

The Tidal Wave of Change

To Wash-Away Youth Homelessness

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Introduction

The Youth System of Monterey and San Benito Counties is a collaborative of youth serving agencies with the mission to end/prevent youth homelessness in their geographical region. This collaborative is made up of institutions of care such as child welfare, juvenile justice, homeless youth serving agencies, and for profit companies to bring together folks who have been traditionally siloed to perform intensive care to this population. This system noticed an increase in need of funding for this complex population and applied for the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program(YHDP). This document outlines the community’s plan to fulfill its mission and vision.

The YHDP Mission and Vision Statement were created by Youth for Action, the community’s Youth Action Board (YAB).

YHDP Vision

We envision the future of our community to be youth-centered and youth-led.

- A community where youth homelessness does not exist.
- A community where youth are offered supportive services.
- A community where housing is affordable.
- A community where youth are offered housing when in need.
- A community where youth are included at all tables and conversations.
- A community that is an equitable safe space.
- A community where youth are empowered and enact change.

YHDP Mission

The Youth System of Monterey and San Benito Counties fight to eradicate adultism, racism, ableism, transphobia, homophobia, and classism. Ultimately, to uplift youth and young adults to positions of leadership, we empower youth by creating and strengthening support systems for youth. We will influence local policy and programming that centers the lived expertise and needs of young people. We inform all youth and young adults of all available services, building a pathway between local systems to bridge the gaps to ensure no young person is left behind or lost in the system. We train our staff to better serve our youth and young adults. We advocate for the rights of young people, to ensure that youth homelessness is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

Guiding Values

Since the inception of its Youth System, the Lead Me Home Continuum of Care (LMHCoC) has upheld authentic youth engagement, having youth lead the way with guiding values. This community has centered youth in its practice through community agreements made in tandem and led by youth and young adults to promote equity in this space. LMHCoC and the Youth Action Board (YAB), locally known as Youth for Action (Y4A) created these agreements to alleviate power constructs, bring young leaders into this arena and promote comfortability by dismantling a hierarchical space. In addition, equitable practices at a systems-level and embedded within policy have paved the way for providers to serve youth in their programs thoughtfully taking into consideration cultural competent, trauma informed and respectful care.

The LMHCoC acknowledges the existence of systems of oppression and strives to center all projects and programs with inclusion and equity. In addition, they would like to combat discrimination based on age, race, gender, familial type, sexuality, ability level, and others not mentioned by committing to include folks from all walks of life to the table.

Statement from the YAB

We are youth of Monterey and San Benito counties. We came to add our voices to the table because we saw a need in our community; youth that are hurting, hungry, unsafe, unhoused, and unheard - who need help. We decided we wanted to make a difference and change our community for the better. To create a system that better supports and responds to the needs of all youth and is equitable in design. Including delivering trauma-informed, culturally competent care that is accessible to youth with disabilities, LGBTQ+ inclusive, individualized and driven by youth choice, which will support positive youth development and provide peer support. We offer support to the CCP in the form of artwork, authentic youth collaboration, and YLE expertise.

Youth for Action officially approves the CCP, signed below by all members.

Acknowledgments

Thank you to the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) for providing the Youth Homeless Demonstration Program (YHDP) grant, and for their invaluable technical assistance and guidance as we work towards our vision and goals.

The Coordinated Community Plan (CCP) for Salinas/Monterey and San Benito Counties is the result of sustained community engagement across multiple sectors and systems, led by Youth for Action and the Youth Systems Leaders.

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Leadership Council

- Luis Alejo – Board of Supervisors, Monterey (Chair)
- Mike Lebarre – Mayor of King City
- Kimbley Craig – Mayor of Salinas
- Ian Oglesby – Mayor of Seaside
- Ignacio Velazquez – Mayor of Hollister
- Jose L. Rios – Mayor of Gonzales
- Cesar E. Flores – Vice Mayor, San Juan Bautista (Co-Chair)
- Tory Gunsolley – Interim Executive Director, Housing Authority
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Terms and Acronyms

Acronyms

5YP: Lead Me Home 5-Year Plan to Reduce Homelessness
AB 12: Extended Foster Care Program and Benefits
ADA: Americans with Disabilities Act
CARS: Coordinated Assessment and Referral System
CCP: Coordinated Community Plan
CE: Coordinated Entry
CoC: Continuum of Care
CHSP: Coalition of Homeless Services Providers
CSUMB: California State University, Monterey Bay
DOJ: US Department of Justice
ERF: Encampment Resolution Fund
HEAP: Homeless Emergency Aid Program
HHAP: Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention
HMIS: Homeless Management Information System
HUD: US Department of Housing & Urban Development
LMHCoC: Lead Me Home Continuum of Care
NCHE: National Center for Homeless Education
PSH: Permanent Supportive Housing
RHY: Runaway and Homeless Youth
RRH: Rapid Rehousing
RFP: Request for Proposals
SLE: Sober Living Environment
SSO: Supportive Services Only
TH: Transitional Housing
TH-RRH: Joint Transitional Housing-Rapid Rehousing
TAY: Transition age youth
VAWA: Violence Against Women Act
WIOA: Workforce Investment & Opportunity Act
YHDP: Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program
Y4A: Youth for Action
YAB: Youth action/advisory board
YYA: Youth and young adults

Definitions

Equality - is about ensuring that every individual has an equal opportunity to make the most of their lives and talents, regardless of the way they were born, where they come from, what they believe, or whether they have a disability.

Equity- is the fair treatment, access, opportunity, and advancement for all people, while at the same time striving to identify and eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups.

Justice - is when the cause(s) of an inequality have been addressed. The Systemic barrier has been removed.

Oppression - the systematic subjugation of a social group by another social group with access to institutional or systemic power.

Power - socially, power is defined as access to resources and institutions; the ability to exercise control, influence others and gain access to decision-makers to get what you want done.

Privilege - A special right, advantage, or immunity granted or available only to a particular person or group.

Community History with a Youth Homeless System

Located on the central coast of California, the Monterey and San Benito Counties' Continuum of Care (CoC) serves a geographic area close in size to the state of Connecticut. Along with its neighboring communities, the CoC is highly affected by the housing crisis, with 544 per 100,000 people experiencing homelessness. This is higher than California's overall rate of 383 people experiencing homelessness per 100,000. The CoC includes expansive rural areas in both counties along with city hubs in Monterey County, requiring the CoC to adopt a unique approach to homelessness response that works to serve both people in populous cities as well as more remote rural communities. Youth and young adult (YYA) homelessness is of particular interest for the CoC: individuals under the age of 25 make up 28% of the population of people experiencing homelessness in Monterey County and 16% of the population in San Benito County.^{1 2} Throughout this CoC's upbringing has had a single robust youth specific agency that provided housing interventions for an expanse of the entire CoC. These services also are centrally located in the peninsula in the most densely populated areas.

5 Year Plan To Reduce Homelessness in Monterey and San Benito Counties

In 2021, the LMH-CoC released its 5-Year Plan to Reduce Homelessness (5YP). The Plan has been used to impact three performance measures: entry from literal homelessness, length of stay in the program, and exit rate to permanent housing. Included in this was a mini-plan to address youth homelessness. According to the 2019 PIT count, unaccompanied youth under the age of 25 made up 13% of the population of people experiencing homelessness in Monterey and San Benito counties. Of those young people, 91% were unsheltered³. At the time of the 5YP's development, there was only one housing program in the CoC explicitly serving young adults. As explained in the mini-plan, young people often prefer and feel safer in programs geared towards their age range where services are tailored towards their developmental phase, so it was clear that the response system lacked appropriate resources to proportionate to the number of youth experiencing homelessness.

With extensive feedback from youth with lived experience and community stakeholders, the CoC created a foundation for the youth-centered homelessness response system. Three critical components of this Plan are 1) implementing a refined Coordinated Entry System (CES) that focuses on this subpopulation, 2) expanding the inventory of youth-tailored housing options, and 3) improve collaboration between the homelessness response system and other systems of care that young people at risk of homelessness engage in.⁴

¹https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5176dcd7e4b0e5c0dba41ee0/t/5d547da9c47599000137ddae/1565818281609/ExecutiveSummary_Monterey2019.pdf

²https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5176dcd7e4b0e5c0dba41ee0/t/5d547ebdb15600001f8d37d/1565818556191/ExecutiveSummary_SanBenito2019.pdf

³ Number calculated by using the total estimated number of youth experiencing homelessness (338) and Monterey and San Benito counties combined total PIT count (2704).

⁴https://chsp.org/wp-content/themes/chsp/img/Monterey-and-San-Benito-Counties-5YP_LMH-Update_07232021.pdf

100 Day Challenge

The community engaged in the 100-Day Challenge to End Youth Homelessness under the administrative direction of the Coalition of Homeless Services Providers (CHSP, CoC Lead Agency), which resulted in 36 youth gaining safe and stable housing. The Challenge was the community's first organized attempt to coordinate YYA efforts and services across both counties. The effort was fruitful and encouraged service providers and agencies to work in a more coordinated and less siloed manner through the expansion of networks and resource identification through a recurring Youth Systems Meeting (YSM).

During the Challenge, CHSP partnered with YYA experiencing homelessness and developed its first needs assessment to explore the strengths of the system, as well as identify opportunities to reimagine how the system can better serve youth and young adults, meet their unique needs, and facilitate a successful transition to stable housing. A key goal in this work is to ensure the voices of YYA in the community are prioritized in crafting the Coordinated Community Plan and the design of the youth homelessness response system moving forward.

At the conclusion of the Challenge, stakeholders expressed a desire to continue the collaborative efforts and partnerships. The YSM served as a foundation for the community's Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project (YHDP) efforts and motivated local pursuit of this Coordinated Community Plan.

Youth Action Board

The Youth Action Board was established as an official committee of the Leadership Council in September 2020 and held its first meeting that December. The name of the YAB in the LMHCoC is Youth for Action. They are a group of youth between the ages of 16 and 24. It was created to advocate for youth's needs and incorporate their perspectives into how the community should run the youth-tailored homelessness response system. They are the leaders who will uplift other YYA in the system through advocacy, training, networking, and outreach. They are seen as the heart of the LMHCoC and have participated in creating the CCP, advocated for food security, partnered on the drafting of Request for Proposals, and collaborated with the community's youth-serving agencies.

Simultaneous Funding and Initiatives

The alignment of LMHCoC and the State of California's fight against youth homelessness has brought various funding streams into the network, with a healthy amount of youth set-aside. The Homeless Emergency Aid Program (HEAP) was a release of a one-time \$500 million block grant in 2018 to provide direct assistance to California's CoCs and large cities to address the homelessness crisis throughout the state. This funding brought youth-specific outreach programs and the community's first diversion center in San Benito County and started the partnership in their more rural areas.

Homeless Housing, Assistance, and Prevention (HHAP) block grants were issued in the following years that helped continue to support these aforementioned programs. During round 2 of HHAP funds, the

community established a youth-specific rapid re-Housing (RRH) program. Y4A members were involved in every aspect of the RFP process, from approving the use of the funding to be used for RRH to editing the RFP, adding requirements of the applicant, and ultimately deciding on the awardee.

The County of Monterey was able to follow suit in the needs of their youth, creating their RFP for a Youth Specific Transitional Housing Project with the use of THP-Plus funds. Monterey County Department of Social Services also collaborates with the Housing Authority of the County of Monterey to administer the Foster Youth to Independence Vouchers (FYI). This initiative was created to provide housing assistance to TAY who left foster care or will leave foster care within 90 days, in accordance with a transition plan, and are homeless or are at risk of being homeless at age 16 or older. Finally, in 2022, \$2 million in Congressional Earmarked funds were allocated to the County of Monterey to create a center in the Salinas Valley to serve YYA. These federal funds have provided the perfect opportunity to actualize the dire need to build services that are equitable in modality and by region.

Other Community Context

The LMHCoC has continued tireless efforts across its community to address homelessness within its geographic region. This community is rich in diversity with unique problems. For example, this community has a history of agriculture and migrant workers and has highlighted these seasonal workers' difficulties. Finding a secure, fixed place to stay for these workers and their children is a feat that is paralleled by this region's housing market. The beautiful landscapes of this rural community also come with the advocacy of environmentalists. The waste of unassisted encampments that threaten the waterways and estuaries is a shared concern of the CoC, which led to the application of the State of CA Encampment Resolution Fund.

Encampment Resolution Fund

The Encampment Resolution Fund (ERF) Program was created to fund local demonstration projects that provide services to address the immediate crisis of experiencing unsheltered homelessness in encampments, support people in encampments onto paths to safe and stable housing, and result in sustainable restoration of public spaces to their intended uses while safeguarding the needs of unhoused. In this community, the collaborative effort is led by the City of Salinas, spearheaded by the Salinas Outreach and Response Team (SORT). The City of Salinas was awarded \$4.08 million to restore an encampment bordering a stream in the agricultural center of its city. They partnered with key stakeholders to create an innovative plan to move these funds including Monterey County Water Resources Agency, Coalition of Homeless Services Providers, California State University Monterey Bay (CSUMB) / Return of the Natives, and Catholic Charities Diocese of Monterey. Catholic Charities plays a pinnacle role in serving one of the most vulnerable populations, their undocumented neighbors.

Statement of Need

Monterey and San Benito Counties engaged in a collaborative, youth-driven and community-led process to identify the distinct housing, education, employment, and social-emotional well-being needs of youth and young adults across the bi-county region. These discussions considered the needs of all youth at risk of and experiencing homelessness, as well as the needs for populations of focus known to be particularly vulnerable in how they experience homelessness, including LGBTQ+ youth, minors, pregnant and parenting youth, and youth with experiences with the child welfare and juvenile justice systems.

Additionally, members of Youth for Action and the Youth Systems Meeting identified additional populations of focus based on local circumstances and addressed their distinct needs. These populations of focus include youth who are Black, Indigenous, or a Person of Color (BIPOC); undocumented and immigrant youth; youth with disabilities; youth who are survivors of domestic violence; and students experiencing homelessness.

HUD Threshold Requirements

Unaccompanied Youth		
Population	Data Source(s)	Estimates of Number of Youth
<i>At-risk unaccompanied youth*</i>	ACS Census Survey - 2019 ⁵	3,757 youth
<i>Unaccompanied youth experiencing homeless*</i>	Point In Time Count (PIT) – 2019 ⁶	338 youth
<i>Unaccompanied youth experiencing unsheltered homelessness*</i>	Unsheltered Point In Time Count – 2019 This estimate may include accompanied youth.	303 youth

In the Monterey and San Benito Counties 2019 Point in Time Count the youth population experiencing homelessness makes up 13% of the total population experiencing homelessness⁷. Youth in their mixed urban-rural setting face many setbacks to accessing services. One of the greatest barriers is a general lack of youth-specific housing and youth-specific programs in both counties. There are few agencies that target this population in both counties. The lack of available resources and entry points into the system deter youth from reaching out and leave a huge knowledge gap in terms of other options available to them. In addition to a lack of housing programs, one of the needs identified by Youth for Action is increasing the number of drop in centers specifically for youth. But more than just access to food and hygiene kits, these centers should be equipped with system navigators who work hand-in-hand with youth

⁵ [ACS 5-Year Estimate 2019 - Table ID: S1701](#)

⁶ Estimated from [Monterey County Final Report page 45](#) and [San Benito County Executive Summary](#)

⁷ Number calculated by using the total estimated number of youth experiencing homelessness (338) and Monterey and San Benito counties combined total PIT count (2704).

to navigate not only the homeless response system, but all systems in which they can obtain resources. Identifying a safe and easily accessible site was identified as a priority for these centers as well, especially since transportation is another major issue for youth in this CoC.

Both Monterey and San Benito Counties' Workforce Development Board have made efforts to create more youth-specific job programs, but had a difficult time recruiting. Instead, youth have voiced the need for increased collaboration with the target population to help design and implement these types of programs. This highlights the need for the community, in general, to start recognizing the expertise youth have in their experience so that more programs can include and reflect the population it serves. Until services become more youth-friendly, the community will continue having difficulty accurately assessing the number of youth who are experiencing homelessness in Monterey and San Benito Counties. Youth at-risk of and experiencing homelessness also need supports to achieve their educational goals, including access to school courses, school counselors to support their success, and connections to higher education and trade schools. Social-emotional well-being needs identified by youth with lived experience and youth providers include life skills workshops, case management, help accessing and navigating health and mental health supports including therapy, and opportunities to connect with their peers and mentors.

Pregnant & Parenting		
Population	Data Source(s)	Estimates of Number of Youth
<i>At-risk</i> pregnant or parenting youth*	Monterey County Birth Rate 2018 ⁸ Ages 15-24 San Benito County 2016 Kids Data ⁹ Ages 15-19	<p>In 2018, there were 313 births to teen mothers up to age 19 in Monterey County. There were an additional 1057 births to mothers age 20-24. Some of these 1370 young mothers may be experiencing homelessness or housing instability.</p> <p>In 2016, there was a total of 23 live births to teen mothers up to the age of 19 in San Benito County. Some of these mothers may be experiencing homelessness or housing instability.</p>

⁸ <https://www.co.monterey.ca.us/government/departments-a-h/health/data-pubs/birth-and-perinatal-health>

⁹ <https://www.kidsdata.org/topic/316/teen-births-age/table#fmt=852&loc=355&tf=88&ch=605,634,635&sortColumnId=0&sortType=asc>

Pregnant or parenting youth experiencing homelessness*	HMIS - Calendar Year 2021 ¹⁰ According to the Voices of Youth Count 2018 the national estimates of females that are pregnant and parenting is 44% and males that have a pregnant partner or are parenting is 18% ¹¹	Using the national average for pregnant or parenting youth, we estimate that in Monterey and San Benito there are 76 young females who are pregnant and parenting and 34 young males who have a pregnant partner or are parenting.
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Pregnant and parenting youth, whether at risk or currently experiencing homelessness, experience a myriad of compounding factors that create hardships in accessing housing, shelter, and services. The greatest challenge and barrier to success for this population is a lack of childcare resources. Community members claim that there are more child care resources available now than in the past; however, the words of pregnant and parenting youth in this community illuminate issues in accessing these childcare services on their own. Coupled with lack of knowledge of what resources are available, many parents struggle to find care that they can trust and rely on. Many youth are also trying to go back or finish school, work multiple jobs because the cost of living in the region is so high, and navigate their way through an aggressive housing market.

While there are some shelters that serve families, those waitlists are long and youth have to somehow find a safe place for their family to go immediately. Additionally, those family shelters also serve unaccompanied adults, which can add another layer of stress or anxiety on a new parent. Having more shelters, maternal group homes, and family housing options that are specific for pregnant or parenting youth that are at-risk or currently experiencing homelessness would also help youth build a community in which they can rely on and trust when it comes to mental health and the stress of parenthood. Pregnant and parenting youth also need access to comprehensive health care resources for themselves and their children before, during and after pregnancy that wrap around their shelter or housing options.

Non-Threshold Requirements

Immigrant & Undocumented Youth		
Population	Data Source(s)	Estimates of Number of Youth
Immigrant and Undocumented Youth***	ACS Census Survey - 2019 ¹²	<p>In Monterey County there is an estimated 13,973 undocumented youth that are under 24 years old.</p> <p>In San Benito County there is an estimated 752 undocumented youth that are under 24 years old.</p>

¹⁰ Total unaccompanied youth estimate 365, estimated number of female 172, estimated number of male 187

¹¹ [Voices of Youth Count 2018](#)

¹² [ACS 5-year Estimate 2019: Table Id: S0501](#)

The complexities of being undocumented make housing and housing support much harder to obtain. Typically, youth already have a lack of credit and rental history that can create barriers to their housing, but those barriers are reinforced when added to the challenges of being undocumented. Due to the stigma surrounding undocumented status, it has historically been difficult to collect data regarding this population. However, it is clear and apparent that there is an urgent need to create more low-barrier housing and shelter programs that have the ability to serve undocumented individuals and families.

Housing issues are exacerbated by the inability to secure well-paying jobs by youth that are experiencing homelessness and lack citizenship status. Many youth in these situations end up working in the agriculture industry or “under the table” and are exposed to exploitation. Youth serving programs should consider these barriers and offer person-centered services that include citizenship services, financial literacy courses, cultural-competent services, education supports and access to long-term employment. Support groups and culturally aware mentors can help address the social and emotional well-being needs of undocumented youth across program types.

