute this YHDP grant, our community partners decided to divide the work into six regions based on geography, demography, preexisting referral relationships, agency service-delivery areas and the patterns in which youth and young adults experiencing homelessness move throughout the state. The six regional teams, identified by color in the map below, will collaborate and bring decisions to the state CoC through the governance processes set out in subsequent sections.

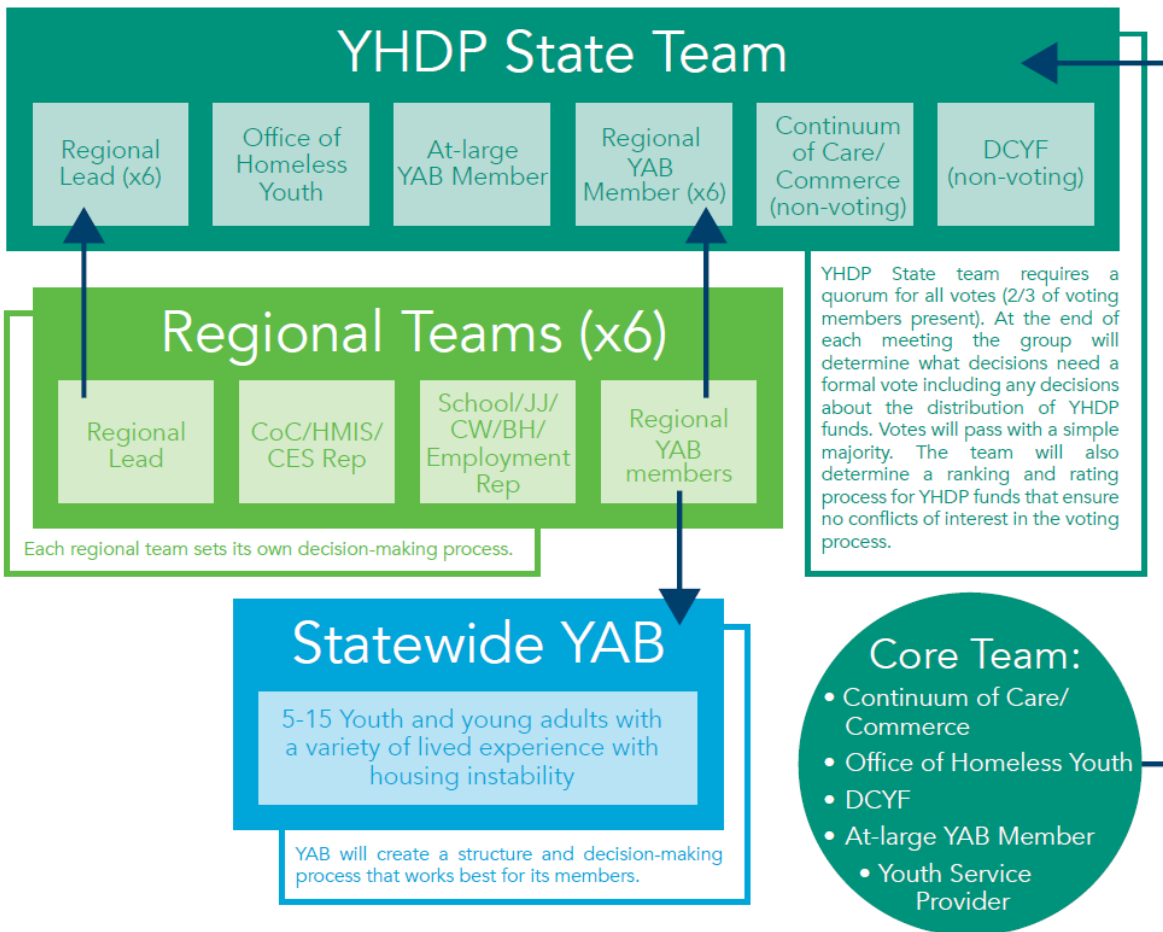


II. Vision Statement

Our vision is that every youth and young adult in Washington State has a safe, supportive, nurturing environment in which they can move towards barrier-free independence. Resources will be equitable and inclusive to allow every youth and young adult to reach their full potential socially, emotionally, educationally and professionally. To eliminate the disparities across race, ethnicity, justice involvement and sexual identity that characterize the current homeless system, we will look upstream to root causes, and embrace diversity in culture and individual expression in a youth-driven system that is innovative and accessible.

III. Governance

We have established four overlapping YHDP bodies to conduct our work. Below is an organizational chart, followed by a description of each body's decision-making role and structure.



YHDP State Team

The YHDP State Team consists of up to 14 voting members including six regional leads (one per region), six Youth for Youth (Y4Y) members (one per region), one At-Large Y4Y member and one representative from the Office of Homeless Youth (Commerce). The team also includes a representative from the Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) and the Department of Commerce for the Washington Balance of State Continuum of Care (WA BoS CoC) who will not have a vote on the State team but will have the ability to approve the coordinated community plan (CCP) and all YHDP projects before being submitted to the U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), as required by HUD under the demonstration project. Non-voting stakeholders are encouraged to participate at both the state and regional levels. Regional teams meet regularly and are organized so that they inform the Regional Leads on how to vote. State Team Meetings will be open to a broad range of non-voting stakeholders including:

- OSPI
- State Justice department
- Tribal liaisons
- CoC youth subcommittee members
- Youth service providers
- Behavioral health crisis providers

- HCA or BHO
- Workforce: state board
- DCYF employment services

The State Team will set racial and LGBTQ diversity goals for State Team membership.

YHDP State Team Roles and Responsibilities:

- Oversee the creation and implementation of the coordinated community response to prevent and end youth homelessness, including the creation of the plan's framework and guidance on regional work assignments.
- Determine the ranking and rating process for YHDP funds, which includes Y4Y members. Based on the results of the competition, the State team, including Y4Y members, will formally approve the projects prior to HUD's approval.
- Ensure regions and projects are conducting business in-line with the CCP's guiding principles, including but not limited to, being youth led, using a housing first approach, focusing on equity for special populations and incorporating Trauma Informed Care (TIC) and Positive Youth Development (PYD) strategies.
- Convene once a month from October 2018-January 2019 in person to review the work of the regional teams and guide the formation of the coordinated community plan to be submitted to HUD by March 2019.
- Track the progress of the open and competitive community process for awarding YHDP funds, including the local review process, which will include regional Y4Y members, and the submission of YHDP applications by awardees.
- Convene the State Team in the Spring of 2019 to make formal recommendations, based off the local RFP review process, on the projects to be funded by YHDP funds to the CoC board.
- Facilitate a continuous quality improvement process on a quarterly basis throughout and after the YHDP grant term to oversee, monitor, and adjust the design and implementation of projects to be awarded by YHDP and other state and locally funded projects needed to implement the plan.
- Provide regular progress reports to the CoC Youth Subcommittee and the CoC board during and after the YHDP grant term.

YHDP State Team Decision Making

The YHDP State team will require a quorum for all votes which is defined by 2/3 of voting members being present. At the end of each State Team Meeting the group will determine what decisions need a formal vote to move forward. Any decision about the distribution of YHDP funds will need a formal vote. Votes will pass with a simple majority. The team will also determine a ranking and rating process for YHDP funds that ensure no conflicts of interest in the voting process. Regional teams will locally determine if they can send a proxy voter in the case that the regional lead cannot attend. Regions can also have co-leads and allow either to vote but will be restricted to one vote per region in any formal vote.

YHDP State Team Member List

- Region 1 (Blue) Lead: Doc Robinson (voting)
- Region 2 (Orange) Lead: Cassie Lentz (voting)
- Region 3 (Red) Lead: Lori Call (voting)
- Region 4 (Gray) Lead: Mark Hollandsworth (voting)
- Region 5 (Yellow) Lead: Lea Porter (voting)

- Region 6 (Green) Lead: Jeff Tietjen (voting)
- At-Large Youth for Youth (Y4Y) Member: Tara L.(voting)
- Region 1 (Blue) Y4Y: Gaia M. (voting)
- Region 2 (Orange) Y4Y: Melissa R. (voting)
- Region 3 (Red) Y4Y: Damon W. (voting)
- Region 4 (Gray) Y4Y: Veronica G. (voting)
- Region 5 (Yellow) Y4Y: Milo E. (voting)
- Region 6 (Green) Y4Y: TBD
- Office of Homeless Youth: Kim Justice (voting)
- CoC/Commerce : Joe Ingram (non-voting)
- Department of Children, Youth, and Families: Sherrie Flores (non-voting)

YHDP Regional Teams

Each regional team will nominate a regional lead to represent their regional interests and vote at the State Team Meetings. Regional teams will be responsible for recruiting and forming their teams to complete regional assignments in between the regular YHDP State Team convening's. YHDP Regional teams will report back to the YHDP State team to inform planning processes, inform planning content, and ensure implementation of the plan, including YHDP projects. Team members must include:

- Regional Lead
- Regional Y4Y member
- An agency that represents one of the following: CoC project, coordinated entry, or HMIS
- A stakeholder that represents one of the following: school/JJ/CW/BH/employment

Regional Team Meetings should also be open to a broad range of stakeholders that may include:

- County officials
- Tribes
- Homeless assistance provider
- Other county reps that aren't YHDP-county eligible but in the WA BoS CoC
- Private funders

Regional Team Roles and Responsibilities

- Respond to regional work assignments which will include, but are not limited to:
 - Gathering and analyzing regional data sets to inform the statement of need in the coordinated community plan and modeling the resources needed to address youth homelessness in their region
 - Developing regional goals, objectives, and action steps that are aligned with the framework agreed upon by the YHDP Team
 - Implementing the core values and principles of YHDP across their region
 - Developing innovative project ideas based on regional need
- Recruit and support Y4Y members which may include supporting regional Y4Y meetings
- Assist in the regional implementation of the coordinated community plan, including YHDP-funded projects

- Send regional representatives (at minimum the Regional Lead and Y4Y member) to regular YHDP State Team convening's

Youth for Youth (Y4Y) Board

The Y4Y will consist of youth and young adults ages 16-24 with a variety of lived experience with housing instability. The Y4Y will have an equal seat at all YHDP decision making tables, will assist in the creation and implementation of the coordinated community plan, and will give formal approval to the plan and projects funded by the Y4Y. The Y4Y is still forming and will decide other specific actions they will take as a board. The Y4Y is creating a structure and decision-making process that works best for the Y4Y Board. The below structure is the suggestion of the State Team and will be adapted over time:

Proposed Structure

The YHDP State Team is proposing the following structure, however this may change as Y4Y membership grows and the Y4Y makes their own decisions on governance and decision-making. Each regional team will help recruit and support a regional Y4Y with diverse membership across their region. Each regional Y4Y will send 1-2 Y4Y members to YHDP State Team meetings and each of the six regions would have one Y4Y vote per region on any state team decisions. The statewide Y4Y would consist of all the members of the regional Y4Y's and would be supported by the Office of Homeless Youth to convene throughout the year on a quarterly basis. The statewide Y4Y is also responsible for approving the coordinated community plan and approving all YHDP funded projects.

