

Polk County Plan to End Youth Homelessness
Update to Stakeholders and Polk County Continuum of Care Board
July, 2017

Summary:

Through the work of the first stakeholders meeting on April 24, four work groups were developed to explore strengths and opportunities for growth in the current system, best practices, and develop recommendations for the final community plan. The following describes the work of these groups through June, 2017.

Highlights:

Youth Advisory Board: (June 14th, 17 attendees)

- Youth were asked what a program would look like if they designed it. Responses: staff are trustworthy, offer support, encouragement, understanding, and follow through. Would also provide life skills classes and mentors. Youth were concerned that staff and “helpers” do not understand youth perspective.
- Youth formed groups and brainstormed names for the homeless plan and the YAB, then voted on their top three choices. Will formally adopt names next meeting.
- Next meeting: Wednesday, July 12, 2017

Prevention: (June 28, 8 attendees)

- Assessed case study of a youth who became homeless; identified direct and indirect causes of homelessness in case and current prevention resources available, discussed specific points and opportunities for intervention.
- Reviewed [Juvenile Law Center](#) recommendations and began to create prevention goals-particularly for youth who have been involved in child welfare and juvenile justice systems- for the plan.
- Next meeting: Wednesday, June 28

Housing & Services: (June 14, 9 attendees)

- Reviewed shelter options and housing programs in Polk Co. that specifically serve youth.
- Identified gaps and opportunities to enhance services and began to develop goals for the homeless plan.
- Group would like more data on specific subpopulations and where youth currently access services, more discussion about youth-specific services and options
- Next meeting: Tuesday, July 18

Communications: (June 27, 6 attendees)

- Reviewed purpose and use of youth systems map and began to brainstorm layout and content
- A working draft systems map will be presented at the next meeting
- Next meeting: Monday, July 31

Data & Assessment: (June 23, 6 attendees)

- Reviewed item #1 in [Interagency Council on Homelessness document](#)
- Discussed barriers and gaps in services and housing options for highly vulnerable/difficult to serve youth
- Identified a few goals for the plan
- Group requested several data points including # of families receiving FIP and vulnerability scores for ages 16-24 (YPII will gather and report back)
- Next meeting: Thursday, July 20

Next steps:

Each group will work towards solidifying goals for the final plan and begin to develop strategies to reach goals.

The next large group stakeholders meeting is scheduled for Monday, July 24, 12:00-1:30 at IHYC Youth Opportunity Center, 612 Locust. We will review findings from first few months of research and community input, discuss goals for the final plan and review draft of systems map. All are invited to attend.

Respectfully Submitted by: Andrea Dencklau, Youth Policy Institute of Iowa on 7/5/17