In Monterey and San Benito County, there is not substantial information regarding the documentation status of the youth population. Nevertheless, the community would like to focus on this area because of its significant immigrant population. In Monterey County there are an estimated 129,085 immigrants (93,155 undocumented). Among those, there are an estimated 15,748 immigrants that are under 24 years old (13,973 undocumented). In San Benito County there are an estimated 12,000 immigrants (6,654 that are undocumented). Among those, there are an estimated 1,140 immigrant youth (752 undocumented)¹³

Youth with Disabilities		
Population	Data Source(s)	Estimates of Number of Youth
Youth with Disabilities***	HMIS - Calendar Year 2021 ¹⁴	132 youth

In general, the homeless response system needs improvement in regard to services for people with disabilities who are at-risk or experiencing homelessness. While true that in recent years there has been more movement toward “disability justice” equity for this subpopulation, regulations such as ADA compliance are - as the Youth for Action so aptly put it - “nowhere near hitting the ceiling.” Rather, these are still ground level requirements and need much expansion and improvement - that is because they stop at things like wider doors but still won’t address the weight of the door or other key areas of accessibility needs. Youth with disabilities are often stigmatized and requiring training about disabilities, disability justice, and mental health are much needed in order to help the community move forward. In the meantime, truly ADA accessible housing and shelters are needed to help this population (36% of youth identified as disabled in 2021). In addition, programs and outreach should be accessible for those cross-disability, such as those who are deaf or hard of hearing, and access to care for those with mental or developmental disabilities.

¹³ [ACS 5-year Estimate 2019: Table Id: S0501](#)

¹⁴ HMIS Calendar Year 2021 total estimated unaccompanied number of youths is 365

Transportation for youth with disabilities can be one of the biggest barriers to service. On-call programs exist, but they take a long time, don't come frequently enough and don't have enough stops. A transportation program to help youth get to their appointments would help reduce this barrier. Overall, more accessibility and universal design is needed - from college campuses and doctor's offices to green and public spaces. Additionally, access to assistive technology and flexible funding to help youth with disabilities afford resources not covered by health insurance can help increase equity in housing outcomes and opportunities.

LGBTQ+ and Gender Non-Conforming Youth		
Population	Data Source(s)	Estimates of Number of Youth
LGBTQ+ and gender non-confirming youth**	HMIS - Calendar Year 2021 ¹⁵ True Colors United estimates that nationally up to 40% of homeless youth identify as LGBTQ+ and gender non-confirming ¹⁶	According to HMIS 17 youths identify as LGBTQ+ and gender non-confirming youth. Based on national estimates we would expect to see up to 146 youth that identify as LGBTQ+ and gender non-confirming.

The LGBTQ+ and gender non-confirming community has been historically undercounted. This brings up one of the greatest needs - a system in which people are comfortable in expressing their sexual orientation and gender identity without fear of retribution or backlash. In HMIS, out of the 365 youths that are engaging with the system, only 235 shared their sexual orientation. As illuminated by the 142 missing entries, youth are not comfortable expressing their sexual orientation and gender identity to service providers as they currently operate. The CoC has been working towards equity within the system by introducing trainings on gender identity and expression, sexual identity, and the intersections of these identities and homelessness. For the first time, this community was formally introduced to pronouns and the importance of acknowledging someone's pronouns. However, there is still a need for more thorough training for providers as the community learns to accept these concepts and put them into practice. Of all the needs, one of the most urgent for this subpopulation was acknowledgment and a more well-trained, unbiased staff in shelters and programs that serve youth.

The lack of a safe shelter and well-trained housing, shelter, education, and supportive services staff exacerbate the challenges faced by this community. From that need, it became apparent that shelter, transitional housing, or other crisis response programs specifically for youth who identify as LGBTQ+ are also needed. Currently in the CoC, there is only one program dedicated to LGBTQ+ youth, but that resource is limited to a day center, which became further limited during the pandemic. Furthermore, agencies and programs throughout the CoC should recruit staff that are reflective of the population they serve - to encourage youth participation and allow for peer communication and networking. These

¹⁵ HMIS Calendar Year 2021 total estimated unaccompanied number of youths is 365

¹⁶ [True Colors United](#)

resources should be coupled with easier access to therapy and mental health support, including a navigator to help manage the health-care system.

Unaccompanied Minors		
Population	Data Source(s)	Estimates of Number of Youth
Minors (young people under the age of 18)**	HMIS Calendar Year 2021	15 youth

Unaccompanied minors at risk of or experiencing homelessness have very limited resources available to them unless they are justice or child welfare -involved in this community. At one point the CoC did have a RHY program for unaccompanied minors, but as of 2021 this program had lost its funding. This was a major program for identifying unaccompanied minors currently in the CoC, illuminating that the 15 youth is in likelihood an undercount. Throughout the CoC, there are no shelters that allow minors to participate in their programs without an accompanying adult, an unintentional barrier caused by the need for various certifications and licenses. Having a 24-hour resource for minors is the number one need currently in the community - a safe haven that they can access whenever needed. Unaccompanied minors also need support in accessing permanent housing options and could greatly benefit from having co-signer support for subsidized and low-cost housing opportunities.

In addition, there is a considerable need for increased education and employment resources, such as assistance in getting their GED/diploma but also employment education, financial literacy, college prep, legal and/or emancipation assistance, and knowing their rights in the education system and in the workplace. Access to life skills workshops, case management and mentoring supports can be the buildings block to work with unaccompanied minors and help set them up to be successful in their futures through strong social and emotional supports.

Victims of Trafficking		
Population	Data Source(s)	Estimates of Number of Youth
Victims of sexual trafficking and exploitation**	YWCA – January 1, 2021 - February 1, 2022	8 youth

Trafficking and sexual exploitation are common among youth experiencing homelessness even in Monterey County. Monterey County, due to its extravagant events and position along the U.S. Route 101, is a hub for trafficking and exploitation. While the community has the YWCA, Rape Crisis Center, and Set Free Monterey Bay, the need for assistance outweighs the available resources. More service providers need to be educated on the identification of victims and how to best serve them while they work through their trauma. That is why one of the greatest needs is to have more providers be certified or have a regular training series on trafficking and exploitation of youth that incorporates a trauma-informed approach.

When youth are able to leave these situations, we find there is a crucial need for more youth specific shelter space - a safe space where they can lean on peer support and well-trained case managers or staff to help them navigate through their situations. Most importantly, more shelters or housing programs will help limit the wait time before someone can receive assistance - which can be one of the biggest barriers for youth. Youth who were victims of sexual trafficking and exploitation may also need legal support, case management, therapy, and support reintegrating into school or reconnecting to their families as they work to rebuild their lives. Support with school reconnection and reintegration and job training are also often needed as they work towards economic security and stability.

Youth with Histories of Justice Involvement		
Population	Data Source(s)	Estimates of Number of Youth
Youth involved with Juvenile Justice**	<p>HMIS - Calendar Year 2021¹⁷</p> <p>U.S. Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Family and Youth Services Bureau Street Outreach Program Report estimates¹⁸.</p> <p>44% of youth experiencing homelessness had stayed in a jail, prison, or juvenile detention center.</p>	<p>According to HMIS, 41 youth had histories of justice involvement</p> <p>Using the national estimate, LMHCoC would expect that approximately 161 of the youth engaged with the system had previously stayed in a jail, prison, or juvenile detention center.</p>

Youth that are justice involved face additional challenges to accessing housing. In 2021, HMIS data reports that 11% of youth experiencing homelessness had a history of involvement with the justice system. However, it is suspected based on the 166 individuals that did not answer this question in HMIS, that this is an undercount. In the past, the systems of care have been siloed, so many youth who would have been eligible to receive homeless navigation services have not made those connections due to a lack of knowledge and lack of resources. Shelters in the CoC need to adjust to low-barrier entry practices for housing and shelter and have greater connections to behavioral health and mental health services to ensure that youth are getting the emotional support they need after exiting the justice system. Reintegration support, which may include peer support groups and systems navigation, were identified as crucial for helping youth with justice involvement meet their education, employment, and social and emotional well-being needs.

The most significant need in Monterey and San Benito Counties surround youth gang involvement and the myriad of services that are needed to help someone who has experienced that particular trauma. Despite Monterey and San Benito Counties' efforts to address gang involvement, recent activity suggests

¹⁷ Out of 365 total estimated youths, 41 answered that they have a history of involvement with the Justice system. 166 (45%) did not answer the question. This suggests an undercount.

¹⁸ [U.S. Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Family and Youth Services Bureau Street Outreach Program Report](#)

that more youth are being drawn into these gang rivalries. Whether it be reintegration support, record expungement, or tattoo removal, youth need extra support to help fight the stigma that surrounds someone who is justice involved. This leads to a need for increased training in trauma-informed practices, better coordination with parole and probation, gang intervention programs, and employment support.

Youth with Histories of Child Welfare Involvement		
Population	Data Source(s)	Estimates of Number of Youth
Youth involved with child welfare**	HMIS - Calendar Year 2021 CalYOUTH (University of Chicago's Chapin Hall) estimates. 25% - 30% of transition-age foster youth in California experience homelessness.	According to HMIS, 30 youth had histories of child welfare involvement.

There has been a lot of movement and improvement to help support youth experiencing homelessness in recent months; however, there is still more support needed for youth who are child welfare involved. For example, AB 12 or California's Extended Foster Care Program and Benefits have been an enormous help for youth, however, it comes with restrictions on other services and supports that can be received preventing youth from "double-dipping" from various streams of support.

The main challenge for youth comes in the form of housing - some foster youth report that they may move up to 70 times while in the system (CYC campaign) and many lose their housing support once they turn 18. Typically when they "age out" of the system, they are left with little to no resources to help them navigate their next steps or understand their education, employment, and health care rights. Having a navigator or a "one-stop shop" for all their needs has been a resource that the CoC identified as a step toward a more comprehensive system of care. That system needs to include more collaboration between the child welfare agencies and the homeless services providers to create true wrap-around services and transitional planning into safe, stable futures.

Youth who are Black, Indigenous, or a Person of Color (BIPOC)		
Population	Data Source(s)	Estimates of Number of Youth
Youth who are Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC)***	HMIS – Calendar Year 2021	256 youth

A unique population that was identified through this work were BIPOC youth who are experiencing homelessness. In 2021, CoC data showed that 70% of youth identified as Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC). Additionally, Monterey and San Benito counties are leaders in the field of agriculture and also have a great influx of undocumented individuals and families (including youth).

While many needs were identified, the most pressing were related to having culturally competent and diverse staff providing support in shelters and housing programs such as transitional housing and affordable housing options. That includes more in-depth training on anti-racism, cultural competency and anti-racist policies, mentorships and representation within staff and the system as a whole.

Victims of Domestic Violence		
Population	Data Source(s)	Estimates of Number of Youth
Victims of Domestic Violence***	YWCA – 2019 - 2021	849 youth

Much like youth who experience trafficking or exploitation, the greatest need that exists for this community is time-sensitive housing placements or transitional housing programs that can quickly rehouse an individual or family. Currently, people have to wait in the streets or in their cars if they are displaced due to a domestic violence situation because there is a lack of programs in both Monterey and San Benito Counties that provide housing and DV support. The YWCA reported that in 2019, they served 849 youth ages 0-24. According to the YWCA, domestic violence is a large reason why people engage with them. Despite the large number of youth they see, there are no youth-specific DV programs to help those fleeing from unsafe situations.

In addition to increased shelter beds and housing programs, staff need to be well-trained in domestic violence - including the cycle of domestic violence, trauma-informed practices, and how to create a safe space for people. This training needs to include more than just homeless services providers; it should include the police departments, fire departments, and other local leadership entities to help create a comprehensive understanding of domestic violence. Access to therapy, peer support, counseling and mental health supports are also crucial components of any program to serve youth who have experienced domestic violence to help navigate and address the trauma of their experiences.

Highschool Students Experiencing Homelessness		
Population	Data Source(s)	Estimates of Number of Youth
Students Experiencing Homelessness***	SIS System (CALPADs Data) - 20/21 School Year KIDS Count Data Center (Annie E. Casey Foundation) 2020 ¹⁹	CALPADs - 10,512 youth KIDS Count Monterey – 7,660 youth KIDS Count San Benito – 258 youth

Highschool Students

Students in high school who are experiencing homelessness also face their own unique challenges and have specific needs. Most notably is the need for education so that students know their rights and how to access the services they may need. Much like unaccompanied minors, there is a lack of space or shelter for this subpopulation and that makes going to school even harder. Increased access to technology, scholarships for school supplies, food pantries, and access to therapy are also needs that have been highlighted by this community.

While McKinney-Vento liaisons at schools are an important resource, there is still a gap in knowledge of these resources. Greater advertisement of these services is needed, including a need to address the stigma that comes with being homeless for the entire student population, which can be a huge barrier to access for youth that are concerned about bullying or being seen differently because of their housing situation. Reducing stigma should focus on other students, as well as school staff and administrators first.

College Students Experiencing Homelessness		
Population	Data Source(s)	Estimates of Number of Youth
Students Experiencing Homelessness***	California State University (8-12% of CSU students are estimated as homeless or displaced students) ²⁰	California State University - 600 to 900

One population that had gone unnoticed for too long was the collegiate student population experiencing homelessness. While institutions of higher education claim they have little to no students experiencing homelessness, the reality is quite the opposite. According to a CSU system report published in 2016, it is estimated that 8-12% of their student population are homeless or housing displaced. During the 2021 Fall

¹⁹ [Students who experience homelessness | KIDS COUNT Data Center](#)

²⁰ [Serving Displaced and Food Insecure Students in the CSU | The Homeless Hub](#)

semester at CSUMB there were a total of 7,504 students. Using the estimate from the 2016 study of the CSU system the community can estimate that there are approximately 600 – 900 students experiencing homelessness at CSUMB. The community would like to further understand the numbers coming from community and graduate colleges. During the 100 Day Challenge, the hardships faced by students became more apparent. Many students are forced to couch surf during their schooling or live out of their cars due to the rising costs of on-campus living. Some schools don't even offer housing as part of their enrollment (ex: community colleges). Additionally, living on campus does not necessarily mean all your needs will be taken care of due to the number of other services that students must sign up and pay for. In places like MIIS (Middlebury Institute of International Studies), where the cost of on-campus living matches the going market rate, there is a need for more grants or scholarships that help students bear that financial burden. In the meantime, campuses like CSUMB should not require students to live on campus for any duration of time in order to attend, especially if there are more affordable options elsewhere. Students also need access to housing support before they graduate so they are not exiting to homelessness, which can be a common outcome as more and more jobs for people fresh out of college are typically not high paying enough to afford the cost of living.

Coordinated Entry System

As mentioned prior, one crucial need is the addition of a youth-specific Coordinated Entry System (CES) in the LMHCoC to provide access to various services for this complex population. In this community, Coordinated Entry is called the Coordinated Assessment and Referral System (CARS). With the feedback from Youth for Action, they proposed a plan of care that details how clients move through the system and how agencies collaborate to serve them.

Improved access points at youth-serving agencies and institutions -- such as homeless youth-serving agencies, schools, the juvenile justice system, healthcare providers, and others -- will streamline youth's access to services. These access points will have information to refer clients to the CE-specific outreach team that will meet YYA to do the client's intake. Having this mobile CARS assessment team will help improve data quality by reducing the number of staff inputting assessment data and allowing for more specialized training on how to complete client intakes. The mobile assessment strategy will maximize information points while reducing the burden on participating agencies, thereby incentivizing greater community involvement and inclusion.

The community would like to continue incentivizing a robust system by hiring more employees to assert and address the capacity problems with running an improved CES. The improved capacity will allow for the implementation of a more accurate prioritization tool and adoption of more impactful landlord engagement strategies. The CARS team will create a refined referral system that considers the client's needs, case manager input, and agency specializations. Lastly, this collaboration of entities will improve case conferencing, using person-centered care to build rapport with clients and facilitate a warm hand-off of youth moving between agencies and into housing.

Action Plan

The following goals were developed by Y4A and brought to the Youth Systems Meeting for the Committee to add to but not take away from in order to support youth-led, authentic goal development to prevent and end youth homelessness in Monterey and San Benito Counties. The community used the goals to guide the brainstorming of objectives and action steps for the Coordinated Community Plan. Each goal area will be spearheaded by a team to implement the objectives and take responsibility for the success of this plan.

Authentic Youth Collaboration

Youth for Action held goal setting discussions about the importance of youth with lived experience who reflect the community being engaged, taken seriously, and respected as partners in decision-making processes. Youth for Action also emphasized the need to have safe, comfortable and authentic spaces to speak their minds in different ways and at different tables across the community. Youth Systems leaders emphasized that youth and young adults have wisdom and experience that needs to be better uplifted and valued in local decision-making processes, and that “you can’t open new doors by doing things the old ways.”

Goal: We envision a community that supports and engages youth authentically by creating an ethical and equitable framework that is responsive to youth's needs and understanding of systems of oppression and how they affect youth. A safe space where adult partners are transparent and include youth at the table in leadership roles. Where youth's lived experiences are valued through compensation and uplifted through supportive services so that they are able to engage without barriers.

AUTHENTIC YOUTH COLLABORATION TEAM: (PARTNERS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF BELOW OBJECTIVES):

Coalition of Homeless Services Providers, Youth for Action, and Leadership Council (CoC Board).

Objective 1: Embed youth leadership and authentically share power in decision-making at all levels (community, CoC, programs, and across systems).

Action Step 1: Establish at least two seats for youth and young adults with lived experiences of homelessness on the CoC Board and at least one seat on all program boards that serve youth and young adults experiencing homelessness.

Action Step 2: Increase the number of meetings and trainings that are facilitated or co-facilitated by youth that center their expertise.

Action Step 3: Facilitate trainings on power sharing to help young adult and older adult partners understand local power dynamics and shift them to share and center power with youth.

Action Step 4: Provide Youth for Action members and other interested youth with lived experience access to trainings on leadership, homeless response system 101, and other trainings and resources to support their professional development.

Action Step 5: Develop program policies and procedures that formalize the incorporation of youth voice at the program policy level.

Action Step 6: Encourage and train older adult partners to provide guidance and support to young adult partners without paternalism or adultism.

Action Step 7: Have youth participate in the design of YHDP projects that are funded.

Action Step 8: Have youth participate in hiring panels for YHDP projects that are funded.

Action Step 9: Allow youth to lead meetings with “higher ups” in the community, such as those in executive positions.

Timeframe: Fall 2022 - Fall 2023

HUD Key Principles

Equity <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Positive Youth Development <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Trauma-Informed Care <input type="checkbox"/>	Family Engagement <input type="checkbox"/>
Housing First <input type="checkbox"/>	Youth Choice <input type="checkbox"/>	Community Integration <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Coordinated Entry <input type="checkbox"/>

Objective 2: Create and support youth in owning safe spaces as participants, leaders, and creators that are safe and accessible across intersectional identities (i.e. e; race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, language, dialect, youth with disabilities, etc.).

Action Step 1: Provide equity, diversity and inclusion training for all organizations that incorporate accountability and putting equitable youth engagement into practice.

Action Step 2: Provide trauma-informed training for all organizations.

Action Step 3: Work with organizations to put trauma-informed training into action to develop trauma-informed policies, procedures, programs, and to restructure physical spaces with trauma-informed principles in mind.

Action Step 4: Establish and enforce community agreements and program/meeting expectations that the voices and experiences of youth are truly listened to, valued, and acted upon.

Action Step 5: Define reparative actions to be taken when older adult partners are not creating these safe spaces or have created toxic spaces.

Timeframe: Fall 2022 - Fall 2023

HUD Key Principles**

Equity <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Positive Youth Development <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Trauma-Informed Care <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Family Engagement <input type="checkbox"/>
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Housing First <input type="checkbox"/>	Youth Choice <input type="checkbox"/>	Community Integration <input type="checkbox"/>	Coordinated Entry <input type="checkbox"/>
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Objective 3: Increase recruitment and develop of Youth for Action and other youth-led, youth-focused efforts.

