

Youth Homeless Demonstration Program

# Coordinated Community Plan

Milwaukee 2024



*YAB members created materials for recruitment within the Drop-In Center, that specifically support the advocacy and recognition of survivors of homelessness, sex trafficking and exploitation.*

**LIVE**

Can you imagine if  
I was down but I still chose to give  
Found it hard but I still could forgive  
Thought that I couldn't but knew that I can  
I'd take back them choices I did  
Thought the "world is yours" just was a wish  
Now I just look back and grin  
Oh, the moments that I remember when  
How I laid down my life just to live

*Edgar Allan Poe*

## We Are POP

POP has been around a little over a year now. I remember joining POP, it was fun and exciting. The fun part was, I got the chance to share my opinion. The exciting part is I get to advocate for so many people who look like me. POP has a mixture of races on its board and I think we all can agree.

We Are POP

POP has given me a chance to grow as a person and also meet so many different people with many different opinions. We debate, disagree, and often agree. That's what makes us a strong team and a force to be reckoned with.

We Are POP

We are "Strong, Smart, Funny, Intelligent, Clever and Sharp"

We Are POP

POP sympathizes with homeless youth because we have lived experience. Being smart is not the only thing that makes us strong, but our stories. Our stories are what make us go above and beyond to advocate for the future.

We Are POP

"It feels so good to be a part of something greater than yourself; Wouldn't you agree?" We are here, and we are focused and ready to learn and teach.

WE ARE POP

*~ D'Angelo Markham*

*\*POP is Power of Path Youth Action Board*

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## Introduction

Milwaukee's pathway to the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP) application has been paved by a history of collaboration among youth service providers, the lead agency, and the insights of the Youth Advisory Board (YAB). While the city's youth have previously received support through various system programs, and youth provider leadership has had a presence on the Board of Directors, there has historically been an absence of dedicated funding specifically for youth homelessness initiatives. Recognizing the critical need for targeted resources, the decision was made to pursue dedicated funding. This strategic move aimed to fill a significant gap in the existing system, ensuring more focused and effective support for homeless youth. The YHDP application represents a deliberate step towards a dedicated youth homelessness system designed to address the unique needs of this vulnerable population in Milwaukee.



*YAB members and other community members with lived expertise, CoC board members, Coordinated Entry-IMPACT 211, Milwaukee County, United Way, direct services providers for homeless services all gathered for YHDP planning, and talking through assessments and priorities that could support YHDP efforts.*

## Acknowledgments

### Youth Action Board Members

- Adojana
- Beth O'Brien
- Cherry Paw
- D'Angelo Markham
- Davonta Sellers
- Dream Lecher
- Hazel Scott
- Jaroy Johnson
- Kathryn Yang
- Markell Crawford
- Marvin Hicks
- Shabae
- Tatyana Wright
- T Ray

### YHDP Coordination Team

- Davonta Sellers, Power of Paths Youth Action Board President
- Kathryn Yang, Power of Paths Youth Action Board Vice President

- Beth O'Brien, Power of Paths Youth Action Board Secretary
- D'Angelo Markham, Power of Paths Youth Action Board Treasurer
- Emily Adams-Whitcomb, Continuum of Care Strategic Initiatives Manager, City of Milwaukee
- Audra O'Connell, Executive Director, Walker's Point Youth & Family Center
- DeShanda Williams-Clark, Sr. VP of Programs & Services, Pathfinders
- Emily Kenney, Director of Systems Change, IMPACT, Inc.

### Technical Assistance Providers

- Angel Brown, True Colors United
- Ely Sepúlveda Garcia, Abt Global
- Gary Wickersham, The Partnership Center
- Kathryn Primas, Abt Global
- Megan Johnson, National Center for Homeless Education
- Tim Syth, Contexture

### Acronyms List

1. CCP: Coordinated Community Plan
2. CoC: Continuum of Care
3. HUD: US Department of Housing and Urban Development
4. RHY: Runaway and Homeless Youth
5. TA: Technical Assistance
6. YAB: Youth Action Board
7. YHDP: Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program
8. YYA: Youth and Young Adults
  - a. Definition: For YHDP, this group encompasses youth and young adults aged 24 and younger who are unaccompanied by a parent or caregiver over the age of 24. It is inclusive of youth and young adults who are parents or caregivers for children, youth and young adults who are partnered but not parenting, and youth and young adults who are surviving independently.

### Housing Types

1. ES: Emergency Shelter
2. OPH: Permanent Supportive Housing
3. PSH: Permanent Supportive Housing
4. RRH: Rapid Re-Housing
5. SH: Safe Haven
6. TH: Transitional Housing

## Mission and Vision

### Introduction

Milwaukee's YHDP CCP is dedicated to ending youth homelessness by fostering a comprehensive support system that includes housing, income, and social services. Guided by principles of youth choice and voice, the program aims to ensure that Milwaukee becomes a city where every young person has access to safe, immediate shelter and flexible housing, making homelessness brief, rare, and a non-recurring phenomenon.

### Alignment

A multifaceted approach has been implemented to align the work done between all stakeholders and clearly articulate the direction and values of the community. This approach began with listening sessions to ensure a broad range of voices were heard, directly incorporating input from the Youth Advisory Board (YAB) to center the perspectives of those most affected by homelessness. Additionally, a Youth Needs Survey was conducted to gather data on the specific needs within the community. A kick-off event launched the initiative and served as an opportunity for engagement and feedback. Continued outreach efforts are vital to maintaining momentum and ensuring ongoing dialogue with the community. A dedicated listserv for the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP), alongside discussions on general listservs and active engagement through social media, facilitates open communication and collaboration. This strategy ensures that the direction and values of the community are communicated and that the work remains aligned across all stakeholders.

## Mission, Vision, and Values

### Mission

The goal of the Milwaukee Coalition on Housing and Homelessness Youth Homeless Demonstration Program is to prevent and reduce youth homelessness. We seek to uplift a holistic safety net of services including housing, income, and social support by increasing collaboration for greater system effectiveness. We will use a unified definition of homelessness and integrity, and be led by youth voice and choice across the homeless response system. We will achieve this by working to increase the visibility and advocacy of youth homelessness with local leaders in power.

### Vision

We envision a Milwaukee that offers safe and affirming spaces for youth and young adults that ensure immediate shelter and flexible housing options. The experience of youth homelessness will be brief, infrequent, and non-recurring. The Milwaukee Coalition on Housing and Homelessness will center youth-led, holistic programming to inform local services and strategies.

### Our Values

Addressing the issue of youth homelessness requires a comprehensive approach that places young people at the center of all interventions and strategies. The core values identified by the Youth Advisory Board (YAB) and other stakeholders reflect a deep understanding of the multifaceted nature of homelessness and the

importance of empowering those it affects directly. These values—Youth Choice, Youth Voice, Lived Experience, Provision of Life Skills, Youth-Centered, and Continuum of Support—are critical in creating effective, sustainable solutions.

