

## USICH BRIEFING PAPER

### PREFACE:

Five federal workgroups were convened to initiate development of the federal plan. At their first meeting, each workgroup was presented with an overview of the literature. These were prepared and presented by Carol Wilkins and Janice Elliott, under contract with USICH.

## Homelessness among Youth

### *Scope of the Problem*

---

1. Reliable and consistent estimates of the scope of youth homelessness are lacking. Estimates vary depending on definitions of homelessness (including youth who are staying in unstable, temporary arrangements or couch-surfing; homeless unaccompanied or as members of homeless families) and age range (12-18, 12-21, or 12-24).<sup>1</sup> Little research has examined patterns of youth homelessness and factors associated with extended or repeated episodes of homelessness

#### **Estimates of youth experiencing homelessness:**

- Estimates are that 8% of youth between ages 13 and 21 experience homelessness over the course of a given year.<sup>2</sup>
- Researchers estimate that about 5% to 7.7% of youth—about 1 million to 1.6 million youth per year—experience homelessness.<sup>3</sup>
- Other sources suggest that approximately 110,000 youth are living on the streets and other public places, cars, abandoned buildings: 55,000 homeless youth age 18-24 living long-term on streets or in public places plus 55,000 young teenagers age 12-17 living on the streets.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families. (2007). *Promising Strategies to End Youth Homelessness: Report to Congress*. Washington, DC.

<sup>2</sup> Ringwalt, C., Greene, J., Robertson, M., & McPheeters, M. (1998). The prevalence of homelessness among adolescents in the United States. *American Journal of Public Health, 88*, 1325-1329.

<sup>3</sup> National Alliance to End Homelessness. (2006, May). *Fundamental Issues to Prevent and End Youth Homelessness. Youth Homelessness Series, Brief No. 1.*

<sup>4</sup> National Alliance to End Homelessness, et al. (2009, February 10). *Advocates sign-on letter to President Barack Obama urging him “to support federal policies to confront the social crisis of youth homelessness in America.* Retrieved April 19, 2010 at <http://www.endhomelessness.org/content/article/detail/2202>.

- US Department of Education reports that in 2008-2009 52,950 unaccompanied homeless youth were served by local education agencies (school districts) that receive McKinney-Vento subgrants. This is about 69% more than the number of unaccompanied youth reported in 2006-2007. About two-thirds of all homeless children identified by schools are doubled up and staying with family or friends; 23% are in shelters, 4% unsheltered, and 6% staying in hotels or motels. (Information about primary nighttime residence is not reported separately for unaccompanied youth.)<sup>5</sup>
- Unaccompanied youth were 2.2% of the total number of sheltered homeless individuals in 2009 (22,631 out of 1,034,659 total) down from a high of 4.7% in 2006.<sup>6</sup> Children and youth under the age 18 comprised 22% of the all person in shelters and transitional housing in 2009 (over 344,000 young persons sheltered)
  - 50% of sheltered homeless children (172,000) are under age 6;
  - Families tend to stay in shelters for longer periods of time than other shelter users
  - Increases in the numbers of people seeking family shelter increases the risk of unaccompanied youth homelessness. Shelter policies regarding adolescent children can lead to family separation as older and adolescent males are frequently required to be housed in male, adult shelters.

**2. Youth become homeless as a result of:**

- Leaving (including running away) home often, but not always, as a result of a severe family conflict which may include abuse
- Being locked out or abandoned by parents or guardians
- Leaving foster or institutional care (including running away, aging out or being discharged)
- Some youth are members of families experiencing homelessness or severe residential instability.

**3. Research on demographics provides an inconsistent profile<sup>7</sup>:**

- Some studies suggest that racial and ethnic minority youth, gay, lesbian, bi-sexual and transgendered and questioning (LGBTQ) are over-represented
- Others suggest no significant differences between homeless youth and the larger population

**4. Relationship between homelessness and education:**

- Many youth who become homeless have a history of academic difficulties including suspensions and expulsion<sup>8</sup>
- If the youth has not dropped out prior to becoming homeless, the experience of homelessness frequently disrupts schooling<sup>9</sup>

---

<sup>5</sup> National Center for Homeless Education. (2010, April). Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program: Analysis of Data From the SY2008-09 Federally Required State Data Collection for the McKinney-Vento Education Assistance Improvements Act of 2001 and Comparison of the SY2006-07, SY2007-08, and 2008-09 Data Collections.