Action Step 1: Increase youth outreach and recruitment efforts, including:

- Tabling/outreach events at diverse locations, including youth centers, mental health providers, high schools and colleges
- Drop-in centers
- Social media
- Printed pamphlets
- Community meals and conversations

Action Step 2: Be deliberate in recruiting currently underrepresented populations of focus, including:

- Minors
- Black and indigenous people of color (BIPOC)
- Pregnant and parenting youth
- Youth with disabilities
- LGBTQ+ youth
- Youth with experience going through systems such as child welfare, juvenile justice, and shelters

Action Step 3: Ask and compensate past and current Youth for Action members to help with YAB recruitment.

Action Step 4: Identify youth who are connected to local schools and colleges to participate in Youth for Action outreach and engagement efforts.

Action Step 5: Provide youth with compensation at a livable wage for all their work and emotional labor, always.

Action Step 6: Provide youth with non-financial supports for their time and expertise, including basic needs (food, shelter), transportation, child care, and words of affirmation.

Action Step 7: Develop a youth mentorship program that can help Youth for Action members and other youth with lived experience prepared for leadership roles in the community.

Timeframe: Fall 2022 - Summer 2023

HUD Key Principles**

Equity <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Positive Youth Development <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Trauma-Informed Care <input type="checkbox"/>	Family Engagement <input type="checkbox"/>
Housing First <input type="checkbox"/>	Youth Choice <input type="checkbox"/>	Community Integration <input type="checkbox"/>	Coordinated Entry <input type="checkbox"/>

Objective 4: Work with older adult partners to understand histories of adultism and repair harm caused by past experiences and structures that did not value youth collaboration, engagement, and voice.

Action Step 1: Provide frequent training and resources to help combat adultism and reduce harm among older adult partners, including training on equity, disability, trauma, race, power and privilege, LGBTQ+ identities, and the experience of youth homelessness.

Older adult stakeholders for trainings include but are not limited to:

- Youth Systems Meeting participants
- Youth service providers
- Case management staff
- Landlords
- Stakeholders in partner systems, including the health and education systems
- CoC Board

Action Step 2: Evaluate with the YAB how things have been done in the past to identify points and experiences of adultism, harm, and trauma.

Action Step 3: Ensure that all older adult partners consistently use appropriate and respectful language when referring to youth and young adults. Hold older adult partners accountable when they use harmful or adultist language.

Action Step 4: Incorporate the [41 Developmental Assessment](#) for Positive Youth Development into program design, structure, and policies.

Action Step 5: Provide all necessary, trauma-informed supports to assist youth with healing from past hurts and to use that healing in a positive way to help others.

Timeframe: Fall 2022 - Fall 2023

HUD Key Principles**

Equity <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Positive Youth Development <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Trauma-Informed Care <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Family Engagement <input type="checkbox"/>
Housing First <input type="checkbox"/>	Youth Choice <input type="checkbox"/>	Community Integration <input type="checkbox"/>	Coordinated Entry <input type="checkbox"/>

Objective 5: Build a culture of trust and accountability to the key principles of authentic youth collaboration among older adult partners where youth input is authentically valued.

Action Step 1: Establish expectations for older adult partners to have patience and explain step-by-step why something does or does not work, what options are available, etc.

Action Step 2: Incorporate youth choice into case management and program decisions, rather than being prescriptive about what youth need.

Action Step 3: Establish grievance policies and accountability measures to ensure that issues identified by youth and young adults are acted upon quickly, appropriately, and with youth input. Support accountability while also providing space for people to learn and change through accountability as an educating moment.

Action Step 4: Build opportunities for youth and young adult clients to speak and share their experiences during staff performance reviews.

Action Step 5: Establish a culture of leading with love and understanding and move forward being solution oriented in this space working to prevent and end youth homelessness.

Timeframe: Fall 2022 - Fall 2024

HUD Key Principles**

Equity <input type="checkbox"/>	Positive Youth Development <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Trauma-Informed Care <input type="checkbox"/>	Family Engagement <input type="checkbox"/>
Housing First <input type="checkbox"/>	Youth Choice <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Community Integration <input type="checkbox"/>	Coordinated Entry <input type="checkbox"/>

Education

Youth for Action emphasized the importance of addressing the interrelated housing and education needs of students, particularly for college students who are trying to balance their education and work along with paying for housing and basic necessities such as food. Youth Systems leaders similarly focused on the need to serve students more holistically and make the connection between education outcomes and access to safe, stable housing.

Goal: We envision a community where education isn't a privilege but a right for youth with lived experience in homelessness. Our community should facilitate professional development by coordination with schools, higher education, and vocational training programs that help those unsheltered. We would like this care to be incorporated in programs and shelters.

EDUCATION IMPLEMENTATION TEAM: (PARTNERS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF BELOW OBJECTIVES):

Coalition of Homeless Services Providers, Monterey County Office of Education, San Benito County Office of Education, National Center for Youth Law, Guardian Scholars of Hartnell College, EOPS of Monterey Peninsula College, EOPS of CSUMB, and Youth for Action.

Objective 1: Make it easier for college students to thrive and complete their education by ensuring that their housing is affordable and secure and that their basic needs are met.

Action Step 1: Meet with local colleges to increase transparency in the college housing process, including around cost, rules, and rent increases.

Action Step 2: Collaborate with students with lived experience, including YAB members, to reimagine campus housing to meet the needs of all students.

Action Step 3: Provide housing counseling, navigation and support from well-trained staff for students who want to access campus housing, off-campus housing, and those currently residing in unstable sleeping situations (overcrowded, sleeping on the beach).

Action Step 4: Create a process to support students in securing safe, stable, permanent housing in the community before graduation.

Action Step 5: Provide discounted or free meal plan options for low-income students.

Action Step 6: Offer access to free or highly discounted technology for low-income and unhoused students

Action Step 7: Ensure that no campus housing units are empty while there are students experiencing homelessness or residing in unsafe housing situations.

Action Step 8: Establish food pantries and other resource centers on campuses to help students meet their day-to-day needs.

Action Step 9: Develop information and awareness campaigns to connect youth in need to available housing and basic need resources.

Timeframe: Fall 2022 - Fall 2024

HUD Key Principles

Equity <input type="checkbox"/>	Positive Youth Development <input type="checkbox"/>	Trauma-Informed Care <input type="checkbox"/>	Family Engagement <input type="checkbox"/>
Housing First <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Youth Choice <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Community Integration <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Coordinated Entry <input type="checkbox"/>

Objective 2: Improve access to education and educational supports for youth who are unhoused and at risk of homelessness.

Action Step 1: Embed connections to education and educational resources into all YHDP projects.

Action Step 2: Bring school courses to places that are more accessible for unhoused or precariously housed youth, including drop-in centers and shelters.

Action Step 3: Move to a more supportive, trauma-informed and person-centered approach to addressing attendance and truancy issues for unhoused youth.

Action Step 4: Develop an incentive approach to assist youth in achieving their education goals who have truancy records.

Action Step 5: Ensure unhoused youth have equitable access to higher education opportunities, including:

- Extra support in applying for college
- Free tutoring for the ACT and/or SAT
- FAFSA support and review

Action Step 6: Offer transportation options that are safe and appropriate for unhoused youth and that can meet youth where they are.

Action Step 7: Create new scholarship opportunities for youth who are or have experienced homelessness, including undocumented youth.

Action Step 8: Hire case managers at youth-serving agencies to work specifically with youth on their education and employment goals.

Timeframe: Fall 2022 - Fall 2024

HUD Key Principles

Equity <input type="checkbox"/>	Positive Youth Development <input type="checkbox"/>	Trauma-Informed Care <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Family Engagement <input type="checkbox"/>
Housing First <input type="checkbox"/>	Youth Choice <input type="checkbox"/>	Community Integration <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Coordinated Entry <input type="checkbox"/>

Objective 3: Address the educational needs of youth populations of focus.

Action Step 1: Provide access to child care during school hours for young people with children who are pursuing their education.

Action Step 2: Consistently connect young people with children to First 5, Head Start, and free Pre-K opportunities.

Action Step 3: Develop trauma-informed pathways for school reintegration for youth who have been disconnected from school for a while, including victims of sexual trafficking and exploitation and young people who have been in the juvenile justice system.

Action Step 4: Make updates to the Student Information System (SIS) to include LGBTQ+ identities.

Action Step 5: Develop trainings for school counselors and education staff on:

- Homelessness and homeless student education rights (McKinney-Vento)
- LGBTQ+ identities and inclusivity
- Identifying youth who may be experiencing domestic violence or exploitation
- Supporting reintegration and combatting stigma for youth who have been involved in the juvenile justice system
- Disability rights and “invisible” disabilities

Timeframe: Fall 2022 - Fall 2024

HUD Key Principles

Equity <input type="checkbox"/>	Positive Youth Development <input type="checkbox"/>	Trauma-Informed Care <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Family Engagement <input type="checkbox"/>
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Housing First <input type="checkbox"/>	Youth Choice <input type="checkbox"/>	Community Integration <input type="checkbox"/>	Coordinated Entry <input type="checkbox"/>
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Objective 4: Empower youth to know their educational rights across their identities (race, disability, etc.) and advocate for themselves in educational settings.

Action Step 1: Provide information and training for unhoused youth and youth in unstable housing situations regarding their educational rights (McKinney-Vento).

Action Step 2: Support minors experiencing homelessness in changing their education rights holder designation if needed or desired.

Action Step 3: Build the knowledge and capacity for unhoused youth to advocate for themselves in educational settings, including:

- Space and time to complete schoolwork
- Access to internet/Wifi
- Accessibility for students with disabilities
- Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) and 504 plans

Action Step 4: Share information across schools and youth-serving agencies about the [Community College Immigration Legal Services program](#), which provides immigration legal assistance for undocumented students.

Action Step 5: Increase advertising in high schools regarding McKinney-Vento rights. Ensure that these advertisements are accessible for all students (i.e. multiple languages).

Timeframe: Fall 2022 - Summer 2023

HUD Key Principles

Equity <input type="checkbox"/>	Positive Youth Development <input type="checkbox"/>	Trauma-Informed Care <input type="checkbox"/>	Family Engagement <input type="checkbox"/>
Housing First <input type="checkbox"/>	Youth Choice <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Community Integration <input type="checkbox"/>	Coordinated Entry <input type="checkbox"/>

Objective 5: Strengthen the connection between the education, homeless response, juvenile justice, and child welfare systems to better identify and serve students at risk of and experiencing homelessness.

Action Step 1: Provide school districts with access to hotel vouchers for unaccompanied minors experiencing homelessness.

Action Step 2: Develop a process across schools/school districts for uniform and universal documentation and identification of youth who are moving into doubled up or tripled up situations.

Action Step 3: Increase education supports for youth while they are in the foster care or juvenile justice systems and help youth maintain those supports when they leave the system.

Action Step 4: Support reintegration into school for disconnected youth and systems-engaged youth.

Timeframe: Fall 2022 - Spring 2023

HUD Key Principles

Equity <input type="checkbox"/>	Positive Youth Development <input type="checkbox"/>	Trauma-Informed Care <input type="checkbox"/>	Family Engagement <input type="checkbox"/>
Housing First <input type="checkbox"/>	Youth Choice <input type="checkbox"/>	Community Integration <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Coordinated Entry <input type="checkbox"/>

Employment

Youth for Action talked about different types of incentives and employment opportunities for youth experiencing homelessness and ensuring that employment opportunities are meaningful and provide a baseline for a stable future. Youth Systems leaders discussed how employment organizations are actively working to expand youth employment programming at the moment.

Goal: A community where youth have equitable access to pathways to supportive and secure employment opportunities that include benefits. Where they can find mentorship opportunities, skill development, and uplift their passions—a place where youth are free to grow and be heard. Employers that are forgiving and understanding of life experiences, including folks in the justice system.

EMPLOYMENT IMPLEMENTATION TEAM: (PARTNERS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF BELOW OBJECTIVES):

Coalition of Homeless Services Providers, WIOA Agencies, Workforce Development Board of Monterey County, and Workforce Development Board of San Benito County.

Objective 1: Continue to provide appropriate compensation, incentives and employment opportunities for YAB members.

Action Step 1: Hire YAB members at CoC, YHDP and other youth-serving programs to lead the work of ending youth homelessness.

Action Step 2: Work with YAB members to create a flow and process for youth to move from the YAB into community-based employment opportunities.

Timeframe: Fall 2022 - Winter 2022

HUD Key Principles

Equity <input type="checkbox"/>	Positive Youth Development <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Trauma-Informed Care <input type="checkbox"/>	Family Engagement <input type="checkbox"/>
Housing First <input type="checkbox"/>	Youth Choice <input type="checkbox"/>	Community Integration <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Coordinated Entry <input type="checkbox"/>

Objective 2: Improve youth connections to existing employment resources, such as WIOA, Workforce Development Board (WDB), and the America’s Job Center.

Action Step 1: Work with youth with lived experience and youth-serving agencies to better market employment programs to eligible youth and young adults in the community.

Action Step 2: Increase online and social media presence through youth mentorship program between the YAB and local WIOA, WDB, and America’s Job Center programs.

Action Step 3: Bring more YYA to the table with WIOA, WDB, and America’s Job Center staff to discuss employment programming needs and solutions.

Action Step 4: Connect WIOA, WDB, and America’s Job Center staff with McKinney-Vento liaisons and National Center for Youth Law staff to bring information regarding youth employment opportunities and programming to youth in schools.

Timeframe: Fall 2022 - Fall 2024

HUD Key Principles

Equity <input type="checkbox"/>	Positive Youth Development <input type="checkbox"/>	Trauma-Informed Care <input type="checkbox"/>	Family Engagement <input type="checkbox"/>
Housing First <input type="checkbox"/>	Youth Choice <input type="checkbox"/>	Community Integration <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Coordinated Entry <input type="checkbox"/>

Objective 3: Expand and increase youth employment opportunities through YHDP and other flexible funding sources.

Action Step 1: Find funding for year-round youth employment options.

Action Step 2: Establish employment programs and opportunities for undocumented youth.

Action Step 3: Launch new and expand existing workshops on resume writing, job search, interviewing and career planning.

Action Step 4: Provide inclusion and anti-racism workshops for employers to improve work conditions for LGBTQ+ and BIPOC youth.

Action Step 5: Create a list of employers and employment options that are friendly to working with youth who have histories of justice system involvement.

Action Step 6: Provide youth with support and training on communicating with employers about justice system involvement.

Action Step 7: Explore youth-focused entrepreneurship programs (similar to Homeboy Industries).

Timeframe: Fall 2022 - Fall 2024

HUD Key Principles

Equity <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Positive Youth Development <input type="checkbox"/>	Trauma-Informed Care <input type="checkbox"/>	Family Engagement <input type="checkbox"/>
Housing First <input type="checkbox"/>	Youth Choice <input type="checkbox"/>	Community Integration <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Coordinated Entry <input type="checkbox"/>

Equity

Youth for Action held goal setting discussions that focused on how youth and young adults bring their diverse identities into spaces and how equity and inequities impact their experiences of programs, services, and systems designed to provide assistance as a whole. Youth Systems leaders also brought a focus on diverse experiences and identities in discussing and taking action on equity, including race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, education level, language, dialect, and disability.

Goal: We will understand, deconstruct and eliminate systems of oppression in our community. We will build new systems to equitably support our youth in this community.

EQUITY IMPLEMENTATION TEAM: (PARTNERS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF BELOW OBJECTIVES):

Coalition of Homeless Services Providers, Youth for Action, Youth Systems Leaders, Leadership Council (CoC Board).

Objective 1: Be open as individuals working with youth and young adults experiencing homelessness to learning about others' identities and how they are brought into different spaces. Increase our comfort with the uncomfortable as community partners in these necessary conversations about equity.

Action Step 1: Provide consistent access to resources to support individual learning about how to bring equity into spaces where youth and young adults are being served (training, staff support, etc.).

Action Step 2: Increase value placed within agencies and across systems on lived experience in equity conversations.

Action Step 3: Provide community-wide trainings, agency trainings, and self-trainings to improve staff and volunteer understanding of equity, including:

- Biases and privileges
- Breaking stereotypes
- Systems of oppression

Action Step 4: Dedicate time and space in meetings to ask questions, talk about equity, and participate in ongoing learning opportunities as individuals.

Timeframe: Fall 2022 - Fall 2024

HUD Key Principles			
Equity <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Positive Youth Development <input type="checkbox"/>	Trauma-Informed Care <input type="checkbox"/>	Family Engagement <input type="checkbox"/>
Housing First <input type="checkbox"/>	Youth Choice <input type="checkbox"/>	Community Integration <input type="checkbox"/>	Coordinated Entry <input type="checkbox"/>

Objective 2: Expand understanding of the local landscape of the communities we are working within, including histories of inequities and harm, in order to develop more equitable, culturally competent, and person-centered projects and programs.

Action Step 1: Develop an overarching equity strategy for the Salinas/Monterey, San Benito Counties CoC.

Action Step 2: Analyze our systems and programs to identify how we exclude certain population groups and how we can increase inclusivity.

Action Step 3: Establish common language, definitions and understanding across the community about how to enact change through equity.

Action Step 4: Implement cultural competency trainings across youth-serving organizations to increase understanding of different cultural experiences, languages, and dialects among youth experiencing homelessness.

Action Step 5: Use live data to understand equity issues and drive equity-based decision making in the CoC and broader community, including:

- HMIS data
- Coordinated Entry data
- Data from schools, colleges, juvenile justice, child welfare, and other partner systems

Action Step 6: Create a new Coordinated Entry assessment tool to help understand the whole person, including culture, pronouns, and other information to help understand and meet the needs of each individual youth experiencing homelessness presenting for services.

Timeframe: Fall 2022- Fall 2024

HUD Key Principles			
Equity <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Positive Youth Development <input type="checkbox"/>	Trauma-Informed Care <input type="checkbox"/>	Family Engagement <input type="checkbox"/>
Housing First <input type="checkbox"/>	Youth Choice <input type="checkbox"/>	Community Integration <input type="checkbox"/>	Coordinated Entry <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Objective 3: Increase representation and power sharing in order to shift the power dynamic in Monterey and San Benito Counties to prioritize equity, diversity, and authentic youth engagement and representation.

Action Step 1: Ensure that decision making bodies are representative of the community and that historically marginalized populations are represented in decision making processes at the program, CoC, and systems levels, including on the YAB (Youth for Action) and Community Action Board.

Action Step 2: Hold caucuses with youth from different identity groups within our youth system.

Action Step 3: Develop new programs, policies, and procedures to meet youth where they are without imposing values, thoughts or beliefs on youth feedback regarding how well the current system functions.

Action Step 4: Increase representation of marginalized groups serving in positions of leadership across the community.

Action Step 5: Conduct training with providers throughout the community to help stakeholders understand the power they hold and impacts of that power.

Action Step 6: Conduct a comprehensive analysis of accessibility across programs.

Timeframe: Fall 2022 - Fall 2024

HUD Key Principles

Equity <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Positive Youth Development <input type="checkbox"/>	Trauma-Informed Care <input type="checkbox"/>	Family Engagement <input type="checkbox"/>
Housing First <input type="checkbox"/>	Youth Choice <input type="checkbox"/>	Community Integration <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Coordinated Entry <input type="checkbox"/>

Objective 4: Establish and implement accountability to our equity goals at the personal, agency, CoC, and community levels.

Action Step 1: Create intentionality in spaces and meetings to discuss equity and accountability in real-time.

Action Step 2: Identify resources to help conduct organizational and personal equity assessments among youth-serving programs and staff.

Action Step 3: Support the CoC in working with agencies to conduct equity assessments to identify weaknesses in equitable practices and create a plan to address them.

Action Step 4: Establish community-wide expectations and policies (ex: YHDP community agreements) to help hold each other accountable to principles and practices of equity.

Action Step 5: Decolonize our existing and new policies and procedures through the use of equitable and inclusive wording.

Action Step 6: Create an official process for identification and reporting of inequities experienced within the youth homeless response system.

Action Step 7: Include equity goals in all program outcomes.

Action Step 8: Collect and analyze outcome and performance data with a racial equity lens.