**Youth Choice** and **Youth Voice** emphasize the importance of including young people in the decision-making processes that affect their lives. This approach ensures that the services and support provided are relevant and tailored to the individual needs of those experiencing homelessness. It also fosters a sense of agency among youth, encouraging them to take an active role in their journey.

The value placed on **Lived Experience** recognizes that those who have navigated the challenges of homelessness possess invaluable insights into the barriers and opportunities within existing support systems. By integrating these perspectives into the development and implementation of policies and programs, organizations can ensure that their efforts are grounded in reality and truly responsive to the needs of homeless youth.

The **Provision of Life Skills** acknowledges the critical gap in practical knowledge that many young people face, particularly those without stable support networks. By equipping youth with essential skills for independent living—such as financial literacy, job readiness, and self-care—stakeholders can empower them to build successful, self-sufficient futures.

A **Youth-Centered** approach is fundamental, recognizing each young person as an individual with unique strengths, challenges, and aspirations. Tailoring services to fit these individual needs ensures that support systems are both effective and respectful of the dignity of those they serve.

Finally, the commitment to a **Continuum of Support** underscores the understanding that the journey from homelessness to stability is not linear and varies greatly from person to person. This value calls for a flexible, responsive system that can provide varying levels of support. Flexible funding mechanisms are crucial in this model, allowing for adaptable responses to the changing needs of youth as they progress toward independence. Aftercare is equally critical as it recognizes the fact that individuals achieve self-sustainability on unique and varying timelines that do not always fit within programmatic limitations.

By upholding these core values, the YAB and other stakeholders can create a supportive, empowering environment for young people facing homelessness. This values-driven approach not only addresses the immediate challenges of homelessness but also builds a foundation for long-term stability and success.

### How we align with YHDP Principles

Our core values—Youth Choice, Youth Voice, Lived Experience, Provision of Life Skills, Youth-Centered, and Continuum of Support—harmonize with YHDP's principles—Special Populations, Equity, Positive Youth Development & Trauma-Informed Care, Unsheltered Homelessness, Youth Choice, Individualized & Client-Driven Supports, Family Engagement, Housing First, Social & Community Integration, and Coordinated Entry—advocating for a strategic, empathetic approach to youth homelessness.

These values underline the importance of equity, acknowledging the diverse needs of special populations, and are rooted in the practices of Positive Youth Development and Trauma-Informed Care. By prioritizing Youth Choice and ensuring interventions are client-driven, we align with the Housing First model and advocate for the immediate provision of housing alongside supportive services. Our approach emphasizes

the significance of social and community integration through life skills education, adheres to a Youth-Centered methodology, and supports the Coordinated Entry system, ensuring that our efforts are inclusive, empowering, and responsive to the unique challenges and strengths of young people facing homelessness.

## Statement of Need

### Introduction

The plight of youth homelessness presents a stark reality marked by cold, loneliness, and a constant struggle for basic needs. These young individuals fight not just for survival but to maintain some semblance of normalcy in their lives. The instability of housing significantly disrupts their ability to focus on education, secure stable employment, and find a place they can call home, with schooling often becoming the first casualty in their list of priorities. The lack of social and emotional support, coupled with challenges to mental wellness, further exacerbates their vulnerability. The criminalization of homelessness leads to jails and hospitals becoming de facto housing solutions, placing these youths in even riskier environments. Addressing youth homelessness requires a comprehensive approach that encompasses housing, education, employment, and social and emotional well-being.

### Housing

The cornerstone of tackling youth homelessness is providing stable and accessible housing. The Housing First model stands out by offering homeless youth immediate access to permanent, affordable housing without preconditions, such as sobriety or employment. This approach prioritizes the right to housing as a foundation for addressing other life challenges. It facilitates stability, enabling young people to focus on long-term goals and recovery. However, the availability of such youth-specific housing options is limited, highlighting the need for more widespread implementation and adaptations to specifically meet the needs of young individuals.

Homeless youth often struggle to find housing they can afford on their limited incomes, perpetuating their cycle of homelessness. Many homeless youth require more than just shelter; they need supportive services to address underlying issues such as mental health challenges, substance abuse, or trauma. However, there is often a shortage of supportive housing programs tailored to their unique needs, leaving them without access to essential services and resources.

Homeless youth may face barriers to accessing transitional housing programs, which provide temporary housing and supportive services to help individuals transition to permanent housing. Age restrictions, eligibility criteria, and limited availability of beds can all hinder homeless youth from accessing these crucial programs. There is a lack of specialized housing services specifically tailored to the needs of homeless youth. Safe and supportive environments that cater to their developmental stage and provide age-appropriate services are essential but often unavailable.

In Wisconsin, legal regulations present a significant challenge for minors seeking shelter. Specifically, under Chapter DCF 57, minors are permitted to stay in a shelter for only 21 days, in stark contrast to adults, who may stay for up to 24 months. Additionally, minors can be sheltered for just 12 hours before the

requirement kicks in to either obtain guardian permission or for the service provider to petition the Children's Court for authorization to place the child in the shelter.

Homeless youth may lack the knowledge, resources, or support networks necessary to navigate complex housing systems effectively. They may struggle to understand eligibility requirements, complete paperwork, or access housing resources, further hindering their ability to secure stable housing. Furthermore, discrimination and stigma present significant barriers to homeless youth when attempting to access housing. Whether from landlords, neighbors, or community members, discrimination can make it challenging for them to find housing and maintain stable living arrangements, exacerbating their homelessness.

## Education

Homelessness disrupts the educational journey of many young people, making consistent schooling and academic progress challenging. The instability and survival priorities often push education to the background, adversely affecting their prospects. Enhancing access to education for homeless youth involves flexible schooling options, support programs that cater to their unique circumstances, and measures to ensure that education remains a priority despite housing challenges. This can include tutoring, mentorship programs, and advocacy to remove barriers to school attendance and success.



*Youth leaders led a project that included educating peers on the environmental issues here in Milwaukee, and as part of that project funding led by youth leaders - they planned and designed murals, these youth were compensated for the art and education sessions.*

Several gaps in educational opportunities affect homeless youth, exacerbating the challenges they face in obtaining a quality education. Inconsistent attendance due to frequent moves or disruptions in living situations is a significant issue. Homeless youth may struggle to attend school regularly, leading to missed lessons and falling behind in coursework. This irregularity also hampers their ability to form meaningful relationships with teachers and peers, which are crucial for academic success and emotional support.

Access to essential educational resources is limited for homeless youth. They may lack textbooks, school supplies, or technology like computers and internet access, hindering their ability to complete assignments and participate fully in classroom activities. Additionally, transportation barriers pose a significant challenge.