<sup>6</sup> U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Community Planning and Development. (2009, July). *The 2008 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress (AHAR)*. Washington, DC.; and U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Office of Community Planning and Development. (2010). 2009 Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR), forthcoming.

<sup>7</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2007). *Promising Strategies*.

<sup>8</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2007). *Promising Strategies*.

<sup>9</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2007). *Promising Strategies*.

- A recent study of 18-21 year-old homeless youth found that, at the point of program intake, two-thirds had not obtained a high school diploma or a GED certificate.<sup>10</sup>
- “Young people who are able to stay in the same community or in the same schools as before they became homeless have a better chance of avoiding the dangerous consequences for youth who do not have familiar support.”<sup>11</sup>

**5. Homeless youth and trauma:<sup>12</sup>**

- Youth who become homeless are more likely to have experienced some of multiple forms of trauma including sexual abuse, neglect, early parental separation, and/or out-of-home placement
- Homeless youth are highly vulnerable to coercion and trauma and at risk of suffering from anxiety disorders and PTSD
- Additionally, those that have been abused or neglected are at increased risk of abusing or neglecting their own children. The likelihood of personality disorders, depression, anxiety, and substance abuse is also higher among those who have been abused and neglected. Research also shows that abuse and neglect affects a youth’s behavior and ability to learn.

**6. Homeless youth and foster care<sup>13</sup>**

- Each year approximately 29,000 youth ages 18 and older transition from foster care to legal emancipation or ‘age out’ of the system<sup>14</sup>
- 25% of former foster youth had been homeless within 2.5 to 4 years after exiting foster care
- “National data for 1998 show that 54% of placements into foster care involved neglect; 23% involved physical abuse; and 12% experienced sexual abuse”.<sup>15</sup>

**7. Homeless youth engage in risky subsistence strategies**

- This includes: selling drugs, panhandling, stealing, and sex work as a means of getting money and food<sup>16</sup> and that they have high rates of prior arrests and convictions. For instance, in a Chicago study, 58.2% of youth reported engaging in stealing, 51.5% selling or trading drugs, 24.2% selling or trading sex (30.9% of female respondents), and 46.5% reported one or more prior arrests, 52.7% of which resulted in a conviction.<sup>17</sup>
- GLBTQ: one out of five homeless youth self-identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or questioning
- **Substance abuse<sup>18</sup>**
  - Homeless adolescents have higher rates of substance use disorders than housed youth (according to research); rates are estimated at 70-85%

---

<sup>10</sup> Barber, C., Fonagy, P, Fultz, J., Simulinas, M., & Yates, M. (2005). Homeless near a thousand homes: Outcomes of homeless youth in a crisis shelter. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 75, 347-355.

<sup>11</sup> National Alliance to End Homelessness. (2006, May). *Fundamental Issues*.

<sup>12</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2007). *Promising Strategies*.

<sup>13</sup> National Alliance to End Homelessness. (2006, May). *Fundamental Issues*.

<sup>14</sup> National Alliance to End Homelessness. (2010, January). *Youth Homelessness*. Fact Sheet. Washington, DC.

<sup>15</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2007). *Promising Strategies*.

<sup>16</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2007). *Promising Strategies*.

<sup>17</sup> Center for Impact Research. (2005). *Wherever I can lay my head: Homeless youth on homelessness*. Chicago: Author.

<sup>18</sup> National Alliance to End Homelessness. (2006, May). *Fundamental Issues*.