Timeframe: Fall 2022 - Fall 2024

HUD Key Principles

Equity <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Positive Youth Development <input type="checkbox"/>	Trauma-Informed Care <input type="checkbox"/>	Family Engagement <input type="checkbox"/>
Housing First <input type="checkbox"/>	Youth Choice <input type="checkbox"/>	Community Integration <input type="checkbox"/>	Coordinated Entry <input type="checkbox"/>

Housing

Youth for Action and Youth Systems leaders identified a lack of housing for youth in general, and the need for creating a continuum of youth-specific housing options accessible to youth in both Monterey and San Benito Counties. Discussions included a range of housing options, including crisis housing, transitional housing, and permanent housing options, all to be provided with low barriers and in alignment with Housing First.

Goal: The goal for our community is for everyone to have housing, which is affordable, accessible and fulfills the needs of youth. For housing to be supportive of our population and attuned to clients' needs. This means having housing where youth can thrive—working with the community to break down biases against unhoused folks to better educate landlords and housing developers. The supports attached to housing, if sought out, should be trauma-informed.

HOUSING IMPLEMENTATION TEAM: (PARTNERS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF BELOW OBJECTIVES):

Coalition of Homeless Services Providers, Youth Systems Leaders, Youth for Action, and the Leadership Council (CoC Board).

Objective 1: Ensure youth housing and options align with the principles of Housing First and are low-barrier.

Action Step 1: Design all YHDP projects with the principles of Housing First and low-barrier access at the forefront of project design.

Action Step 2: Offer youth-specific housing and shelter options that accept pets, as well as service and emotional support animals.

Action Step 3: Explore options for affordable, supported housing that is site-based or master-leased to decrease reliance on landlords and allow for youth to access housing with as low of barriers as possible.

Action Step 4: Ensure that there are 24-hour shelters or other crisis response options available for youth in urgent need.

Action Step 5: Provide housing options that are accessible for person with previous involvement in the criminal legal system, including youth with felonies / Penal Code 290 violations.

Action Step 6: Utilize new funding streams from the State to develop housing options that are accessible for youth who are undocumented or don't ask about immigration status.

Action Step 7: Ensure all housing and shelters are designed in partnership with disability advocates and persons with disabilities to ensure that they are truly ADA compliant and accessible.

Action Step 8: Stop the encampment sweeps and develop a more person-centered and supportive approach to encampment resolution.

Timeframe: Fall 2022 - Spring 2023

HUD Key Principles

Equity <input type="checkbox"/>	Positive Youth Development <input type="checkbox"/>	Trauma-Informed Care <input type="checkbox"/>	Family Engagement <input type="checkbox"/>
Housing First <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Youth Choice <input type="checkbox"/>	Community Integration <input type="checkbox"/>	Coordinated Entry <input type="checkbox"/>

Objective 2: Expand the crisis response system for youth to include immediately available and safe housing, shelter, and services for all youth in need.

Action Step 1: Meet with the Board of Supervisors to discuss the need for emergency housing for unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness.

Action Step 2: Identify funding sources and interested organizations to develop and operate youth-specific shelters.

Action Step 3: Develop youth-specific shelters, LGBTQ+ shelters, drop-in centers, and day centers that can provide on-site support and wraparound services.

Action Step 4: Provide information on licensing and support the development of a licensed shelter for minors experiencing homelessness.

Action Step 5: Utilize YHDP funds to build out the youth crisis response system with Youth Navigation, Outreach, and Drop-In Centers (based on project proposals).

Action Step 6: Earmark at least one unit in winter shelter for pregnant or parenting youth.

Action Step 7: Explore host homes and supported kinship care as potential models to divert youth or respond to their immediate housing crisis, particularly for unaccompanied minors.

Action Step 8: Secure hotel and motel vouchers that can be used by providers and partners in the education, child welfare, and justice systems to prevent youth from sleeping unsheltered if no shelter or housing is immediately available.

Action Step 9: Increase safe and confidential crisis options for youth who are fleeing domestic violence, sexual trafficking, exploitation, or gang involvement, including 24-hour safe houses and DV shelters.

Timeframe: Fall 2022 - Fall 2024

HUD Key Principles

Equity <input type="checkbox"/>	Positive Youth Development <input type="checkbox"/>	Trauma-Informed Care <input type="checkbox"/>	Family Engagement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Housing First <input type="checkbox"/>	Youth Choice <input type="checkbox"/>	Community Integration <input type="checkbox"/>	Coordinated Entry <input type="checkbox"/>

Objective 3: Provide new transitional housing options designed to help youth exit the crisis of homelessness, access supports, and connect with longer-term housing options.

Action Step 1: Utilize YHDP funds to develop transitional housing (TH) and/or joint transitional housing-rapid rehousing (TH-RRH) projects (based on project proposals).

Action Step 2: Design and open a maternal group home to serve pregnant and parenting youth.

Action Step 3: Provide specific resources and peer support options in TH and TH-RRH for LGBTQ+ youth, BIPOC youth, and youth with histories of justice system or child welfare involvement.

Action Step 4: Explore tiny homes as a transitional housing option for youth.

Action Step 5: Work with the child welfare system to provide longer housing support for youth involved in the foster care system after “aging out”.

Timeframe: Fall 2022 - Fall 2023

HUD Key Principles

Equity <input type="checkbox"/>	Positive Youth Development <input type="checkbox"/>	Trauma-Informed Care <input type="checkbox"/>	Family Engagement <input type="checkbox"/>
Housing First <input type="checkbox"/>	Youth Choice <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Community Integration <input type="checkbox"/>	Coordinated Entry <input type="checkbox"/>

Objective 3: Invest in safe, stable, permanent and affordable housing options specifically designed to serve youth.

Action Step 1: Utilize YHDP funds to develop Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) and Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) for youth (based on project proposals).

Action Step 2: Offer landlord incentives and explore other strategies to encourage landlords to accept youth as their tenants.

Action Step 3: Secure flexible funding to help youth pay for first month’s rent, security deposit, application fees, and other upfront costs.

Action Step 4: Provide youth with information on tenants’ rights and protections.

Action Step 5: Develop campaign to combat landlord discrimination against youth.

Action Step 6: Ensure that permanent, affordable housing units are available that are appropriate in size and location for young families with children and that incorporate child care options.

Action Step 7: Provide co-signing support for any youth who need it to secure permanent, affordable housing.

Action Step 8: Increase collaboration with the Public Housing Authority to set aside housing vouchers for youth and provide wraparound services during the voucher application process.

Action Step 9: Develop affordable long-term care options for youth with disabilities.

Action Step 10: Advocate for new affordable housing developments to provide mixed ability and cross disability housing.

Action Step 11: Work with local colleges to make campus housing more accessible and affordable, including exploring the option for campus rapid re-housing for students and providing separate grants to students specifically for housing.

Action Step 12: Explore new and innovative ways to expand affordable housing options targeted for youth, including smaller units in specified apartment complexes, increased shared housing options, dorm-like congregate housing options, and prefabricated dwellings.

Timeframe: Fall 2022 - Fall 2023

HUD Key Principles

Equity <input type="checkbox"/>	Positive Youth Development <input type="checkbox"/>	Trauma-Informed Care <input type="checkbox"/>	Family Engagement <input type="checkbox"/>
Housing First <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Youth Choice <input type="checkbox"/>	Community Integration <input type="checkbox"/>	Coordinated Entry <input type="checkbox"/>

Identification and Outreach

Youth for Action has discussed the importance of identifying and engaging youth in receive shelter, housing, services, and authentic engagement opportunities such as the YAB. Youth System leaders emphasized the importance of maintaining consistent engagement with youth experiencing homelessness throughout the entire process from identification to engagement.

Goal: We envision a community that has improved cross-system partnerships and coordination so that we can help youth navigate the system. We would like our community to equitably perform outreach and embed it into our coordinated entry system to help identify youth and accurately assess their needs.

IDENTIFICATION & OUTREACH IMPLEMENTATION TEAM: (PARTNERS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF BELOW OBJECTIVES):

Coalition of Homeless Services Providers, Youth Systems Leaders, County Departments of Social Services, and Outreach Teams.

Objective 1: Expand cross-systems partnerships to increase local capacity to identify youth and young adults at-risk of and experiencing homelessness, conduct outreach, and engage them in services.

Action Step 1: Develop and share out a contact sheet for all members of the Youth Systems Meeting team, including information on agency, name, contact information, and position.

Action Step 2: Conduct outreach to local youth serving systems that are not already at the table to participate in outreach and engagement efforts.

Action Step 3: Connect with additional agencies and organizations to increase outreach and identification efforts, including Community Action Agencies, juvenile justice, and nonprofits that specifically serve foster youth.

Action Step 4: Identify youth in need through schools:

- Work with teachers and counselors to help identify and reach youth
- Create a pipeline with on-site school counselors to connect to services
- Presentations in schools about available services
- Connect with trade schools to increase outreach and identification efforts

Action Step 5: Train school staff and other community members about possible signs to look for in order to identify youth at risk of or experiencing homelessness.

Action Step 6: Attend events not just related to youth in the community to reach more people with information on resources to address youth homelessness.

Action Step 7: Connect with the local Homeless Union to support outreach and engagement efforts.

Action Step 8: Develop subcommittees to support targeted outreach and engagement efforts for certain subpopulations/caucuses of youth.

Action Step 9: Support case conferencing to ensure youth are not only referred to but are connected to the services for which they are eligible. If a youth is not eligible for services, case conferencing can discuss why and other resources to provide support.

Timeframe: Fall 2022 - Summer 2023

HUD Key Principles

Equity <input type="checkbox"/>	Positive Youth Development <input type="checkbox"/>	Trauma-Informed Care <input type="checkbox"/>	Family Engagement <input type="checkbox"/>
Housing First <input type="checkbox"/>	Youth Choice <input type="checkbox"/>	Community Integration <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Coordinated Entry <input type="checkbox"/>

Objective 2: Increase equitable and youth-led outreach and identification efforts through new peer positions and supports led by people with lived experience and expertise.

Action Step 1: Develop a new outreach model to promote “youth reaching youth, youth teaching youth.”

Action Step 2: Support and compensate Youth for Action members to engage in the wider community and participate in identification and outreach efforts.

Action Step 3: Increase peer-to-peer supports for outreach and engagement beyond the YAB (within programs, schools, other agencies).

Action Step 4: Embed peer-led outreach into schools through liaison positions.

Action Step 5: Develop and implement mentorship and/or role model programs for peer-to-peer outreach and support.

Action Step 6: Consult with and listen to youth with lived experience regarding where outreach teams should go in order to connect with unsheltered youth.

Action Step 7: Connect with older community members experiencing homelessness to build trust and get leads on where youth are located in the area.

Action Step 8: Partner with the Homeless Union to support youth outreach and identification efforts.

Action Step 9: Authentically engage persons with lived experiences of residing in encampments in developing a person-centered approach to facilitating connections to shelter, housing and services.

Timeframe: Fall 2022 - Summer 2023

HUD Key Principles

Equity <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Positive Youth Development <input type="checkbox"/>	Trauma-Informed Care <input type="checkbox"/>	Family Engagement <input type="checkbox"/>
Housing First <input type="checkbox"/>	Youth Choice <input type="checkbox"/>	Community Integration <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Coordinated Entry <input type="checkbox"/>

Objective 3: Ensure that outreach and identification efforts are accessible to youth by meeting youth where they are, addressing their urgent needs, and reach youth across populations of focus.

Action Step 1: Ensure that basic needs (i.e. food, employment) are provided for during outreach, identification and engagement efforts.

Action Step 2: Incorporate migrant liaison position into local street outreach teams.

Action Step 3: Provide transportation and technology as needed to help identify and engage youth and maintain engagement while being connected to housing and services.

Action Step 4: Create marketing materials that are developed by and in partnership with youth with lived experience, so they are engaging for youth.

Action Step 5: Develop marketing materials in more than one language (ex. Spanish; Vietnamese; Tagalog, etc.).

Action Step 6: Recruit and hire staff that speak the same languages and dialects as youth.

Action Step 7: Ensure that outreach workers are trained in trauma-informed care and Positive Youth Development. Outreach should be focused on building trust and youth choice by listening to houseless youth and responding to their goals and needs as defined by them.

Action Step 8: Embed people in Coordinated Entry to help youth navigate the system.

Action Step 9: Expand youth-specific outreach to San Benito County.

Timeframe: Fall 2022 - Fall 2023

HUD Key Principles

Equity <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Positive Youth Development <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Trauma-Informed Care <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Family Engagement <input type="checkbox"/>
Housing First <input type="checkbox"/>	Youth Choice <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Community Integration <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Coordinated Entry <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Objective 4: Utilize new and varied methods of outreach to strengthen youth identification, outreach and engagement efforts.

Action Step 1: Increase youth-led outreach team presence on social media, such as Tik Tok advertisements.

Action Step 2: Conduct outreach outside of the "traditional setting", such as shopping centers, skate parks, community centers, churches, parks, coffee shops, food pantries, and libraries.

Action Step 3: Conduct tabling at community-wide events.

Action Step 4: Increase outreach and identification efforts at K-12 schools and institutions of higher education, including:

- Going into middle and high schools to talk about the YAB.
- Connecting with school-based liaisons such as McKinney-Vento liaisons to aid in outreach efforts.
- Sharing information on identification and outreach at colleges through resource centers, classes, and education of faculty/staff.
- Tabling on campuses.

Action Step 5: Keep 211 United Way informed of and up-to-date regarding information on youth homelessness services.

Action Step 6: Network and connect with organizations outside of the Youth Systems Meeting to learn more about how they conduct outreach and identification and collaborate where possible.

Action Step 7: Share with youth and their families the benefits of sharing personal information to allow for connections to housing and services, as well as their rights in sharing information.

Action Step 8: Utilize YHDP funds to expand outreach and identification efforts through new Housing Navigation, Outreach, and/or Drop-In Centers (based on project proposals).

Timeframe: Fall 2022 - Fall 2023

HUD Key Principles

Equity <input type="checkbox"/>	Positive Youth Development <input type="checkbox"/>	Trauma-Informed Care <input type="checkbox"/>	Family Engagement <input type="checkbox"/>
Housing First <input type="checkbox"/>	Youth Choice <input type="checkbox"/>	Community Integration <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Coordinated Entry <input type="checkbox"/>

Objective 5: Improve the experience of first engaging with the homeless response system by making initial engagement conversations trauma-informed, strength-based, and compassionate.

Action Step 1: Provide all staff who may have first engagement with youth with trainings on trauma-informed care, Positive Youth Development, multicultural competency, and mental health training.

Action Step 2: Reframe initial engagement discussions around whole person care, relationship building, and understanding each person’s needs.

Action Step 3: Ask each youth what they need right now and provide immediate partner referrals.

Action Step 4: Ensure that youth-serving providers have safe spaces (race, LGBTQ+, disability) for youth to initially engage in conversations about needs and services.

Timeframe: Fall 2022 - Fall 2023

HUD Key Principles

Equity <input type="checkbox"/>	Positive Youth Development <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Trauma-Informed Care <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Family Engagement <input type="checkbox"/>
Housing First <input type="checkbox"/>	Youth Choice <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Community Integration <input type="checkbox"/>	Coordinated Entry <input type="checkbox"/>

Objective 6: Evaluate and re-focus energy around outreach and identification efforts often to ensure accountability, sustainability, and shared responsibility in ensuring youth are not “falling through the cracks”.

Action Step 1: Provide trainings for outreach workers on understanding biases, building trust, being reliable (do what you say), being attentive rather than prescriptive, and progressive engagement (begin with sharing information and empowering youth).

Action Step 2: Identify innovative ways to maintain engagement with youth throughout the entire housing process, which may include providing cell phones/technology and implementing housing navigation.

Action Step 3: Share success stories with the community about outreach, identification and engagement efforts.

Action Step 4: Regularly evaluate and increase staffing as necessary to ensure there is enough capacity to coordinate all local youth outreach efforts.

Action Step 5: Incorporate continuous quality improvement (CQI) in the evaluation of the outreach efforts.

Action Step 6: Facilitate regular check-ins between outreach teams across Monterey and San Benito Counties to support coordination of efforts.

Action Step 7: Use this action plan and timeline community wide and at project level to help ensure that outreach and identification efforts remain sustainable, responsive and accountable to the needs of youth.

Timeframe: Fall 2022 - Fall 2023

HUD Key Principles

Equity <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Positive Youth Development <input type="checkbox"/>	Trauma-Informed Care <input type="checkbox"/>	Family Engagement <input type="checkbox"/>
Housing First <input type="checkbox"/>	Youth Choice <input type="checkbox"/>	Community Integration <input type="checkbox"/>	Coordinated Entry <input type="checkbox"/>

Social-Emotional Well-Being and Health

Youth for Action focused on the need for increased access to therapy, case management and other mental health services and support in navigating the health care system. Youth for Action also emphasized the particular health and social-emotional well-being needs of youth with disabilities and pregnant and parenting youth. Youth Systems Meeting leaders also saw the need for more and better access to therapy and for providers to take a more comprehensive, whole person care approach to serving young people in need of housing and services.

Goal: We envision a community where youth have access to more available physical, mental, and emotional supports which are proactive instead of reactive. We would like staff to be supportive rather than paternal, build systems of support, and provide person-centered and trauma-informed services.

WELL-BEING AND HEALTH IMPLEMENTATION TEAM: (PARTNERS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF BELOW OBJECTIVES):

Coalition of Homeless Services Providers, Monterey County Behavioral Health, San Benito Health and Human Services, Central Coast Center for Independent Living, and Youth Systems Leaders.

Objective 1: Ensure that health and mental health services are available, accessible, and affordable for all youth who need them.

Action Step 1: Embed mental health services, therapy, alcohol and drug treatment/prevention, and case management into all YHDP-funded projects.

Action Step 2: Provide training and secure a commitment from youth-serving health providers to provide culturally appropriate and competent care for LGBTQ+, BIPOC, and immigrant youth.

Action Step 3: Develop a list of all youth and LGBTQ+ friendly, trauma-informed, and affordable health and mental health resources in Monterey and San Benito Counties.

Action Step 4: Hire navigators, counselors, and case managers who are trained to help youth navigate and access health and mental health services and to address their overall well-being needs.

Action Step 5: Secure discretionary funding to allow programs to integrate more health and mental health supports into their array of services.

Action Step 6: Collaborate with County Behavioral Health Departments to streamline the process of applying for and accessing services for YYA at risk of and experiencing homelessness, based on need.

Action Step 7: Increase marketing and connections to Esperanza Care / Esperanza Center for youth who are not eligible for State and Federal health care programs and who do not have health insurance.

Action Step 8: Provide interpretation and translation services within health and mental health resources.

Action Step 9: Support youth who are transitioning in accessing hormone therapy and resources to help youth stay on hormone therapy consistently, particularly through financial resources to increase affordability.

Action Step 10: Offer more mental health supports and services in schools.

Action Step 11: Share information and resources to help unhoused youth know their rights in the health system, including control over reproductive health, rights to contraception, ability to choose a health care provider, and access to timely doctor’s appointments.

Timeframe: Fall 2022 - Fall 2024

HUD Key Principles

Equity <input type="checkbox"/>	Positive Youth Development <input type="checkbox"/>	Trauma-Informed Care <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Family Engagement <input type="checkbox"/>
Housing First <input type="checkbox"/>	Youth Choice <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Community Integration <input type="checkbox"/>	Coordinated Entry <input type="checkbox"/>

Objective 2: Incorporate trauma-informed approaches and practices for youth throughout the homeless response system and partner systems such as schools, child welfare, and juvenile justice.

Action Step 1: Ensure all YHDP and non-YHDP funded projects incorporate trauma-informed approaches to housing and services and can offer or refer youth to wraparound services to help address their trauma.

Action Step 2: Lower barriers to housing and shelter, including less stringent rules in shelters.

Action Step 3: Provide training for all direct service and housing staff on differences between mental health concerns and behavioral issues and trauma-informed responses for both types of situations.

Action Step 3: Provide training for all direct service and housing staff on PTSD and trauma responses.

Action Step 4: Offer art therapy and creative healing as a holistic approach to trauma.

