



Into the Spotlight

HAMPDEN COUNTY'S
COORDINATED COMMUNITY
PLAN TO PREVENT AND END
YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT
HOMELESSNESS

SEPTEMBER 2020



**Into the Spotlight:
Hampden County's
Coordinated Community
Plan to Prevent and End
Youth and Young Adult
Homelessness**

**A product of the
Springfield-Hampden
County Massachusetts
Continuum of Care**

Acknowledgements

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Disclaimer

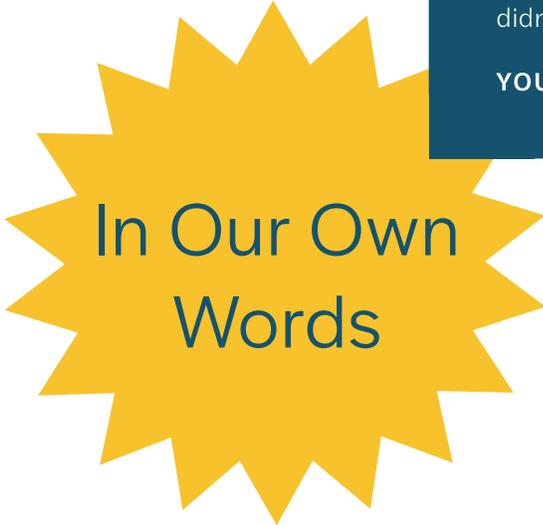
The substance of this work is dedicated to the public. It is owned by all who participated in its creation and will be continuously improved overtime.

Updates and news will be posted at intothespotlighthampden.org



This is so important to me because I went through the struggle of being young and homeless as well, I would love to be able to give the help people need because I know how bad it was for me when others didn't give me the help I needed to succeed and be stable.

YOUTH ACTION BOARD LEADER



In Our Own Words

I believe anything can change for the better.

TRAVIS SMITH



It is important for community members to be involved in this work due to the fact that the youth is our future, without the guidance and help the youth need now we won't have a future.

STATE YOUTH COMMISSIONER



Preventing and ending YYA homelessness is important and necessary because YYA are the future and when YYA are given the chance to live harmoniously with the community they can do amazing things and YYA in my experience have great ideas and innovative ways to better us all as a people. They just need people to listen, incorporate and support them.

My dream is for all YYA to have stable housing and a community that supports diversity and working together to achieve higher goals working alongside YYA. We may be different and have different talents, but I believe if we pull those talents together we can provide a safe and stable community that flourishes. Change is hard, no doubt, but change can be a positive thing. By working together in the community we can provide stability for not just YYA but the whole community and demonstrate a mutual respect for each other.

CHRIS COBURN

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Introduction

Into the Spotlight is a coordinated community plan to prevent and end youth and young adult (YYA) homelessness in Hampden County, Massachusetts. It is the work of stakeholders from across our community—from the worlds of homelessness, government, child welfare, education, workforce development, business, justice, affordable housing, advocacy, and out of school time activities—whose commitment will determine its successes and failures. Led by a Planning Committee of core partners, including YYA with lived homelessness experience and their adult allies, stakeholders met regularly, participated in both short and day-long convenings, and consistently stepped up with their time and energy. They supported an effort that clarified our needs and prioritized the actions that we believe will ensure that experiences of homelessness among YYA in Hampden County are rare, brief, and non-recurring.

In August 2019, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) selected Hampden County to participate in the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP). This prestigious opportunity provided us with \$2.4 million in project funding and significant technical assistance, but required us to complete a coordinated community plan according to HUD's program standards. With that in mind, the Planning Committee has designed this document to meet both the needs of our community and our HUD partners.

Our plan begins with a **Vision** of Hampden County without YYA homelessness and the **Goals** that we must meet to make that vision a reality. The plan then highlights critical **Needs** for each goal area and the **Objectives** and **Actions** that we believe will lead us most effectively to addressing those needs. It includes the **Guiding Principles** and **Decision-Making Framework** that we used to prioritize our needs and actions in a way that centered YYA voice, included a broad spectrum of stakeholders, and honored our community's experiences and expertise.

Into the Spotlight is in effect as of the publication date of this document. We believe that the strategy laid out in this plan includes the action steps most likely to lead us to our vision and goals. It is a living document that we intend to update and adapt regularly in response to feedback and change as part of a **Continuous Improvement Strategy** and includes the full commitment of our Planning Committee as represented by their names on our **Planning Committee Signature Page**. We invite you to read through the plan and see yourself in it. Only with the full participation of our community—from Tolland to Holland, Chester to Palmer, Southwick to Holyoke, and our center in Springfield—will we prevent and end YYA homelessness for good.

Vision & Goals

Our vision, developed through a facilitated community dialogue, is the bedrock of our work. It has rooted us in identifying our goals, drafting our statement of need, and articulating actions, and reminds us where we are trying to go regarding YYA homelessness.

We envision a world in which youth and young adults in Hampden County have a safe and stable home, community, resources, and opportunities to live harmoniously and thrive.

Our goals focus on the high-level outcomes we are trying to accomplish in pursuit of our vision. They are grounded in positive youth development, trauma informed care, and a holistic vision of success for YYA at risk of and experiencing homelessness. We believe that we must achieve all of the following if we are going to prevent and end YYA homelessness in Hampden County.

YYA experiencing homelessness, at risk of experiencing homelessness, and leaving systems of care will have...

1. SYSTEM ACCESS

Access to a broad spectrum of services and opportunities through a coordinated system that is well-known, effective, caring, and prioritizes their choice

2. STABLE HOUSING

Access to well-maintained and affordable housing in safe, welcoming neighborhoods

3. HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Access to resources to help promote and maintain health and well-being at home, school, work, and in the community

4. EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT

Access without barriers to a variety of education and employment opportunities to achieve the personal and financial stability necessary to thrive

5. PERMANENT CONNECTIONS

A consistent, self-identified person or people who can respectfully guide, support, and advocate with YYA to get their needs met

MASSACHUSETTS DEFINITION OF HOMELESSNESS FOR YYA: A person 24 years of age or younger not in the physical custody of a parent or legal guardian who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. “Fixed” refers to a residence that is stationary, permanent, and not subject to change. “Regular” means a dwelling at which a person resides on a regular basis (i.e. nightly). “Adequate” means a dwelling that provides safe shelter, meeting their physical and psychological needs. (Mass.gov, 2013)

AT-RISK: We use a broad range of risk factors including housing instability and a variety of non-housing indicators supported by national evidence that consider economic stability, education, and identification with vulnerable populations. For HUD funded actions, the plan will use HUD’s definitions as guidelines for project eligibility.*

*<https://files.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/Determining-Homeless-Status-of-Youth.pdf>

Organizing for Success

Into the Spotlight is all about taking action. Our capacity to accomplish this work depends on creating a structure to implement the vision and strategy, align activities, review performance, and mobilize funding. To succeed, we must hold ourselves accountable by collecting and sharing quality data about our performance and adjusting our response based on what the data shows us. We recognize that because our success will also depend on our community's ongoing support, we must educate the public and build the will to prevent and end YYA homelessness.

GOVERNANCE

This work will be led by a new YYA homelessness governance and decision-making framework. The CoC will hire a YYA coordinated community response director who will lead the effort, coordinate partners, build community relationships, and track implementation progress. The existing YHDP Planning Committee will transition into a YHDP Executive Committee responsible for implementing the plan, supporting the director, and updating the plan as needed.