- 75% of street youth using marijuana, 33% using hallucinogens, stimulants, and analgesics, and 25% using crack, other forms of cocaine, inhalants and sedatives. Street youth have the highest rate of use and use often increases with age.
- Many have co-occurring alcohol, other drug use, or mental health disorders
- **Mental health**
  - Research shows higher prevalence of depression, suicidal initiations, and other mental health disorders among homeless youth than among housed matched groups or the general population
  - “Homeless youth are a higher risk for anxiety disorders, depression, post-traumatic stress disorder, and suicide”<sup>19</sup>
- **Physical Health**<sup>20</sup>
  - Chronic health conditions that are common among homeless youth:
    - Asthma and other respiratory problems
    - Hypertension
    - Tuberculosis
    - Diabetes
    - Hepatitis

---

<sup>19</sup> National Alliance to End Homelessness. (2006, May). *Fundamental Issues*.

<sup>20</sup> National Alliance to End Homelessness. (2006, May). *Fundamental Issues*.

## Overview of Best & Promising Practices

---

Following is an overview of effective practices and strategies to prevent and end youth homelessness. There are six major areas that are consistently referenced in reports and studies on youth homelessness that must be addressed in order to successfully prevent and ultimately end homelessness for this population. These include:

**1. Independent Goal-based Service Planning**

Services for youth should be driven by service planning that has concrete objectives around measurable outcomes such as obtaining housing, employment, vocational training, education and life skills. These should reflect the long-term goals that the young adults have for themselves.

**2. On-going support services connected to mainstream resources**

Services for youth should also be available for as long as the youth needs support. Connecting youth to mainstream resources such as case management, SSI, Food stamps, and Medicaid is a critical service.

**3. Independent Living Skills Training**

Because homeless and at-risk youth often come from dysfunctional environments, they have not been exposed to or taught normal day-to-day skills needed to function in society. Youth need to learn how to survive on their own by learning skills such as career development, education, job training, financial management, residential living/home management skills, and personal hygiene and safety.

**4. Connections to supportive and trusting adults and a support network**

Youth need access to their parents or other reliable and trusting adults to support them and assist them in securing housing, education and employment. Peers can also play a key role in creating a supportive network.

**5. Employment and Education**

In order to have income to meet basic life needs, youth must have an education and vocational training so that they can secure employment and income.

**6. Affordable Housing**

In order to ensure that youth can obtain and maintain stable and safe housing, they must have access to affordable housing opportunities; this might be in the form of public housing, Section 8, or other forms of rental assistance. For youth with disabilities, access to permanent supportive housing can be an important resource for maintaining stable housing.

The information that follows is organized according to strategies for unaccompanied youth, youth still in families and strategies that serve all youth.

## Strategies for youth who are part of families

---

### 1. Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-housing

Strategies that prevent family homelessness or help families quickly regain housing can provide significant benefits for youth who might otherwise become homeless with their families. Too often youth are separated from other family members when homeless shelters do not accommodate older children (particularly male teenagers). Rapid re-housing usually offers families short-term rental assistance and/or other flexible financial help (for security deposits, utility bills or moving costs) and services that help families get into housing and establish connections to ongoing support. This can be an effective strategy for keeping families together and preventing or quickly ending homelessness for youth who can stay with their families.

### 2. Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect

#### a. Parent Education<sup>21</sup>:

- Can be effective in reducing rates of child abuse and neglect among high risk families and shows promise in preventing youth homelessness
- Schools are a delivery system for parent education targeted to teenagers
- Behavior principles: Parent Nurturing
- Psychological principles: Parent Effectiveness Training
- Some parent education programs lead to reductions in risk factors for child abuse; most studies focus on short-term gains; little known regarding long-term impacts

#### b. Home Visiting<sup>22</sup>

- Bring services to families with young children
- Factors that maximize program effectiveness:
  - Comprehensive, frequent visits
  - Flexible core educational program
  - Staffing by well trained professionals
  - Connecting families to needed services
- Studies of home visiting programs have not tested the same intervention so it is not possible to link interventions to documented outcomes.