Action Step 5: Provide social reintegration and healthy relationship building support for youth who have been involved in systems and/or have been through highly traumatic situations.

Timeframe: Fall 2022 - Fall 2023

HUD Key Principles

Equity <input type="checkbox"/>	Positive Youth Development <input type="checkbox"/>	Trauma-Informed Care <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Family Engagement <input type="checkbox"/>
Housing First <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Youth Choice <input type="checkbox"/>	Community Integration <input type="checkbox"/>	Coordinated Entry <input type="checkbox"/>

Objective 3: Emphasize the development of healthy and permanent connections with friends, peers, supportive family / family of choice, and other caring adults.

Action Step 1: Develop youth homelessness prevention program focused on building relationships and community connections to help prevent isolation, maintain housing, and strengthen social and emotional health.

Action Step 2: Provide youth with individualized support and case management to build their social network and identify their personal support system.

Action Step 3: Design youth mentorship programs that provide connections to other youth or trusted adults to help with building life skills, providing one-on-one support, and healthy relationship development.

Action Step 4: Work with school counselors and McKinney-Vento liaisons to help youth connect with afterschool and extracurricular activities (i.e. clubs, sports, enriching activities). Provide transportation and flexible funding to support participation in activities as needed.

Action Step 5: Increase and expand family reunification and engagement support, particularly for minors, youth who have been victims of sexual trafficking and exploitation, and youth who have been involved with the child welfare or juvenile justice systems.

Action Step 6: Offer support groups for youth populations of focus within programs, and across programs when possible.

Timeframe: Fall 2022 - Fall 2023

HUD Key Principles

Equity <input type="checkbox"/>	Positive Youth Development <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Trauma-Informed Care <input type="checkbox"/>	Family Engagement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Housing First <input type="checkbox"/>	Youth Choice <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Community Integration <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Coordinated Entry <input type="checkbox"/>

Objective 4: Ensure that all youth-serving programs are accessible for youth with disabilities and staff are knowledgeable regarding the ADA, disability rights, needs, and services.

Action Step 1: Ensure all projects and spaces - including new YHDP projects, college campuses, and medical offices - are designed with disability advocates and with people with disabilities being involved in every step of the project.

Action Step 2: Provide community-wide education on different disabilities so that folx are brought into the present on disability rights, advocacy, and disability justice (addressing intersection of disability with other forms of oppression).

Action Step 3: Create a list of what supports at each program are there for people with disabilities in the community and what organizations have particular expertise serving youth with disabilities.

Action Step 4: Develop referral pipeline to connect youth to organizations with disability services and expertise when appropriate.

Action Step 5: Develop and provide YAB-led training for community agencies/organizations on serving youth with disabilities.

Action Step 6: Ensure that shelter and housing programs are able to meet the needs of individuals with different disabilities and provide resources that are accessible cross-disability, including:

- Ramps for individuals using wheelchairs
- Assistive technology for individuals who are deaf or have vision impairments, etc.

Action Step 7: Provide on-call transportation options that are accessible to youth with disabilities.

Action Step 8: Create a list of medical providers, doctor’s offices, and shelters that are accessible for youth with different types of disabilities.

Action Step 9: Create campaigns and educational opportunities for the community regarding diagnosable drug and alcohol addictions or substance abuse disorders (SUDs) as a disability to support connections to eligible treatment and housing.

Action Step 10: Increase the number of trained staff available to serve clients who are diagnosed with substance use disorders and other disabilities.

Action Step 11: Secure flexible funding to support youth with disabilities in paying for any out-of-pocket expenses for care, treatment, assistive devices, transportation, or other needs that may not be covered at all or in full by health insurance or program funding.

Timeframe: Fall 2022 - Fall 2023

HUD Key Principles

Equity <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Positive Youth Development <input type="checkbox"/>	Trauma-Informed Care <input type="checkbox"/>	Family Engagement <input type="checkbox"/>
Housing First <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Youth Choice <input type="checkbox"/>	Community Integration <input type="checkbox"/>	Coordinated Entry <input type="checkbox"/>

Objective 5: Expand resources to address the health and wellness needs of pregnant and parenting youth and their children.

Action Step 1: Increase access to child care across youth-serving programs and systems for young parents.

Action Step 2: Offer comprehensive health and wellness supports for youth and their children before, during and after pregnancy, including:

- Pre/post-natal care education
- Contraception access, education, and planning
- Access to affordable medical care and clinic check ups
- Navigating postpartum / attachment, including postpartum therapy (if needed)

Action Step 3: Collaboration with victim service providers to identify safe housing, resources, and support systems for pregnant and parenting youth.

Action Step 4: Provide access to parenting classes that are flexible to accommodate youth schedules or are recorded, and that are designed by and for young parents in particular.

Timeframe: Fall 2022 - 2024

HUD Key Principles			
Equity <input type="checkbox"/>	Positive Youth Development <input type="checkbox"/>	Trauma-Informed Care <input type="checkbox"/>	Family Engagement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Housing First <input type="checkbox"/>	Youth Choice <input type="checkbox"/>	Community Integration <input type="checkbox"/>	Coordinated Entry <input type="checkbox"/>

Objective 6: Incorporate more youth-friendly and accessible green spaces and community spaces through programs and the community as a whole.

Action Step 1: Incorporate green spaces and community spaces such as community gardens into plans for new YHDP-funded projects.

Action Step 2: Encourage existing youth programs to develop green spaces and community spaces as part of their program design.

Action Step 3: Advocate for universal design to be the standard across all community spaces and public parks.

Action Step 4: Work with City and County Departments to fix existing accessibility issues in public spaces (i.e. uneven sidewalks).

Timeframe: Fall 2022 -2024

HUD Key Principles			
Equity <input type="checkbox"/>	Positive Youth Development <input type="checkbox"/>	Trauma-Informed Care <input type="checkbox"/>	Family Engagement <input type="checkbox"/>
Housing First <input type="checkbox"/>	Youth Choice <input type="checkbox"/>	Community Integration <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Coordinated Entry <input type="checkbox"/>

Support

Youth for Action discussed the need for supportive services to respond to the needs of unhoused youth and to prevent youth in precarious housing situations from losing their housing and falling into homelessness. Youth Systems leaders focused on the importance of making sure that organizations have the capacity and staff to meet youth where they are and be more responsive in providing support / supportive services.

Goal: We envision that our community first and foremost listens to youth to meet their basic needs. To create equitable centered safe spaces that are comfortable for youth, emphasizing the importance of culturally competent and trauma-informed care. A system that provides youth a helping hand up and holds providers accountable.

SUPPORT IMPLEMENTATION TEAM: (PARTNERS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF BELOW OBJECTIVES):

Coalition of Homeless Services Providers, First 5 of both Counties, United Way of Monterey County, Salvation Army, Catholic Charities, and Youth Systems Leaders.

Objective 1: Expand access to supportive services and wraparound supports for youth at every stage of the housing process and that are specialized for populations on focus.

Action Step 1: Secure discretionary funding to provide supports that respond to youth needs beyond rental assistance, including furniture, cleaning supplies, treatment, and transportation.

Action Step 2: Begin engagement with all youth by ensuring that their basic needs are met by providing access to warm meals, laundry, lockers, showers, and restrooms.

Action Step 3: Provide supportive services to meet the specific needs of youth populations of focus, including:

- Pregnant and parenting youth – Baby clothes and supplies, milk, formula, and baby food, blankets, child care, diapers
- Unaccompanied minors – Emancipation assistance, legal assistance, family reunification support
- LGBTQ+ youth – non-gendered, gender neutral and gender affirming supports, legal support, support in making document changes, safe spaces to express needs and concerns
- Youth with histories of justice system involvement – legal advocates, legal services, record expungement, gang prevention and intervention services
- Youth with histories of involvement with the child welfare system – preparation for emancipation, legal support, accessible transportation, “one-stop shop” of resources for successful transition into adulthood
- Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), immigrant and undocumented youth – assistance with getting DACA, immigration support, translation services, advocates, and free/reduced fees for IDs
- Youth with disabilities – free and good public transport, disability justice, transition planning, flexible funding for health-related purchases, emotional support animals, assistance with bills (phone/internet)
- Students experiencing homelessness – laundry, food, transportation, showers, clothing

Action Step 4: Utilize YHDP funds to develop a Youth Navigation project to direct support to youth in crisis as they navigate and engage with different systems of care (based on project proposals).

Timeframe: Fall 2022 - Fall 2024

HUD Key Principles

Equity <input type="checkbox"/>	Positive Youth Development <input type="checkbox"/>	Trauma-Informed Care <input type="checkbox"/>	Family Engagement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Housing First <input type="checkbox"/>	Youth Choice <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Community Integration <input type="checkbox"/>	Coordinated Entry <input type="checkbox"/>

Objective 2: Increase education and awareness among youth, families, and youth-serving providers regarding what supportive services exist for homeless and unstably housed youth and where/how to access them.

Action Step 1: Make a Google link with a list of all of the supportive services youth can receive.

Action Step 2: Create social media accounts (Facebook, Tik Tok, Instagram) to share information on available resources directly with youth.

Action Step 3: Post youth-specific resource links on agency and provider websites.

Action Step 4: Share the San Benito County Resource Guide Book with all local youth-serving providers to share with clients.

Action Step 5: Develop a youth-specific guide book of services for Monterey County.

Action Step 6: Provide regular updates via meeting, email blast, listserv and other communication to inform staff at youth-serving agencies about youth resources.

Action Step 7: Host events and resource fairs to help spread the word and connect youth the available resources.

Action Step 8: Update 211 United Way monthly with information about youth-specific resources.

Action Step 9: Post flyers about available services where youth will see them, including schools, the YMCA, rec centers, the Epicenter.

Timeframe: Fall 2022 - Fall 2023

HUD Key Principles

Equity <input type="checkbox"/>	Positive Youth Development <input type="checkbox"/>	Trauma-Informed Care <input type="checkbox"/>	Family Engagement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Housing First <input type="checkbox"/>	Youth Choice <input type="checkbox"/>	Community Integration <input type="checkbox"/>	Coordinated Entry <input type="checkbox"/>

Objective 3: Create inclusive, safe, and intersectionally equitable spaces for youth throughout the community.

Action Step 1: Create more community and green spaces for youth, including as part of YHDP projects. This should include accessible parks, community gardens, community centers, and other shared spaces.

Action Step 2: Develop spaces such as drop-in and resource centers where youth with children can come for support together.

Action Step 3: Ensure all new projects (YHDP and non-YHDP) are structurally accessible and developed with the needs of youth with disabilities in mind.

Action Step 4: Establish “no judgment zones” in all youth projects and programming.

Action Step 5: Create community spaces that are safe and accessible for undocumented youth, pregnant and parent youth, and survivors of domestic violence, sexual trafficking, and exploitation.

Action Step 6: Ensure there are safe spaces at schools for youth who are houseless or unstably housed to seek out support and services.

Timeframe: Fall 2022 - Fall 2024

HUD Key Principles

Equity <input type="checkbox"/>	Positive Youth Development <input type="checkbox"/>	Trauma-Informed Care <input type="checkbox"/>	Family Engagement <input type="checkbox"/>
Housing First <input type="checkbox"/>	Youth Choice <input type="checkbox"/>	Community Integration <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Coordinated Entry <input type="checkbox"/>

Objective 4: Invest in expanded prevention and diversion resources for youth so that they do not need to experience homelessness now or in the future.

Action Step 1: Increase understanding of available resources and benefits available, including FUP vouchers. Let youth know all the great help they can receive even if they aren't homeless to help pay for rent and meet basic needs.

Action Step 2: Create partnerships with landlords to remove barriers for youth and young families, such as rental history, social security and credit requirements.

Action Step 3: Provide unstably housed youth with vouchers for food/free food programs, clothing, and child care.

Action Step 4: Set aside a flexible pool of funding to help unstably housed youth with financial assistance for security deposits, first and last month's rent, and furniture.

Action Step 5: Collaborate with the Public Housing Authority to use Section 8 to house youth.

Action Step 6: Provide direct cash transfers to youth as a prevention and diversion intervention.

Action Step 7: Listen to youth about what they need and use youth choice to drive safe and appropriate prevention and diversion strategies for every person, such as family reunification, family finding, and conflict mediation.

Action Step 8: Integrate support persons who can connect youth to prevention and diversion services into places where youth spend their time, such as schools, community centers, and health clinics. This may be accomplished through a YHDP Youth Navigation project.

Action Step 9: Strengthen relationships with the foster care system, CASA advocates, and social workers to begin working with youth aging out of the system before they turn 18 to transition plan.

Action Step 10: Work with the YAB to establish a mentorship program and develop peer workshops on topics such as how to sign a lease or budget and lived experience knowledge.

Action Step 11: Ensure prevention and diversion services are embedded and available through Coordinated Entry.

Action Step 12: Utilize YHDP funds to invest in projects to help youth who are at imminent risk of homelessness (Category 2) find stable housing, which may include Youth Navigation, Outreach/Drop-in Center, Host Homes, and/or Supported Kinship Care (based on project proposals).

Timeframe: Fall 2022 - Fall 2024

HUD Key Principles

Equity <input type="checkbox"/>	Positive Youth Development <input type="checkbox"/>	Trauma-Informed Care <input type="checkbox"/>	Family Engagement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Housing First <input type="checkbox"/>	Youth Choice <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Community Integration <input type="checkbox"/>	Coordinated Entry <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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Objective 5: Increase program and staff capacity to provide support services to all unstably housed and houseless youth who need them.

Action Step 1: Recruit and hire more staff to focus on connections to wraparound supportive services, including:

- System navigators
- Peer navigators
- Youth Coordinated Entry specialists
- Volunteers
- Summer hires
- College students/interns
- Recreational staff

Action Step 2: Offer paid internship opportunities for YAB members and other youth with lived experience.

Action Step 3: Strengthen community partnerships and act as advocates for each other's' programs and services.

Action Step 4: Research and share information about resources in nearby counties as well as Monterey and San Benito Counties to add to the supportive services list.

Action Step 5: Increase capacity across youth-serving agencies to provide or refer to mental health services.

Action Step 6: Staff up programs to ensure that when a youth calls, the phone is answered, and they are able to be assisted as soon as possible.

Timeframe: Fall 2022 - Fall 2024

HUD Key Principles

Equity <input type="checkbox"/>	Positive Youth Development <input type="checkbox"/>	Trauma-Informed Care <input type="checkbox"/>	Family Engagement <input type="checkbox"/>
Housing First <input type="checkbox"/>	Youth Choice <input type="checkbox"/>	Community Integration <input type="checkbox"/>	Coordinated Entry <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Systems Change

Youth for Action identified a need for systems change with an equity focus, including creating a homeless response system that is more flexible, adaptive, responsive, and accountable to the needs of youth. Youth Systems Meeting leaders focused on improving coordination within and leveraging of the network of youth-serving systems and providers.

Goal: Our goal for systems change is for it to be a fully community driven initiative where, as individuals, we collectively make up the system and share the responsibility to disrupt systems of oppression. To deliver culturally

competent care in real-time to address the needs of our youth. We would like the system to be flexible, to change with the ever evolving needs of the youth.

SYSTEMS CHANGE IMPLEMENTATION TEAM(PARTNERS RESPONSIBLE FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF BELOW OBJECTIVES):

Coalition of Homeless Services Providers, Youth for Action, San Benito Office of Education, Monterey County Office of Education, Child Welfare, WIOA Agencies, Juvenile Justice and Department of Corrections, Youth Systems Leaders and the Leadership Council (CoC Board)

Objective 1: Ensure that providers and staff across systems are ready to serve youth as their full selves - with compassion, acceptance and flexibility.

Action Step 1: Provide training for all youth-serving programs and staff on serving youth populations of focus, including LGBTQ+, BIPOC, and youth with disabilities.

Action Step 2: Make changes to policies, procedures, and staff onboarding and training to ensure that all staff use appropriate terminology and respect youth’s pronouns.

Action Step 3: Offer non-gendered, gender neutral and gender-affirming supports and provide training to ensure staff do not make assumptions about gender when offering supports.

Action Step 4: Develop individualized housing and support plans for each youth that captures their whole-person goals, including housing, health, education, employment, and support networks.

Timeframe: Fall 2022 - Summer 2024 (end of program)

HUD Key Principles

Equity <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Positive Youth Development <input type="checkbox"/>	Trauma-Informed Care <input type="checkbox"/>	Family Engagement <input type="checkbox"/>
Housing First <input type="checkbox"/>	Youth Choice <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Community Integration <input type="checkbox"/>	Coordinated Entry <input type="checkbox"/>

Objective 2: Make changes to systems so they are more equitable and reflective of the population of young people experiencing homelessness in Monterey and San Benito Counties.

Action Step 1: Evaluate representation across systems and shelters, services, and employers to identify disparities and areas where representation can be improved to better represent youth, including BIPOC, LGBTQ+, and youth with disabilities.

Action Step 2: Review existing hiring practices for youth-serving organizations and revise as necessary to promote equity in hiring processes.

Action Step 3: Post and share new job listings with organizations that focus on equity, diversity, inclusion and representation.

Action Step 4: Ensure youth with lived experience are represented on hiring panels and have decision-making power in organizational hiring processes.

Action Step 5: Increase the focus on restorative justice and healing through the development of a Youth Court and by decreasing police presence in programs and on school campuses.

Timeframe: Fall 2022 - Fall 2024

HUD Key Principles

Equity <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Positive Youth Development <input type="checkbox"/>	Trauma-Informed Care <input type="checkbox"/>	Family Engagement <input type="checkbox"/>
Housing First <input type="checkbox"/>	Youth Choice <input type="checkbox"/>	Community Integration <input type="checkbox"/>	Coordinated Entry <input type="checkbox"/>

Objective 3: Make system improvements to be more responsive and to serve youth in a timelier manner.

Action Step 1: Offer more mobile resources that can meet youth where they are (in schools, shelters, etc.).

Action Step 2: Ensure there are enough staff to coordinate outreach efforts, including in rural parts of the CoC.

Action Step 3: Increase hiring and intern or volunteer recruitment at service providers and access points to ensure that someone is able to answer the phone for every youth who calls seeking assistance.

Timeframe: Fall 2022 - Fall 2023

HUD Key Principles

Equity <input type="checkbox"/>	Positive Youth Development <input type="checkbox"/>	Trauma-Informed Care <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Family Engagement <input type="checkbox"/>
Housing First <input type="checkbox"/>	Youth Choice <input type="checkbox"/>	Community Integration <input type="checkbox"/>	Coordinated Entry <input type="checkbox"/>

Objective 4: Improve cross-system and cross-provider coordination to serve youth as effectively as possible.

Action Step 1: Maintain and continuously engage new partners to participate in monthly Youth Systems Meetings.

Action Step 2: Continue to use case conferencing to network and share resources about programs and services that can help young people meet their needs.

Action Step 3: Work across systems to streamline referral pathways from the homelessness response system to key resources that youth may want to access to assist with housing stability (education, employment, health, etc.).

Action Step 4: Remove potential barriers to accessing housing, shelter, and services across systems, such as documentation requirements, consistency in phone access, or prior involvement with the criminal justice system.

Action Step 5: Develop and fund Youth Navigator positions to provide centralized support as youth access resources across systems.

Action Step 6: Improve coordination between DV providers, child welfare, and housing providers to more quickly identify and connect youth facing safety concerns to safe, confidential housing or shelter options.

Action Step 7: Increase collaboration with LGBTQ+ providers in the work to prevent and end youth homelessness.

Action Step 8: Ensure all partner systems of care are trained on the Coordinated Access and Referral System (CARS) and referral pathways to CARS.

Timeframe: Fall 2022 - Fall 2023

HUD Key Principles

Equity <input type="checkbox"/>	Positive Youth Development <input type="checkbox"/>	Trauma-Informed Care <input type="checkbox"/>	Family Engagement <input type="checkbox"/>
Housing First <input type="checkbox"/>	Youth Choice <input type="checkbox"/>	Community Integration <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Coordinated Entry <input type="checkbox"/>

Objective 5: Refine the Coordinated Access and Referral System (CARS) to better address the needs of youth and young adults.

Action Step 1: Expand training and accountability for implementation of existing CARS policy to provide support with service linkages at access points.