Roles and Responsibilities:

- Attend and participate in Y4Y Board Meetings
- Send regional Y4Y representation to the YHDP State Team Meetings
- Pave the way for future youth to succeed with the challenges they have been given
- Provide insightful opinions and knowledge on the issue of youth homelessness
- Approve the YHDP coordinated community plan to prevent and end homelessness and all YHDP funded projects
- Act as an ambassador and advocate for youth experiencing or at-risk of experiencing homelessness
- Assist in recruiting new youth to participate in Y4Y activities on an ongoing basis

Compensation:

- The Department of Commerce will provide travel reimbursement and a stipend for attendance at approved Y4Y events.
- Youth and young adults must receive approval prior to the event in which reimbursement/stipend is being sought.

YHDP Core Team

The YHDP Core Team is a subset of the YHDP State Team that will offer leadership, regular and reliable decision-making on process points, and staff support to the YHDP State Team.

YHDP Core Team Roles and Responsibilities

- Design and implement the YHDP Governance Structure

- Recruit the YHDP State Team, including Regional Team co-chairs
- Recruit and compensate Y4Y members, including regionally
- Collaborate with Y4Y members to design and implement a functioning Y4Y
- Schedule, plan, and facilitate the YHDP State Team convening's
- Interface with HUD and the YHDP technical assistance team, including participation in weekly TA check-ins, monthly community calls, and other TA opportunities
- Ensure the timely submission and approval of the Coordinated Community Plan to HUD
- Following the planning process, design the open and competitive community process that will determine the projects funded through YHDP funds awarded by HUD
- Ensure regular communication between the YHDP State Team and the CoC Youth Subcommittee and CoC Board
- Support YHDP Regional Teams in their planning and implementation

YHDP Core Team Members

- CoC Board Representative: Joe Ingram
- Commerce: Nick Mondau
- Office of Homeless Youth: Kim Justice
- DCYF: Sherrie Flores
- At-large Y4Y member: Tara L
- Youth provider – Northwest Youth Services: Rachel Handy

Below is a list of members in each group and a description of their involvement.

Partners	Partner's name	Involvement
a. CoC Program Recipients*	Department of Commerce – Nick Mandau	Core Team
b. Youth for Youth Board*	Tara L. Veronica G. Milo E. Damon W. Melissa R. Rayanna T. Gaia M. Harjot S.	Core Team/Statewide Y4Y Statewide Y4Y Statewide Y4Y Statewide Y4Y Statewide Y4Y Statewide Y4Y Statewide Y4Y Statewide Y4Y
c. Local and State Government*	Department of Commerce – Kim Justice – Riannon Bardsley Skagit County Government -Sarah Hinman Benton Franklin County Government -Tammy McKiernan -Sheila Berry Cowlitz County -Evelynn Marquez Grays Harbor County -Cassie Lentz Lewis County -Meja Handlen	Core Team/State Team Core Team Regional Team Regional Team Regional Team Regional Team State Team/Regional Team Regional Team

Partners	Partner's name	Involvement
d. Public Child Welfare Agencies*	Department of Children, Youth and Families – Sherrie Flores	Core Team/State Team
e. Local and State Educational Agencies	ESD113 – Isaac Wulff Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction – Ella Deverse Centralia High School -Jim Parker -Ana Rodas -Natasha Rodriguez	Regional Team State Team Regional Team Regional Team Regional Team
f. Runaway and Homeless Youth Program Providers	Northwest Youth Services Community Youth Services	Core Team/State Team/Regional Team Regional Team
g. Non-Profit Youth Organizations	YES (Youth Emergency Services) -Sarah Phillips Family Crisis Network – Cody Francis Ryan's House for Youth – Lori Cavender Community Youth Services – Derek Harris YWCA of Kitsap County – Jackie Brown	Regional Team Lead Regional Team Regional Team Regional Team Regional Team
h. Juvenile and Adult Corrections and Probation	DSHS/JR – Steven Hayes	Regional Team
i. WIOA Boards and Employment Agencies	Coffee Oasis – Patrick Steele	Regional Team
j. Affordable Housing Developers	Serenity House of Clallam County – Doc Robinson OlyCap – Kathy Morgan – Dale Wilson Benton Franklin Community Action – Melissa Hess	Regional Team Lead/State Team Regional Team Regional Team Regional Team
k. Local Advocacy, Research, and Philanthropic Organizations	Raikes Foundation Mockingbird Society Pride Foundation Medina Foundation	Funder Technical Assistance – Y4Y TBD TBD

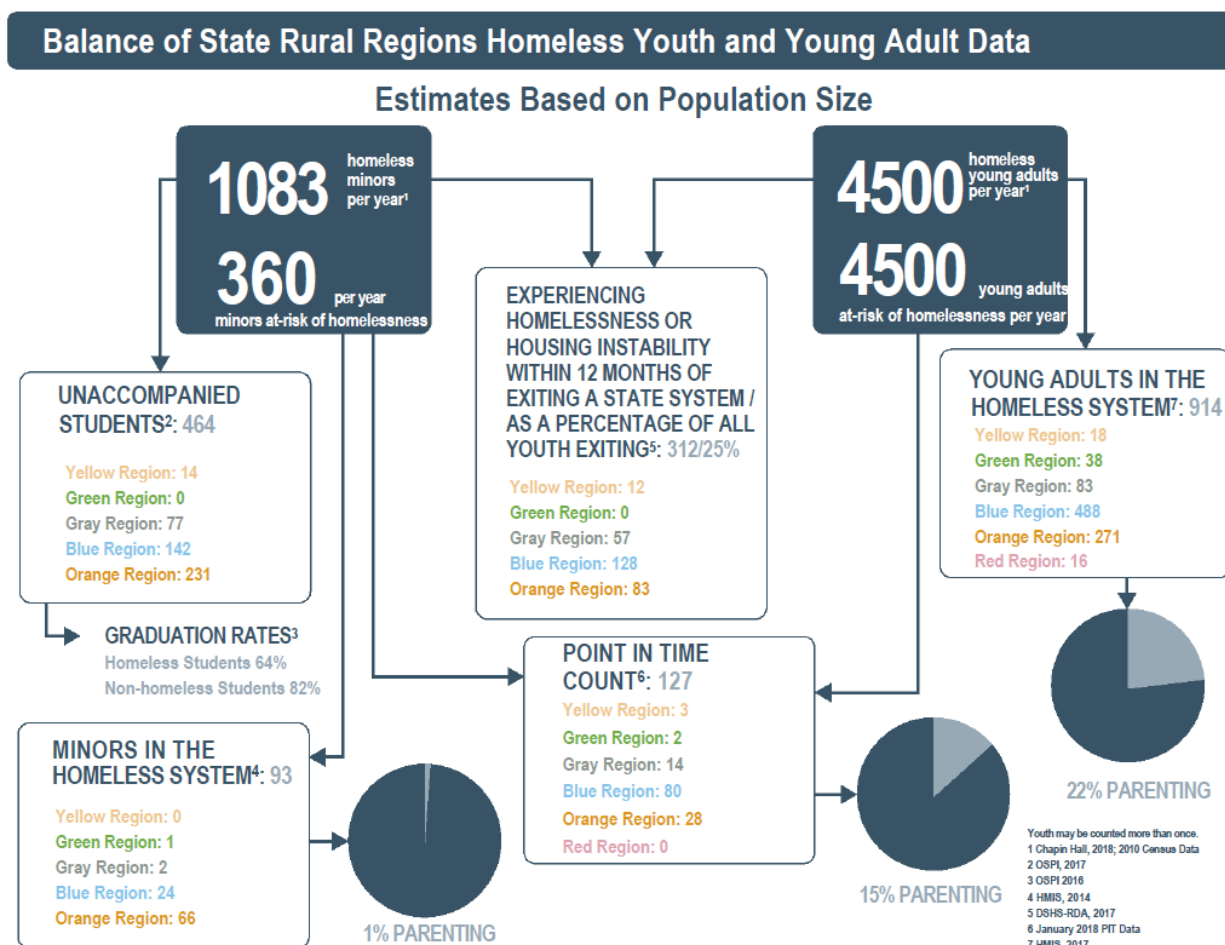
IV. Statement of Need

Prevalence of Youth Experiencing Homelessness and At-Risk of Homelessness in Balance of State Rural Regions

In spite of community concern, efforts to address youth homelessness are often constrained by the absence of credible data on the size and characteristics of the population of homeless young people. Data collected through the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), annual Point In Time counts, the school system and other traditional methods have limitations and do not reflect the experiences of those youth who are not connected with services or who may be hiding their housing instability. This is particularly relevant in rural regions like ours, where there are limited services and few dedicated

spaces for unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness, as service providers and shelters are the key suppliers of homeless population data. Nonetheless, we have developed a representative picture of youth homelessness in rural Washington by braiding together county and state data alongside national research. This allows us to scope the size of the challenge we confront and begin to define an appropriate response.