#### c. Family Preservation

- Working with families to keep them intact and prevent youth from running away or being locked out<sup>23</sup>
  - 12-week comprehensive intervention program for at-risk youth and their parents
  - Services include: mediation, parenting workshops, short-term respite care for older adolescents, safe haven for young children

---

<sup>21</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2007). *Promising Strategies*.

<sup>22</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2007). *Promising Strategies*.

<sup>23</sup> National Alliance to End Homelessness. (2009, March 20). *Model Programs of Prevention and Re-Housing for Unaccompanied Youth - Youth Service Inc.'s Family Preservation Program*.

- Goal is to have cases closed from Department of Human Services upon program completion.

d. **Functional Family Therapy**

- Outcome driven, tested over 30 years
- Family based prevention/intervention for youth 11-18 at risk of or presenting problem behaviors
- Multiphase intervention with specific goals for each phase
  - Engagement and motivation
  - Behavior change – guided and modeled by clinicians
  - Generalization – applying positive changes to other issues
- Studies have shown a reduction in adolescent re-arrests by 20 to 60% compared to no treatment, other family therapy interventions, and traditional juvenile court practices such as probation.

e. **Multi-Systemic Therapy**

- Intensive family and community-based clinical intervention targeted to chronic, violent or substance abusing juvenile offenders age 12-17 at risk of institutional placement
- Uses community based systems (family, peers, school and neighborhood) to facilitate and promote change in natural environment
- Home based delivery model – empowers parents
- Evaluated in randomized clinical trials, for serious juvenile offenders achieved demonstrated reduction of 25 to 70% in long term rates of re-arrest.

**3. School based services**

In addition to strategies that help to support families and prevent child abuse and neglect, school-based strategies can also help to keep young people connected to their schools, teachers and mentors. These relationships can help to protect youth from the risks associated with family conflict, unstable housing, and homelessness.

Congress has provided strong educational rights for homeless children and youth. These services are available for youth who are homeless with their families as well as unaccompanied youth. Under the education subtitle of the McKinney-Vento Act, all school districts must keep homeless children and youth in the school they were attending before they lost their housing, or the school in which they were last enrolled, if that is in their best interest. School districts also must provide transportation to make this school stability possible. If a school move is necessary, homeless children and youth can enroll in school and begin attending immediately, even if they cannot produce normally required documents. Every school district in the United States must designate a homeless liaison to ensure that these rights are implemented in the district. Homeless liaisons have many critical responsibilities, including identification, enrollment, and collaboration with community agencies.

**4. Other strategies that can help to prevent youth homelessness**

For youth who need more intensive support services, therapeutic foster care can be effective. Emergency foster care can also provide some protection from homelessness for youth when families experience a crisis, such as the arrest of a parent.

## Strategies for unaccompanied youth

---

### 1. Supporting Successful Transitions to Independent Living<sup>24</sup>

- a. **Affordable housing** is critical to youth aging out of foster care
- b. **Independent Living Skills Training**
  - Research has shown that the following are critical components in preparing youth to live on their own:
    - Assessments: academic/educational levels; employment/vocational skills; personal and social skills; health; residential living/home management skills; personal hygiene and safety; spending/budgeting/banking.
    - Life skills preparation and training: education/job training; career development; assistance securing stable and affordable housing; accessing community resources;
  - Results from the most comprehensive study of outcomes for youth formerly in foster care demonstrate that consistent training in the following areas was associated with positive outcomes:
    - Health care
    - Education
    - Employment training opportunities
    - Must go beyond classroom instruction and provide experiential learning and practice
    - The Ansell Casey Independent Living Skills assessment and curriculum addresses communication, daily living, career planning, home life, housing and money management, self-care, social relationships, work life, work and study skills.