Action Step 2: Develop and provide training on transparent and consistent communication about what CARS is and is not and how it operates, including:

- Messaging providers can use to explain how the prioritization and Master List processes work
- Types of resources available to youth while they are awaiting further housing resources

Action Step 3: Add and consistently implement a problem-solving phase into the CARS assessment process.

Action Step 4: Develop a customized assessment tool that is specifically aligned with the goals and the values of Youth for Action, the CoC, and YHDP, including:

- Strengths-based
- Trauma-informed
- Assesses for and assists with linkages to multiple types of resources (e.g., housing, behavioral health services, employment supports)
- question order flexibility during administration
- Can be completed quickly and/or divided over multiple sessions

Action Step 5: Provide trainings, resource materials, and/or peer learning collaboratives around assessment administration to help promote and increase consistent training and tool usage

Action Step 6: Review prioritization policies for opportunities to enhance housing referrals for youth.

Action Step 7: Adopt more strategies to maintain up-to-date contact information for participants:

- Ask for multiple forms of contact information

- Utilize text messaging in addition to phone or email contacts
- Ask participants to update changes to their contact information via CHSP or agencies
- Help with securing cell phones and/or phone access

Action Step 8: Add flexibility to deadlines and appointment requirements when a youth is matched to a resource.

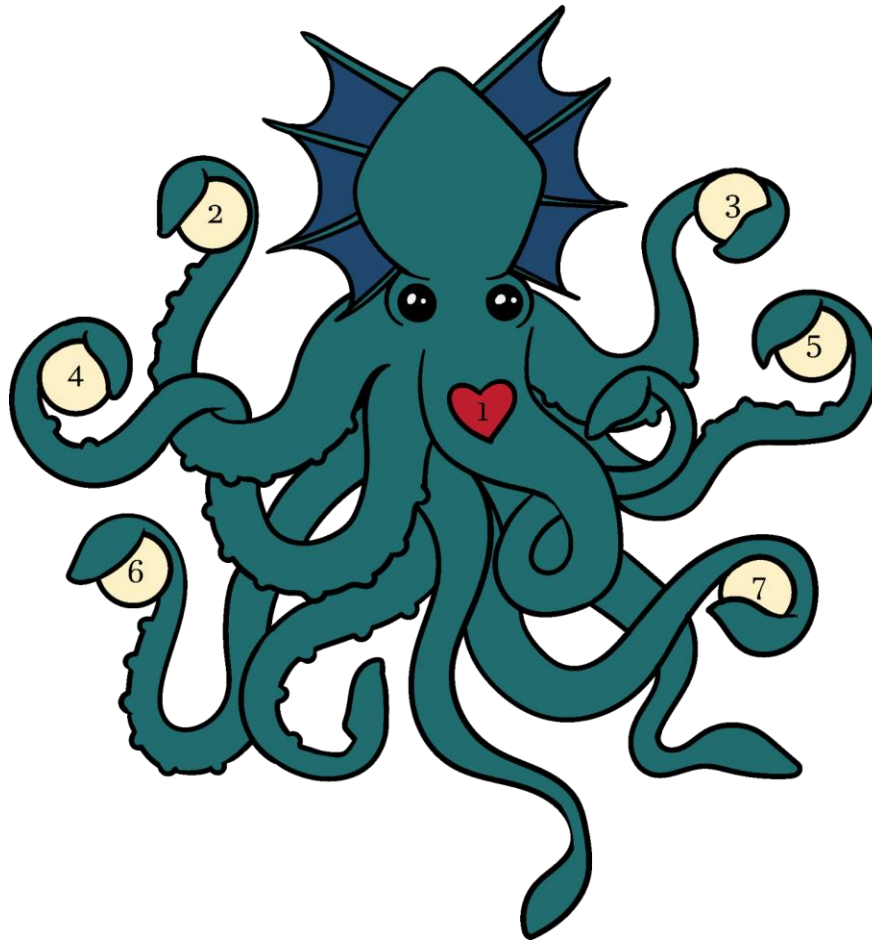
Action Step 9: Provide frequent opportunities for youth to offer feedback and suggestions on CARS procedures, including town halls.

Timeframe: Fall 2022 -Fall 2024

HUD Key Principles

Equity <input type="checkbox"/>	Positive Youth Development <input type="checkbox"/>	Trauma-Informed Care <input type="checkbox"/>	Family Engagement <input type="checkbox"/>
Housing First <input type="checkbox"/>	Youth Choice <input type="checkbox"/>	Community Integration <input type="checkbox"/>	Coordinated Entry <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Governance Structure



Metaphor

The governance structure for the YHDP Plan within the Lead Me Home Continuum of Care is based on the mythical creature, the Kraken. It is flexible and intentional just like the LMHCoC community that is composed of dedicated members determined to end and prevent youth homelessness. Much like a Kraken that can swim through strong currents, the CoC community would like to break down the barriers that youth often face in securing fair housing. The CoC community, as is the Kraken, is wide-reaching and seeks to bring notable members to the table to collaborate in changing the currently inadequate system. The Youth Action Board (also known as Youth for Action) is the heart of the Kraken or the driving force determined for positive and significant change in its community.

Decision Making Bodies

The following entities represent the decision-making bodies for the YHDP. They will continue to perform their regular duties outside the scope of this program.

1. Youth Action Board – The Heart of the Kraken

Who: Youth for Action

Role: Youth for Action is the Youth Action Board of Monterey and San Benito Counties Lead Me Home Continuum of Care. They are made up of youth between the ages of 16-24 with lived experience in homelessness to advise, advocate and lead the initiatives for marginalized populations.

Decision Making: Review every aspect of the Coordinated Community Plan and programs to provide input on need, design and appropriateness for special populations. The Board meets weekly to conduct reviews and discuss progress toward ending youth homelessness. They are informed and present at all processes of the administration of the Youth Homeless Demonstration Program (YHDP). They hold the final decision on the plan and design.

2. Local Youth Advisory Groups

Who: San Benito Youth Ad Hoc Committee, California Youth Connection, local youth, input sessions.

Role: Work with stakeholders in their community and in their prospective subpopulations. Their goal is to advise work moving forward with the Youth Homeless Demonstration Program as well as any programs in the future that will/can affect them.

Decision Making: Provides additional context/experience in order to make decisions.

3. Leadership Council

Who: Youth for Action sub-committee, MCOE, Board of Supervisors, Funding Agencies, Local government, local nonprofit agencies, an adult with lived experience in homelessness.

Role: The Lead Me Home CoC (LMH CoC) is the collective body of community stakeholders that provides forums for discussing plans and taking action to end homelessness in Monterey and San Benito Counties, educating the community on homeless issues, providing advice and input on the operations of homeless services, and advocating on federal, state, county and city policy issues affecting people who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness. It also oversees Federal, State, local and private grants that require CoC oversight, coordination and monitoring.

Decision Making: Provide the final signature of the decision made by Y4A.

4. The Coalition of Homeless Services Providers

Who: CoC Lead Agency and Board (Local Government from Monterey and San Benito County, local homeless service agencies, Monterey County Department of Social Services,

Role: Provide organizing, structure, communication, and training throughout the process. Coordinates integration of YHDP activities with the greater homeless service system.

Decision Making: Approves the YHDP Plan and all project applications.

5. Youth Systems Leaders

Who: Youth for Action, local youth-serving agencies, private institutions, community members, and youth advocacy groups. There is one dedicated staff member from the Coalition of Homeless Services Providers and 2 part-time staff (YAB members) that facilitate these meetings.

Role: Collecting and sharing data on youth experiencing homelessness; mapping the existing service system; identifying and prioritizing gaps in resources; identifying problems in systems that cause youth homelessness; identifying best practices and appropriate models; prioritizing projects for funding; measuring the success of various housing models; and coordinating services to ensure that all youth on the By-Name list are served. Develops all YHDP recommendations for approval including youth project plans.

Decision Making: Provide additional context/experience in order to make decisions. Provided approval on the second iteration of the Coordinated Community Plan.

6. Education Committee

Who: Upper Education Subcommittee and MCOE, NCYL, McKinney Vento Liaisons

Role: Focus on incorporation of educational advancement and attainment throughout the YHDP Process.

Decision Making: Provides additional context/experience in order to make decisions.

7. Other Community Partners

Who: Local advocacy groups, Faith-Based organizations, funders, community members, and older adults with lived experience.

Role: Their main role is advising and to give input on the CCP. Giving much needed lens of the community and their concerns.

Decision Making: Provides additional context/experience in order to make decisions.

YHDP Partners & Key Stakeholders

Type of Stakeholder	Name of Stakeholder	Collaboration
CoC/ESG Homelessness Program	Coalition of Homeless Services Providers	YHDP Lead Agency; convenes all key stakeholders and supports the YAB throughout development and implementation of the Coordinated Community Plan to end youth homelessness; supports YAB recruitment and growth; oversees administrative functions of YHDP
CoC/ESG Homelessness Program	City of Salinas	Participate in the planning and implementation of the Coordinated Community Plan to end youth homelessness; provide program support as ESG recipient; participate in needs analysis and community planning process
CoC/ESG Homelessness Program/Organization that serves culturally specific communities (youth with disabilities)	Central Coast Center for Independent Living	RRH Provider; support and participate in YHDP governance; participate in the planning and preparation of the community plan to end youth homelessness
CoC/ESG Homelessness Program	Community Homeless Solutions	Support and participate in YHDP governance; participate in the planning and preparation of the community plan to end youth homelessness; provide emergency shelter and PSH
CoC/ESG Homelessness Program	Sun Street Centers	SLE/TH Provider; support and participate in YHDP governance; participate in the planning and preparation of the community plan to end youth homelessness
CoC/ESG Homelessness Program	YWCA	Support and participate in YHDP governance; participate in the planning and preparation of the community plan to end youth homelessness; provide

		emergency shelter and PSH
CoC/ESG Homelessness Program	Bay Area Community Services	Support and participate in YHDP governance; participate in the planning and preparation of the community plan to end youth homelessness; provide emergency shelter
CoC/ESG Homelessness Program	Community Human Services	CoC policy/program decision maker; support and participate in YHDP governance; serve as advisors to the YAB; participate in the planning and preparation of the community plan to end youth homelessness; provide emergency shelter, RRH and TH to youth
Child Welfare Agency	Monterey County Department of Social Services - Family and Children's Services	CoC policy/program decision maker; participate in the planning and preparation of the community plan to end youth homelessness; align child welfare and PCWA system with the goals and activities of YHDP; support and participate in YHDP governance; provide supportive services for YYA
Youth-Led Advisory Group	Youth for Action (Y4A)	The leaders in the planning and implementation of the Coordinated Community Plan to end youth homelessness; participate in needs analysis and community planning process; serve as program evaluators for YHDP programs; support and participate in YHDP governance
Youth Led Advisory Group	San Benito Youth Adhoc Committee	Support and participate in YHDP governance; participate in the planning and preparation of the community plan to end youth homelessness
Local Government Agency	Monterey County Board of Supervisors	CoC policy/program decision maker; support and participate in YHDP governance
Local Government Agency	Monterey County Health	CoC policy/program decision

	Department	maker; support and participate in YHDP governance
Local Government Agency	San Benito County Health and Human Services Agency	CoC policy/program decision maker; participate in the planning and preparation of the community plan to end youth homelessness; align San Benito HHS system with the goals and activities of YHDP; support and participate in YHDP governance; provide supportive services for YYA
Local Government Agency	City of Seaside	CoC policy/program decision maker; support and participate in YHDP governance
Local Government Agency	City of King	CoC policy/program decision maker; support and participate in YHDP governance
Local Government Agency	City of Gonzales	CoC policy/program decision maker; support and participate in YHDP governance
Local Government Agency	City of Hollister	CoC policy/program decision maker; support and participate in YHDP governance
Local Government Agency	City of San Juan Bautista	CoC policy/program decision maker; support and participate in YHDP governance
Local Education Agency or State Education Agency	National Center for Youth Law	They have Liaisons in Schools; Support and participate in YHDP governance; participate in the planning and preparation of the community plan to end youth homelessness; provide services
Local Education Agency or State Education Agency	Monterey County Office of Education	CoC policy/program decision maker; support and participate in YHDP governance; serve as advisors to the YAB; participate in the planning and preparation of the community plan to end youth homelessness
Local Education Agency or	San Benito County Office of	Support and participate in

State Education Agency	Education	YHDP governance; participate in the planning and preparation of the community plan to end youth homelessness
Public Housing Authority	Housing Authority of the County of Monterey	CoC policy/program decision maker; support and participate in YHDP governance; provide HC Vouchers
WIOA Boards and Employment Agencies	Equus Workforce Solutions	Support and participate in YHDP governance; participate in the planning and preparation of the community plan to end youth homelessness; serves youth through a youth specific job program
WIOA Boards and Employment Agencies	CSWD (SBC)	Participate in the planning and implementation of the Coordinated Community Plan to end youth homelessness; provide program support as system-involved youth provider; participate in needs analysis and community planning process
Juvenile and Adult Corrections	Monterey County Probation	Participate in the planning and implementation of the Coordinated Community Plan to end youth homelessness; provide program support as system-involved youth provider; participate in needs analysis and community planning process
Juvenile and Adult Corrections	San Benito County Probation	Participate in the planning and implementation of the Coordinated Community Plan to end youth homelessness; provide program support as system-involved youth provider; participate in needs analysis and community planning process
Juvenile and Adult Corrections	California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation	Participate in the planning and implementation of the Coordinated Community Plan to end youth homelessness; provide program support as system-involved youth provider;

		participate in needs analysis and community planning process
Private Funded Organization - contracted by Juvenile and Adult Corrections	Geo Group	Participate in the planning and implementation of the Coordinated Community Plan to end youth homelessness; provide program support as system-involved youth provider; participate in needs analysis and community planning process
Non Profit Youth Organization	Youth Alliance	Youth service provider; support and participate in YHDP governance; serve as advisors to the YAB; participate in the planning and preparation of the community plan to end youth homelessness
Non Profit Youth Organization- Organization that serves culturally specific communities (LGBTQ+ and Foster Youth)	Epicenter	Youth service provider; support and participate in YHDP governance; participate in the planning and preparation of the community plan to end youth homelessness
Non Profit Youth Organization	Rancho Cielo	Support and participate in Youth System and Meetings
Affordable Housing Providers	CHISPA Housing	Support and participate in YHDP governance; participate in the planning and preparation of the community plan to end youth homelessness; CoC policy/program decision maker
Local and State Law Enforcement	Monterey PD	Support and participate in YHDP governance; participate in the planning and preparation of the community plan to end youth homelessness
Local and State Law Enforcement	Salinas PD	Support and participate in YHDP governance; participate in the planning and preparation of the community plan to end youth homelessness
Faith-Based Institutions	Salvation Army	Support and participate in YHDP governance; participate

		in the planning and preparation of the community plan to end youth homelessness
Faith-Based Institutions	Victory Mission	Support and participate in YHDP governance; participate in the planning and preparation of the community plan to end youth homelessness; CoC policy/program decision maker
Early Childhood Development and Child Care Providers	First 5 Monterey	Participated in the 100 Day Challenge to end youth homelessness; participate in the planning and preparation of the community plan to end youth homelessness
Early Childhood Development and Child Care Providers	First 5 San Benito	Participated in the 100 Day Challenge to end youth homelessness; participate in the planning and preparation of the community plan to end youth homelessness
Institutions of Higher Education	Monterey Peninsula College	Support and participate in YHDP governance; participate in the planning and preparation of the community plan to end youth homelessness
Institutions of Higher Education	California State University, Monterey Bay	Support and participate in YHDP governance; serve as advisors to the YAB; participate in the planning and preparation of the community plan to end youth homelessness; provide outreach in Monterey County
Institutions of Higher Education	Hartnell College	Support and participate in YHDP governance; participate in the planning and preparation of the community plan to end youth homelessness
Local Advocacy, Research, and Philanthropic Organizations	Student Housing Coalition	Advocate for student housing; Support and participate in YHDP governance; participate in the planning and preparation of the community plan to end youth homelessness

Local Advocacy, Research, and Philanthropic Organizations	Community Foundation of Monterey County	Support and participate in YHDP governance; participate in the planning and preparation of the community plan to end youth homelessness; CoC policy/program decision maker
Local Advocacy, Research, and Philanthropic Organizations	California Rural Legal Assistance	Support and participate in YHDP governance; participate in the planning and preparation of the community plan to end youth homelessness; CoC policy/program decision maker
Local Advocacy, Research, and Philanthropic Organizations	Monterey Bay Economic Partnership	Support and participate in YHDP governance; participate in the planning and preparation of the community plan to end youth homelessness; CoC policy/program decision maker; serve as advisor to the YAB
Local Advocacy, Research, and Philanthropic Organizations	Monterey Peninsula Foundation	Support and participate in YHDP governance; participate in the planning and preparation of the community plan to end youth homelessness; CoC policy/program decision maker

Proposed Project List

Below are a list of what Y4A would like to be implemented in all projects:

- Trauma-informed staff, services and program design
- Culturally competent care
- Accessible for youth with disabilities
- LGBTQ+ inclusive
- Peer supports
- Youth choice
- Individualized and client-driven supports
- Positive Youth Development

Youth Navigation (Supportive Services Only - SSO)	
Core Elements of the Project	<p>Youth Navigators will provide direct support to youth in crisis as they navigate and engage with different programs and services. Youth navigation should always incorporate a housing focus, but may also include navigation support for education, employment, health and mental health, mainstream benefits, case management and more as identified by youth.</p> <p>The Youth Navigator should provide a consistent point of contact for youth from unhoused to housed and be supportive and empathetic in relationship building. Navigators may be peers with lived experience or expertise of homelessness, and may also share identities with youth populations of focus (BIPOC, LGBTQ+, foster care involvement, etc.). Navigators should be knowledgeable of local resources - including resources and needs for youth with disabilities - and connected to CARS for housing and service referrals.</p> <p><i>This program type was highly prioritized by Youth for Action members and Youth Systems Meeting members.</i></p>
Target Population	<p>Youth who meet Categories 1,2, and 4 from the HUD definition of homelessness. Populations of focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pregnant and parenting youth ● LGBTQ+ youth ● Youth with disabilities and mental health struggles ● Undocumented and immigrant youth
Supportive Services Description	<p>Supportive services offered may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Housing-focused case management ● Housing and system navigation ● Referrals to supportive services ● Family mediation, reunification and family finding (including identifying and connecting with family of choice) ● Connections and referrals to community networks and partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mainstream benefits and Medicaid/healthcare enrollment

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Employment assistance and job training programs ○ Medical, mental, and behavioral health services ○ Education support, including reconnection / reintegration into school and college prep ○ Legal services ○ Pregnancy and parenting supports ○ Childcare/early childhood education access ○ Life skills training ● ID and documentation support ● Basic needs provision ● Transportation ● Peer supports
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Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)	
Core Elements of the Project	<p>Permanent Supportive Housing offers non-time limited housing & support for youth with a disability. PSH is geared towards the most vulnerable youth in need of long-term, supportive housing. PSH can be site-based or scattered-site. Youth PSH is not restricted to youth experiencing chronic homelessness. PSH uses a Housing First approach with voluntary comprehensive support, and services are tailored to the individualized needs of youth.</p> <p>PSH must be located in accessible spaces that are close to transportation, neighborhood resources (grocery stores, green spaces, community spaces), and designed by and for people with disabilities. Supportive services should include mental health, benefits counseling, assistive technology, and other supportive services identified by youth.</p> <p><i>This program type was highly prioritized by Youth for Action and Youth Systems Meeting members.</i></p>
Target Population	<p>Youth who meet Categories 1,2, and 4 from the HUD definition of homelessness. Populations of focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Youth with disabilities (eligibility requirement) ● Survivors of domestic violence
Supportive Services Description	<p>Supportive services offered may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Housing-focused case management ● Housing and system navigation ● Navigation for disability documentation ● Benefits counseling ● Family mediation, reunification and family finding (including identifying and connecting with family of choice) ● Supportive services to be provided directly or through connections to community networks and partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mainstream benefits and Medicaid/healthcare enrollment