ACCOUNTABILITY

We will hold ourselves accountable for achieving success in preventing and ending YYA homelessness, and for centering equity in our work, by publishing a data dashboard that tracks our system performance. It will include equity metrics for Latinx, Black, and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/ Questioning (LGBTQ) YYA, and breakdowns for other vulnerable populations such as YYA involved with systems, minors, survivors of violence, parenting YYA, and others.

We will ensure that our understanding and reporting is based on quality data by incorporating a data improvement strategy. This will include requiring YYA programs to collect Runaway and Homeless Youth (RHY) program data elements, providing system-wide training to support trauma-informed data collection, providing end-user and program administrator training in the use of our Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) data collection program, and supporting increased capacity to understand and use data by enabling attendance by CoC staff and stakeholders at twice-annual National Human Services Data Consortium conferences.

We will implement a continuous improvement process that regularly solicits feedback from YYA and adult allies and, as necessary, updates the coordinated community response. Further, we will require YHDP-funded programs to incorporate participant voice by using participant satisfaction surveys and a complaint procedure.

BUILDING THE WILL

In order to build the public will to achieve our plan's goals, we will develop a comprehensive community education campaign to build support for the goal of preventing and ending YYA homelessness and to reduce stigma against YYA who experience housing instability.

Needs, Objectives, and Actions

In this section, we highlight the most pressing **NEEDS** we have identified, and then outline the **OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS** our community will undertake to meet those needs. We have organized them around our five goals:

1. **SYSTEM ACCESS**
2. **STABLE HOUSING**
3. **HEALTH AND WELL-BEING**
4. **EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT**
5. **PERMANENT CONNECTIONS**

The needs, objectives, and actions emerged from a series of community meetings held between September 23, 2019 and January 29, 2020. The sessions began with a review of relevant qualitative and quantitative data and included partners from across multiple sectors (e.g., homeless service and housing providers, education, workforce development, behavioral health, child welfare, city and state agencies, and others). Each meeting included substantial representation of YYA with lived experience; in one meeting, YYA comprised the majority of attendees, while in others, they represented at least 25% of those in attendance.

During the final three months of the planning process, the planning committee worked hard to prioritize the plan's objectives and actions. We realize that committing to implement every good idea is equivalent to committing to implement nothing. With that in mind, we left many ideas on the cutting room floor. We have prioritized those listed here according to the following:

Short-Term Actions:	Medium-Term Actions:	Long-Term Actions:
WILL BE IMPLEMENTED WITHIN 12 MONTHS	WILL BE IMPLEMENTED IN 12 TO 36 MONTHS	WILL BE REVIEWED REGULARLY FOR IMPLEMENTATION WITHIN 60 MONTHS

Short-term and medium-term actions have an action number below each objective and will be started immediately. Long-term actions have been labeled throughout and will be reviewed and updated regularly during plan implementation. A fully detailed list of actions can be found in the appendix.

The needs that precede each goal's objectives and actions are those that rose to the top in meetings and during our data analysis; however, the full statement of need can be accessed online at intothepotlighthampden.org.

We drafted and finalized all of this content under the direction and principles of our governance and decision-making structure, which can be found on page 16.

1. System Access

Access to a broad spectrum of services and opportunities through a coordinated system that is well-known, effective, caring, and prioritizes their choice

SYSTEM ACCESS: NEEDS	
<p>Hampden County needs to improve its efforts to inform YYA how to get help when they are experiencing a housing crisis</p>	<p>Throughout the planning process, YYA made clear that, when first facing a crisis, they did not know where to go for help. They faced a confusing and disjointed collection of programs, and were forced to try to learn and navigate different eligibility requirements and application processes. They were forced to become experts in the systems and programs in order to access the help they needed. The community needs to make clear how YYA can get help, ensure that providers and community members know where to direct YYA, have clear and accurate guidance on program types and eligibility, and provide fair access to existing and new YYA programs. The system must be improved in order to increase the likelihood that YYA, particularly those under 18, will present for help. The community also needs to increase its capacity to respond to the needs of YYA experiencing homelessness, including awareness of the impact of intimate partner violence, gang involvement, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and trauma, and recruit new allies from parallel efforts in the work of ending YYA homelessness. Partners emphasized a particular need for outreach regarding behavioral health supports.</p>
<p>Hampden County needs to improve its capacity for collaboration</p>	<p>YYA homelessness is more multi-jurisdictional than for any other population. 31% of YYA experiencing homelessness report Department of Children and Families (DCF) experience and almost 20% report justice system involvement. YYA experiencing homelessness are underidentified and underserved in behavioral health programs, at schools, colleges, out of school-time programs and the adult homelessness system; and yet there are few data sharing agreements, cross-training platforms, or cross-system strategies to help align these sectors. The county needs to collaborate with homelessness and non-homelessness partners, including criminal justice, education, workforce development, business, child welfare, commercial and sexual exploitation (CSE), parenting, and low barrier access points to reduce collateral consequences, increase data sharing, reduce barriers to sign-up for system benefits, and coordinate responses to YYA homelessness.</p>
<p>Hampden County needs to improve the competency of systems to support YYA and all vulnerable subpopulations</p>	<p>Our data highlight the outsized need for our systems to work effectively for LGBTQ, Latinx, Black, under 18, parenting, and unsheltered YYA. It also reveals a system that is oriented to older adults, and both low rates of exit to permanent housing and long average lengths of stay for YYA in shelter and Transitional Housing (TH). Our YYA at times find themselves engaging with an “unsafe and uncaring system” and will “steer away from” resources that don’t meet their needs in an affirming way. The community needs strategies that are trauma informed¹, use positive youth development² and harm reduction³ frameworks, are linguistically and culturally competent, designed for YYA leaving systems and encountering cliff effects, and trained to engage with families and communities.</p>

¹ Trauma-Informed-Care (TIC) includes the adoption of principles and practices that promote a culture of safety, empowerment, and healing. <https://www.integration.samhsa.gov/clinical-practice/trauma>

² Positive Youth Development (PYD) is a comprehensive framework for supporting YYA in the development of critical personal and social capacities according to the 5 C’s: Competence; Confidence; Connection; Character; Caring/Compassion. When implemented in a program, they are designed to lead to a 6th C: Contribution. <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/fysb/whatispyd20120829.pdf>

³ Harm reduction is a set of practical strategies aimed at reducing negative consequences associated with certain risky behaviors. It emphasises well-being outcomes over the removal of the behavior, is built on a belief in, and respect for, the rights of people, and accepts the intersectionality of circumstances that lead to the behavior. <https://www.hri.global/what-is-harm-reduction>