### 2. Gateway Services: RHYA (Runaway Homeless Youth Act) Street Outreach and Drop In

- a. **Street outreach – engage those most mistrustful**
  - Successful outreach: trained in youth development principles, know how to communicate with young people; respect personal space.
  - Able to connect to services
  - Know street culture
    - Peers as outreach workers promising strategy
  - Collaboration among outreach teams to provide greater coverage and reduce duplication of effort<sup>25</sup>

---

<sup>24</sup> Although there are over 130 transitional living programs currently in operation serving more than 4,000 youth annually, scant data exists regarding their effectiveness. In fact, while a literature search conducted for this report found a significant increase in the number of peer reviewed articles focused on youth who are homeless in the past decade, with over 60 articles published in the past three years alone, only three of these – less than 5% -- contained evaluations of programs or program outcome data, only one of which examined the outcomes of a transitional housing program. Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2007). *Promising Strategies*.



**b. National runaway switchboard**

- Facilitates access to services and/or bus tickets to help runaways return home

**c. Drop-In Centers**

- Initial point of contact for services
- Provide immediate subsistence needs
- Site for case management

**3. Shelter and Stabilizing Services<sup>26</sup>**

**a. Shelter**

- Should emphasize stabilizing youth and reunification with families
- Younger youth and those experiencing first episode of homelessness are more likely to reconcile with families if early intervention is available.
- Many youth in shelters are younger and first time homeless; street homeless youth more likely to have been homeless longer or more frequently
- Youth shelters provide a safe alternative to adult shelters and the dangers of victimization and life on the streets
- Research supports that the first episode of homelessness is critical time for intervention
  - Follow-up when youth are reunited with families is critically important
- Barriers to accessing services at shelters include:
  - Program rules (wake up time, curfew, and prohibitions on smoking, alcohol and drugs)
  - Fears/concerns for personal safety
  - Fears/concerns of poor treatment by shelter staff
  - Some shelters screen youth who present with severe problems
- Federal law requires that shelter programs contact a youth's family within 72 hours of admission to the shelter
  - Critical step to reunification – a primary goal of the Runaway and Homeless Youth Program
  - Some state laws require that shelters contact parent or guardian sooner for permission to enter shelter program

---

<sup>25</sup> Examples include: StreetWorks Collaborative, Minneapolis 12 youth serving organizations conducting street outreach to homeless youth – emphasis on relationship building, provide basic needs and referrals and financial assistance available for one shot deals; Community Human Services, Oakland Peer-based Outreach team providing emotional support and basic needs; able to make referrals to wide array of housing and services.

<sup>26</sup> Some promising shelter strategies include: Maine's Rapid Response Program - Over 25 state and local agencies work together to intervene during the first 72 hours of homelessness. Program keeps children in school, provides family intervention services and mediation and evidence shows decrease in suicide, gang involvement, criminal activity, drug and alcohol use. and Daybreak Emergency Shelter, Dayton, OH - Serves homeless youth up to 18 ; wide array of services provided, safe shelter with high security, philosophy of re-parenting and providing high level of support Strong aftercare program; on-going services available for as long as youth wants to stay connected. Positive outcomes include: 54% of minors returned home, 37% found safe alternative housing (relatives, Daybreak housing, or foster care); 81% of 18-year-olds found permanent safe housing; 27% of 18-year-olds secured employment while living in shelter.

- As a result many shelters require identification and/or parent contact information (This is a barrier to accessing shelter for many youth)

#### 4. Transitional Housing

##### a. TLP (Transitional Living Programs)<sup>27</sup>

- Provide shelter, life skills and services to children who cannot be reunited
- For youth 16-21 and generally provide up to 18 months of assistance
- Serve youth leaving foster care and homeless youth
- Avoid long term dependency on social services
- Make successful transition to independent living
- Living accommodations include host family homes, group homes or supervised apartments
- Services include case management and
- Life skills
  - Employment training
  - Mental and physical health care
  - Housing placement
  - Benefits assistance
- Research indicates that to be most effective TLP services should recognize adult-like status of homeless youth and teach life skills that youth may not have learned earlier
- Requirements to remain in TLP:
  - Rent payment required (based on ability to pay)
  - Contribute money toward household expenses or savings
  - Attend school/educational program and/or remain employed
  - Be drug and alcohol free and meet house rules (curfew)
  - Participate in activities
  - Assist in housekeeping
  - Be part of the program by assisting staff in screening new youth entering program
- Compared to other programs, TLPs offer more privacy, are more service intensive, and have more requirements and expectations for youth participation. Some will not admit ‘hard-to-serve’ adolescents