Below is a visual reflecting our community's data, followed by a narrative discussion of some of these data points. Data below is broken out by region, and detailed regional summaries are attached as **Appendix 2**.



Population Estimates Based on Voices of Youth Count Prevalence Findings

Chapin Hall recently undertook the Voices of Youth Count (VOYC) research initiative, designed to produce replicable national prevalence and incidence estimates of youth homelessness, as well as data on the population's needs and characteristics.ⁱ The VOYC showed that, over a 12-month period, approximately **1 in 30 13- to 17-year-olds endure some form of housing instability each year**, including both explicit homelessness and couch surfing. A quarter of the prevalence is couch-surfing only. **About 1 in 10 young adults ages 18-25 endure housing instability each year**, with about half the prevalence including couch surfing only. The VOYC concluded that youth homelessness is equally prevalent in rural and non-rural areas. **Applying these prevalence estimates to the Balance of State county populations of youth and young adults** (using 2010 Census

data), approximately 1,083 minors ages 13-17 experience homelessness in our region each year, and another 360 per year are couch surfing. An additional 4,500 young adults ages 18-24 experience homelessness in our region annually, with another 4,500 couch surfing per year. Given the multitude of risk factors for homelessness that are elevated in rural Balance of State Counties (poverty, teenage pregnancy, domestic violence, drug use), there is no reason to believe that actual rates of homelessness would vary significantly from the VOYC estimates.

Education System Data

The Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction's (OSPI) Comprehensive Education Data and Research System contains K-12 public education data, including housing status data collected under the McKinney-Vento Act. In the 2016-2017 school year, **2,345 homeless high school students** were identified, **464 of whom were unaccompanied**. In our YHDP zone, **64% of eligible homeless students (including those who were accompanied) graduated in 2017, versus a graduation rate of 82% for housed students**. At the national level, homelessness is associated with an 87% increased likelihood of dropping out of school.ⁱⁱ Students experiencing the traumas of homelessness during their middle and high school years have a hard time remaining focused on their schoolwork and matriculating on time. They also tend to not complete the more rigorous courses needed to prepare for college and future employment.

OSPI data does not typically capture students who are disengaged from school, and is generally incomplete for reasons including a lack of dedicated resources for school districts and changes in staffing of the liaison position. Although improvements in the methodology behind identification of homeless students have led to Washington's count of homeless students doubling over the last nine years, analysis of state data in 2012 showed **over half (56%) of homeless students statewide were identified by DCYF caseworkers or local housing providers (in the HMIS database) but not by the school system**.ⁱⁱⁱ

At the national level, one of the strongest risk correlates for homelessness is a lack of a high school diploma or GED.^{iv} Those with learning impairments are also at a higher risk of homelessness. State-level research in Washington has shown that a high GPA is a protective factor for youth aging out of foster care, and that youth with a GPA of a B or above were **0.62 times less likely** to experience homelessness within 12 months of aging out of foster care than their peers.^v Although we cannot make causal inferences, these findings reinforce the possibility that education, and underlying factors that support educational success, might protect youth from becoming homeless, and that school-based strategies that help young people persist and graduate are invaluable.

Homeless System Data

Due to the absence of youth-oriented homeless services, HMIS data is minimal in many of our regions. In 2014, **93 minors** were recorded annually from rural Balance of State counties in the HMIS database. Legal conflicts surrounding a minor's ability to consent to having information included in HMIS prevented accurate HMIS data on minors from being collected between 2014 and 2017. The conflict surrounding consent was resolved through legislative action in 2018, so our regions will now be able to collect and use HMIS data on minors. **In 2017, 730 unaccompanied young adults in our region were recorded in HMIS over the course of the year. 1% of the minors and 32% of the young adults in HMIS were parenting.**

PIT Data

Point in Time Counts conducted in January 2018 for our Balance of State regions counted **127 youth and young adults experiencing homelessness, 15% of whom were parenting**. As a first step in the YHDP planning process, the red region, which had not previously held a youth-specific PIT count (and had reported a 0 for youth experiencing homelessness in the 2018 PIT count) conducted a regional survey to get a more accurate estimate. Homeless peer liaisons counted **29 unduplicated youth**, and also collected information on vulnerability and service needs.

Service Needs of Youth Experiencing and At-Risk of Homelessness

Based on existing data on the size and characteristics of our target populations, we anticipate service needs to be as follows.

Additional detail on the service needs of special populations is in the subsequent section, and details on how these service needs will be addressed are set forth in the Objectives and Action Steps.

Population	Youth per year	Stable Housing	Education and Employment	Wellbeing
Minors Experiencing Homelessness	1,083	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to immediate crisis housing with no preconditions Permanent housing options and navigation (which could include family support, host homes, rapid rehousing or permanent supportive housing) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GED and re-enrollment support Academic support (tutoring, credit recovery) Transportation Holistic family supports Connections to employers and skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TIC/PYD Strengths-based pro-social activities Mentors and positive peer groups Connection to behavioral health supports
Young Adults Experiencing Homelessness	4,500	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to immediate crisis housing with no preconditions Permanent housing options and navigation (which could include family support, host homes, affordable rapid rehousing or permanent supportive housing) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GED and re-enrollment support Academic support (tutoring, credit recovery, connection to higher-ed) Transportation Holistic family supports Connections to employers and skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TIC/PYD Strengths-based pro-social activities Connections to positive peer groups Connection to behavioral health supports
Minors At-Risk of Homelessness	360	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diversion support and navigation (which could include family reunification, host family respite or placement, or access to higher levels of support like therapeutic foster care) Individualized and age-appropriate case management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Academic support (tutoring, credit recovery) Transportation Holistic family supports Connections to employers and skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identification of positive peer groups and caring adults Connection to behavioral health supports
Young Adults At-Risk of Homelessness	4,500	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Diversion support and navigation (which could include family reunification, host family respite or placement, or access to crisis housing) Individualized and age-appropriate case management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Academic support (tutoring, credit recovery) Holistic family supports Connections to employers and skills Vocational training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identification of positive peer groups and caring adults Connection to behavioral health supports
Numbers in the four categories above were established by applying Voices of Youth Count prevalence estimates to the Balance of State county populations of youth and young adults, using 2010 Census data.				

Pregnant or Parenting Youth Experiencing Homelessness	230	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency housing with no preconditions • Quick transfer to longer term housing that is stable and safe for children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connection to vocational training, GED completion, higher-ed • Childcare supports, including subsidies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connection with home visiting and parent support • Behavioral health supports • Access to public benefits
Pregnant or Parenting Youth at Risk of Homelessness	174	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to safe, stable, affordable housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connection to vocational training, GED completion, higher-ed and other routes to wage progression • Childcare supports 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connection with home visiting and parent support • Behavioral health supports • Connection to positive peer parenting groups

Characteristics and Service Needs of Priority Subpopulations

Youth Involved in Multiple Systems

Research has established the numbers of youth who identify as homeless in HMIS or ACES (the database used by DCYF caseworkers when determining eligibility for public assistance) within 12 months of exiting other state systems. Statewide, the largest numbers of youth who later experience homelessness come from behavioral health facilities (in-patient mental health and substance abuse programs), followed by criminal justice then foster care. Rates are similar in both rural and urban settings.^{vi} Statewide, 23%, 28% and 36% of young people experience housing instability within 12 months of exiting state behavioral health, foster care and criminal justice systems, respectively. In the Balance of State rural regions, **25% of youth and young adults, or 312 individuals, experienced homelessness or housing instability within 12 months of exiting foster care, in-patient behavioral health or the criminal justice system in 2017.** State data does not include information from tribal foster care and behavioral health systems, or from county detention facilities, so community team members are pursuing this data at the regional level.



Strategies to support these populations will be identified collaboratively with child welfare, juvenile justice and behavioral health members of our community teams. Because of the absence of support systems that may be in place for many of these youth, service strategies will likely be intensive interventions, including transition support as youth move from foster care or detention to independence. Involvement in multiple systems also suggests factors contributing to a young person's homelessness may be complex, particularly among those exiting behavioral health services, and that service strategies will need to be commensurate in their intensity and complexity. Last spring Washington State passed legislation mandating that no youth exit a state system into homelessness, so both community-level and state-level leadership are attuned to the challenges and potential solutions for this special population of youth at-risk of homelessness.

Cultural Background and Disproportionate Risk of Homelessness

Disproportionality of homelessness experiences among Hispanic and Native American youth mirrors racial disparities documented elsewhere, such as juvenile justice involvement and sentencing, negative health outcomes and poverty. This research highlights a need to address root causes of homelessness for youth at greater risk, as well as the need to target interventions and provide services that are accessible and responsive to the unique needs of youth marginalized due to their race or ethnicity. Nationally, although Hispanic youth are at higher risk than non-Hispanic youth of experiencing homelessness, they tend to be underrepresented in homeless services.^{vii} Although **Latino and Hispanic youth are showing up in our homeless system data at similar rates in which they appear in our region's population (21% and 19.5% respectively)**, this does not necessarily indicate our services are reaching all those in need or are culturally appropriate.^{viii} In the rural regions of Washington, **3.1% of the population is American Indian or Native Alaskan, yet Native youth were appearing in HMIS at rates that were almost double that (5.84%).**^{ix} For both Native and Hispanic youth, regions will need to make key programmatic considerations around upstream interventions, and culturally appropriate and community-based services. Services should be available in geographic areas that youth of color frequent, and youth should remain connected to and exit programs back into their home communities whenever possible. Ongoing program data will also need to be reviewed to ensure that quality programs are available and delivered in an equitable way, and that minority youth are showing the same amount of success in programming as white youth and young adults experiencing homelessness.