Many homeless youth may not have reliable transportation to get to school regularly or access extracurricular activities and support services, further isolating them from educational opportunities.

The emotional and psychological toll of homelessness can impact academic performance. Feelings of anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem may interfere with their ability to concentrate in class and engage with academic material. Moreover, stigma and discrimination from peers and school staff create a hostile learning environment, discouraging homeless youth from attending school or seeking help when needed.

## Employment

Employment opportunities for homeless youth are often hindered by a lack of experience, education, and a stable address. To bridge this gap, targeted support is essential, including job training programs, resume-building workshops, and connections to employers willing to hire and support them. Such initiatives can empower these young individuals with the skills and opportunities needed to secure stable employment, which is crucial for independence and self-sufficiency.

*Youth leaders led a project that included educating peers on the environmental issues here in Milwaukee, and as part of that project funding led by youth leaders - they planned and designed murals, these youth were compensated for the art and education sessions.*



Many homeless youths lack significant work experience due to circumstances such as unstable living situations or disruptions in education, leading to incomplete schooling or limited qualifications for higher-paying jobs. This limited work history puts them at a disadvantage when competing with other job seekers who may have more extensive experience.

The requirement for a stable address poses a significant obstacle for homeless youth seeking employment. Many employers mandate a fixed residence for job applications, making it challenging for those without permanent housing to provide consistent contact information or complete application forms.

Transportation barriers also contribute to the employment gap, as homeless youth may struggle to access transportation to attend job interviews or commute to work, particularly if job opportunities are not within walking distance or if public transportation is limited.

Mental health and emotional challenges associated with homelessness can impede homeless youth from effectively seeking, obtaining, and maintaining employment. Issues such as trauma, depression, or substance abuse can hinder their ability to pursue job opportunities with confidence and motivation. Additionally, limited support systems further compound these challenges, as homeless youth may lack the guidance, mentorship, or access to professional networks necessary for navigating the job market successfully.

## Social and Emotional Well-being

The social and emotional challenges of homelessness, including isolation, stress, and mental health struggles, require dedicated support services. Peer support, mental health counseling, and health care access can provide the foundation for addressing these complex needs. Programs that focus on building social connections, developing coping strategies, and enhancing resilience are vital. Overcoming the criminalization of homelessness and ensuring these services are accessible without stigma or barriers can significantly improve the well-being of homeless youth.

Homeless youth often encounter barriers to accessing mental health services, despite experiencing high levels of stress, trauma, and mental health challenges. Limited availability of services tailored to their needs, lack of insurance coverage, and stigma surrounding mental health within their communities prevent many homeless youth from receiving the support they require to address their emotional well-being.

Homeless youth may lack stable, supportive relationships with adults or peers who can provide guidance, mentorship, and emotional support. This absence of positive relationships leaves them feeling isolated, alone, and unsure of where to turn for help during times of crisis or need. Additionally, homelessness disrupts their education, impacting academic performance and leading to feelings of frustration, inadequacy, and low self-esteem. The lack of access to educational support services further exacerbates these challenges, as homeless youth struggle to address academic difficulties and stay engaged in their studies.

Homeless youth often lack healthy coping mechanisms for dealing with stress, trauma, and adversity. Without access to appropriate resources and support, they may resort to unhealthy coping strategies, such as substance abuse or risky behaviors. Social exclusion, stigma, and discrimination from peers and communities further isolate homeless youth, impacting their sense of belonging and self-worth. They may struggle to form meaningful connections and participate in social activities due to the shame and judgment associated with experiencing homelessness.

Homeless youth often lack opportunities to develop essential life skills, such as financial literacy, job readiness, communication, and conflict resolution skills. Without these skills, they face challenges in navigating their way out of homelessness and achieving long-term stability and independence. Addressing these gaps requires a comprehensive approach that includes increasing access to mental health services, fostering supportive relationships, providing educational support, teaching healthy coping mechanisms, promoting social integration, and offering life skills development programs tailored to the unique needs of homeless youth. By addressing these challenges, communities can help homeless youth build resilience, self-confidence, and hope for the future despite the adversity they face.

Engaging youth experiencing homelessness with a holistic approach that integrates housing stability, educational support, employment opportunities, and social and emotional well-being can create a pathway out of homelessness. Tailored interventions, early support, and a focus on the individual needs of young people are key to empowering them toward long-term stability and success.

## Data

Below is the most recent data on youth homelessness in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, offering a snapshot of this critical issue. This data is pulled from HMIS for the last completed year, 1/1/2023 to 12/31/2023.

This data underscores the urgent need for comprehensive strategies and resources to address and mitigate youth homelessness in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. And to ensure understanding of the charts, Unacc Youth experiencing homelessness spend the night in emergency shelters or in transitional, or temporary, housing. Unsheltered youth sleep on the streets, in cars, in abandoned buildings, or in other places not intended for human habitation. The need for a youth-focus liaison is demonstrated by the Missing and Data Not Collected line items in the charts below.

| <b>Age Tier</b> | <b>Unacc Youth experiencing homelessness</b> | <b>Parenting or Pregnant Youth experiencing homelessness</b> | <b>Unsheltered Youth</b> | <b>At-risk Youth</b> |
|-----------------|----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|
| 0 to 17         | 319                                          | 9                                                            | 165                      | 313                  |
| 18 to 24        | 349                                          | 57                                                           | 660                      | 454                  |
| <b>Totals</b>   | <b>668</b>                                   | <b>66</b>                                                    | <b>825</b>               | <b>766</b>           |

*This data is pulled from HMIS for the last completed year, 1/1/2023 to 12/31/2023*

| <b>Race and Ethnicity</b>                     | <b>Unacc Youth experiencing homelessness</b> | <b>Parenting or Pregnant Youth experiencing homelessness</b> | <b>Unsheltered Youth</b> | <b>At-risk Youth</b> |
|-----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|
| American Indian, Alaska Native, or Indigenous | 5                                            | 0                                                            | 3                        | 5                    |
| Asian or Asian American                       | 11                                           | 0                                                            | 5                        | 3                    |
| Black, African American, or African           | 451                                          | 53                                                           | 621                      | 583                  |
| Hispanic/Latina/e/o                           | 5                                            | 0                                                            | 7                        | 14                   |
| Multi-Racial                                  | 121                                          | 11                                                           | 111                      | 100                  |
| Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander           | 3                                            | 0                                                            | 2                        | 0                    |
| White                                         | 72                                           | 2                                                            | 65                       | 46                   |
| Client doesn't know                           | 0                                            | 0                                                            | 2                        | 2                    |
| Client prefers not to answer                  | 0                                            | 0                                                            | 5                        | 11                   |

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|                    |            |           |            |            |
|--------------------|------------|-----------|------------|------------|
| Data not collected | 0          | 0         | 4          | 2          |
| <b>Totals</b>      | <b>668</b> | <b>66</b> | <b>825</b> | <b>766</b> |