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Employment assistance and job training programs ○ Medical, mental, and behavioral health services ○ Education support, including reconnection / reintegration into school and college prep ○ Legal services ○ Pregnancy and parenting supports ○ Childcare/early childhood education access ○ Assistive technology ● ID and documentation support ● Transportation ● Life skills training ● Peer supports / support groups
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Joint Transitional Housing – Rapid Rehousing (TH/RRH)	
Core Elements of the Project	<p>Joint TH/RRH is one project that offers both Transitional Housing and Rapid Rehousing for up to 24 months. This project will provide short-term, crisis housing for youth and young adults while providing for planned rapid exit to permanent housing through the rapid rehousing model. All youth will be able to access either TH or RRH directly based on their choice, or to enter TH and move into RRH over time.</p> <p>Housing-focused case management and life skills classes such as financial literacy will be provided to connect young adults with supportive services and a rapid pathway to permanent housing.</p> <p><i>This program type was highly prioritized by Youth for Action and Youth Systems Meeting members.</i></p>
Target Population	Youth who meet Categories 1,2, and 4 from the HUD definition of homelessness .
Supportive Services Description	<p>Supportive services offered may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Housing-focused case management ● Housing and system navigation ● Referrals to supportive services ● Family mediation, reunification and family finding (including identifying and connecting with family of choice) ● Supportive services to be provided directly or through connections to community networks and partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mainstream benefits and Medicaid/healthcare enrollment ○ Employment assistance and job training programs ○ Medical, mental, and behavioral health services ○ Education support, including reconnection / reintegration into school and college prep ○ Legal services ○ Pregnancy and parenting supports

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Childcare/early childhood education access ● ID and documentation support ● Basic needs provision ● Transportation ● Classes (budgeting, navigating rentals, gardening, etc.) ● Laundry and shower facilities ● Mail management and storage ● Life skills training ● Peer supports/support groups
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Drop-In Center / Outreach (Supportive Services Only - SSO)

Core Elements of the Project	<p>Outreach & Drop In Centers offer basic needs assistance and connections to other systems and diversion services. Both project types will provide housing navigation services and information on services. Projects are encouraged to operate 24 hours a day.</p> <p>Outreach services should include street outreach as well as outreach to colleges, schools, and other places to meet youth where they are. Outreach should also cover a large geographic area, including rural areas of Monterey and San Benito Counties.</p> <p>Drop-in centers should be accessible both in location and building infrastructure/physical access and function as a safe space for youth to access information and services.</p> <p><i>This program type was highly prioritized by Youth Systems Meeting members.</i></p>
Target Population	<p>Youth who meet Categories 1,2, and 4 from the HUD definition of homelessness. Populations of focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Survivors of sexual trafficking and exploitation ● Youth with histories of justice system involvement ● Neurodivergent youth
Supportive Services Description	<p>Supportive services offered may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Case management ● Housing and system navigation ● Family mediation, reunification and family finding (including identifying and connecting with family of choice) ● Supportive services to be provided directly or through connections/referrals to community networks and partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mainstream benefits and Medicaid/healthcare enrollment ○ Employment assistance and job training programs ○ Medical, mental, and behavioral health services ○ Education support, including reconnection / reintegration into school and college prep

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Legal services ○ Pregnancy and parenting supports ○ Childcare/early childhood education access ● ID and documentation support ● Basic needs provision ● Transportation ● Peer supports <p>For Drop-In Center projects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Classes (budgeting, navigating rentals, gardening, etc.) ● Laundry and shower facilities ● Mail management and storage ● Life skills training
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Rapid Rehousing (RRH)

Core Elements of the Project	<p>RRH provides up to 24 months of tenant-based rental assistance, housing location, and supportive services. Youth have their own leases in a community based apartment, therefore the housing is considered permanent. RRH offers a deep array of optional services for a youth to choose, such as education, employment, health/mental health services, life skills classes, and more based on individualized need.</p> <p>Shared housing (long-term living arrangement between 2 unrelated people who choose to live together as a way of sharing costs and building a community of support) can be offered through the RRH model.</p> <p>RRH programs funded through YHDP will be complemented by landlord incentives (such as a landlord mitigation fund) and other financial supports to help youth with attaining and maintaining housing, such as security deposit, first and last month’s rent, and purchase of furniture.</p> <p><i>This program type was highly prioritized by Youth Systems Meeting members.</i></p>
Target Population	<p>Youth who meet Categories 1,2, and 4 from the HUD definition of homelessness. Populations of focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● College students experiencing homelessness ● Youth with histories of justice system involvement ● Youth who are Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC)
Supportive Services Description	<p>Supportive services offered may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Housing-focused case management ● Housing and system navigation ● Housing search and placement

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Family mediation, reunification and family finding (including identifying and connecting with family of choice) ● Supportive services to be provided directly or through connections to community networks and partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mainstream benefits and Medicaid/healthcare enrollment ○ Employment assistance and job training programs ○ Medical, mental, and behavioral health services ○ Education support, including reconnection / reintegration into school and college prep ○ Legal services ○ Pregnancy and parenting supports ○ Childcare/early childhood education access ● ID and documentation support ● Transportation ● Classes (budgeting, navigating rentals, gardening, etc.) ● Life skills training ● Peer supports/support groups
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Transitional Housing (TH)	
Core Elements of the Project	<p>Transitional Housing provides up to 24 months of housing and services. This project type can be implemented in a congregate or scattered-site model (with a master lease), with a preference for congregate setting expressed by Youth for Action and Youth Systems members.</p> <p>TH is designed to help resolve the immediate crisis a youth is experiencing and build the life skills needed to live safely and independently in their own housing. TH will provide housing-focused case management and an array of services includes education, financial readiness, and housing supports to move into living independently in safe, stable permanent housing. TH will also work with youth from the start to develop a youth-driven transition plan to longer-term housing in the community.</p> <p><i>This program type was prioritized by Youth Systems Meeting members.</i></p>
Target Population	<p>Youth who meet Categories 1,2, and 4 from the HUD definition of homelessness. Populations of focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Youth with histories of justice system involvement ● Youth with histories of child welfare involvement ● Youth who are Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) ● LGBTQ+ youth ● Youth who are survivors of domestic violence
Supportive Services Description	<p>Supportive services offered may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Housing-focused case management ● Housing and system navigation

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Family mediation, reunification and family finding (including identifying and connecting with family of choice) ● Supportive services to be provided directly or through connections to community networks and partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mainstream benefits and Medicaid/healthcare enrollment ○ Employment assistance and job training programs ○ Medical, mental, and behavioral health services ○ Education support, including reconnection / reintegration into school and college prep ○ Legal services ○ Pregnancy and parenting supports ○ Childcare/early childhood education access ● ID and documentation support ● Basic needs provision ● Laundry and shower facilities ● Mail management and storage ● Transportation ● Classes (budgeting, financial readiness, housing search and tenancy, gardening, etc.) ● Life skills training ● Peer supports/support groups
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Host Homes and Supported Kinship Care (Supportive Services Only - SSO)	
Core Elements of the Project	<p>Host Homes and Supported Kinship Care provide a family-based setting that can offer an alternative to shelter. Host Homes are an arrangement between community members who act as volunteers to provide housing in their homes for youth, whereas kinship care is when housing is provided by a known family member as defined by the youth.</p> <p>Host Homes and Supported Kinship Care are envisioned as short- to medium-term crisis housing to provide a safe space where clients are able to resolve their urgent housing crisis with privacy and support. It is important that Host Homes and Kinship Care feel safe and homelike and do not look or feel like group homes.</p> <p>Host Homes will be structured around ensuring the safety and success of youth, which means an extensive training and vetting process for host families and no more than two participants in a Host Home. Matching between hosts and participants will be youth-led.</p> <p>Supports provided for Host Homes and Supported Kinship Care should include incentives and support to help pay for increased housing costs such as food and utilities; mentorship; case management; and family liaisons who can help mitigate issues with family and support reunification when it is safe and appropriate.</p>

Target Population	<p>Youth who meet Categories 1,2, and 4 from the HUD definition of homelessness. Populations of focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Unaccompanied minors ● Survivors of domestic violence and/or sexual trafficking and exploitation ● Undocumented and immigrant youth
Supportive Services Description	<p>Supportive services offered may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Housing-focused case management ● Housing and system navigation ● Family liaisons to support mediation, reunification and family finding (including identifying and connecting with family of choice) ● Host stipends or incentives for increased costs (food, utilities) ● Mentorship opportunities ● Connections and referrals to community networks and partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mainstream benefits and Medicaid/healthcare enrollment ○ Employment assistance and job training programs ○ Medical, mental, and behavioral health services ○ Education support, including reconnection / reintegration into school and college prep ○ Legal services ○ Pregnancy and parenting supports ○ Childcare/early childhood education access ● Basic needs provision ● Transportation ● Classes (budgeting, financial readiness, housing search and tenancy, gardening, etc.) ● Life skills training ● Peer supports/support groups

Non-YHDP-funded projects

Youth Emergency Shelter	
Core Elements of the Project	<p>Youth-specific shelters provide an immediate, safe place for youth to sleep when they do not have a safe place to stay. Youth shelter needs to be low-barrier, accessible and focused on safety and inclusion for all youth, including LGBTQ+ youth, BIPOC youth, youth with disabilities and youth who are undocumented.</p> <p>On-site supports and case management is needed to help provide connections to services based on youth choice such as education, employment, and health resources, as well as to support family reunification and engagement when youth indicate it is safe and</p>

	<p>appropriate. Shelter staff should be diverse and representative of youth being served, and cultural competency should be incorporated throughout shelter operations (ex: culturally diverse food).</p> <p>Confidential shelter and emergency supports need to be available for youth who are fleeing domestic violence, sexual trafficking or exploitation.</p>
Target Population	<p>Youth who meet Category 1 from the HUD definition of homelessness and are residing in unsheltered or unsafe situations. Populations of focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Unaccompanied minors ● Survivors of domestic violence and/or sexual trafficking and exploitation ● Undocumented and immigrant youth ● Young families with children ● LGBTQ+ youth ● BIPOC youth
Supportive Services Description	<p>Supportive services offered may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Housing-focused case management ● Housing and system navigation ● Family mediation, reunification and family finding (including identifying and connecting with family of choice) ● Supportive services to be provided directly or through connections to community networks and partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mainstream benefits and Medicaid/healthcare enrollment ○ Employment assistance and job training programs ○ Medical, mental, and behavioral health services ○ Education support, including reconnection / reintegration into school and college prep ○ Legal services ○ Pregnancy and parenting supports ○ Childcare/early childhood education access ● ID and documentation support ● Basic needs provision ● Laundry and shower facilities ● Mail management and storage ● Transportation ● Classes (budgeting, financial readiness, housing search and tenancy, gardening, etc.) ● Life skills training ● Peer supports/support groups

YHDP Guiding Principles



Lead Me Home Plan Update: 5 Year Plan to Reduce Homelessness in Monterey and San Benito Counties

The [Lead Me Home Plan Update](#) provides a five-year roadmap for the Monterey and San Benito County Continuum of Care (CoC) and its partners to achieve the vision that all people in the region live in decent, safe, and affordable housing from which they access services and supports that stabilize their lives. The Plan has been developed by the Lead Me Home Leadership Council of Monterey and San Benito Counties (the Continuum of Care board) and coordinated by the Coalition of Homeless Services Providers (CHSP), in partnership with the County of Monterey Department of Social Services, County of Monterey Health Department, County of San Benito Health and Human Services Department, and the City of Salinas.

The LMH Plan Update sets out the ambitious Goal of reducing the total population of people experiencing homelessness in Monterey and San Benito Counties by 50% over five years (July 2021 to June 2026). To achieve these lofty Goals, the Plan identifies a set of overarching strategies:

- Increase Participation in Homelessness Solutions by Leaders and Key Stakeholders from Across the Region.
- Improve the Performance of the Homelessness Response System.
- Expand Service-Oriented Responses to Unsheltered Homelessness.

The Plan also established three key principles to be implemented across the homeless response system in order to quickly and effectively respond with a housing solution to experiences of homelessness:

- **Housing-focused:** An effective homelessness response system is built upon the understanding that homelessness is a crisis – the loss of housing – and the solution is to quickly return people to housing. The Goal is to identify an appropriate housing solution for each household experiencing homelessness, and along the way to connect them to other services they might need. This does not mean that every program or service in the system must directly provide housing - but all interventions should in some way help people along the pathway to housing.
- **Strategic and data-informed:** A robust homelessness response system has strong and coordinated leadership that makes strategic decisions informed by data. A priority is placed upon the collection and analysis of data to set Goals, understand whether the system is meeting its objectives, and improve effectiveness. System leadership and funders work in a coordinated manner to ensure that all sources of funding for addressing homelessness are aligned to maximize impact and achieve identified system objectives.
- **Person-centered and equitable:** A fair and equitable homeless system is focused on meeting people’s needs for housing and responding to their self-identified Goals for their future. It respects client choice and preferences about where and how they will be housed. The system is also easily understood and navigated by people experiencing homelessness, with minimal barriers to access. Disparities in access and in outcomes are analyzed and addressed.

Monterey and San Benito Counties' YHDP Coordinated Community Plan (CCP) aligns with strategies and principles established in the LMH Plan Update. Furthermore, the CCP provides a clear and action-oriented roadmap for achieving the vision of significantly reducing homelessness across Monterey and San Benito Counties' in part through a focused, coordinated effort to prevent and end youth homelessness.



U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) Youth Framework

The 2012 Amendment to Opening Doors, which includes the [Federal Framework to End Youth Homelessness](#), was developed to specifically address what strategies should be implemented to improve the educational outcomes for children and youth, and the steps that need to be taken to advance the Goal of ending youth homelessness.

The framework focuses on two complementary strategies:

Data Strategy

Getting better data on the numbers and characteristics of youth experiencing homelessness, and a capacity strategy, to strengthen and coordinate the capacity of federal, state, and local systems to act effectively and efficiently toward ending youth homelessness.

The YHDP, CCP, and overall youth homelessness efforts in Monterey and San Benito Counties align with the USICH data strategy:

- Participation of key youth system stakeholders in the 2022 Point-in-Time (PIT) Count, which includes a street count of unaccompanied children and young adults and County Office of Education (COE) street count of K-12 students and their families.
- Review and coordination of local quantitative data from HMIS, PIT, and other data sources (provider data, education data, census data) and qualitative data from youth system stakeholders and youth with lived experience to better understand the prevalence, characteristics, and needs of youth experiencing homelessness
- Planning for further investment and coordination around youth data collection through YHDP

Capacity Strategy

Strengthening and coordinating the capacity of local systems to act effectively and efficiently toward ending youth homelessness.

The YHDP, CCP, and overall youth homelessness efforts in Monterey and San Benito Counties align with the USICH capacity strategy:

- Cross-provider and cross-system coordination of the local response to youth homelessness through regular (monthly or bi-monthly) Youth Systems Meetings
- Investment of new resources including YHDP and other state and federal funding in the expansion of youth-specific housing and service delivery models
- Clear vision, Goals, and action plan established in this CCP and a commitment by local providers and systems to implement the Plan



USICH Four Core Outcomes

The [Federal Framework to End Youth Homelessness](#) also establishes four core outcomes for youth experiencing homelessness:

- **Stable housing**, which includes a safe and reliable place to call home;
- Permanent connections, which include ongoing attachments to families, communities, schools, and other positive social networks;
- **Education/employment**, which includes high performance in and completion of educational and training activities, especially for younger youth, and starting and maintaining adequate and stable employment, particularly for older youth; and
- **Social-emotional well-being**, which includes the development of key competencies, attitudes, and behaviors that equip a young person to succeed across multiple domains of daily life, including school, work, relationships, and community.

These four core outcomes were incorporated throughout the YHDP and CCP processes:

- **Statement of Need:** The four core outcomes provided the framework for brainstorming with youth systems leaders and youth with lived experience around needs to be addressed through YHDP and the youth homeless response system.
- **Goals and Objectives:** Youth for Action established Goals and objectives informed by the four core outcomes, including:
 - **Housing Goal:** The goal for our community is for everyone to have housing. For housing to be supportive of our population, attuned to clients' needs. This means having accessible housing that is comfortable and where youth can thrive—working with the community to break down biases against unhoused folks to better educate landlords and housing developers. The supports attached to housing, if sought out, should be trauma-informed.
 - **Education Goal:** We envision a community where education isn't a privilege but a right for youth with lived experience in homelessness. Our community should facilitate professional development by coordination with schools, higher education, and vocational training programs that help those unsheltered. We would like this care to be incorporated in programs and shelters.
 - **Social-emotional well-being Goal:** We envision a community where youth have access to more available physical, mental, and emotional supports which are proactive instead of reactive. We would like staff to be supportive rather than paternal, build systems of support, and provide person-centered and trauma-informed services.
 - **Permanent connections objective:** Emphasize the development of healthy and permanent connections with friends, peers, supportive family / family of choice, and other caring adults.
- **Project Design:** Descriptions of how the four core outcomes will be addressed are incorporated into the project design for each YHDP proposed project.
- **Implementation and Evaluation:** The four core outcomes will help inform data collection, evaluation and continuous quality improvement for YHDP-funded projects.



Populations of Focus

USICH, in partnership with its member agencies, has identified several special populations of youth experiencing homelessness that are particularly vulnerable in how they experience homelessness, as well as their pathways in and out of homelessness, in ways that are distinct from the general population of youth. These populations of focus include:

- Youth who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (LGBTQ);
- Youth who are gender-non-conforming; minors (under the age of 18);
- Youth involved with juvenile justice and child welfare systems; and
- Victims of sexual trafficking and exploitation.

Youth for Action identified additional populations of focus that need different identification and engagement strategies, infrastructure considerations, and housing and service-delivery approaches:

- Youth who are Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC);
- Immigrant and undocumented youth;
- Youth with disabilities;
- Youth who are survivors of domestic violence; and
- High school and college students experiencing homelessness.

This Plan addresses the prevalence, characteristics and needs for each of the above populations of focus in the **Statement of Need (page 13-23)**. Strategies to address the distinct needs of populations of focus were discussed and are incorporated into the **YHDP Action Plan (page 24 -57)**. Populations of focus were also identified for each **new proposed YHDP Project (page 68 -76)**.



Equity

National research has found significant racial and ethnic disparities in rates of homelessness.²¹ Specifically, Black, Indigenous, Hispanic (non-white), and LGBTQ youth experience homelessness at disproportionately higher rates. In Monterey and San Benito Counties, BIPOC and LGBTQ+ youth were similarly identified as a population of focus among Youth for Action members and Youth Systems leaders alike.

The 2019 Monterey County PIT Count found significant differences between the racial and ethnic composition of the total county population compared to the population of people experiencing homelessness. Most notably, African Americans were 25% of the people counted but only 3% of the general population. Conversely, Latinx people are 36% of the homeless population but 59% of the general population. In their 2019 report on Racial Disparities in Homelessness submitted as part of the CoC funding application, the Coalition for Homeless Service Providers (CHSP) noted that the per capita population of African Americans in the PIT Census was 12.1 times greater than the per capita of Whites.²²

The CoC has made a commitment to continually analyze all homelessness response system data with an equity lens and develop and implement strategies to ensure both equitable access to the system as well as equitable results.

²¹ Fusaro, V.A., Levy, H.G., Shaefer, H.L. (2018). Racial and Ethnic Disparities in the Lifetime Prevalence of Homelessness in the United States. *Demography* 55(6):1-10. 2018 Sep 21. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13524-018-0717-0>

²² Information from Lead Me Home Plan Update: 5 Year Plan to Reduce Homelessness in Monterey and San Benito Counties, The Coalition of Homeless Service Providers (CHSP), July 2021.

For youth experiencing homelessness, the YHDP planning process has been and will continue to be driven by equity and authentic youth collaboration as the key frameworks and guiding principles for all work:

- Youth for Action and Youth Systems leaders attended a series of trainings with True Colors United (TCU) that covered a range of topics designed to support equity and youth leadership in decision-making, including sustaining an equitable system; social identified and systems of oppression; and understanding power and power sharing
- Utilized existing HMIS data to analyze prevalence of homelessness among LGBTQ+ youth, BIPOC youth, and undocumented and immigrant youth
- Established an equity Goal to guide ongoing work (with detailed objectives and action step): We will understand, deconstruct and eliminate systems of oppression in our community. We will build new systems to equitably support our youth in this community.
- Incorporated equity considerations into objectives and action steps across other Goal areas, including education, employment, housing, and systems change.
- Equity training and outcomes will be incorporated throughout YHDP project implementation, tracking of outcomes, and continuous quality improvement discussions.