LGBTQ Youth

While various state sources suggest that **between 22% and 24% of youth experiencing homelessness identify as LGBTQ**, we have not captured data on the sexual orientation of youth experiencing homelessness in rural regions.^x Although there is no reason to believe that the prevalence of LGBTQ youth experiencing homelessness would be lower in our region, there may be additional barriers that deter these youth from identifying themselves. Lower visibility of LGBTQ populations, social stigma, discrimination, and, in many cases, experiences of rejection by their families of origin and/or licensed foster homes, may limit a youth's openness about their sexual orientation, and/or add to the challenges of homelessness for this population. The absence of crisis housing specifically for youth in most of our regions means that there are no services designed for and protective of the diverse psycho-social needs of homeless LGBTQ youth and young adults. Specific strategies for inclusively and competently serving this population are necessary.

The VOYC showed common notions of LGBTQ youth being evicted by families into homelessness after “coming out” are overly simplistic and that the young person’s sexual orientation or gender identity is only one factor involved in household tensions.^{xi} Most families also faced broader issues of instability, including poverty, loss, violence, addiction, mental health problems, or housing troubles. These findings suggest that intervening around other stressors that families face (like poverty, single parenthood, parental addiction, and mental health) could have direct positive implications for addressing this subpopulation’s homelessness, and that there is often more time and opportunity to intervene than was previously assumed. Our community is pursuing family reconciliation programs that would address a family’s needs in a holistic way, rather than a youth’s LGBTQ status in isolation. We are simultaneously working to ensure that LGBTQ youth will receive inclusive, accepting and affirming services in all regional programs.

Minors

The population of youth ages 13-18 who are experiencing and/or at risk of homelessness present distinct vulnerabilities and opportunities for intervention. This subgroup may be experiencing homelessness for the first time, without the loving and supportive network that their young age demands. Interventions that are school-based and supportive of family reconciliation, whenever possible, will be a priority for this group. Current data gathering efforts show more than 1,000 minors a year are experiencing homelessness across these regions. However, due to the lack of resources in many of these communities, it is not an accurate reflection of local need. Capacity to document minors experiencing homelessness will increase once projects are in place.

Parenthood

Washington **foster youth who become parents are more than twice as likely to become homeless** within 12 months of aging out of care than their non-parenting peers.^{xii} **Many of our regions have the highest teen birth rates in the state, including 45.1 per 1,000 youth ages 15-19 in Okanogan County and 40.0 in Grant County, versus a statewide rate of 16.2 for the same population.**^{xiii} These findings indicate a marked need for coordination among youth and family homelessness service providers, as well as interventions designed with the unique needs of young parents and their children in mind. The VOYC research also indicated that pregnancy and parenthood are critical junctures at which youth experiencing homelessness, even those with negative views of service providers or a strong sense of self-reliance, might be open to engage in services or reunite with families. Our region is developing outreach and service arrays to capitalize on this moment, including:

- Providing pregnancy prevention programs and contraception in shelters, drop-in centers and outreach locations. Healthcare providers must be credible, trauma informed, and respectful of youth’s reproductive choices.
- Ensuring collaboration between any homeless service providers and providers in early childhood, early intervention, education and welfare.
- Connecting pregnant and parenting youth with childcare as well as GED completion, credit retrieval, vocational and higher education opportunities to support wage progression.
- Developing housing that is developmentally appropriate for young parents. Housing programs often serve youth OR families, without a recognition of the fluidity between the two groups. If possible from licensing and space

perspectives, housing should accommodate youth and young families. These programs should ensure programs are developed using TIC/PYD approaches that are unique to pregnant and parenting youth.

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

Social Supports

The last place youth report staying before entering shelter reveals a young person's most recent trajectory, as well as the network that might be available to support an alternative living situation, if resources were available to sustain it. **25% of youth in HMIS in our region report staying with friends and family the night before entering emergency shelter.** A similar pattern was found by DCYF when looking at homeless students in urban versus rural regions.^{xiv} Students who were living in shelters, homeless housing, or in places unfit for human habitation were more likely to live in high density urban areas, and **youth in rural regions were more likely to be in doubled-up situations (living with friends or family due to economic hardship, family turmoil, incarceration, hospitalization, etc.).** A young person's experience couch surfing or doubled-up could include a wide range of vulnerability, from lower-risk experiences of leveraging social networks during periods of housing instability to high-risk or exploitative arrangements. Trying to **formalize and support youth at risk of homelessness in the safe informal networks**, when they exist, is one of the most efficient and cost-effective approaches to homelessness prevention, one we are adopting in our regional approaches

Incidence

Although some youth may have had incidents of family or independent homelessness without using homeless services in the past, of the youth accessing homeless services in our region in 2017, **90% were new to the system.**^{xv} This dynamic suggests that, while there may be a significant group of young people who can get stuck in a cycle of recurring homelessness, the problem cannot be fully addressed with reactive policies and programs alone, and prevention and early intervention solutions are necessary to stop the flow of youth into homelessness. Regions are emphasizing school-based identification and diversion programs as one such approach.

Commercially Sexually Exploited Children

While the incidence of trafficking in our region has yet to be enumerated, we are cognizant of the cycles of homelessness, couch-surfing, survival-sex and human trafficking that vulnerable youth can fall into. In our regional planning we will emphasize the need for shelter and housing programs to adopt a trauma-informed approach to support youth who have survived the sex trade, and the need for outreach and prevention programs to stop other youth experiencing homelessness from becoming victimized.

V. Goals, Objectives and Action Steps

Goal 1: The community identifies all unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness.

Objective 1.1: Create a community-wide identification system that reaches any youth experiencing or at-risk of homelessness.

Action Step 1 Launch or expand street outreach capacity to reach youth experiencing literal homelessness.

Regional Actions

Yellow: Create a system for street outreach that considers the many committee partners that have knowledge of youth who are experiencing homelessness. Identify central location for outreach activities and community resources with an emphasis on reaching special populations, including LGBTQ and at-risk youth.

Gray: Develop a regional community and peer outreach team to help identify youth experiencing literal homelessness. Equip leads with mobile offices (laptops, scanners).

Blue: Develop regional outreach program that is trauma-informed. Pursue funding for additional outreach positions to reach most rural portions of region.

Orange: Develop a regional street outreach team to help identify youth experiencing literal homelessness. Focus on summer, working with McKinney Vento liaisons and school staff. Conduct a summer Point-In-Time count.

Red: Develop a regional street outreach team to collect data.

Green: Create a community team involving youth. Create a list of available resources to homeless youth with-in the community.

Action Step 2 Build an early identification system for youth at-risk of homelessness, and referral sources to prevention services.

Step 2A: Identify partners that can help identify youth at-risk of homelessness and create a system to track and refer to prevention services.

Step 2B: Identify alternate pathways to incentivize (or at least not dis-incentivize) system-wary youth from accessing crisis housing and/or other homeless services.

Step 2C: Ensure data systems enable engagement in prevention and crisis services.

Regional Actions

Yellow: Track at-risk populations for early intervention.

Gray: Recruit agencies in the region that have contact with youth: DSHS, schools, juvenile detention, youth groups, etc.

Blue: Use essential voice of local youth to guide outreach efforts and referrals, particularly those youth overrepresented in the homeless population such as Native American and other ethnic and racial minorities and LGBTQ youth.

Orange: Develop and strengthen partnerships with organizations that may have the opportunity to identify and refer unaccompanied youth experiencing literal homelessness (schools, DCYF, BH, etc.). Consider use of peer support models for engagement, navigation and advocacy to build healthy adult relationships.

Red: Strengthen connections with DCYF, juvenile detention, school liaisons, etc.

Green: Develop partnerships with schools and juvenile justice systems.

Lead

Yellow: Sarah Phillips at YES and Brian Crandall at Rural Resources

Gray: Mark Hollandsworth at HopeSource and Caitlin Cordell at Room 1

Blue: Doc Robinson at Serenity House

Orange: Cassie Lentz at Grays Harbor County

Red: Lori Call at WGAP

Green: Jeff Tietjen in Whitman County

Timeline

Yellow:

- 6 month – Create count team using developed best practice tools
- Explore expanding and educating community partnerships
- Year One – Conduct count
- Create referral system
- Year Two – Evaluate and improve count process
- Evaluate and improve referral system

Gray:

- 6 month – Develop outreach team
- Year One – Conduct count

	Create referral system
	Year Two – Evaluate and improve count process
	Evaluate and improve referral system
	Blue:
	6 month – Identify community needs
	Explore formalizing partnerships
	Year One – Develop regional outreach team and drop-in center
	Year Two – Institutionalize new system
	Orange:
	6 month – Develop a regional outreach team
	Formalize relationship with schools
	Year One – Train school staff
	Conduct Summer PITC
	Sort out any data sharing or logistical barriers to sharing information
	Year Two – Develop youth CE
	Develop and strengthen community partnerships
	Red:
	6 Month – Engage youth in the regional Y4Y
	Create stronger connections with community partners
	Year One - Develop a regional outreach team
	Incorporate youth PITC lessons learned
	Green:
	Year One - Create a cross system referral system for homeless youth
	Year Two - Create by-name list of Youth Homeless in service area
	Indicators
	Yellow: Annual Youth Count resulting in identified baseline
	Youth referrals from community partners
	Gray: Annual Youth Count resulting in identified baseline
	Youth referrals from community partners
	Blue: Formalized partnerships across the region
	Active and engaged Y4Y
	Orange: Annual Youth Count resulting in identified baseline
	Youth referrals from community partners
	Red: Active and engaged Y4Y
	Annual Youth Count resulting in identified baseline
	Green: Formalized partnerships across the region
	Youth referrals from community partners

Goal 2: The community uses prevention and diversion strategies whenever possible, and otherwise provides immediate access to low-barrier crisis housing and services to any youth who needs and wants it.