*This data is pulled from HMIS for the last completed year, 1/1/2023 to 12/31/2023*

| <b>Sexual Orientation</b>    | <b>Unacc Youth experiencing homelessness</b> | <b>Parenting or Pregnant Youth experiencing homelessness</b> | <b>Unsheltered Youth</b> | <b>At-risk Youth</b> |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|
| Heterosexual                 | 183                                          | 8                                                            | 223                      | 36                   |
| Bisexual                     | 35                                           | 2                                                            | 26                       | 19                   |
| Other                        | 9                                            | 0                                                            | 4                        | 4                    |
| Lesbian                      | 8                                            | 0                                                            | 4                        | 1                    |
| Gay                          | 6                                            | 0                                                            | 7                        | 3                    |
| Questioning/Unsure           | 3                                            | 0                                                            | 5                        | 3                    |
| Missing                      | 354                                          | 55                                                           | 631                      | 699                  |
| Data not collected           | 79                                           | 1                                                            | 11                       | 0                    |
| Client prefers not to answer | 11                                           | 0                                                            | 17                       | 3                    |
| Client doesn't know          | 0                                            | 0                                                            | 8                        | 0                    |
| <b>Totals</b>                | <b>668</b>                                   | <b>66</b>                                                    | <b>825</b>               | <b>766</b>           |

*This data is pulled from HMIS for the last completed year, 1/1/2023 to 12/31/2023*

| <b>Foster Care: Former Ward</b> | <b>Unacc Youth experiencing homelessness</b> | <b>Parenting or Pregnant Youth experiencing homelessness</b> | <b>Unsheltered Youth</b> | <b>At-risk Youth</b> |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|
| Yes                             | 62                                           | 6                                                            | 90                       | 54                   |
| No                              | 440                                          | 56                                                           | 657                      | 475                  |
| Missing                         | 191                                          | 6                                                            | 71                       | 200                  |
| Client doesn't know             | 0                                            | 0                                                            | 0                        | 1                    |
| Client prefers not to answer    | 14                                           | 0                                                            | 39                       | 8                    |
| Data not collected              | 2                                            | 2                                                            | 26                       | 41                   |
| <b>Totals</b>                   | <b>668</b>                                   | <b>66</b>                                                    | <b>825</b>               | <b>766</b>           |

*This data is pulled from HMIS for the last completed year, 1/1/2023 to 12/31/2023*

| <b>Juvenile Justice: Former Ward</b> | <b>Unacc Youth experiencing homelessness</b> | <b>Parenting or Pregnant Youth experiencing homelessness</b> | <b>Unsheltered Youth</b> | <b>At-risk Youth</b> |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|
| Yes                                  | 15                                           | 2                                                            | 4                        | 2                    |
| No                                   | 138                                          | 3                                                            | 16                       | 66                   |
| Missing                              | 513                                          | 60                                                           | 810                      | 699                  |
| Client doesn't know                  | 0                                            | 0                                                            | 0                        | 0                    |
| Client prefers not to answer         | 5                                            | 1                                                            | 0                        | 0                    |
| Data not collected                   | 0                                            | 0                                                            | 5                        | 0                    |
| <b>Totals</b>                        | <b>668</b>                                   | <b>66</b>                                                    | <b>825</b>               | <b>766</b>           |

*This data is pulled from HMIS for the last completed year, 1/1/2023 to 12/31/2023*

## Housing Inventory

The data from our latest Housing Inventory Count indicates a notable trend in the availability of beds across various types of housing projects aimed at serving homeless youth. From 2022 to 2023, there has been a decline in the number of beds available in both RRH and TH categories, largely due to the end of Covid-era funding. There is a vast gap between the number of available beds for youth and the number of individuals in need.

Given these trends, there is a clear and pressing need for projects aimed at increasing the availability of RRH and TH services. Our proposed project seeks to address these gaps by focusing on increasing the number of beds available for both RRH and TH. By doing so, we aim to reverse the current downward trend and ensure that more homeless youth, both with and without children, have access to the critical support they need during their transition to permanent housing. This initiative not only meets the immediate needs highlighted by the current data but also aligns with broader efforts to provide a comprehensive and responsive housing support system for one of the most vulnerable populations in our community.

| <b>Project Type</b> | <b>Youth Beds HH w/ Children</b> |             | <b>Youth Beds HH w/o Children</b> |             |
|---------------------|----------------------------------|-------------|-----------------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Year</b>         | <b>2022</b>                      | <b>2023</b> | <b>2022</b>                       | <b>2023</b> |
| ES                  | 0                                | 0           | 0                                 | 22          |
| OPH                 | 0                                | 0           | 0                                 | 0           |
| PSH                 | 7                                | 7           | 11                                | 0           |
| RRH                 | 4                                | 4           | 28                                | 11          |
| SH                  | 0                                | 0           | 0                                 | 0           |
| TH                  | 19                               | 8           | 17                                | 0           |
| <b>Totals</b>       | <b>30</b>                        | <b>19</b>   | <b>56</b>                         | <b>33</b>   |

*Data from 2022 & 2023 Homeless Inventory Counts*

## Needs

### Needs of Youth and Young Adults At-Risk of Homelessness

To effectively combat homelessness among at-risk youth and young adults, a multi-faceted approach is necessary to enhance the community services and support systems designed to address the various factors contributing to their vulnerability with the goal of earlier intervention efforts that prevent homelessness.

The following strategies may be employed in the implementation of this plan:

#### **Housing Initiatives**

1. Dedicated programs for individuals aged 18-24 living without guardians.
2. Ensuring housing is both affordable and accessible.
3. Provision of financial assistance for housing and utilities.
4. Awareness and utilization of funding for host and kinship care homes.
5. Motivating landlords to support young adult tenants.

#### **Strengthening Community Ties**

1. Development of peer mentorship initiatives.
2. Continuous advocacy support for young adults.
3. Extensive support services for the parents of at-risk young adults.

#### **Empowerment Through Employment and Education**

1. Collaboration with employment services linked to empathetic employers.
2. Educational services tailored to the needs of at-risk young adults, accessible within their workplace and other youth-focused venues.
3. Opportunities for GED attainment, higher education, and vocational training.
4. Education on personal finance and tenant rights.
5. Ensuring academic credits are transferable for displaced young adults without penalization.

#### **Support for Social-Emotional Health**

1. Provision of comprehensive health services, including physical, mental, and holistic health care.
2. Services aimed at reconciling family relationships, where appropriate and safe.
3. Programs to assist in obtaining transportation.
4. Consistent mentorship support, offering guidance from initial crisis intervention to securing stable housing.
5. Round-the-clock crisis support.
6. Assistance in rapidly obtaining necessary documentation for employment or obtaining waivers.