<p>Hampden County needs to address systemic structural challenges related to transportation, affordable housing, and racism</p>	<p>YYA homelessness resources are hard to reach without transportation, it is difficult to remain stably housed in the long-term without affordable housing, and stability across one's life can be difficult to maintain with the risk of unexpected barriers due to racism and other forms of prejudice. Community members in every session reinforced the need for a new transportation strategy that connects people to resources across the county. We identified that residents pay over 34% of their income on housing on average and that fair market rent is over 2 times what the average renter can afford. Hampden County has some of the worst income and employment inequality in the country, most significantly affecting Latinx community members. The community needs to name these larger system issues as root causes of homelessness, to identify targeted actions that will connect directly to YYA homelessness outcomes, and then advocate for broader measures that are likely to move us closer to system reform.</p>
<p>Hampden County needs resources and training to prevent and divert YYA from experiencing homelessness</p>	<p>YYA and their adult allies agree that entering the homelessness system is a last resort and should be rare. Yet over 70% of YYA engaging the homelessness system each year do so for the first time. The number is 83% for under 18s. Prevention and diversion saves resources for those with higher needs. According to national evidence, it also prevents long-term homelessness, as every day spent in the system may be associated with a 2% increased risk of future homelessness. Our data identifies many opportunities for intervention, including better transition planning for our large foster care population and for those leaving the juvenile justice system, as well as family conflict resolution -- different forms of family conflict are the leading reasons YYA give for leaving home. Hampden County needs a prevention and diversion strategy to end YYA homelessness.</p>
<p>SYSTEM ACCESS: OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS</p>	
<p>OBJECTIVE 1.1. Make it clear and straight-forward for YYA to get help</p>	<p>Action 1.1.1. Develop an outreach and marketing campaign directed toward YYA that provides clear guidance on how to access assistance with housing insecurity; use a variety of channels (including social media), with visibility on community databases and incorporating multiple languages</p> <p>Action 1.1.2. Create an improved YYA-specific access and coordinated entry strategy which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A single phone number, which is answered during extended hours by someone knowledgeable about YYA crisis and housing resources ▪ Redesigned intake that incorporates YYA needs and preferences and incorporates education, workforce development, and employment resources ▪ Capacity for referral to housing, services, YYA-led connections, and use of the problem-solving protocol currently being developed by the Massachusetts Unaccompanied Homeless Youth Commission (UHYC) ▪ Participation of all providers and use of universal release of information forms and Memoranda of Understanding between agencies ▪ Use of a dynamic by-name list of YYA needing assistance and regular case conferencing meetings of agencies serving YYA ▪ Family engagement and stabilization resources for YYA who choose this strategy

<p>OBJECTIVE 1.2.</p> <p>Improve access to critical resources for YYA experiencing homelessness</p>	<p>Action 1.2.1. Implement a permanency navigator program with capacity to support YYA as they navigate challenges related to stable housing, health and well-being, education and employment, permanent connections, and public systems</p> <p>Action 1.2.2. Within programs serving YYA, incorporate transportation strategies with a range of options across all communities that that consider existing options and account for access to health services, education, employment, and the needs of parents with young children.</p> <p>Action 1.2.3. Increase the number and capacity of safe and secure YYA drop-in locations in Hampden County to provide front door and system access activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide front door access to coordinated entry in a safe and affirming space ▪ Open at times needed by YYA, including early evening and weekends ▪ Designed to meet the needs of LGBTQ YYA and YYA from many cultural and linguistic backgrounds ▪ Consider new locations in Holyoke and Chicopee ▪ Offer a variety of supports, including: a place to rest during the day, peer mentoring, career and financial readiness, tutoring and GED, prep for post-secondary education, life planning/ coaching, daily living skills, family engagement, showers, laundry, lockers, internet/Wi-Fi, clothing pantry, on-site clinical services, behavioral health services, various transportation options (passes, cards, cabs, etc.), help getting identification documents (birth certificate, social security card, state ID)
<p>OBJECTIVE 1.3.</p> <p>Improve the system’s capacity to support all populations of YYA experiencing homelessness</p>	<p>Action 1.3.1. Recruit and retain a workforce that includes people with lived experience of homelessness in system and program roles, including peers and near-peers</p> <p>Action 1.3.2. Build system-wide training and resources for program staff on the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support for LGBTQ YYA as they engage with resources, wish to re-engage community and family, and seek LGBTQ-specific healthcare ▪ Support for Latinx and Black YYA ▪ Support for minors and those transitioning from systems of care ▪ Support for YYA navigating the collateral consequences of criminal justice involvement ▪ Integration of best practices related to trauma-informed care, harm reduction, motivational interviewing, restorative justice, and positive youth development ▪ Support for survivors of human trafficking and domestic violence <p>Action 1.3.3. Design and implement a YYA-focused racial equity strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support the use of an equity lens in designing and evaluating education, training and employment programs ▪ Create a racial equity workgroup to review policies, procedures and outcomes and make recommendations to increase equity throughout all programs and outcomes ▪ Support desegregation-oriented policies that remove barriers for Latinx and Black residents to move out of areas of concentrated poverty <p>Action 1.3.4. Enhance collaboration with the DCF and continue to develop strategies that respond to the needs of YYA who were previously engaged with the foster care system and at risk of homelessness or experiencing homelessness.</p>

2. Stable Housing

Access to well-maintained and affordable housing in safe, welcoming neighborhoods

STABLE HOUSING: NEEDS	
Hampden County needs a YYA-homelessness-specific housing strategy	YYA often need and want different housing solutions than older adults based on their physical, developmental, social, and emotional status. Their housing pathways are also far less linear. Unfortunately, the CoC has not had a YYA-homelessness-specific housing strategy, YYA homelessness housing resources have not always been coordinated (e.g., some permanent housing units are not in HMIS), and most of the CoC's housing resources are designed for older adults. Partners acknowledge that finding units and landlords is challenging. Hampden County needs a way to model future housing needs for parenting and non-parenting YYA, including a targeted "long-stayer" response. The County also needs a plan for landlord and developer engagement.
Hampden County needs new YYA-specific housing and shelter resources	YYA know when a program is designed for them, when it is affirming of their identity and agency, and when it is designed for their success. YYA and adult allies have argued for a variety of YYA-specific housing options, including crisis shelter, host homes, medium-term housing, rapid rehousing (RRH), and permanent supportive housing (PSH), all with low barriers; options for immediate access to permanent housing; and staff who are trauma-informed and trained in positive youth development. Our quantitative data suggests the same, with a combined 50% long-stayers and 5% chronically experiencing homelessness, while at the same time many younger YYA are experiencing homelessness outside of the system and over 70% of all YYA engage in system services for the first time. According to our simple housing model, which only accounts for YYA included in HMIS and assumes that a large percent of YYA will resolve their homelessness without a homelessness system resource, the CoC needs at least 130 new units over the next 4 years to end YYA homelessness. This does not account for YYA who do not interact with the formal homelessness system and undercounts the needs of parenting YYA but is a good place to start and accounts for those with the highest needs. The housing must be flexible, for multiple subpopulations, and located in urban, suburban, and rural communities. New investments should include up to 15 YYA-specific crisis housing beds and additional support for those who may leave the homelessness system without accessing housing programs but still spend nights on the street or places not meant for sleeping. Up to 70% of YYA may exit the system successfully (though not without consequences) without using CoC or other formal housing programs.
Hampden County needs higher capacity to serve YYA with existing housing resources	The CoC has a number of high performing organizations that serve YYA experiencing homelessness. But only half of YYA parents and less than a third of non-parenting YYA exit shelter or TH programs to permanent housing. Hampden County resources need to improve exit rates so that all YYA have a reasonable chance of success (See System Access Objectives and Actions).
Hampden County YYA receiving housing assistance need support to gain the skills needed to live independently	YYA with lived experience reported how challenging it was for them to live independently at an early age, without guidance and help in learning critical independent living skills, which they termed "how to adult." In our existing and planned housing support plan, almost all of the housing is time-limited. YYA emphasized that, during the time they are in these programs, they need support to learn skills they will need at the end of the program, including housing search, dealing with landlords, budgeting, and managing banking.