Objective 2.1: Create system-wide prevention and diversion services that connect youth to resources of their choice, including family reunification.

Action Step 1

Maximize pre-crisis prevention services.

Step 1A: Engage partners to use existing systems (foster care, CPS, McKinney Vento Liaisons, MST, WISE) to house unaccompanied homeless youth (when appropriate.)

Step 1B: Determine relationship between diversion/ prevention/ family reunification programs and coordinated entry.

Action Step 2

Launch or expand diversion strategies that include youth-centered family-reconciliation services, case management, host homes, and connection to mainstream services.

Step 2A: Design a regional diversion project and decide which services can be offered within the region, which may include:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family conflict/ crisis services • Family reunification or counseling services • Supports to keep youth housed with family/friend of their choice (host homes) • Case management and connections to critical services such as behavioral health, schools and employment • Targeted substance abuse, mental health treatment or safety planning <p>Step 2B: Make connections with behavioral health, schools, and other youth and family providers to partner in implementing diversion and train them on trauma-informed diversion strategies and tools.</p> <p>Step 2C: Apply for YHDP funds to support a regional diversion project.</p> <p>Step 2D: Implement a YHDP-funded diversion project and potentially find local funding to supplement expansion</p>
Regional Actions	<p>Yellow: Replicate a host home program; provide mental health services; aid in finding recovery services for caregivers and youth; partner with early head start; identify creative outlets for youth and mentorship programs; and work on cases and effects of homelessness.</p> <p>Gray: Create a region wide diversion project that expands access to all youth identified and targeted for diversion.</p> <p>Blue: Create and fund a diversion project targeted for all youth and young adults and their families who are experiencing housing insecurity.</p> <p>Orange: Create and fund a program that expands access to all youth identified and targeted for diversion. Include behavioral health screening/ engagement; mental health/ CDP trained (in-home services when safe to do so).</p> <p>Red: Create host homes, and support reunifications with families that youth choose.</p> <p>Green: Identify at risk populations by outreach, and development of community referrals for early intervention.</p>
Lead	<p>Yellow: Sarah Phillips at YES</p> <p>Gray: Mark Hollandsworth at HopeSource and Caitlin Cordell at Room 1</p> <p>Blue: Doc Robinson at Serenity House</p> <p>Orange: Cassie Lentz at Grays Harbor County</p> <p>Red: Lori Call at WGAP</p> <p>Green: Jeff Tietjen in Whitman County</p>
Timeline	<p>Yellow:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6 month – Recruit and begin training host homes Begin conducting outreach to community partners Year One – Expand program services across the region Explore regional coverage of diversion system Year Two – Conduct sustainability activities <p>Gray:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6 month – Create a region wide diversion project Identify diversion tool and train community partners Year One – Expand diversion partners to include WorkSource Explore regional coverage of diversion system Year Two – Institutionalize diversion and prevention procedures and tools across the region <p>Blue:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6 month – Explore effective diversion strategies Year One – Begin funding and implementing diversion strategies Year Two - Institutionalize diversion within new systems <p>Orange:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6 month – Create a region wide diversion project Year One – Explore partnerships with existing systems to leverage resources Year Two – Develop prevention strategies to intervene before crisis Work with Y4Y to identify alternative diversion pathways <p>Red:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6 month – Begin creating host home program Train staff in PYD and TIC

Indicators	Year One – Build strong regional connection through outreach efforts Create a CE
	Year Two – Explore how to expand options and leverage community resources for housing minors
	Green:
	6 Month - Create Community Team to reach or refer youth for early intervention
	Year two - Re-Evaluate services and make improvements
	Yellow: Regional coverage Diversified funding sources
	Gray: Regional coverage Diversion tool incorporated within procedures
	Blue: Operational diversion interventions
	Orange: Regional coverage Broad base of partners diverting youth
	Red: Regional youth CE Operational Host Home program
	Green: Regional outreach and diversion coverage

Objective 2.2: Create the capacity within every region to offer immediate low-barrier access to crisis housing that prevents street homelessness, which may include shelters, host homes, and other regional housing interventions.

Action Step 1	<p>Establish or expand crisis, low-barrier housing.</p> <p>Step 1A: For communities with crisis housing, work with providers to reduce barriers to entry and increase youth-centered services.</p> <p>Step 1B: For communities with no crisis housing, plan for the right scale and types of emergency housing to meet the regional need (supported by modeling work). This may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emergency host homes • Emergency flex funds to keep a youth housed • New shelter options <p>Step 1C: Explore local, state, private and YHDP funds for crisis housing.</p> <p>Step 1D: Implement expanded crisis housing options.</p>
Regional Actions	<p>Yellow: Region will not prioritize this objective.</p> <p>Gray: Increase low-barrier crisis housing options for minors and young adults.</p> <p>Blue: Increase low-barrier emergency housing options. Emergency systems are currently needed in four of the five counties in the region for minors.</p> <p>Orange: Develop an integrated low-barrier crisis housing program. Review capital/ and facilities. Consider lowering barriers. Differentiate between YYA, nuclear family, pregnant and parenting teens and consider licensing requirements. Develop options for crisis respite- use different performance standards than traditional emergency shelter, as goal is different.</p> <p>Red: Maintain strong connection with the homeless youth shelter in adjacent region.</p> <p>Green: Identify and review best practices for immediate housing interventions.</p>
Lead	<p>Blue: Doc Robinson at Serenity House</p> <p>Gray: Mark Hollandsworth at HopeSource and Caitlin Cordell at Room 1</p> <p>Orange: Cassie Lentz at Grays Harbor County</p> <p>Red: Lori Call at WGAP</p> <p>Green: Jeff Tietjen in Whitman County</p>
Timeline	<p>Blue:</p> <p>6 month – Identify community needs Explore formalizing partnerships</p> <p>Year One – Develop low-barrier housing projects across the regions</p> <p>Year Two – Institutionalize new system</p> <p>Gray:</p> <p>6 month – Identify housing models</p>

Indicators		Year One – Develop low-barrier crisis housing options for youth and young adults Year Two – Seek Y4Y input on system evaluation and improvement efforts.
	Orange:	Year One – Develop an integrated low-barrier crisis housing program Year Two - Seek Y4Y input on system evaluation and improvement efforts.
	Red:	6 months – Partner with existing resources to improve efficiencies and effectiveness across the region Year One – In partnership with Y4Y, develop an assessment tool
	Green:	6 month - Determine if unmet needs of homeless youth require creation of shelter, or change in current shelter options. Year One - Research funding options Year Two - Take action on recommendations on unmet needs
	Blue:	Formalized partnerships across the region Increased number of low-barrier crisis housing options across the region
	Gray:	Increased number of low-barrier crisis housing options across the region
	Orange:	Effective region wide crisis housing project
	Red:	Increased number of youth accessing services
	Green:	Emergent housing options for young people experiencing homelessness

Goal 3: The community uses coordinated entry processes to effectively link all youth experiencing homelessness to housing and services solutions that are tailored to their needs.

Objective 3.1: Implement regional youth-centered coordinated entry that assesses and quickly connects youth to a tailored resource of their choice.

Action Step 1	<p>Develop or improve accessibility and accuracy of coordinated entry systems for youth in each region.</p> <p>Step 1A: Launch TIC/PYD informed youth-specific access points where they don't exist. Step 1B: Ensure intake process assesses vulnerability in a trauma-informed and youth-specific way. Step 1C: Reach agreement with adult service providers on how to prioritize young adults within adult and family systems. Step 1D: Create space for consumer voice, choice and self-advocacy. Step 1E: Conduct CE training for agency partners. Step 1F: Provide ongoing CE, TIC and PYD training and technical assistance.</p>
Regional Actions	<p>Yellow: Develop a plan for coordinated entry that aligns with our values of research based, trauma-centered, youth designed and creates a way to capture and share work in a meaningful way, has a housing-first emphasis and is networked and centralized.</p> <p>Gray: Identify youth access points throughout the region that may include schools, community providers and other county service centers. Identify locations and agencies that contact with youth and provide outreach material, and Zoho training. Provide log-on credentials and begin developing referral list. Use technology and social media in a way to get more youth connected to CE.</p> <p>Blue: Identify youth access points throughout the region that may include schools, school liaisons, counselors, community providers, juvenile and county service centers, dependency court, tribal health services, homeless family services, and youth-led organizations within and without schools. Provide TA and trainings on how to ensure each coordinated entry system is youth-informed, equitable and uses age-appropriate assessment tools. Use expertise of youth peers to develop fair and equal access across the region.</p> <p>Orange: Identify potential youth access points throughout the region. Work with adult system to identify and refer youth to appropriate resources so those youth don't get screened out.</p> <p>Red: Try creating a phone CE system so youth feel a little safer.</p> <p>Green: Develop a plan for youth coordinated entry.</p>