This structured approach aims to address the critical needs of at-risk youth and young adults by providing a supportive and resource-rich environment. Through housing, education, employment, and emotional well-being initiatives, the plan seeks to pave a pathway out of a trajectory that likely leads to homelessness.

## Needs of Youth and Young Adults Experiencing Homelessness

Addressing the unique challenges faced by homeless youth and young adults, especially those unaccompanied, requires a comprehensive and multi-faceted strategy. These individuals, aged 14-24, must navigate adulthood prematurely, often without the necessary support to meet their basic needs due to structural barriers in housing and employment.

The following strategies may be employed in the implementation of this plan:

### **Housing Initiatives**

1. Specialized programs for unaccompanied minors (14-17) and young adults (18-24).
2. Dedicated shelters for these age groups to ensure safety and security.
3. Enhancement of the Coordinated Entry System for better service access.
4. Financial assistance for housing, including rent and utilities subsidies.
5. Promotion of knowledge on kinship care and host homes for community support.
6. Encouragement of landlord engagement with young adult tenants through incentives.
7. Commitment to providing affordable and easily accessible housing solutions.

### **Strengthening Community Ties**

1. Establishment of peer mentorship schemes to offer guidance and support.
2. Advocacy and mentorship programs tailored to the needs of the young and homeless.
3. Ongoing efforts for community outreach to maintain and build connections.

### **Empowerment Through Employment and Education**

1. Partnerships with employment providers linked to employers who understand the challenges faced by homeless or at-risk youth.
2. Facilitated access to necessary employment documents or waivers to remove employment barriers.
3. Education services accessible within workplaces and other youth-friendly environments.
4. Opportunities for GED completion, vocational training, and higher education.
5. Financial literacy and tenant rights education to empower young individuals.
6. Policies that ensure educational credit transferability for displaced youth to prevent educational setbacks.

### **Support for Social-Emotional Health**

1. Support programs for acquiring transportation to reduce mobility barriers.
2. Consistent mentorship from the point of crisis intervention to achieving stable housing.
3. Availability of 24/7 crisis assistance to offer immediate help when needed.
4. Accessibility to comprehensive health services including mental, physical, and holistic care to support overall well-being.

This strategic framework aims to address the root causes of homelessness among youth and young adults by offering tailored solutions across housing, employment, education, and health. By focusing on these critical areas, the plan seeks to empower young individuals to overcome the challenges of experiencing homelessness and work toward a self-sufficient future.

## Needs of Special Populations

Each individual experiencing housing instability or homelessness brings a unique set of circumstances, influenced by a variety of cultural, geographic, and societal factors. Tailoring support to meet these varied needs is crucial for effectively assisting special populations within the youth and young adult demographic.

The following strategies may be employed in the implementation of this plan:

### **For Pregnant and Parenting Youth**

1. Ensure equitable, safe, and reliable housing that preserves family integrity.
2. Prioritize these youth in housing opportunities and streamline the entry process.
3. Support through parenting groups, trauma-informed care, and mentorship.
4. Flexible childcare solutions and work-from-home employment training.
5. Developmental support and healthcare access, including for substance abuse and sexual wellness.

### **For Minors**

1. Enhance access to long-term housing and safe daytime shelters.
2. Provide service locations that are informal and welcoming.
3. Offer comprehensive wrap-around services, including financial assistance.
4. Tailored support for specific cultural, gender, orientation, and ability needs.
5. Initiatives for family reunification, where safe and possible.
6. Trauma-informed services, peer mentorship, and broad community outreach.
7. Skill-building and educational support to overcome employment barriers.

### **For LGBTQ+ and Gender Non-conforming Youth**

1. Provide LGBTQ+-friendly shelter and housing options.
2. Remove barriers to housing and implement supportive community systems.
3. Employment training in safe environments and awareness training for service providers.
4. Education opportunities that respect and address their specific needs.

### **For Justice-Involved Youth**

1. Housing solutions that cater specifically to their situation, including transitional options.
2. Support for reintegration, including peer mentorship and long-term advocacy.
3. Education and employment training tailored to overcome systemic barriers.

### **For Youth Involved in Foster Care**

1. Create supportive housing options that transition youth out of foster care without the feeling of abandonment.
2. Establish continuous support networks that include mentorship and advocacy.
3. Provide financial literacy and trauma-informed educational opportunities.

### **For Victims of Trafficking, Domestic Violence, and/or Exploitation**

1. Safe housing solutions that prioritize confidentiality and security.
2. Crisis intervention and long-term advocacy to ensure stable and safe housing.

3. Employment and education pathways that are safe and trauma-informed.
4. Access to specialized mental and physical healthcare.

**For Youth with Co-occurring Diagnosis** (*e.g. mental health, substance abuse, HIV and other communicable diseases*)

1. Develop integrated treatment programs that simultaneously address mental health, substance abuse, and medical care for a holistic approach to youth health.
2. Offer specialized support services, including case management and counseling, tailored to the complexities of youth with co-occurring diagnoses.
3. Implement preventive and educational programs focused on reducing substance abuse and communicable disease risks, coupled with efforts to reduce stigma.
4. Provide stable housing and employment assistance specifically designed to support the recovery and community reintegration of youth with co-occurring diagnoses.
5. Ensure continuous access to care and advocacy for healthcare rights to help youth with co-occurring diagnoses navigate healthcare challenges and maintain engagement with necessary services.

By addressing the specific needs of these special populations through targeted strategies, we can create a more inclusive and effective framework for supporting all youth and young adults facing homelessness. This approach recognizes the diversity of experiences and aims to provide tailored assistance that respects the individuality of each person's journey.

## Goals, Objectives, & Action Steps

### Introduction

Milwaukee's YHDP CCP aligned its goals with its core mission of preventing and reducing youth homelessness through a holistic approach that emphasizes housing, income, social support, and the empowerment of youth voices. These goals directly support the vision of creating a safe, supportive Milwaukee where youth homelessness is rare and non-recurring.

The YHDP's focused efforts on improving housing access, raising awareness, enhancing educational and employment opportunities, and providing holistic support services are instrumental in achieving this vision. Each goal, from improving emergency and permanent housing access to fostering advocacy and employment opportunities, is grounded in principles of youth choice, positive development, trauma-informed care, and equity. The initiative's dedication to continuous quality improvement underscores a commitment to impactful, youth-centered solutions.

By integrating these strategic goals with its mission and vision, the YHDP is setting a solid foundation for creating meaningful change in the lives of Milwaukee's youth, ensuring their journey out of homelessness is supported at every step.

The YHDP goals were crafted by the YAB, drawing on their personal experiences with homelessness. This process ensured the program's objectives closely align with the actual needs of homeless youth, emphasizing the foundational importance of stable housing, life skills, and comprehensive support services as prerequisites for success in education and employment.