STABLE HOUSING: OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

<p>OBJECTIVE 2.1. Increase the supply of housing designed to meet YYA needs</p>	<p>Action 2.1.1. PSH for YYA with high need for services, particularly those with mental, developmental and substance use disorders and survivors of trafficking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support 8 units using YHDP funds ▪ Work with regional partners to identify 10 additional units over the next three years ▪ Consider the needs of YYA exiting systems of care who have high service needs and limited or no permanent connections in the community <p>Action 2.1.2. Flexible low barrier RRH that accounts for YYA choice</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support 30 units using YHDP funds ▪ Work with regional partners to identify 32 additional units over the next three years ▪ Eligibility should last until age 25 (24 and 11.9 months) or 2 years, whichever is longer ▪ Consider targeting a portion of the units to LGBTQ YYA <p>Action 2.1.3. TH to RRH for access to crisis housing with immediate option of RRH, all using housing first principles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Support 10 units equivalent using YHDP funds ▪ Work with regional partners to identify 10 additional units over the next three years <p>Action 2.1.4. Innovative TH-RRH (host homes, dorm, transitional living, multigenerational)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Work with regional partners to develop innovative housing models that target vulnerable populations and leverage community resources
<p>OBJECTIVE 2.2. Support YYA in housing programs to gain skills and competencies that support independence</p>	<p>Action 2.2.1. Require CoC- and YHDP-funded housing programs to provide programming for YYA that supports acquisition of skills, competencies, and self-efficacy needed for independent living and to incorporate positive youth development and trauma-informed care training for staff to provide effective, individualized, and YYA-diven supports</p> <p>LONG-TERM ACTION. Create a volunteer program that recruits local community members to help YYA understand the finance, credit, and banking-related skills that will allow YYA to meet their basic needs</p>
<p>OBJECTIVE 2.3. Improve access and successful connection to housing resources</p>	<p>Action 2.3.1. Implement a Landlord Liaison program that partners with and educates landlords to increase the availability of housing units for YYA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Embed within a comprehensive YYA coordinated entry strategy and coordinate across programs as a system-wide effort

3. Health and Well-being

Access to resources to help promote and maintain health and well-being at home, school, work, and in the community

HEALTH AND WELL-BEING: NEEDS	
Hampden County providers need increased capacity to competently support YYA experiencing homelessness	All YYA-homelessness service agencies need to employ staff trained in harm reduction and trauma informed care practices. During focus groups and planning meetings, YYA shared stories of interactions with provider staff from across YYA-serving systems that did not meet their needs and occasionally caused them harm. What's more, YYA reported leaving or avoiding systems all together when they were confident they would not have their well-being needs met. CSE and the impact of juvenile justice involvement are two areas where providers have little knowledge or connection to supportive resources. The community needs to train providers to fully support YYA health and well-being and to both identify and engage YYA in conversations about CSE.
Hampden County needs additional targeted healthcare efforts for YYA experiencing homelessness	Physical and behavioral health needs can act as barriers to housing, education, and employment success when not met. This is a reality for 37% of YYA in HMIS who report a disabling health condition (over 70% for non-parenting minors). 30% report a mental health condition and while only 6% report a substance use challenge, local stakeholders acknowledge that both our mental health and substance use data is underreported; particularly among parents who are reticent to acknowledge something that might put their parental rights at risk. Data from our annual youth count suggest the system is not meeting the needs of the majority of YYA experiencing homelessness and 25% of the 56 YYA who completed a standardized assessment claim they previously lost housing due to a mental health condition. YYA also highlighted the lack of professionals willing to prescribe needed medications and the general difficulty with filling prescriptions consistently over time. Planning committee members prioritized low-barrier access to an array of mental health services for YYA under 18 and 18-24 and access to YYA-specific substance use treatment. The county needs to provide better access to medical supports, including for physical health, and improved outreach efforts to connect YYA to existing resources.
Hampden County needs to invest more broadly in the well-being of YYA experiencing homelessness	Healthy living requires meeting basic daily survival needs which are often highly individual and varying from day to day and week to week. A system analysis of all non-housing or homelessness-specific YYA programs reveals a dearth of basic needs programs that might include the following: rest; food; toiletries; laundry; childcare services; and other related needs like immigration services; benefits enrollment; documentation and ID support; and legal services. When there are services, they are most often located in city centers with little access via region-wide transportation. The community needs additional locations and resources that flexibly meet basic needs like rest, hygiene, food, storage. It also needs the capacity to support spiritual, emotional, and holistic connections, and to offer barrier-busting fungible support like those offered through our region's Executive Office of Health and Human Services Unaccompanied Homeless Youth Commission grant.

<p>Hampden County needs health-related support for vulnerable subpopulations</p>	<p>National evidence and local expert experience suggests that the healthcare experience of certain populations is more severe than their counterparts, particularly in their risk for traumatic experiences and ability to find population-specific health and well-being supports. A review of community resources reveals few available programs for commercial and sexual exploitation recovery, disability services, domestic violence supports, or support for LGBTQ YYA. The experience of Latinx and Black YYA, particularly recent transplants from Puerto Rico and Central America, may also require a cultural competency that is not currently reflective of our YYA’s experiences. Finally, communities report very high teen pregnancy rates but very few related supportive services. The county needs the capacity to support childcare, survivors of commercial and sexual exploitation, LGBTQ YYA, immigrants, and targeted services for juvenile justice-involved YYA. The county also needs to invest in supports that address segregation, poverty, parenting, and the ability of Latinx YYA to return home. It needs to address the lack of culturally and linguistically competent strategies for family conflict resolution based on abuse, beliefs, and identity, and teen pregnancy.</p>
<p>HEALTH AND WELL-BEING: OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS</p>	
<p>OBJECTIVE 3.1. Improve healthcare outcomes of YYA and children of YYA</p>	<p>Action 3.1.1. Incorporate use of the SSI/SSDI Outreach, Access and Recovery (SOAR) model to increase access to SSI/SSDI for children of parenting YYA and YYA at-risk and experiencing homelessness through a new federal initiative directed toward YYA</p>
<p>OBJECTIVE 3.2. Support YYA well-being</p>	<p>Action 3.2.1. Include connections with clinical pastoral care in an array of services offered to promote spiritual health and connections to community</p> <p>LONG-TERM ACTION. Increase the number of safe spaces at non-clinical locations throughout the region to offer YYA an immediate safe location to go when in a crisis, collect themselves, and connect to trained supports</p> <p>LONG-TERM ACTION. Increase the number of and provide financial assistance to attend activities and programming for YYA at risk and experiencing homelessness, including meetups, school-based programs, interest groups, fitness classes, etc.</p>
<p>OBJECTIVE 3.3. Improve YYA behavioral health outcomes</p>	<p>Action 3.3.1. Build partnerships with local treatment programs and both mental health and substance use disorder services to improve diversion, care coordination, referral, and consistent access to prescribed medication</p> <p>LONG-TERM ACTION. Identify a system or strategy that enables YYA to obtain quick access to non-crisis mental health care</p> <p>LONG-TERM ACTION. Increase the availability of peer support for behavioral health and general well-being; consider use of the existing YYA peer support and self-advocacy program “Hope for Holyoke” as a model</p>

