100 Day Challenge to Prevent and End Youth Homelessness

Data from the 2019 Youth Count estimated that there are 1,559 homeless and unstably housed youth and young adults in Fairfield County at any given time. Four hundred and forty of these youth are literally homeless. Literally homeless youth live on streets or in shelters. Fairfield County is one of eight regions participating in the 100 Day Challenge to prevent and end youth homelessness across the state. The purpose of the 100 Day Challenge is to help catalyze community action in order to build a systematic response to a significant community problem. The short timeline is intentional, inviting a cross-sector of partners from each community, to generate urgency and action. What makes this effort unique is that people on the frontlines and youth with lived experience of homelessness are empowered to make decisions and remove barriers in order to advance the goal of ending youth homelessness. With support from the Rapid Results Institute, the process will provide our community with the opportunity to understand and learn about our current system and pursue ambitious 100 Day goals that unleash intense collaboration, innovation, and execution.

At the launch of the 100 Day Challenge, on May 2nd, the 100 Day Challenge Team set a goal to safely and stably house or divert seventy-five young adults over the course of 100 days. An additional goal that 50% of the young adults who are housed through this effort will be employed or actively engaged in an employment or educational program was also set. The 100 Day Challenge Team has developed relationships with providers that serve homeless youth, such as community colleges, public school systems, and Court Support Services. They have implemented protocol to minimize barriers to housing for youth experiencing homelessness and they have developed strategies to ensure these changes to the system are sustainable. To date, fifty-four young adults have been housed or diverted from homelessness. Forty-three percent of these young adults were connected to an employment or educational program. In addition to the fifty-four young adults that have been housed or diverted, four young adults are already connected to a housing resource and are currently in the process of searching for an apartment and signing a lease.

The 100 Day Challenge ends on Friday, August 9, 2019. The System Leaders and 100 Day Challenge Team are planning an event to celebrate their successes, discuss progress, and share information about the important system changes that have been implemented. We invite you to join us to hear about this incredible campaign and the amazing work that has been done, as well as the work ahead in our efforts to end youth homelessness, in Fairfield County. The event will be held on August 15th, from 3pm - 5pm at Housatonic Community College, Beacon Hall, Rm. 214, 900 Lafayette Boulevard. For more information please contact: Lisa Bahadosingh, Director of Youth Initiatives and Special Projects, Supportive Housing Works, at 203-767-0787.