Action Step 2	Build and diversity referral sources into coordinated entry system. See Objective 1.1, Action Step 2.
Lead	Yellow: Cody Francis at Family Crisis Network Gray: Mark Hollandsworth at HopeSource and Caitlin Cordell at Room 1 Blue: Doc Robinson at Serenity House Orange: Cassie Lentz at Grays Harbor County Red: Lori Call at WGAP Green: Jeff Tietjen in Whitman County
Timeline	Yellow: 6 month – Explore youth-friendly CE tools Begin to align CE tools and process across the region Year One – Recruit, hire and provide high quality CE training to CE staff Year Two – Coordinate CE across the region Gray: 6 month – Identify youth access points Begin developing a referral list Year One – Develop technology based youth engagement and outreach tools Work with the regional Y4Y to ensure effective design Year Two – Seek evaluation efforts from regional Y4Y Blue: 6 month – Identify community needs Explore formalizing partnerships Year One – Develop regions CE Recruit, hire and provide high quality CE training to CE staff Year Two – Institutionalize new system Orange: 6 month – Identify youth access points Develop a robust CE process for youth Year One- Train staff in PYD Year Two – Ensure adult CE has mechanisms to identify and refer youth to youth CE Red: 6 month – Explore realities of phone-based and web-based CE Seek Y4Y guidance on implementation of youth CE Green: 6 month - Review current coordinated entry process Year One - Develop regional CE Year Two - Seek evaluation efforts from regional Y4Y
Indicators	Number of youth accessing Coordinated Entry by region

Objective 3.2: Use Coordinated Entry data in ways that are transparent and designed to maximize system performance and community progress.

Action Step 1	Address data sharing, integration and deployment. Step 1A: Develop a by-name list and case conferencing strategies in each region. Step 1B: Ensure data is collected in a way that can be used to maximize system performance.
Regional Actions	Yellow: Region will not prioritize this objective. Gray: Build ability to develop a master list of names and create MOUs across agencies to collectively address the needs of youth.

	<p>Blue: Use multiple data sources such as HMIS and OSPI to quantify the number of youth experiencing homelessness under any federal definition. Develop a youth By Name List to identify, assess and prioritize the most vulnerable.</p> <p>Orange: Ensure different definitions of homelessness aren't barriers to identifying homeless youth. Commerce and OSPI work together to iron out confidentiality, data sharing, and release of information concerns to increase flow of information.</p> <p>Red: Region will not prioritize this objective.</p> <p>Green: Region will not prioritize this objective.</p>
Lead	<p>Gray: Mark Hollandsworth at HopeSource</p> <p>Blue: Doc Robinson at Serenity House</p> <p>Orange: Cassie Lentz at Grays Harbor County</p>
Timeline	<p>Gray:</p> <p>6 months - Create MOU's across organizations</p> <p>Year One - Train community partners to use tools</p> <p>Blue:</p> <p>Year One - Create MOU's across organizations</p> <p>Train staff</p> <p>Orange:</p> <p>6 months - Create MOU's across organizations</p> <p>Year One - Train community partners to use tools</p>
Indicators	<p>Gray: Regional list of young people in need of housing interventions</p> <p>Blue: Regional list of young people in need of housing interventions</p> <p>Orange: Regional list of young people in need of housing interventions</p>

Goal 4: The community acts with urgency to swiftly assist youth to move into permanent or non-time-limited housing options with appropriate services and supports.

Objective 4.1: Create an array of programs based on data and youth input that offer youth choice in housing and tailored services that meet their needs.	
Action Step 1	<p>Use current data to perform regional system modeling that can help inform the type and amounts of housing and service resources needed across the counties in the region.</p> <p>Step 1A: Collect current local system data.</p> <p>Step 1B: Identify ideal system and pathways out of homelessness.</p> <p>Step 1C: Inventory existing programs and services.</p> <p>Step 1D: Complete regional modeling exercise.</p>
Regional Actions	<p>Yellow: The committee works together to identify the need for safe and emergency shelter/ housing and what other types are available.</p> <p>Gray: Model and identify capacity and locations. Count beds and eligibility. Develop priority placement policy.</p> <p>Blue: Assess the accessibility of housing interventions (both crisis, time limited, and non-time limited) across the region.</p> <p>Orange: Discuss replicating/ scale up or down existing housing programs/ shelter in other communities that are cost effective (cost benefit analysis).</p> <p>Green: Collect and use data to identify effective interventions.</p>
Action Step 2	<p>Establish or expand housing and service array for youth throughout the region, focusing on youth needs and increased rates of immediate access.</p>

	<p>Step 2A: Determine types of housing that are needed for each community, informed by the system modeling. Consider how to implement each type using the Housing First approach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host homes • Master leasing • Rapid rehousing • Supportive housing • Permanent affordable housing <p>Step 2B: Explore local, state, private and YHDP funds for housing.</p> <p>Step 2C: Ensure programming is trauma-informed, culturally relevant and has set systems to address bias, youth choice and the needs of special populations.</p> <p>Step 2D: Connect housing program to youth-specific and mainstream services around employment/ education, behavioral health, healthcare, social integration.</p> <p>Step 2E: Implement expanded housing options.</p>
Regional Actions	<p>Yellow: Develop strategies to be responsive to the needs of the community to create solutions that are safe, responsive, immediately available, and appropriate for that youth.</p> <p>Gray: Work with community members to establish host families for quick response to homeless youth. Develop master leases for multi-unit housing with a house leader.</p> <p>Blue: Community-based regional youth organizations involved in youth outreach and service delivery provide cohesive wrap around services to ensure swift delivery of housing services with necessary supports – employment/education programs, law-enforcement, healthcare, mental healthcare etc. Fund regional non time-limited Permanent Housing.</p> <p>Orange: Increase the number of affordable housing units to place youth and families quickly.</p> <p>Red: Continue with landlord relations and develop a program that can house the underage homeless youth. Continue to serve youth in need with low-barrier apartment complex.</p> <p>Green: Build a positive relationship with local landlords.</p>
Lead	<p>Yellow: Sarah Phillips at YES</p> <p>Gray: Mark Hollandsworth at HopeSource and Caitlin Cordell at Room 1</p> <p>Blue: Doc Robinson at Serenity House</p> <p>Orange: Cassie Lentz at Grays Harbor County</p> <p>Red: Lori Call at WGAP</p> <p>Green: Jeff Tietjen in Whitman County</p>
Timeline	<p>Yellow:</p> <p>6 month – Explore short term housing options</p> <p>Year One – Create regional consistency</p> <p>Explore creation of expanding low-barrier crisis housing</p> <p>Year Two – Create low-barrier system and projects</p> <p>Focus on programming that supports improved education and employment outcomes.</p> <p>Gray:</p> <p>6 month – Identify types of housing intervention are needed across the region</p> <p>Develop priority placement policy</p> <p>Year One – Begin developing housing programs</p> <p>Ensure programs using TIC, PYD and Harm Reduction approaches</p> <p>Blue:</p> <p>6 month – Identify community needs</p> <p>Explore formalizing partnerships</p> <p>Year One – Begin developing housing programs</p> <p>Create regional transportation opportunities</p> <p>Year Two – Institutionalize new system</p> <p>Orange:</p> <p>6 month – Explore housing options</p> <p>Year One – Create regional communication strategy</p> <p>Develop a continuum of crisis service options</p> <p>Year Two – Create low-barrier projects</p> <p>Explore scaling and regionalizing projects</p>

Indicators	Red:	Year One – Increase case management capacity to leverage roommate capabilities Year Two – Strengthen landlord relations activities
	Green:	6 month – Identify community needs Explore formalizing partnerships Year One – Begin developing housing programs Strengthen landlord relations activities
	Yellow:	Youth will have housing options Increased number of youth in school and/or employed
	Gray:	Youth will have quick-response housing options
	Blue:	Youth will have housing coordinated with appropriate supportive services Transportation will not be a barrier to accessing housing
	Orange:	Increased number of housing units across the region
	Red:	Landlords reach out when units become available Increase in roommate units
	Green:	Youth will have housing options

Objective 4.2: Pursue youth vision and high quality in the structure and design of any new or expanded housing options.

Action Step 1	Proactively seek youth input and consider any housing program's community integration.
Regional Actions	Yellow: Region will not prioritize this objective. Gray: Region will not prioritize this objective. Blue: Develop progressive engagement practices and assessments that utilize youth self-determination and help identify the appropriate intervention to lead to permanent housing, including community support. Orange: Housing/ services for youth are integrated into the community (i.e. not obviously identified as social services, nice, new, clean, etc.) to prevent stigmatization that may prevent youth from accessing them. Develop communication strategies to educate the community on the needs, gaps, and barriers. Red: Region will not prioritize this objective. Green: Develop a Youth Action Board
Lead	Blue: Doc Robinson at Serenity House Orange: Cassie Lentz at Grays Harbor County Green: Jeff Tietjen in Whitman County
Timeline	Blue: 6 month- Develop engagement practices and assessment tool Year One – Seek Y4Y input Year Two – On-going assessment, evaluation and improvement efforts Orange: 6 months - Develop communication strategies to educate the community on the needs, gaps, and barriers Year One – Seek Y4Y input Develop projects Year Two – Engage new stakeholders to help implement Green: 6 month - Develop engagement practices and assessment tool Year One – Seek Y4Y input
Indicators	Blue: Y4Y informed programs Orange: System wary youth in stable and safe housing

Green: Y4Y informed programs

Goal 5: The community has resources, plans, and system capacity in place to continue to prevent and quickly end future experiences of homelessness among youth.

Objective 5.1: Provide integrated services that serve youth and families before homelessness occurs, and prevent recurrences of homelessness.