4. Education and Employment

Access without barriers to a variety of education and employment opportunities to achieve the personal and financial stability necessary to thrive

EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT: NEEDS	
<p>Hampden County needs increased capacity and opportunities at all levels of education, workforce development, and employment for YYA experiencing homelessness</p>	<p>National data suggest that educational attainment may be the greatest predictor of future homelessness, with lack of a GED or diploma increasing risk by 346%. Similarly, an income less than \$24,000 increases risk by 162%. And achieving a diploma or success in employment can be an insurmountable challenge when YYA don't have a stable home. But 26% of YYA experiencing homelessness are either not in school or do not have a diploma and only 31% report active employment. Stakeholders, including YYA, consistently ask for conversations about jobs and income to be integrated into system programs and are looking for pathways to meet their present and future educational and employment needs. Middle schools, high schools, and homeless service providers need to better support the educational outcomes of YYA experiencing homelessness, including educational re-engagement for those who have left or fallen off of a traditional education path. Community college students need housing and school support, including awareness among school staff, to account for the 47% who report housing insecurity and 13% who report homelessness. Hampden County needs more attractive workforce development opportunities specifically for YYA experiencing homelessness that lead to living wages, improved assistance program enrollment rates, employment strategies built into homelessness programs, and employers willing and ready to hire YYA experiencing homelessness.</p>
<p>Hampden County needs better data collection regarding education and employment</p>	<p>Education and employment support is often provided by a wide variety of non-homelessness dedicated partners, including public schools and non-profit organizations. Unfortunately, our HMIS only has grade level completion data for 1% of YYA served by system resources. The school system has a wealth of data, and could have more given their near-universal interaction with young people, but all that is currently shared is a static and limited yearly download. For example, Chicopee public schools reports that 43% of "homeless students" are also chronically absent. Understanding this data point across the entire county would be powerful. There is very little information currently shared with workforce development and employment partners. To make better information decisions on education and employment, Hampden County needs better data and data coordination on individual educational progress and employment status.</p>
<p>Hampden County needs to support the education of young parents and provide improved access to early childhood education</p>	<p>201 YYA parents and their 283 children utilized homelessness system services in 2019 with an average length of stay in shelter of 219 days and only a 51% rate of exit to permanent housing. Providers note that YYA parents appear to have higher rates of intimate partner violence, very low rates of high-school completion, and high levels of trauma experience. They appear unmotivated to go to school, to work, or move out of shelter. The community needs programming that addresses barriers to education and employment for parenting YYA and to ensure that all children of YYA parents have access to quality early childhood education. Early childhood education is recognized as one of the best investments that a community can make and it also supports YYA parents as they strive to achieve their own education and employment goals. Unfortunately, our resource analysis identified few early childhood education resources available to YYA parents experiencing homelessness.</p>

<p>Hampden County needs targeted education and employment programming for YYA of color and those experiencing intergenerational poverty</p>	<p>Hampden County has some of the largest wealth and income disparities in the country comparing Latinx and Black residents to their White-identified counterparts. Independently, Latinx unemployment is 21.5%, average income is \$23,911 and poverty rate is 40%; the Black poverty rate is 22%. There are unique challenges affecting employment for the Latinx population; for example, while the majority of the Latinx population is Puerto Rican, stakeholders identified fears about citizenship and false targeting as barriers. Providers have also highlighted specific challenges in both education and employment for unaccompanied Black and Latinx young men, many of whom have systems involvement, including engagement with the adult and juvenile criminal justice systems. The community needs culturally competent wealth-building programs that address intergenerational poverty, particularly among the Latinx population and both Black and Latinx male-identifying YYA, ages 20-24, in Springfield and other urban centers.</p>
<p>EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT: OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS</p>	
<p>OBJECTIVE 4.1. Improve Access to and Quality of Early Childhood Education</p>	<p>Action 4.1.1. Expand the number and capacity of existing parent education and support specialists so that young parents experiencing homelessness can access immediate case assignment, individual home visiting, parenting education and support, and child care services</p> <p>Action 4.1.2. Increase coordination with early childcare education resources (Head Start, child care subsidies, etc.) to prioritize YYA families experiencing homelessness for these resources</p>
<p>OBJECTIVE 4.2. Improve K-12 Outcomes</p>	<p>Action 4.2.1. Expand the existing “graduation coaches” program that currently serves YYA experiencing homelessness in select Springfield high schools throughout the county and include college readiness activities and FAFSA support</p> <p>Action 4.2.2. Increase the capacity of homeless liaisons and outreach social workers in K-12 so that every student who needs supports has access to them.</p> <p>LONG-TERM ACTION. Increase access to career and technical education opportunities connected to high school for YYA experiencing homelessness</p>
<p>OBJECTIVE 4.3. Improve Access to and Outcomes in Post-Secondary Educations</p>	<p>Action 4.3.1. Continue and expand the pilot homeless college student housing program in which Holyoke Community College students without housing may live in dorms at Westfield State University</p> <p>LONG-TERM ACTION. Increase the number and capacity of post-secondary liaisons (referred to as “SPOCs: Single Point of Contacts”) to help with FAFSA, loans, and general support on campus</p>
<p>OBJECTIVE 4.4. Connect to Supportive and Sustainable Employment</p>	<p>Action 4.4.1. Incorporate a short education and employment assessment into the coordinated entry intake process that will lead to targeted referrals based on identified needs and goals</p> <p>LONG-TERM ACTION. Launch employment hubs that are easily accessible in high schools, coordinate with liaisons and navigators, and focus on job opportunities for students and recent graduates</p> <p>LONG-TERM ACTION. Require all applicants responding to local grant applications, public and private, to include hiring YYA experiencing homelessness</p>

5. Permanent Connections

A consistent, self-identified person or people who can respectfully guide, support, and advocate with YYA to get their needs met

PERMANENT CONNECTIONS: NEEDS	
<p>Hampden County needs a strategy for building strong community connections to prevent homelessness and returns to homelessness</p>	<p>Both local and national experts advise that the most important element for YYA success is permanent connections, sometimes called “natural” or “community” supports. Yet most homelessness system programs struggle to provide this critical resource. Our YYA experiencing homelessness express a need for navigation, emotional and social support, and help regarding a wide-variety life skills and processes, including financial support. According to two studies in 2019, between 50% and 75% of adult children between 18 and 35 receive financial assistance from their parents. They also receive free advice and resources concerning insurance, house maintenance, healthy relationships, child rearing, connections to other people, etc. Those leaving systems of care may be at an even greater deficit for permanent connections than YYA experiencing homelessness who still have connections with families. The homelessness system needs greater collaboration with non-homelessness YYA programs that offer access to non-housing supports, including mentoring, life skills, and social activities, for urban, suburban, and rural communities. The community needs to help YYA navigate life challenges, including personal relationships, self-improvement, house-management and life skills, emotions, education, employment, medical care, and benefits systems.</p>
PERMANENT CONNECTIONS: OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS	
<p>OBJECTIVE 5.1. Connect More YYA to Positive Mentoring Experiences</p>	<p>Action 5.1.1. Create and expand opportunities for YYA with lived experience of homelessness to become mentors, especially Black, Latinx, and LGBTQ YYA</p> <p>Action 5.1.2. Improve connection to community mentorship programs to increase the number of all YYA able to access these programs</p>
<p>OBJECTIVE 5.2. Increase Access to Positive Peer Relationship Building</p>	<p>Action 5.2.1. Develop platforms where YYA experiencing homelessness can meet and build relationships and create a sense of community</p>
<p>OBJECTIVE 5.3. Increase Capacity of System Partners</p>	<p>Action 5.3.1. Train YYA-serving organizations to support the cultivation of permanent connections among YYA and consider a certification process to acknowledge their capacity</p>