##### b. Foyer Model<sup>28</sup>

---

<sup>27</sup> Youth Villages Transitional Living, multiple locations nationwide

- Serving 17-22 year olds; Program lasts 6-8 months and provides: life skills, community reintegration, vocational skills, and job training and experience
- Youth work closely with transitional specialists to assist through every aspect of the program
- Positive outcomes include: after 24 months - 87% are living in stable housing and 78% are in school, working, or both

<sup>28</sup> Chelsea Foyer, New York City

- Common Ground – developer and facilities manager Good Shephard Services providing support services
- 40 units (in 207 unit building) for 18-25 year olds who are aging out of foster care, homeless or at-risk of becoming homeless

- Developed in Europe
- Youth who cannot live at home assisted in transitioning to independent living
- In addition to housing, residents receive intensive case management, and linkages to job training, education and life skills development

**5. Longer-term affordable housing<sup>29</sup>**

- In most communities there has been less experience with permanent affordable housing for youth, and significantly less documentation and evaluation, compared to housing models for homeless adults
  - Differences with transitional programs:
    - Permanent housing is more flexible
    - Provides longer-term support
    - Has fewer admission criteria
  - Give residents the rights and responsibilities of tenants
  - Longer term housing falls into scatter site and cluster/congregate care models
  - Typically target youth 18-25

**6. Permanent supportive housing for homeless youth**

- Serve persons of legal age (18 and up)
- Scatter and single site models
- Service participation may be voluntary
  - Little difference noted in service participation between voluntary and mandatory programs
- Rent payments generally required

**7. Rapid Re-housing<sup>30</sup>**

- Documented to be effective in serving range of homeless populations

- 
- Focus on individualized support services developed in “Action Plan” with a focus on lifeskills and workforce development. Youth enter into a contract and pay a program fee that is saved and returned upon exit. Discharge planning is key and begins upon entry into the program
  - Alumni report that: 90% are living in stable housing; 92% are employed part-time; 75% have health insurance; 93% earned a high school diploma or GED; 44% are pursuing higher education or vocational training

<sup>29</sup> Housing Supports for Youth Aging out of Foster Care

- New York City, Section 8 Priority Code - provides Section 8 vouchers or public housing units to qualified current and former ACS Independent Living clients
- Connecticut Department of Children and Families, Community Housing Assistance Program – youth receives subsidy to cover rent, food, utilities, transportation, and other living expenses. Youth must be enrolled in school or working. Average length of stay is 2 years.
- England’s Children Leaving Care Act of 2000 – government focused attention on performance management and tracks 9 indicators including housing. Government provides resources to housing for all youth leaving care – in 2008, 88% of youth leaving care are in “suitable accommodations” up from 69% in 2001 (Common Ground Conference Report).

<sup>30</sup> Hennepin County Rapid Rehousing County contracts with providers to provide: host home programs with family reunification services for recently homeless youth; rapid exit screening and advocacy services in drop-in centers and shelters and short-term housing subsidies

- Studies show that young people benefit most if intervention occurs at first instance of homelessness and if connections are maintained to school of origin

#### 8. Transition in Place<sup>31</sup>

- Programs transfer units into the tenant’s name once tenant is ready for independent living – a housing subsidy may or may not continue. Generally tenants can access supportive services as needed moving forward.

## Strategies applicable to all youth

---

### 1. Supporting Positive Youth Development strategies that focus on at-risk youth

- a. **Positive Youth Development** approach includes prevention and resiliency. These models incorporate elements and practices that include:
  - Focus on preparing youth for successful adulthood by fostering development of positive traits, personal and social developmental assets
  - Strengthening social, emotional, behavioral, cognitive and moral competencies
  - Opportunities for youth to engage in leadership, planning and decision-making
  - Building self-efficacy, a sense of competence and personal identity and control over their future
  - Connection to caring adults
  - Nurturing, trusting and mutual relationships with adults and peers
  - High expectations for success and achievement
  - Structure and consistency in program delivery
  - Longer term interventions (9 months +)
- b. **National Guard Youth Challenge Program** provides training, mentoring and leadership development for at risk youth. The program begins with a residential phase and may provide an opportunity for stability for youth who do not have safe or stable housing.