Action Step 1	<p>Engage in multi-party collaboration in designing and executing solutions in sustainable ways.</p> <p>Step 1A: Build on mainstream or preexisting resources.</p> <p>Step 1B: Build sustainable coalitions and cross-system partnerships.</p>
Regional Actions	<p>Yellow: Broad Collaboration in the planning of the system and recognizing what is not available and creating solutions for those deficits.</p> <p>Gray: Bring local diverse coalitions of providers and community members together to continuously address problems with creativity and shared resources.</p> <p>Blue: Create sustainable partnerships with school, justice, welfare and other systems to divert youth from homelessness. Identify precursors to homelessness and those especially vulnerable to experiencing homelessness.</p> <p>Orange: Create mechanisms for integration with BH, Housing, Education, DCYF so youth and families have comprehensive care in a seamless way. Use data and other processes to identify common root causes that are strong contributors or risk factors for homelessness and develop integrated community strategies to work upstream- i.e. addressing the root causes of homelessness rather than just responding to the crisis.</p> <p>Red: Have our regional team meet monthly and develop a plan to make contact with youth before they exit the foster care system, juvenile dept. or any other facility so that way we have a better understanding of how to meet their needs before they are on the streets.</p>
Lead	<p>Yellow: Sarah Phillips at YES and Brian Crandall at Rural Resources</p> <p>Gray: Mark Hollandsworth at HopeSource and Caitlin Cordell at Room 1</p> <p>Blue: Doc Robinson at Serenity House</p> <p>Orange: Cassie Lentz at Grays Harbor County</p> <p>Red: Lori Call at WGAP</p>
Timeline	<p>Yellow:</p> <p>6 month – Build partnerships with providers outside of current homeless system</p> <p>Year One – Collect data and track youth who return to homeless systems</p> <p> Create referral system</p> <p>Year Two – Seek Y4Y input on system evaluation and improvement efforts.</p> <p>Gray:</p> <p>6 month – Identify local coalitions of providers</p> <p>Year One – Develop prevention tool and procedure to assist in preventing returns to homelessness</p> <p>Year Two – Seek Y4Y input on system evaluation and improvement efforts.</p> <p>Blue:</p> <p>6 month – Organizations across the region involved in 5 year plans</p> <p> Work to incorporate youth into county plans</p> <p>Year One – Formalize partnerships with MOU's</p> <p> Create prevention interventions in partnership with systems that exit youth into homelessness</p> <p>Orange:</p> <p>Year One – Use data to inform project types and scale</p> <p> Identify and address equity issues</p>

Indicators	Red:	Year Two – Seek Y4Y input on system evaluation and improvement efforts
		Year One – Create plan to engage systems of care
		Year Two – Implement plan
	Yellow:	Expanded community partners Y4Y informed projects
	Gray:	Developed and proceduralized prevention tool Y4Y informed projects
	Blue:	Increased collaboration with regional systems of care
	Orange:	Equitable access to services Data informed decisions Y4Y informed projects
	Red:	Increased collaboration with regional systems of care

Objective 5.2: Shift community behavior in a sustainable way that will allow for ongoing collaboration around services and data.

Action Step 1	Establish sustainable processes to collaboratively and accountably monitor system data. Step 1A: Set group data protocols. Step 1B: Make data actionable through dashboards or other transparent means. Step 1C: Conduct ongoing review of Community Plan goals and project outcomes by state and regional teams.
Regional Actions	Yellow: Region will not prioritize this objective. Gray: The community reviews system data on youth on a monthly basis. Blue: Stakeholders will act in partnership to monitor data, recidivism rates, and request TA as needed. Regional meetings periodically to review youth programs and data and help support those in smaller areas with supports and ideas to grow the capacity in their counties. This should include the voices of youth in the regions for feedback regarding service delivery, etc. Orange: The community team reviews system data on youth on a monthly basis. Red: Region will not prioritize this objective. Green: Region will not prioritize this objective.
Lead	Gray: Mark Hollandsworth at HopeSource Blue: Doc Robinson at Serenity House Orange: Cassie Lentz at Grays Harbor County
Timeline	Gray: Year One - Create a team to evaluate data on a monthly basis Blue: Year One - Create a team to evaluate data on a regular basis Orange: 6 month – Identify data points and tracking tool Year One – Review system data on a monthly basis Create mechanisms for community services integration
Indicators	Gray: Dashboard to evaluate data collection Blue: Broad stakeholder engagement Orange: Dashboard to evaluate data collection Broad stakeholder engagement

Project List

YHDP annual award will be allocated using youth census data resulting in the following approximation:

Yellow: \$190,000

Gray: \$575,000

Blue: \$635,000

Orange: \$479,000

Red: \$100,000

Green: \$258,000

In order to ensure the priorities of Y4Y are incorporated within YHDP funded projects, the Y4Y Board will provide a set of required project components.

Regions will choose one or more project types from the list below to apply for through a competitive process:

<i>Program Type:</i>		Supportive Services Only (SSO):
		Crisis Navigation & Diversion/Outreach/ Coordinated Entry
<i>Timeframe/Length of Assistance for Participants:</i>		1-6 months
<i>Populations Served:</i>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaccompanied Youth, under 18 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pregnant/parenting Youth, under 18 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaccompanied Young Adults, 18-24 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pregnant/parenting Young Adults, 18-24
<i>Optimal Provider Characteristics:</i>		Demonstrated: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • history of engaging young people into services • ability to be flexible and creative in their work with young people • strong community partnerships • experience administering government funding • integration of youth voice • policies ensuring staff safety (outreach programs)
<i>Program Description/Elements:</i>		Mobile outreach services Site-based engagement services Regional Coordinated Entry On-line and text services Flexible, short-term resource investment Housing and service assessment Family mediation Case management Housing Navigation Real time problem solving Crisis host home options (six months or less)
<i>Desired/Expected Key Outcomes:</i>		Youth can be diverted from shelter to safe alternative housing options with supports. Increased identification of young people and improved access to resources. Youth engage in service intervention and exit homelessness. Communities have a more accurate count of youth experiencing homelessness.

<i>Program Type:</i>		Transitional Housing (TH)
<i>Timeframe/Length of Assistance for Participants:</i>		6-24 months
<i>Populations Served:</i>		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaccompanied Youth, under 18 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pregnant/parenting Youth, under 18 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaccompanied Young Adults, 18-24 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pregnant/parenting Young Adults, 18-24
<i>Optimal Provider Characteristics:</i>		Demonstrated:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • history of engaging young people into services • ability to be flexible and creative in their work with young people • strong community partnerships • experience administering government funding • integration of youth voice • capacity to manage or support a licensed facility (minor programs)
<i>Program Description/Elements:</i>	<p>3 Transitional Housing Options:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Housing Solution for Minors 2. Transition-in Place for Youth and Young Adults 3. Long Term Host Homes <p>All Transitional Housing will include: Housing-First Approach (low-barrier) Youth voice and choice Parent/Family Model Case Management Vocational support Pro-social activities</p>
<i>Desired/Expected Key Outcomes:</i>	<p>Youth engage in service intervention and exit homelessness.</p> <p>Education and employment advancement.</p> <p>Lasting connections to community</p>
<i>Program Type:</i>	Rapid Re-Housing (PH-RRH)
<i>Timeframe/Length of Assistance for Participants:</i>	6-24 months
<i>Populations Served:</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaccompanied Youth, under 18 <input type="checkbox"/> Pregnant/parenting Youth, under 18 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaccompanied Young Adults, 18-24 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pregnant/parenting Young Adults, 18-24
<i>Optimal Provider Characteristics:</i>	<p>Demonstrated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • history of engaging young people into services • ability to be flexible and creative in their work with young people • strong community partnerships • experience administering government funding • integration of youth voice • ability to create financial policies and/or procedures that facilitate housing in an open-market
<i>Program Description/Elements:</i>	<p>Housing-First Approach (low-barrier) Youth voice and choice Case Management Housing search assistance Deposit and rental assistance Vocational support Pro-social activities</p>
<i>Desired/Expected Key Outcomes:</i>	<p>Youth engage in service intervention and exit homelessness.</p> <p>Education and employment advancement.</p> <p>Lasting connections to community.</p>

<i>Program Type:</i>	Transitional Housing to Rapid Re-Housing (TH-RRH Joint Component):	
<i>Timeframe/Length of Assistance for Participants:</i>	1-24 months	
<i>Populations Served:</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaccompanied Youth, under 18 <input type="checkbox"/> Pregnant/parenting Youth, under 18 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaccompanied Young Adults, 18-24 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Pregnant/parenting Young Adults, 18-24	
<i>Optimal Provider Characteristics:</i>	<p>Demonstrated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • history of engaging young people into services • ability to be flexible and creative in their work with young people • strong community partnerships • experience administering government funding • integration of youth voice • ability to create financial policies and/or procedures that facilitate housing in an open-market 	
<i>Program Description/Elements:</i>	<p>Immediate access to TH unit (host home, master-leased or owned units) Housing-First Approach (low-barrier) Youth voice and choice Case Management Housing search assistance Deposit and rental assistance Vocational support Pro-social activities</p>	
<i>Desired/Expected Key Outcomes:</i>	<p>Youth engage in service intervention and exit homelessness.</p> <p>Education and employment advancement.</p> <p>Lasting connections to community.</p>	

There are currently no additional youth dedicated project outside of YHDP in development but further projects funded outside the YHDP funds will be explored as part of the ongoing community planning process.

A Request for Proposals will be released April 1, 2019 with a due date of May 15, 2019. Each region will have access to the amount of funds outlined above be able to apply for any of the above project types in their region. The RFP will be available on the Department of Commerce/Office of Homeless Youth website and will be distributed via email to organizations and networks across the state. The ranking and review committee will have 16 days to make funding decisions. This group will include key stakeholder such as public child welfare, school system partners, and Y4Y members. Successful project announcements will occur June 4, 2019 and projects will be entered into esnaps by July 1, 2019.