Governance and Improvement

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

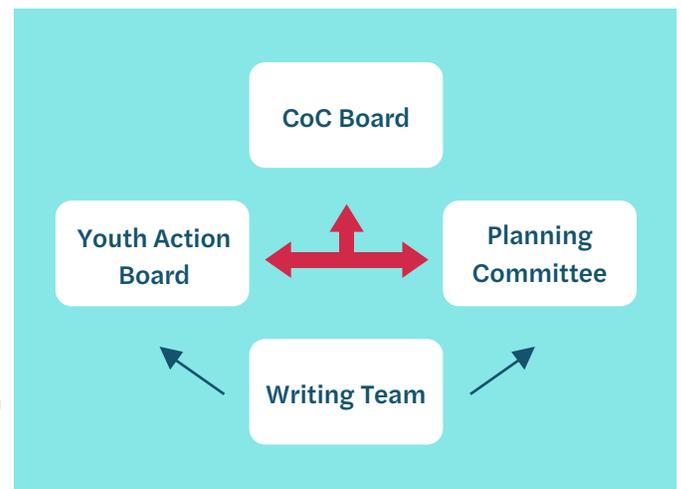
To ground the work of preventing and ending YYA homelessness in Hampden County, the Planning Committee developed and agreed upon a set of guiding principles:

1. Leadership by YYA
2. Collaboration between YYA and their adult allies
3. Data-informed decision making and evaluation
4. Centering equity in all policy and programs
5. Relentless commitment to transparency, positive outcomes, and innovative and sustainable solutions

These principles work together to elevate the voice of YYA, address racism and other inequities, and create a community commitment to long-term solutions. They also serve as cross-cutting themes that support each of the strategic areas outlined throughout the plan.

DECISION-MAKING

The Writing Team developed the initial framework for the planning process, prepared agendas and materials for meetings, facilitated conversations and actions between stakeholders, and consolidated content generated by community members. They led the drafting of the plan but did not act independently as decision-makers. **The Youth Action Board (YAB)** and **Planning Committee** acted as the primary decision-making bodies. They reviewed and approved the plan and then presented it to the **CoC Board** of Directors for their approval and signature.



The Planning Committee made decisions by consensus: nothing was included in the plan unless **all** members were at least **80%** comfortable. They also agreed to the following rules:

1. At least 3 YAB members must be present for a decision to be made.
2. Planning Committee YAB members represent the full YAB's perspective but may need to take a decision back to the full YAB before a decision can be made, at their discretion.
3. Ensure every voice is heard by listening actively, using respectful disagreement, and following our meeting agreements.

When YAB members on the Planning Committee brought decisions to the full YAB, the decisions were presented for a vote. Final votes at the YAB level were made by majority vote of YAB members present, with the vote taken anonymously. The YAB worked in close partnership with the Planning Committee throughout the planning process.

YHDP FUNDING ALLOCATIONS

The Planning Committee recognizes that \$2.4 million in HUD funding will accelerate our efforts to prevent and end YYA homelessness in Hampden County. We also recognize that our HUD funding is insufficient and that our plan will require significant local and state support. It is designed to best support certain types of projects—rental assistance, supportive services, coordinated entry, and system planning—and must be allocated quickly. With that in mind, the Planning Committee designed a decision-making process during Spring 2020 to allocate YHDP funding quickly, prevent conflicts of interest for those members who anticipated applying for those funds, and solicit proposals that most efficiently leveraged our HUD grant:

- 1. Project Design and Prioritization** was conducted according to the decision-making rules above. The entire Planning Committee participated in project design and prioritization. The process was aided by the use of both our housing model and a cost calculator that estimated the per unit cost of each proposed project and calculated the optimal amount of each (e.g., number of units) to reach our total YHDP award.
- 2. The RFP Team** included the writing team that incorporated the project design with application requirements and assessment criteria and a small group of planning committee members whose agency's were ineligible to apply for YHDP funding, including several YAB members, and who reviewed, edited, and approved the RFP.
- 3. Application and Proposal Selection** occurred between March 2 and April 24, 2020. This included a mandatory training and bidders' conference and allowed applicants approximately 6 weeks to write their applications. Separately, the writing team trained all RFP Team members to review applications. CoC staff assessed all applications for threshold requirements, and forwarded all applications that passed threshold requirements to the RFP Team. RFP members spent 10 days reviewing and independently scoring each application. The RFP Team certified the final slate of approved projects based on our 80/100 consensus rules.

A summary chart is below and the entire RFP has been uploaded to intothesporthampden.org. It is important to note that RFP includes YYA collaboration explicitly in its expectations for proposal development, implementation, and organizational decision-making.

Activity	2-Year Funding	Annual Quantity
Coordinated Entry and Navigation Project	\$576,742	Est. 100-150 YYA
Rapid Rehousing	\$1,080,000	30 units
Joint Transitional Housing - Rapid Rehousing	\$360,000	10 units
Permanent Supportive Housing	\$288,000	8 units

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT STRATEGY

Into the Spotlight will remain relevant by committing to outcomes and improving over time. To ensure the effectiveness of our plan, we commit to adapting as we learn and circumstances change and to honoring the transparent, YYA-led community process and shared ownership model that we used during its development.

Once this plan is approved, we will implement a new governance and decision-making framework for our CoC's YYA homelessness coordinated community response. The framework will include the following stakeholder groups and roles:

A YYA Homelessness Coordinated Community Response Director will be in charge of the day to day implementation of Into the Spotlight. They will lead the Hampden County effort, coordinate among partners, build community relationships, track implementation progress, and present progress updates and critical decisions to the Executive Committee.

A YYA Homelessness Executive Committee will provide oversight and be responsible for implementation and outcomes. The committee will support the Director and make decisions according to the framework developed during the planning process. Importantly, they will be in charge of reviewing outcome data and feedback from community partners in order to propose and approve changes to this plan. Membership must include participants from the YAB, the CoC, YYA providers, child welfare, justice, education, employment, and behavioral health. The membership will strive to include as many representatives from relevant sectors as possible and maintain a racial, ethnic, sexual orientation and gender identity balance that reflects the community to the greatest extent possible.

The YAB will be responsible for reviewing key products and decisions presented to the Executive Committee. The YAB will be included in all decisions, will nominate representatives to the Executive Committee, will provide feedback on the plan and its action steps, and can propose changes. The YAB will prioritize recruiting and raising up the voices of a diverse group of people who represent a variety of communities including, but not limited to, Latinx and Black YYA, LGBTQ YYA, YYA living with behavioral health challenges, YYA with systems experience, parenting YYA, and minors.

The CoC will take an active role in the coordinated community response. The CoC will be included in all decisions, will nominate representatives to the Executive Committee, and will commit to honoring decisions made by the Executive Committee that compel the CoC to take action. The CoC will play a leading role in providing data and managing the projects funded through the YHDP.