### 2. Reducing Violence and Delinquency Among Juveniles<sup>32</sup>

- a. **“Youth Courts”**
  - Modeled on successful ‘homeless courts’ which seek to decriminalize lifestyle crimes associated with being homeless

---

<sup>31</sup> Daybreak Housing Program, Dayton Ohio

- o 33 Scatter Site apartments in the community – lease starts off in the name of agency and youth tenant; when tenant is ready, lease is transferred into only client’s name
- o Aftercare services available, strong alumni connections, clients can access on-going services

<sup>32</sup> National Alliance to End Homelessness. (2006, May). *Fundamental Issues*.

- Especially relevant for youth since they are susceptible for arrest for ‘status’ crimes by virtue of being under age 18
- According to the National Association of Youth Courts there are over 1400 youth courts though out the country

**b. Intensive After Care Program**

- Provides a continuum of supervision and services to high risk juvenile offenders during institutionalization and after release.
  - Pre-release preparation and planning
  - Supportive services by institutional and aftercare staff
  - Long term re-integration services – access to services and monitored
- 5 principles:
  - Preparing youth for progressively increased responsibility
    - Facilitation youth-community interaction and involvement
    - Work with youth and support system to develop successful traits and adjustment
    - Developing new resources and supports
    - Monitoring and testing in community
  - Comprehensive case management – team oriented approach
    - Identify and assess high-risk youth using validated instruments
    - Develop individualized care plans
    - Small case loads
    - Available 24/7
  - Supervision and monitoring based on system of graduating sanctions
  - Rewards that holds youth accountable and provides incentives for positive behavior
  - Linkages with community resources and social networks
- IAP interventions reduce juvenile recidivism rates and lead to successful transition from justice system into the community and thereby reduce homelessness among high-risk population

**c. “Serious and Violent Offenders Re-entry Initiative”**

- Interagency effort that funds state criminal and juvenile justice agencies to develop, implement, enhance and evaluate re-entry strategies
- Three phases:
  - Institution based programs to help incarcerated youth prepare for re-entry.
  - Community based programs that work with ex-offenders pre- and post-release
  - Community based long term support programs
- Only 10% of target population is youth

**d. “Responsible Reintegration of Youthful Offender” – Department of Labor**

- Addresses workforce challenges to young offenders
- Demonstration grants in 15 states that link youth offenders to jobs in high-growth industries

**e. Individual Development Accounts** assist in developing effective financial management skills

- IDAs are an important step toward financial literacy and are the start of asset-building; through these programs youth build financial knowledge, save for education and receive matching funds.<sup>33</sup>

**f. Connections to caring adults**

- Explore resources of families: biological, foster and adoptive
- Facilitate visitation between youth and family
- Engage families in development of plans for youth
- Develop alternative support systems

**3. Targeted Supportive Services**

**a. Stages of change model**

- High risk youth intervention adapting stages of change model<sup>34</sup>
- Assessment of where young people are in relation to their readiness and/or willingness to change
- A guide to inform youth worker's use of self in their work with young people;
- A foundation for designing engagement and competency-building programming that meets young people where they are

**b. Critical Time Intervention (CTI)**

- Well-researched and cost effective Evidence Based Practice assists homeless persons in their transition from the streets, homeless shelters, psychiatric hospitals or the criminal justice system into the community.
- The primary goal of CTI is to prevent recurrent homelessness and other adverse outcomes among formerly homeless individuals during the period following placement into the community. This is accomplished by strengthening the individual's long-term ties to services, family, and friends and providing emotional and practical support during the critical time of transition.