Data analysis and housing inventory assessments further informed these goals, highlighting critical gaps and guiding the program's focus. This youth-led, data-driven approach guarantees that the YHDP's strategies are both relevant and targeted, aiming to effectively address the complex challenges faced by young people experiencing homelessness in Milwaukee.

### Goals

Goal 1: Improve access to emergency crisis housing for youth experiencing homelessness.

| <b>Objective 1.1: Provide youth-centered transitional housing.</b>             |                                                   |                                           |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| <i>Action Items</i>                                                            | <i>Partner(s) Responsible</i>                     | <i>Timeframe</i>                          |
| 1. Implement a Transitional Housing demonstration project for 18-24 year olds. | Pathfinders, Walker's Point Youth & Family Center | Begin 10/24. First youth housed by 10/25. |
| <b>HUD Key Principles</b>                                                      |                                                   |                                           |

Unsheltered Homelessness  
Housing First  
Youth Choice  
Special Populations  
Positive Youth Development and Trauma Informed Care  
Family Engagement

Goal 2: Provide increased access to safe and immediate permanent housing for youth experiencing homelessness.

**Objective 2.1: Develop safe/accessible emergency and rapid re-housing options for YA.**

| <i>Action Items</i>                                                    | <b>Partner(s)<br/>Responsible</b>                 | <b>Timeframe</b>                          |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| 1. Implement an RRH Housing demonstration project for 18-24 year olds. | Pathfinders, Walker's Point Youth & Family Center | Begin 10/24. First youth housed by 10/25. |

**HUD Key Principles**

Unsheltered Homelessness  
Housing First  
Youth Choice  
Special Populations  
Positive Youth Development and Trauma Informed Care  
Family Engagement

Goal 3: Raise the profile of youth homelessness in Milwaukee.

**Objective 3.1: Provide youth-centered services at the initial point of contact within the homelessness response system.**

| <i>Action Items</i>                                                                           | <b>Partner(s)<br/>Responsible</b> | <b>Timeframe</b> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------|
| 1. Hire a youth-focused liaison to be housed within the local Coordinated Entry organization. | IMPACT                            | Hired by 12/24.  |
| 2. Improve data accuracy for youth homeless projects.                                         | YHDP core team, YAB, IMPACT       | Ongoing          |

**Objective 3.2: Ensure youth representation in decision-making that affects homeless youth.**

| <i>Action Items</i>                                                       | <b>Partner(s)<br/>Responsible</b> | <b>Timeframe</b>           |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Formalize the participation of the YAB in ongoing COC decision-making. | CoC Lead, YAB, Lead Agency        | Codified process by 10/24. |

|                                                                           |     |         |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|---------|
| 2. Promote the YAB as a resource within the existing homelessness system. | YAB | Ongoing |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|---------|

### HUD Key Principles

Equity  
Positive Youth Development and Trauma-Informed Care  
Social & Community Integration  
Coordinated Entry  
Individualized and Client-Driven Support  
Youth Choice

## Goal 4: Improve educational opportunities for formerly unhoused youth.

### Objective 4.1: Homeless Services will collaborate with MATC to create cohorts for a youth-centered specific educational program.

#### Action Items

|                                                                                                                                                       | <b>Partner(s)<br/>Responsible</b> | <b>Timeframe</b>                            |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| 1. Collaborate with the education system to create an assessment tool to better understand the educational status of youth experiencing homelessness. | IMPACT                            | Begin summer 2025. Complete by summer 2026. |
| 2. Develop a curriculum targeted at youth experiencing homelessness.                                                                                  | YAB, RHY Providers                | Summer 2026                                 |
| 3. Ensure child care is provided.                                                                                                                     | YAB, Lead Agency                  | Summer 2026                                 |

### HUD Key Principles

Unsheltered Homelessness  
Equity  
Positive Youth Development and Trauma-Informed Care  
Social & Community Integration  
Coordinated Entry

## Goal 5: Improve advocacy efforts for youth homelessness.

### Objective 5.1: Engage at the state level.

#### Action Items

|                                                                                       | <b>Partner(s)<br/>Responsible</b> | <b>Timeframe</b>      |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Advocate to improve the identification and access to quality child care resources. | YAB, Lead Agency                  | Start spring of 2025. |
| 2. Advocate for free driver's education and driver's licenses for homeless youth.     | YAB, Lead Agency                  | Start spring of 2025. |

### Object 5.2: Engage at the local level.

**Partner(s)  
Responsible**      **Timeframe**

| <i>Action Items</i>                                                                                                                                                            |                              |              |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------|
| 1. Work with local housing authorities to improve rent payment timeliness; also, to advocate for the prioritization of homelessness when distributing vouchers.                | YAB, Lead Agency             | Begin 10/24. |
| 2. Create a plan to improve the marketing of housing resources available for youth.                                                                                            | County Landlord Liaison, YAB | Begin 10/24. |
| <b>HUD Key Principles</b>                                                                                                                                                      |                              |              |
| Equity<br>Youth Choice<br>Special Populations<br>Social & Community Integration<br>Positive Youth Development & Trauma-Informed Care<br>Individualized & Client-Driven Support |                              |              |

**Goal 6: Provide holistic support services to youth being served.**

| Objective 6.1: Provide comprehensive case management.                                                                                           |                                                                                 | Partner(s)   |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| Action Items                                                                                                                                    | Responsible                                                                     | Timeframe    |
| 1. Leverage partnerships to provide support services.                                                                                           | Pathfinders,<br>Walker's Point<br>Youth & Family<br>Center, YAB,<br>Lead Agency | Begin 10/24. |
| 2. Source or create new programming to fill in support service gaps.                                                                            |                                                                                 |              |
| 3. Provide improved access to mental health services for all youth.                                                                             |                                                                                 |              |
| 4. Conduct a feasibility assessment of mental health needs and potential resources.                                                             |                                                                                 |              |
| 5. Ensure all YHDP programs will incorporate life skills programming.                                                                           |                                                                                 |              |
| 6. Pilot preventive and flexible funding to be used for things such as transportation, driver's licenses, and other housing-supportive efforts. |                                                                                 |              |
| HUD Key Principles                                                                                                                              |                                                                                 |              |
| Equity                                                                                                                                          |                                                                                 |              |
| Family Engagement                                                                                                                               |                                                                                 |              |
| Youth Choice                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                 |              |
| Individualized & Client Driven Supports                                                                                                         |                                                                                 |              |
| Social & Community Integration                                                                                                                  |                                                                                 |              |
| Special Populations                                                                                                                             |                                                                                 |              |

**Goal 7: Ensure youth-centered services address employment opportunities.**

| <b>Objective 7.1: Develop partnerships with employment and skills development service providers.</b> |                               |                  |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|
|                                                                                                      | <i>Partner(s) Responsible</i> | <i>Timeframe</i> |

|                                                                                                                  |     |             |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|-------------|
| <b>Action Items</b>                                                                                              |     |             |
| 1. Ensure programming includes formal employment program elements, whether by MOU, subcontracting, or otherwise. | TBD | Summer 2025 |
| <b>HUD Key Principles</b>                                                                                        |     |             |
| Equity<br>Individualized & Client Driven Supports<br>Social & Community Integration<br>Youth Choice              |     |             |

Goal 8: Nurture the development of a network that provides social and emotional well-being.