The Director and Executive Committee will collect and analyze project-level data, regularly gather feedback from project staff, and ensure clear and accessible feedback loops for program participants. The Director will track the implementation of plan objectives and actions, examine successes and challenges, assess movement toward plan outcomes, and work with the Executive Committee to identify opportunities to make plan refinements.

Transparency is critical to our improvement strategy. The Director will provide regular progress updates to be shared with community stakeholders on our community blog and via email. The Director and Executive Committee commit to open and public opportunities for feedback from a broad array of stakeholders and commit to outreach that brings in community members who do not frequently provide feedback.

The Executive Committee may create special subcommittees to review recommended plan revisions to include board members and other relevant subject matter experts. They may also provide training or technical assistance (through local expertise, local consultants, or YHDP technical assistance provided by HUD, the National Youth Forum, and the National Center for Homeless Education) to organizations implementing plan actions that need refinement or adjustment.

Further, we commit to the following regarding continuous learning and improvement:

- » Prioritizing YAB voice in planning, implementation, and evaluation
- » Utilizing YAB members as technical assistants in continuous learning and improvement
- » Using current data to set benchmarks and our Simple Housing Model to adapt them as investments change and performance improves
- » Collecting and analyzing qualitative data from YYA, providers, funders, and other stakeholders to evaluate progress and the need for change
- » Co-hosting focus groups with the YAB to obtain and incorporate feedback from YYA currently engaging with system resources
- » Including quantitative data analysis in ongoing evaluation efforts and dashboard development and share findings with local stakeholders
- » Establishing a learning community environment amongst providers who are implementing plan projects
- » Providing opportunities for both remote and in-person learning forums for non-urban partners and to learn from other YHDP communities.

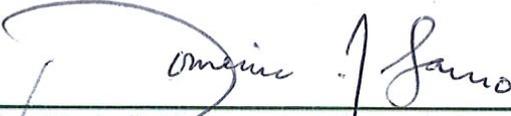
HUD Required Signatures

In Section III.F.b of the FY 2018 YHDP NOFA, HUD requires that representatives of the Continuum of Care, Public Child Welfare Agency, a Local Government Agency, and the Youth Action Board, participate in the planning process, approve of the coordinated community plan, and provide a signature verifying their approval. The purpose is to ensure broad partnership and shared ownership in a program that crosses multiple sectors and jurisdictions.

We, the representatives of these entities, verify that our agencies have participated in the planning process, reviewed this document, and approve of “Into the Spotlight” as Hampden County’s coordinated community plan to prevent and end youth and young adult homelessness.

We commit to supporting the implementation of this plan. We will work to ensure that its values and principles are upheld and that we remain reliable partners to the many stakeholders who have invested so much time and effort in its creation. Together we can end youth and young adult homelessness in Hampden County

Signed by the following HUD required representatives:



City of Springfield: Domenic J. Sarno, Mayor



Continuum of Care: Geraldine McCafferty, CoC Administrator



Youth Action Board: Jacob Chacon



MA Department of Children and Families: Linda Spears, Commissioner

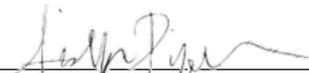
Planning Committee Signatures

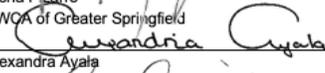
We the members of the Hampden County YHDP Planning Committee approve “Into the Spotlight,” our community’s coordinated community plan to prevent and end youth and young adult homelessness.

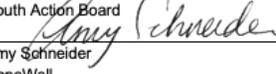
We reviewed the plan individually, held a series of meetings to discuss whether each aspect of the plan met our shared principles, and reached consensus.

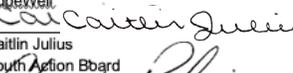
We commit to supporting the implementation of this plan. We understand that it will take a community-wide effort and, not only our collective resources, but also the resources of many other community stakeholders. Nevertheless, we are confident that with our commitment, including a commitment to shared ownership, young adult leadership, transparency, and continuous improvement, that following Into the Spotlight will set us on a path to preventing and ending youth and young adult homelessness in Hampden County for good.

Signed on this day, May 4, 2020 by the following Planning Committee Members:

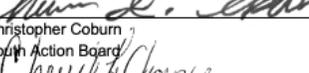

 Aisha Pizarro
 YWCA of Greater Springfield

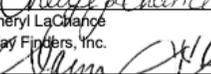

 Alexandra Ayala
 Youth Action Board

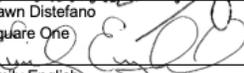

 Amy Schneider
 HopeWell

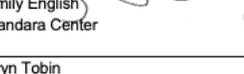

 Caitlin Julius
 Youth Action Board

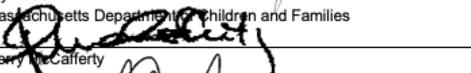

 Christine Palmieri
 Mental Health Association

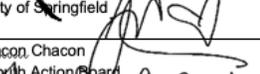

 Christopher Coburn
 Youth Action Board

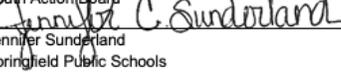

 Cheryl LaChance
 Way Finders, Inc.


 Dawn Distefano
 Square One


 Emily English
 Gandara Center

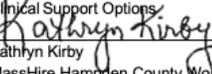

 Eryn Tobin
 Massachusetts Department of Children and Families


 Gerry McCafferty
 City of Springfield

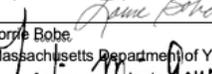

 Jason Chacon
 Youth Action Board

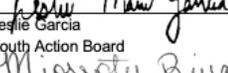

 Jennifer Sunderland
 Springfield Public Schools

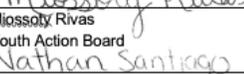

 Karin Jeffers
 Clinical Support Options

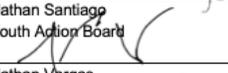

 Kathryn Kirby
 MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board

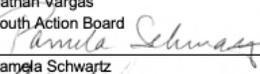

 Kermit Dunkelberg
 Holyoke Community College

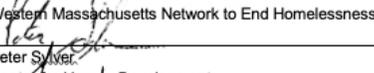

 Lorie Bobe
 Massachusetts Department of Youth Services

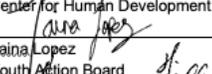

 Leslie Garcia
 Youth Action Board

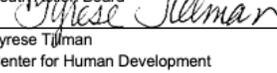

 Miassoty Rivas
 Youth Action Board


 Nathan Santiago
 Youth Action Board


 Nathan Vargas
 Youth Action Board


 Pamela Schwartz
 Western Massachusetts Network to End Homelessness


 Peter Silver
 Center for Human Development


 Taina Lopez
 Youth Action Board


 Tyrese Tillman
 Center for Human Development

Appendix A: Planning Background



This coordinated community plan is a year and a half in the making. During the spring and summer of 2019, the Hampden County CoC, led by the City of Springfield Office of Housing, conducted a Community Needs Assessment (CNA) as part of its Massachusetts Executive Office of Health and Human Services youth homeless grant. Over the course of six months, the CoC worked with a consulting team to gather quantitative data, conduct stakeholder interviews, facilitate focus groups, lead community presentations, and help the community apply for the YHDP. That effort produced [Under The Radar: An Assessment of Youth and Young Adult Homelessness in Hampden County, Massachusetts](#). It also prepared the community for a YYA homelessness planning effort that would use the CNA to build an effective YYA homelessness response.