**c. Employment Services**

- **Social enterprise:**<sup>35</sup> owning and operating businesses that offer employment and job training

---

<sup>33</sup> Juma Ventures in San Francisco pioneered the first IDA program for youth. It is one component of a program that also include job skills training, part-time employment, college preparation services, financial literacy education, and case management support. Documented results of the program include: increased rates of high school graduation; continuance on to higher education; maintaining enrollment in higher education, and among highest risk youth – those entering from the juvenile justice system, reductions in recidivism rates, San Francisco. Source: Juma Ventures. (n.d.). *Program Overview*. Retrieved April 19, 2010 at [http://www.jumaventures.org/pages/what\\_program\\_overview.html](http://www.jumaventures.org/pages/what_program_overview.html)

<sup>34</sup> Crime and Justice Institute. (2006, January 26). *Interventions for High-Risk Youth: Applying Evidence-Based Theory and Practice to the Work of Roca*. Boston, MA: Crime and Justice Institute.

<sup>35</sup> New Door, San Francisco, assists 14-21 at-risk youth with employment opportunities both in agency run and outside businesses, job training, and community building activities. 91% of job-training clients are working two years after hire. 93% of job-training clients are in stable housing upon graduation compared to 35% when entering the program; no enterprise employees are homeless after two-years. 23% of clients received public assistance upon entering the program; at the two-year

- **Internship programs:**<sup>36</sup> place high-risk youth in internship in local business/community organization, provide mentors to supervise youth
  - **Job readiness:** classroom instruction and job search support; training and life skills and budgeting training
  - **Job Corps:** or other employment programs for youth that offer a residential component combining training and work experience with a place to stay, meals, and access to some basic support services and life skills
  - **Supported Employment**
    - An evidenced-based practice used to assist persons find and keep competitive employment. Originally conceived for mentally ill persons, the program can be employed for youth and other populations.
    - Obtain competitive employment in the community and provide support to ensure success in the workplace
    - Principles include: consumer choice/preferences, employment integrated with treatment, on-going support once employment is obtained, job search/employment work begins upon entrance to program<sup>37</sup>
- d. **SOAR SSI Training**
- Targeted training to increase approval rates for SSI coverage on initial application
  - Training has been demonstrated to be highly effective with multiple groups with significant disability and services needs including:
    - People living with HIV/AIDS
    - People with disabilities leaving criminal justice settings
    - Homeless persons with disabilities including the chronically homeless

---

follow-up none receive public assistance. Source: New Door Ventures. (2010). *Program Impact*. Retrieved April 19, 2010 at [http://www.newdoor.org/browse/program\\_impact\\_and\\_evaluation](http://www.newdoor.org/browse/program_impact_and_evaluation)

<sup>36</sup> YouthCare, Seattle: Employment Training Programs

- Works with homeless, transitioning and at-risk young people ages 16-23 year olds on job training, placement, retention and provides internship opportunities.
- Working Zone Tile Project -- 10-week arts-based, pre-employment training program
- Barista Training and Employment - 8-week work training program with hands-on barista training, customer service training, career exploration, internships, resume and interviews skills training. Program includes one year of case management and employment counseling
- YouthTech – 16 week training program in Cisco Systems IT Essentials I: PC Software and Hardware. Youth learn to build, configure, upgrade, and maintain a personal computer system. They receive 12 community college credits.

Source: YouthCare. (n.d.). *Shelter Support Success*. Retrieved April 19, 2010 at <http://www.youthcare.org/index.php/services/training>

<sup>37</sup> Washington State Dept. of Social and Health Services, Office of Research and Data Analysis, Olympia, WA (1996). one study in showed that of 576 persons with developmental disabilities and/or mental illness receiving Supported Employment training, 70% were still employed after one year.

- SOAR has a rigorously structured curriculum to train case managers in processing applications with Social Security including detailing the information to be initially presented to SS and comprehensive follow-up
- Data shows that of the 4386 total decisions of SOAR applications, 71% were positive (compared to 10-15% which is the average for this population) and took an average of 89 days for the decision.