**Objective 8.1: Pilot a mentoring program for youth experiencing homelessness.**

| homelessness.                                                                                   | Partner(s)                                             |                           |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|
| Action Items                                                                                    | Responsible                                            | Timeframe                 |
| 1. Assess existing programs and determine their alignment with youth experiencing homelessness. | Pathfinders, Walker's Point Youth & Family Center, YAB | January 2026-October 2026 |
| 2. Develop partnerships with existing providers.                                                |                                                        |                           |
| 3. Offer YAB guidance on the development of the mentorship pilot.                               |                                                        |                           |
| HUD Key Principles                                                                              |                                                        |                           |
| Equity                                                                                          |                                                        |                           |
| Individualized & Client Driven Supports                                                         |                                                        |                           |
| Social & Community Integration                                                                  |                                                        |                           |
| Positive Youth Development and Trauma-Informed Care                                             |                                                        |                           |

Goal 9: Develop resources.

**Objective 9.1: Advocate for funding changes to more effectively end youth homelessness.**

| end youth homelessness.                                                                                             |  | Partner(s)       |                    |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|------------------|--------------------|
| Action Items                                                                                                        |  | Responsible      | Timeframe          |
| 1. Create educational materials.                                                                                    |  | YAB, Lead Agency | Start spring 2025. |
| 2. Complete a review of all private and public funding resources available, and learn the eligibility requirements. |  |                  |                    |
| 3. Develop an advocacy plan.                                                                                        |  |                  |                    |
| 4. Execute plan.                                                                                                    |  |                  |                    |
| HUD Key Principles                                                                                                  |  |                  |                    |

Equity  
 Social & Community Integration  
 Unsheltered Homelessness  
 Individualized & Client Driven Supports  
 Positive Youth Development and Trauma-Informed Care

**Goal 10: Ensure continuous quality improvement in program- and system-level implementation.**

| <b>Objective 10.1: Develop a CQI Plan.</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | <b>Partner(s)<br/>Responsible</b> | <b>Timeframe</b> |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------|
| <i>Action Items</i>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |                                   |                  |
| 1. Develop a strategy for measuring and tracking YYA outcomes in HMIS, disaggregated by race, gender, sexual orientation, and education/employment.                                                                                                                             | ICA, IMPACT                       | 10/2024          |
| 2. Develop a strategy to get and follow up on feedback from YYA and ensure that YYA experiences and interactions with <b>the system</b> (e.g., CE access and assessment processes) align with YHDP principles (especially racial and LGBTQ+ equity) and intended system design. | ICA, IMPACT                       | 6/2025           |
| 3. Develop a strategy to get and follow up on feedback from YYA and ensure that YYA experiences and interactions with <b>each program</b> (e.g. YHDP-funded projects) align with YHDP principles (especially racial and LGBTQ+ equity) and intended system design.              | ICA, IMPACT                       | 6/2025           |
| 4. Develop a dashboard or other report-out strategy to keep all stakeholders, including Milwaukee Continuum of Care, up to date on YHDP progress and outcomes.                                                                                                                  | ICA, IMPACT                       | 10/2025          |
| 5. Develop a strategy for implementing project improvement based on CQI findings.                                                                                                                                                                                               | YAB                               | Ongoing          |

**HUD Key Principles**

Equity  
 Positive Youth Development & Trauma-Informed Care  
 Individualized & Client Driven Supports  
 Housing First  
 Unsheltered Homelessness  
 Social & Community Integration  
 Youth Choice  
 Special Populations

## New Project List

### Introduction

The YHDP CCP project proposals were created in response to the strengths and gaps of the youth homelessness system. Milwaukee is served by two major organizations, Pathfinders and Walker's Point Youth and Family, dedicated to addressing youth homelessness, both deeply involved in RHY (Runaway and Homeless Youth) initiatives and the Continuum of Care (CoC). They collaborate closely with the Department of Children and Families (DCF) and Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS). Pathfinders, one of these providers, is distinguished by its targeted programs for LGBTQ+ youth and those escaping sex trafficking or engaged in street-level sex work, along with general homeless services. These organizations are well-regarded within the community for their efforts.

Notable strengths in Milwaukee's youth homelessness system include the existing and active Youth Action Board (YAB), which brings invaluable insights from lived experiences into planning and strategy. Successful programs by Pathfinders and Walker's Point Youth and Family highlight the city's capacity to provide targeted support. Additionally, the creative sourcing and leveraging of funding by Pathfinders and Walker's Point Youth and Family maximizes resources for sustained impact.

However, gaps persist, particularly in the availability of youth-specific housing units and the integration of wraparound services emphasizing education, employment training, and well-being, tailored for homeless youth. The 24-month limit on Rapid Rehousing is also a concern, often proving insufficient for ensuring long-term stability for young people.

Addressing these challenges, particularly by increasing dedicated youth housing and coordinating support services, is crucial for enhancing Milwaukee's response to youth homelessness and ensuring more sustainable outcomes for affected young individuals.

The identification of project types for the YHDP CCP was a collaborative and data-driven process led by the YAB. YAB members received training from True Colors, a technical assistance provider, on various project types and on interpreting data and feedback from the listening sessions, contributing to a clearer understanding of the community's needs. This approach ensured that the projects selected were not only informed by the lived experiences of youth but also grounded in comprehensive data analysis, effectively addressing the specific needs of homeless youth in Milwaukee.

## Projects

### Project 1

|                                                               |                                                                                                                                                          |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Project Type</b>                                           | Planning                                                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Summary of Project and Supportive Services Description</b> | This planning grant has supported YYA compensation throughout the YHDP process, as well as CoC staff and consultant time to support planning activities. |
| <b>Desired Outcomes</b>                                       | Youth, young adults, and consultants who participate in the YHDP planning process will be compensated for their time.                                    |
| <b>Projected Cost</b>                                         | \$90,644                                                                                                                                                 |