Positive Youth Development

The [Interagency Working Group on Youth Programs](#), a collaboration of 22 federal departments and agencies that support youth, has created the following definition of Positive Youth Development (PYD):

PYD is an intentional, prosocial approach that engages youth within their communities, schools, organizations, peer groups, and families in a manner that is productive and constructive; recognizes, utilizes, and enhances young people’s strengths; and promotes positive outcomes for young people by providing opportunities, fostering positive relationships, and furnishing the support needed to build on their leadership strengths.²³

The key principles of PYD have been central to guiding authentic youth collaboration before and during the YHDP process.

Strategies: The CCP highlights numerous objectives and action steps developed by Youth for Action and through Youth Systems Meetings to integrate PYD into the homeless response system:

- Embed youth leadership and authentically share power in decision-making at all levels (community, CoC, programs, and across systems) - *Authentic Youth Collaboration Goal, Objective 1*
- Create and support youth in owning safe spaces as participants, leaders, and creators that are safe and accessible across intersectional identities (i.e. e; race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, language, dialect, youth with disabilities, etc.). – *Authentic Youth Collaboration Goal, Objective 2*
- Increase recruitment and develop of Youth for Action and other youth-led, youth-focused efforts - *Authentic Youth Collaboration Goal, Objective 3*
- Incorporate the [41 Developmental Assessment](#) for Positive Youth Development into program design, structure, and policies - *Authentic Youth Collaboration Goal, Objective 4, Action Step 4*
- Build a culture of trust and accountability to the key principles of authentic youth collaboration among older adult partners where youth input is authentically valued - *Authentic Youth Collaboration Goal, Objective 5*
- Hire YAB members at CoC, YHDP and other youth-serving programs to lead the work of ending youth homelessness - *Employment Goal, Objective 1, Action Step 1*
- Ensure that outreach workers are trained in trauma-informed care and Positive Youth Development. Outreach should be focused on building trust and youth choice by listening to houseless youth and responding to their Goals and needs as defined by them - *Identification and Outreach Goal, Objective 3, Action Step 7*
- Provide all staff who may have first engagement with youth with trainings on trauma-informed care, Positive Youth Development, multicultural competency, and mental health training - *Identification and Outreach Goal, Objective 5, Action Step 1*

YHDP Projects: All YHDP-funded projects will need to attend a training on PYD and incorporate the key elements of PYD into their project design.

²³ Youth.gov. “Positive Youth Development,” <https://youth.gov/youth-topics/positive-youth-development>



Trauma-Informed Care

Trauma-informed care (TIC) is a strengths-based service delivery approach “that is grounded in an understanding of and responsiveness to the impact of trauma, that emphasizes physical, psychological, and emotional safety for both providers and survivors, and that creates opportunities for survivors to rebuild a sense of control and empowerment”.²⁴

The impact of trauma as both a cause and consequence of homelessness emerged as a clear theme during discussions of youth experiences and needs. Youth with lived experience spoke to the trauma of homelessness, but also traumatic experiences in schools, in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems, in family relationships, and in spaces where their identities and expertise were not respected. Trauma-informed care was identified as a need in the YHDP process as well as the design, delivery, and implementation of new housing and services through YHDP.

Strategies: Objectives and action steps developed by Youth for Action and through Youth Systems Meetings to integrate TIC into the homeless response system include:

- Provide trauma-informed training for all organizations - *Authentic Youth Collaboration Goal, Objective 2, Action Step 2*
- Work with organization to put trauma-informed trainings into action to develop trauma-informed policies, procedures, programs, and to restructure physical spaces with trauma-informed principles in mind - *Authentic Youth Collaboration Goal, Objective 2, Action Step 3*
- Work with older adult partners to understand histories of adultism and repair harm caused by past experiences and structures that did not value youth collaboration, engagement, and voice - *Authentic Youth Collaboration Goal, Objective 4*
- Move to a more supportive, trauma-informed and person-centered approach to addressing attendance and truancy issues for unhoused youth – *Education Goal, Objective 2, Action Step 3*
- Develop trauma-informed pathways for school reintegration for youth who have been disconnected from school for a while, including victims of sexual trafficking and exploitation and young people who have been in the juvenile justice system - *Education Goal, Objective 3, Action Step 3*
- Ensure that outreach workers are trained in trauma-informed care and Positive Youth Development. Outreach should be focused on building trust and youth choice by listening to houseless youth and responding to their Goals and needs as defined by them - *Identification and Outreach Goal, Objective 3, Action Step 7*
- Improve the experience of first engaging with the homeless response system by making initial engagement conversations trauma-informed, strength-based, and compassionate - *Identification and Outreach Goal, Objective 5*
- Develop a list of all youth and LGBTQ+ friendly, trauma-informed, and affordable health and mental health resources in Monterey and San Benito Counties - *Social-Emotional Well-Being and Health Goal, Objective 1, Action Step 3*
- Incorporate trauma-informed approaches and practices for youth throughout the homeless response system and partner systems such as schools, child welfare, and juvenile justice - *Social-Emotional Well-Being and Health Goal, Objective 2*

²⁴ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). *Treatment Improvement Protocol: Trauma Informed Care in Behavioral Health Services*: <http://store.samhsa.gov/product/TIP-57-Trauma-Informed-Care-in-Behavioral-Health-Services/SMA14-4816>

YHDP Projects: All YHDP-funded projects will need to attend a training on TIC and incorporate the key elements of TIC into their project design, including staff training, programming, and physical infrastructure/design of the project (if applicable).



Family Engagement

Family engagement, when it is safe and appropriate, is a leading diversion and intervention strategy for youth. Youth with lived experience and youth systems leaders identified familial connections as important protective factors to help prevent or divert youth from homelessness. Even in cases where homelessness cannot be prevented, family reunification and strengthening were identified as an important opportunities for youth to heal, overcome trauma, and improve their social and emotional well-being through healthy relationships with people who care about them. Youth leaders also stressed the importance of stabilizing and strengthening young families so that they have the resources and supports to avoid or rapidly exit experiences of homelessness.

Strategies: Youth for Action and Youth Systems Meeting members identified key strategies to strengthen, stabilize, or reunify families:

- Explore host homes and supported kinship care as potential models to divert youth or respond to their immediate housing crisis, particularly for unaccompanied minors - *Housing Goal, Objective 2, Action Step 7*
- Increase and expand family reunification and engagement support, particularly for minors, youth who have been victims of sexual trafficking and exploitation, and youth who have been involved with the child welfare or juvenile justice systems - *Social-Emotional Well-Being and Health Goal, Objective 3, Action Step 5*
- Expand resources to address the health and wellness needs of pregnant and parenting youth and their children - *Social-Emotional Well-Being and Health Goal, Objective 5*
- Increase education and awareness among youth, families, and youth-serving providers regarding what supportive services exist for homeless and unstably housed youth and where/how to access them – *Support Goal, Objective 2*

YHDP Projects: Supported kinship care was identified as an eligible project type for YHDP funding. All YHDP-funded projects are encouraged to offer family strengthening and reunification services as part of their supportive services for youth (in cases where it is safe and appropriate and with family as defined by youth themselves).



Housing First

The Housing First approach focuses on quickly connecting people experiencing a housing crisis to permanent housing without preconditions and barriers to entry while also providing necessary supports to help maintain housing and prevent a return to homelessness.²⁵ Discussions with Youth for Action and youth systems leaders emphasized that a commitment to Housing First and low-barrier housing and services for youth is non-negotiable. Youth in Monterey and San Benito Counties need to be able to access housing with as few barriers as possible and have access to an array of supportive services in every program.

²⁵ U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, (HUD). Using a Housing First Philosophy When Serving Youth, <https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/using-a-housing-first-philosophy-when-serving-youth.pdf>

Strategies: The CCP highlights numerous objectives and action steps developed by Youth for Action and through Youth Systems Meetings to offer youth immediate access to safe, secure, and stable housing without preconditions:

- Meet with local colleges to increase transparency in the college housing process, including around cost, rules, and rent increases - *Education Goal, Objective 1, Action Step 1*
- Ensure youth housing and options align with the principles of Housing First and are low-barrier - *Housing Goal, Objective 1*
- Invest in safe, stable, permanent and affordable housing options specifically designed to serve youth - *Housing Goal, Objective 3*
- Lower barriers to housing and shelter, including less stressful rules in shelters - *Social-Emotional Well-Being and Health Goal, Objective 2*
- Ensure that shelter and housing programs are able to meet the needs of individuals with different disabilities and provide resources that are accessible across disabilities - *Social-Emotional Well-Being and Health Goal, Objective 4, Action Step 6*

YHDP Projects: All YHDP-funded projects need to operate in alignment with Housing First.



Unsheltered Homelessness

The 2019 Point-in-Time Count found that 91% of unaccompanied youth under the age of 25 experiencing homelessness in Monterey and San Benito Counties were unsheltered.²⁶ Youth for Action and youth systems leaders identified an urgent need to ramp up outreach and identification efforts and build out a more robust crisis response system to ensure that no youth experiences unsheltered homelessness in Monterey or San Benito Counties in the future.

Furthermore, there have been recent efforts to address the immediate crisis of those who are experiencing unsheltered homelessness through increased outreach and support. As previously mentioned, the City of Salinas, in partnership with key stakeholders, was awarded \$4.08 million through the Encampment Resolution Fund to restore an encampment bordering a stream in the agricultural center of its city. Outreach workers have identified youth living within this encampment that will likely benefit from the increased funding.

Strategies: A number of strategies in the CCP focus on building up local capacity to address unsheltered youth homelessness in particular:

- Expand the crisis response system for youth to include immediately available and safe housing, shelter, and services for all youth in need - *Housing Goal, Objective 2*
- Expand cross-systems partnerships to increase local capacity to identify youth and young adults at-risk of and experiencing homelessness, conduct outreach, and engage them in services – *Identification and Outreach Goal, Objective 1*

²⁶ Lead Me Home Plan Update: 5 Year Plan to Reduce Homelessness in Monterey and San Benito Counties, The Coalition of Homeless Service Providers (CHSP), July 2021.

- Authentically engage persons with lived experiences of residing in encampments in developing a person-centered approach to facilitating connections to shelter, housing and services - *Identification and Outreach Goal, Objective 2, Action Step 9*

YHDP Projects: All YHDP-funded projects will serve youth who meet HUD’s Category 1 definition of homelessness, which includes people who are sleeping in unsheltered situations.



Youth Choice

Allowing youth to exercise self-determination is a youth centered approach that values youths’ expressed needs, self-awareness, and community knowledge. This youth centered approach emphasizes youth choice in terms of the kind of housing youth need and the extent and nature of supports and services they access and presents alternative options for youth who avoid programs with barriers like sobriety or abstinence. Youth for Action members emphasized throughout the YHDP process that it is important for providers to listen to and trust youth in what they want and need. Also, services and housing should also always be provided from a framework of support rather than paternalism.

Strategies: Youth for Action and Youth Systems Meetings developed a number of new strategies to ensure that youth are provided with choice on which providers and interventions to engage with:

- Incorporate youth choice into case management and program decisions, rather than being prescriptive about what youth need - *Authentic Youth Collaboration Goal, Objective 5, Action Step 2*
- Empower youth to know their educational rights and advocate for themselves in educational settings - *Education Goal, Objective 4*
- Ask each youth what they need right now and provide immediate partner referrals - *Identification and Outreach Goal, Objective 5, Action Step 3*
- Share information and resources to help unhoused youth know their rights in the health system, including control over reproductive health, rights to contraception, ability to choose a health care provider, and access to timely doctor’s appointments - *Social-Emotional Well-Being and Health Goal, Objective 1, Action Step 11*
- Listen to youth about what they need and use youth choice to drive safe and appropriate prevention and diversion strategies for every person, such as family reunification, family finding, and conflict mediation – *Support Goal, Objective 4, Action Step 7*

YHDP Projects: All YHDP-funded projects need to incorporate youth choice as a policy for developing youth housing plans, establishing housing and service goals, choosing housing location and type, and accessing supportive services based on self-identified need.



Individualized and Client-Driven Support

Monterey and San Benito Counties are committed to developing housing and services for youth that are driven by clients and meet their individualized needs. Discussions for the YHDP needs assessment focused heavily around identifying the distinct needs of populations of focus and developing housing and service strategies to respond to those specific needs.

Strategies: Objectives and action steps developed by Youth for Action and through Youth Systems Meetings to respond to the different needs for service type, intensity, and length of supports for every youth include:

- Collaborate with students with lived experience, including YAB members, to reimagine campus housing to meet the needs of all students - *Education Goal, Objective 1, Action Step 2*
- Address the educational needs of youth populations of focus - *Education Goal, Objective 3*
- Provide specific resources and peer support options in TH and TH-RRH for LGBTQ+ youth, BIPOC youth, and youth with histories of justice system or child welfare involvement - *Housing Goal, Objective 3, Action Step 3*
- Ensure that outreach and identification efforts are accessible to youth by meeting youth where they are, addressing their urgent needs, and reach youth across populations of focus - *Identification and Outreach Goal, Objective 3*
- Provide training and secure a commitment from youth-serving health providers to provide culturally appropriate and competent care for LGBTQ+, BIPOC, and immigrant youth – *Social-Emotional Well-Being and Health Goal, Objective 1, Action Step 2*
- Provide youth with individualized support and case management to build their social network and identify their personal support system – *Social-Emotional Well-Being and Health Goal, Objective 3, Action Step 2*
- Expand access to supportive services and wraparound supports for youth at every stage of the housing process and that are specialized for populations on focus – *Support Goal, Objective 1*
- Ensure that providers and staff across systems are ready to serve youth as their full selves - with compassion, acceptance and flexibility – *System Change Goal, Objective 1*

YHDP Projects: All YHDP-funded projects will provide an array of individualized and client-driven supports, which may include education, employment, health, case management, and other supportive service options.



Social and Community Integration

The goal of all YHDP and youth homelessness efforts in Monterey and San Benito Counties goes beyond providing housing. It is also to ensure that youth are able to successfully transition into adulthood and engage in meaningful activities as part of their local community. Social and community integration has been an important topic throughout the YHDP process. Youth need to be supported in feeling safe and comfortable at school and in work, with peers and with trusted adults, and as program participants as well as leaders and decision-makers. Youth for Action members also stressed that the community as a whole needs to be safe and accessible for youth with disabilities.

Strategies: The CCP highlights numerous objectives and action steps developed by Youth for Action and through Youth Systems Meetings to offer meaningful opportunities for participation in community activities:

- Establish at least two seats for youth and young adults with lived experiences of homelessness on the CoC Board and at least one seat on all program boards that serve youth and young adults experiencing homelessness - *Authentic Youth Collaboration Goal, Objective 1, Action Step 1*
- Ensure that decision making bodies are representative of the community and that historically marginalized populations are represented in decision making processes at the program, CoC, and systems levels, including on the YAB (Youth for Action) and Community Action Board - *Equity, Objective 3, Action Step 1*

- Develop youth homelessness prevention program focused on building relationships and community connections to help prevent isolation, maintain housing, and strengthen social and emotional health – *Social-Emotional Well-Being and Health Goal, Objective 3, Action Step 1*
- Design youth mentorship programs that provide connections to other youth or trusted adults to help with building life skills, providing one-on-one support, and healthy relationship development - *Social-Emotional Well-Being and Health Goal, Objective 3, Action Step 3*
- Incorporate more youth-friendly and accessible green spaces and community spaces through programs and the community as a whole - *Social-Emotional Well-Being and Health Goal, Objective 6*
- Create inclusive, safe, and intersectionally equitable spaces for youth throughout the community – *Support Goal, Objective 3*
- Work with school counselors and McKinney-Vento liaisons to help youth connect with afterschool and extracurricular activities (i.e. clubs, sports, enriching activities). Provide transportation and flexible funding to support participation in activities as needed -*Social-Emotional Well-Being and Health Goal, Objective 3, Action Step 4*
- Make it easier for college students to thrive and complete their education by ensuring that their housing is affordable and secure and that their basic needs are met - *Education Goal, Objective 1*
- Improve access to education and educational supports for youth who are unhoused and at risk of homelessness - *Education Goal, Objective 2*
- Support reintegration into school for disconnected youth and systems-engaged youth - *Education Goal, Objective 5, Action Step 2*
- Work with YAB members to create a flow and process for youth to move from the YAB into community-based employment opportunities - *Employment Goal, Objective 1, Action Step 2*
- Improve youth connections to existing employment resources, such as WIOA, Workforce Development Board (WDB), and the America’s Job Center - *Employment Goal, Objective 2*
- Expand and increase youth employment opportunities through YHDP and other flexible funding sources - *Employment Goal, Objective 3*
- Support and compensate Youth for Action members to engage in the wider community and participate in identification and outreach efforts - *Identification and Outreach Goal, Objective 2, Action Step 2*
- Conduct outreach outside of the "traditional setting", such as shopping centers, skate parks, community centers, churches, parks, coffee shops, food pantries, and libraries - *Identification and Outreach Goal, Objective 4, Action Step 2*
- Integrate support persons who can connect youth to prevention and diversion services into places where youth spend their time, such as schools, community centers, and health clinics – *Support Goal, Objective 4, Action Step 8*



Coordinated Entry

The Coordinated Assessment and Referral System (CARS), also known as Coordinated Entry System (CES), is a consistent, community wide process to match people experiencing homelessness to community resources that are the best fit for their situation. Monterey and San Benito Counties’ CoC currently utilizes an “any door” system of access, with opportunities for young people ages 16 to 24 to connect with CARS through site-based programs and street outreach. CARS partners connect participants who are under the age of 18 and unaccompanied to Community Human Services Safe Place, which operates two crisis resolution homes that offer unaccompanied minors a temporary place to stay while working towards family reunification or alternate living arrangements.

For young adults who are 18 or older, a trained assessor at the CARS partner program can facilitate a standardized assessment that helps to understand the participant's needs and vulnerabilities. Trained assessors can include staff or designated volunteers from city or county departments, grassroots programs, medical or hospital facilities, libraries, faith communities, and food pantries. The CoC currently uses the Transition Age Youth Vulnerability Index – Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (TAY-VI-SPDAT) with participants who are 18 to 24, unaccompanied, and not currently pregnant or parenting. Once assessed, young adults can be added to the Master List, which is used by CHSP to identify prioritized participants for housing units or resources that become available. The Master List includes young people who have been assessed via the TAY-VI-SPDAT, as well as adults assessed via the VI-SPDAT and families assessed via the Family-VI-SPDAT. Current factors that inform the ordering of the Master list include: VI-SPDAT score, length of time homeless, severity of need, and local population priorities.

Strategies: Based on the findings from a needs assessment conducted in July 2021 by Focus Strategies, Monterey and San Benito Counties has established a Systems Change Goal (with detailed objectives and action steps) to refine the CARS to better address the needs of youth and young adults. Additional strategies identified during Youth Systems Meetings include:

- Create a new Coordinated Entry assessment tool to help understand the whole person, including culture, pronouns, and other information to help understand and meet the needs of each individual youth experiencing homelessness presenting for services – *Equity Goal, Objective 2, Action Step 6*
- Embed people in Coordinated Entry to help youth navigate the system - *Identification and Outreach Goal, Objective 3, Action Step 8*
- Ensure prevention and diversion services are embedded and available through Coordinated Entry - *Support Goal, Objective 4, Action Step 11*
- Recruit and hire more staff to focus on connections to wraparound supportive services, including Youth Coordinated Entry Specialists - *Support Goal, Objective 5, Action Step 1*

YHDP Projects: Monterey and San Benito Counties plans to utilize YHDP funding to support the refinement of the CARS to better address the needs of youth and young adults. Additionally, all YHDP-funded projects will be required to participate in Coordinated Entry.

[Signature Pages attached here]