Continuous Quality Improvement

On-going evaluation efforts will occur throughout each projects implementation stages. During project participation, young people will be prompted for feedback through both known and anonymous collection methods. Additionally, data will be collected through follow-ups with young people upon exit of services at regular intervals (3, 6 and 12 months). The team will also develop outcome measures, with the assistance of the Partnership Center, that look at CoC system performance measures, RHYA measures, and other measures developed by the team to ensure quality implementation and success of the

program. During quarterly YHDP State Team and Y4Y Meetings members will review feedback and data. These leadership teams will assist regions and projects in incorporating the feedback resulting in on-going improvements to the system.

End State

Upon successful implementation of the six statewide goals, the most rural counties in Washington State will have increased their capacity to effectively engage, divert and intervene in youth and young adult homelessness. Furthermore, community partners will communicate and coordinate across silos and counties to strengthen system supports for young people. In partnership with providers, youth will have opportunities to seek culturally competent services designed and informed by young people. Across the state, youth will have increased access to safe housing, permanent connections, educational and employment support, and most importantly will be leaders in the state effort to end youth homelessness.

VI. Guiding Principles

Each regional team interpreted our guiding principles to determine how they would be reflected and implemented at the local level. The detailed results of this process are attached as **Appendix 3**, but more generally, all localities were in agreement that, as we implement the activities identified through YHDP, all of our actions will be guided by the following principles:

- Lead with youth voice and choice.
- Focus on equity for special populations who are at elevated risk for homelessness, including young parents, LGBTQ youth, Native and Hispanic youth, and those who have been involved in the foster care, criminal justice and behavioral health systems.
- Incorporate PYD and TIC strategies to help build youth resilience and self-efficacy, and to understand the long-term impacts of trauma.
- Decrease barriers to housing by using a Housing First approach, and developing a youth-specific coordinated entry system to match youth with the appropriate and preferred housing and service.
- Provide tailored, age-appropriate services that build on the strengths of each youth.
- Commit to a process for monitoring measurable outcomes, and adjusting activities to achieve outcomes.
- Enhance the social wellbeing and permanent connections of youth by focusing on social supports and community integration.

Principle 1: Positive Youth Development/ Trauma Informed Care

The Trauma Informed Care model involves understanding and responding to the effects of trauma on a young person's well-being (both before and during an experience of homelessness), and acknowledging the ongoing effects trauma can have on social and emotional well-being, educational attainment, employment, permanent connections and behavior. Positive Youth Development emphasizes the need to approach every interaction with a young person believing in the inherent capabilities and strengths of that youth, while also building protective factors and resiliency.

Steps our Core Team will adopt at the state level to ensure that the principles of TIC and PYD are broadly adopted in our YHDP projects include:

- Disseminating information to create a system-wide understanding of trauma prevalence, impact, and trauma-informed practices

- Connecting providers to ongoing TIC and PYD training and technical assistance
- Creating space for consumer voice, choice and self-advocacy
- Establishing programs that enhance and build natural supports, including family
- Establishing or expanding programs that provide meaningful opportunities for personal growth in education and employment
- Requiring TIC and PYD principles in the policies of all YHDP-funded projects
- Monitoring the effective and widespread adoption of TIC and PYD approaches through our ongoing YHDP Continuous Quality Improvement efforts

Principle 2: Family Engagement

One of the best diversion and intervention approaches in rural regions like ours is to engage families whenever it is safe and appropriate to do so. Our community plans to address family engagement by:

- Partnering with organizations including schools, child welfare agencies, youth providers, law enforcement and juvenile justice to identify appropriate interventions for high-risk youth and their families.
- Developing or expanding regional family support programs to stabilize, reunify or strengthen families.
- Determining how early intervention and diversion programs for families will be treated within coordinated entry, for consistency throughout the region.

Principle 3: Immediate Access to Housing with NO Preconditions

Our community upholds immediate access to housing with no preconditions as a core value for young people, and will work to quickly and successfully connect youth experiencing homelessness to permanent housing without preconditions and barriers to entry. Supportive services are offered to maximize housing stability and prevent returns to homelessness as opposed to addressing predetermined treatment goals prior to permanent housing entry. Whenever possible we will require YHDP programs to adhere to Housing First principles including:

- Admissions to projects will not be contingent upon pre-requisites such as abstinence of substances, minimum income requirements, health or mental health history, medication adherence, age, criminal justice history, financial history, completion of treatment, participation in services, "housing readiness", or history or occurrence of victimization
- Intake processes for Coordinated Entry and programs will be trauma-informed, person-centered and flexible, and projects will create regular and formal opportunities for participants to offer input.
- Youth choose the type and extent of services they want to participate in.

Principle 4: Youth Choice

Our community will highlight youth choice both in our planning process and in the delivery of YHDP services. We will develop processes and programs that:

- Recognize the value of self-determination and individualized goals
- Allow youth to choose the nature and extent of programs and services they want to engage in;
- Allow youth to choose their household composition and gender identity;
- Allow youth to develop their own employment and education pathways; and

- Incorporate opportunities for client input, feedback and leadership.

We will treat youth as the experts on their own circumstances, and anticipate that increasing youth choice will have a direct impact on the success of any housing or service intervention. We will need to proactively create the space where youth can provide critical feedback without negative consequences.

Principle 5: Individualized and Client-Driven Support

As our system evolves through the YHDP process, our community will be careful to avoid a one-solution fits all approach. The individualized needs of youth, and special populations in particular, will remain paramount. To ensure that youth and young adults build self-efficacy and resolve ambivalence, services delivered through our YHDP plan will be strengths-based and client-led. Age-appropriate and individualized case management will provide support to youth as they navigate options. See also Youth Choice, above.

Principle 6: Social and Community Integration

Our team sees social and community integration as a principle that demands both empowering youth experiencing homelessness to feel active and included in their communities, and reducing the stigma of homelessness through community education and engagement. To achieve these mutually enforcing goals we will:

- Bring youth voices as equal stakeholders to any community discussion around youth services and homelessness.
- Help youth and young adults build social and community capital, including permanent connections, by incorporating recreation, leisure and civic engagement into YHDP service planning.
- Provide transportation opportunities to reduce barriers for community engagement activities.
- Include peer support specialists as part of YHDP programs and system.

Principle 7: Coordinated Entry

We will implement Coordinated Entry in each region to quickly connect youth to a tailored resource of their choice. This will require us to launch youth-specific access points, and ensure that each intake process assesses vulnerability in a trauma-informed and youth-specific way. We will work with adult coordinated entry systems to determine how youth will be prioritized within them, and with OHY to ensure consistency in our youth CE systems across the state.

ⁱ Chapin Hall, Voices of Youth Count, 2018. Available at: <http://voicesofyouthcount.org/brief/national-estimates-of-youth-homelessness/>

ⁱⁱ America's Promise Alliance, Center for Promise at Tufts University. "Don't Call Them Dropouts: Understanding the Experiences of Young People Who Leave High School Before Graduation." <http://gradnation.americaspromise.org/sites/default/files/d8/DCTD%20Final%20Full.pdf>

ⁱⁱⁱ Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction. "Number of Students Experiencing Homelessness Largest in State History." 2018. <http://www.k12.wa.us/Communications/PressReleases2018/HomelessnessIncrease.aspx> ; Shah, Melissa et al. (2015). Homeless and Unstably Housed K-12 Students in Washington State (RDA Report 11.214). Olympia: DSHS-Research, Data and Analysis. Available at: <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/sites/default/files/SESA/rda/documents/research-11-214.pdf>

^{iv} Chapin Hall, 2018.

^v Shah, Melissa, et al. (2015). Youth at Risk of Homelessness.

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- ^{vi} Mayfield, Jim et al. (2017), Housing Status of Youth Exiting Foster Care, Behavioral Health and Criminal Justice Systems (RDA Report 11.240). Olympia: DSHS-Research, Data and Analysis. Available at: <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/sites/default/files/SESA/rda/documents/research-11-240.pdf>
- ^{vii} Chapin Hall, 2018.
- ^{viii} American Factfinder: Percent of the Total Population who are White Alone, Not Hispanic or Latino, Urban/Rural, 2017 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates.
- ^{ix} Percent of the Total Population Who Are American Indian and Alaska Native Alone- Urban/Rural, 2017 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates
- ^x RHY data: https://extranet.acf.hhs.gov/rhymis/custom_reports.jsp; King County Count Us In 2015 report: <https://tfoo8v2.storage.googleapis.com/Count-Us-In-2015-Rpt.pdf> ; Whatcom County Report: <http://www.nwys.org/wp-content/uploads/gates-pride-recommendations-report.pdf>
- ^{xi} Chapin Hall, Voices of Youth LGBTQ Issue Brief. Available at: <http://voicesofyouthcount.org/brief/lgbtq-youth-homelessness>
- ^{xii} Shah, Melissa et al. (2015). Youth at Risk of Homelessness (RDA Report 7.106). Olympia: DSHS-Research, Data and Analysis. Available at: <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/sites/default/files/SESA/rda/documents/research-7-106.pdf>
- ^{xiii} WA State Department of Health, Induced Abortion/ Pregnancy tables. <https://www.doh.wa.gov/DataandStatisticalReports/HealthStatistics/AbortionPregnancy/AbortionPregnancyTablesbyTopic>
- ^{xiv} Shah, Melissa, et al. (2015). Homeless and Unstably Housed K-12 Students.
- ^{xv} Analysis of 2014 HMIS data.