The CoC intentionally designed its CNA and planning process to mirror the expectations of HUD's YHDP, including the development of a new YAB. When HUD selected Hampden County as a YHDP community **in August 2019**, the CoC had already identified several lead partners and begun to collaborate with local and state agencies. The planning process was led by a newly formed Planning Committee, which was made up of five YAB members, two other YYA who had been involved in foster care planning, DCF, members of the CoC Board of Directors, and other stakeholders. The Planning Committee met regularly, roughly twice a month, **from September 2019 through April 2020**. The work of the Planning Committee was supported by the Writing Team and the HUD-provided technical assistance provider.



From September to December, 2019, the Planning Committee defined its vision, goals, guiding principles, and decision-making structure. A separate track dove more deeply into four of the five plan goals: housing, permanent connections, education and employment, and health and well-being.

The tracks started with facilitated conversations with the YAB to identify needs and barriers, and moved into half-day design sessions with a broader set of stakeholders. These design sessions included YAB members, additional YYA, Planning Committee members, and subject-matter experts, who worked together to explore issues and develop potential solutions.

The work generated in the design sessions produced a very rough first draft of objectives and action steps. The Writing Team organized this material to serve as the information base for the YAB and the Planning Committee to analyze, prioritize, and make decisions.

Between January 2020 and April 2020, the Planning committee held two prioritization sessions to reduce the list of recommended actions to two smaller groups:

- 1) those prioritized for immediate work, and
- 2) those to work towards in the long term as we complete prioritized actions. Many actions were left on the cutting room floor to keep our plan focused.

A parallel process emerged for the drafting of a Request For Proposals (RFP) for projects funded through the YHDP. After the Planning Committee drafted core project elements, a smaller group of members ineligible to apply for funding developed the RFP, reviewed applications, and selected projects for award.

On May 4, 2020, the Planning Committee signed the plan, providing their approval according to its decision-making framework.

Appendix B: Planning Team Roster

(In alphabetical order)

Aisha Pizarro	YWCA of Greater Springfield
Alexandra Ayala	Youth Action Board
Amy Schneider	HopeWell
Caitlin Julius	Youth Action Board
Christine Palmieri	Mental Health Association
Christopher Corburn	Youth Action Board
Cheryl LaChance	Way Finders, Inc.
Dawn Distefano	Square One
Emily English	Gandara Center
Eryn Tobin	Massachusetts Department of Children and Families
Gerry McCafferty	City of Springfield
Jacon Chacon	Youth Action Board
Janice Humason	Clinical Support Options/Friends of the Homeless
Jennifer Sunderland	Springfield Public Schools
Kathryn Kirby	MassHire Hampden County Workforce Board
Kermit Dunkelberg	Holyoke Community College
Lorrie Bobe	Massachusetts Department of Youth Services
Leslie Garcia	Youth Action Board
Miosoty Rivas	Youth Action Board
Nathan Santiago	Youth Action Board
Nathan Vargas	Youth Action Board
Pamela Schwartz	Western Massachusetts Network to End Homelessness
Peter Sylver	Center for Human Development
Taina Lopez	Youth Action Board
Tyrese Tillman	Center for Human Development

Appendix C: Full List of Partners

PARTNERS	PARTNER'S NAME	INVOLVEMENT
a. CoC Board	Springfield-Hampden County Continuum of Care - Board of Directors	Review and approval of all components of plan; provision of HMIS data; participation of multiple board members in planning and working sessions; provision of planning funds
b. Youth Advisory Boards	Youth Action Board (YAB)	Member of stakeholder planning group; participation in all planning groups/sessions, decision-making authority exercised by YAB approval of all parts of the plan and through its representation on the CoC Board of Directors
c. Local and State Government	City of Springfield	Staff support for planning; lead and participate in planning activities; review and approval of all components of plan
	Massachusetts Executive Office of Health and Human Services	Funding support for YAB; provision of state agency data
d. Public Child Welfare Agencies	Massachusetts Department of Children and Families	Member of stakeholder planning group; and participation in all planning groups/sessions; review and approval of all components of plan; assisting foster care youth to attend planning and YAB meetings
e. ESG Program Recipients	YWCA of Western Massachusetts	Member of stakeholder planning group; participation in Education/Employment planning
	Clinical and Support Options-Friends of the Homeless	Member of stakeholder planning group;
f. Local and State Law Enforcement and Judges	Hampden County Sheriff's Department	Provision of data
	Springfield Police Department	Provision of data
g. Early Childhood Development and Child Care providers	Square One	Member of stakeholder planning group; participation in Education/Employment planning

h. Local and State Educational Agencies	Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education	Participation in Education/Employment planning
	Springfield Public Schools	Member of stakeholder planning group; participation in Education/Employment planning
	Chicopee Public Schools	Participation in Education/Employment planning
	West Springfield Public Schools	Participation in Education/Employment planning
i. Runaway and Homeless Youth Program Providers	Center for Human Development - Safety Zone	Member of stakeholder planning group; participation in all planning groups/sessions; provision of staff for ongoing YAB facilitation
j. Non-Profit Youth Organizations	HopeWell, Inc.	Member of stakeholder planning group; participation in Permanent Connections, Education/Employment, and Health & Well-Being planning
	Youth Villages	Participation in Permanent Connection and Education/Employment, and Health & Well-Being planning
	Friends of Children - Focus Program	Participation in Permanent Connections planning
k. Juvenile and Adult Corrections and Probation	Massachusetts Department of Youth Services	Member of stakeholder planning group; provision of data
	Hampden County Sheriff's Department	Provision of data
l. Health, Mental Health, and Substance Abuse Agencies	Gandara Center	Member of stakeholder planning group; participation in all planning groups/sessions; provision of staff for ongoing YAB facilitation; provision of meeting space, food and supplies for the YAB
	Mental Health Association	Member of stakeholder planning group; participation in Permanent Connections, Education/Employment, and Health & Well-Being planning
	Behavioral Health Network	Participation in Health & Well-Being planning
m. WIOA Boards and Employment Agencies	MassHire Hampden County	Member of stakeholder planning group; participation in Education/Employment planning

n. Landlords		
o. Public Housing Authorities	Springfield Housing Authority	
	Holyoke Housing Authority	
p. Institutions of Higher Education	Holyoke Community College	Member of stakeholder planning group; participation in Education/Employment planning
	Westfield State College	Participation in Education/Employment planning
q. Community Development Corporations	New North Citizens Council	Participation in Education/Employment planning
r. Affordable Housing Developers	Way Finders, Inc.	Member of stakeholder planning group; participation in Education/Employment planning
s. Local Advocacy, Research, and Philanthropic Organizations	Davis Foundation	Funding for YAB
	Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts	Funding for YAB
	United Way of Hampden County	Funding for YAB; participation in Permanent Connections planning
	Treehouse Foundation	Participation in Permanent Connections planning
t. Privately Funded Homeless Organizations		
Additional Organizations	Springfield Works	Participation in Education/Employment planning
	Massachusetts Mentoring Partnership	Participation in Permanent Connections planning
	Western Massachusetts Network to End Homelessness	Member of stakeholder planning group; Participation in Housing, Permanent Connections, Education/Employment planning
	Springfield Public Library	Participation in Permanent Connections planning
	Gardening the Community	Participation in Permanent Connections and Education/Employment planning
	I Found Light Against All Odds	Participation in Health & Well-Being planning

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