### Project 2

|                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Project Type</b>                                           | Youth-Centered Joint Transitional Housing/Permanent Housing-Rapid Re-housing                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>Summary of Project and Supportive Services Description</b> | Low-barrier site-based TH-RRH model provides immediate housing options for homeless young adults, based on goals and needs while coordinating with health, employment, educational, and social service programs to ensure adequate support to maintain housing and find permanent housing solutions.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Planned Special Activities</b>                             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Moving Expenses</b> to help youth find and maintain stable housing.</li> <li>- <b>Transportation</b> and <b>Cleaning Supplies</b> to support daily living needs.</li> <li>- Reimbursements for <b>Gas &amp; Mileage</b>, assistance for <b>Household Start-Up</b> costs, and covering <b>Lived Expertise Admin Costs</b> to leverage the insights of those with firsthand experience of homelessness.</li> <li>- Implementing a flexible <b>One Month Lease Requirement</b>, mitigating concerns through <b>Property Damage</b> coverage, and clearing <b>Rental &amp; Utility Arrears</b> to prevent evictions.</li> <li>- Offering varied <b>RRH (Rapid Re-Housing) Rental Assistance Types</b>, helping with <b>Security Deposits</b>, and providing <b>Training</b> for skills development.</li> <li>- Conducting <b>Unit Inspections</b> to ensure quality housing, assisting with <b>Utilities</b>, and <b>YHDP Projects May Employ YYA Receiving Services</b>.</li> <li>- <b>After Care</b> services for ongoing support and a <b>Rental Assistance &amp; Leasing Combo</b> for flexible housing solutions.</li> <li>- Extending support with <b>Up to 36 Months RRH Rental Assistance</b>,</li> <li>- <b>Match Waiver</b> for easier funding access</li> </ul> |
| <b>Target population and number served</b>                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Youth ages 18-24 experiencing homelessness.</li> <li>- 60 people served</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |

|                                       |                                                                                                                                                            |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Target number of housing units</b> | - 15 Master Lease Transitional Housing Units w/ Case Manager for up to 24 months<br>- 45 Rapid Rehousing Units for up to 36 months                         |
| <b>Staffing</b>                       | 1 Program Manager and 4 Case Managers<br>- 15:1 client-to-staff ratio for the Transitional Housing<br>- 15:1 client-to-staff ratio for the Rapid Rehousing |
| <b>Projected Cost</b>                 | <b>\$1,397,411</b><br>- Staffing Costs: \$266,376                                                                                                          |

### Project 3

|                                                               |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|---------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Project Type</b>                                           | Youth-Centered Coordinated Entry Liaison (Supportive Services Only-Coordinated Entry)                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Summary of Project and Supportive Services Description</b> | Create a position to specifically serve homeless youth and young adults within the local Coordinated Entry organization. This position will directly serve youth experiencing homelessness, increase system-wide coordination of services for youth, and improve data collection on youth experiencing homelessness. |
| <b>Planned Special Activities</b>                             | - <b>Match Waiver</b> for easier funding access                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Target population and number served</b>                    | - Homeless youth and young adults age 24 and younger.<br>- 200 people/year                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Target number of housing units</b>                         | n/a                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Staffing</b>                                               | 1 Youth-Centered Coordinated Entry Liaison                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Projected Cost</b>                                         | <b>\$68,000</b><br>- Staffing Costs: \$68,000                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |

| Cost Percentages by Line Item |                    |             |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|-------------|
| Leasing                       | \$156,000          | 10%         |
| Rental Assistance             | \$702,000          | 47%         |
| Supportive Services*          | \$571,376          | 38%         |
| Operating Costs               | \$70,000           | 5%          |
| <b>Total</b>                  | <b>\$1,499,376</b> | <b>100%</b> |

*\*The "Supportive Services" line item includes SSO-CE initiative along with various supportive services integrated into the housing projects.*

## Special Activities

In this CCP plan, **\$21,411** will be dedicated to the special activities listed below. Through these targeted activities, Milwaukee aims to create a supportive ecosystem that addresses the immediate needs of youth at risk of or experiencing homelessness, while also laying down a foundation for their future success.

1. Moving Expenses
2. Transportation
3. Cleaning Supplies
4. Gas & Mileage
5. Household Start-Up
6. Lived Expertise Admin Costs
7. One Month Lease Requirement
8. Property Damage
9. Rental & Utility Arrears
10. RRH Rental Assistance Types
11. Security Deposits
12. Training
13. Unit Inspections
14. Utilities
15. YHDP Projects May Employ YYA Receiving Services
16. Aftercare
17. Match Waiver
18. Rental Assistance & Leasing Combo
19. Up to 36 Months RRH Rental Assistance

## Special Activities Requiring Approval

### **Aftercare**

Our proposal seeks authorization to extend supportive services to participants for up to two years following their exit from homelessness, transitional housing, or the cessation of program aid. Recognizing the unique circumstances, backgrounds, and financial conditions of young individuals, a common challenge remains their struggle for a stable and secure living environment, compounded by a frequent absence of family or community support. By providing access to supportive services for 24 months post-housing assistance, we aim to substantially reduce the risk of recurring homelessness among youth in our area. It will be a requirement for staff to verify that continued access to these services is essential for participants to remain housed and that such support would be unattainable without our program's intervention. This process will include quarterly reviews to confirm ongoing eligibility for support, ensuring that services are effectively meeting participants' needs and fostering their autonomy and long-term housing stability. Efforts will be made to clearly communicate the duration of available support to participants and to collaboratively develop plans for a smooth transition out of the program, prioritizing the individuals' needs and their plans for sustainable independence.

### **Rental Assistance & Leasing Combo**

The temporary housing part of the program will be housing in scattered sites throughout the city and be move in ready. This will require a master lease operations. This will give youth who are most vulnerable and in need of housing options to move in immediately in order to stabilize themselves and provide for a flexible lease to find the best housing situations for each individual. We have previously employed this model for families fleeing domestic violence with success. This operations model has also allowed Pathfinders to operate housing for youth with a zero eviction rate. This is critical for maintaining relationship with landlords and providing consisting housing options.

### **Up to 36 Months RRH Rental Assistance**

Extending the period of rental assistance to 36 months significantly lowers the risk of youth returning to homelessness in our community. This is crucial considering that, according to the National Low Income Housing Coalition, an individual would need to hold 1.9 full-time, minimum wage jobs to afford a one-bedroom rental in Wisconsin. The average hourly wage for Wisconsinites who rent their residence is \$14.32. Wisconsin's minimum wage is \$7.25. It is recommended that Wisconsinites should earn at least \$17.27 per hour (\$35,913 annually) in order to afford rent and utilities without paying more than 30% of income on housing. Young individuals facing homelessness often lack the education, work experience, and stability required to earn a sufficient income to cover rent, not to mention the upfront costs of first and last month's rent plus a deposit. The pandemic has further disrupted educational and employment opportunities for young people, potentially causing lasting effects on their ability to secure housing. For many young individuals, 24 months of rental assistance falls short of providing the necessary time to achieve long-term housing stability. By extending assistance to 36 months, we not only greatly reduce the likelihood of them returning to homelessness but also ensure our approach is equitable, recognizing that not all youth and young adults are in a position to sustain housing independence after just 24 months. Agencies implementing the Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) component of this initiative will employ a standardized assessment tool that will be developed in collaboration with Coordinated Entry leadership to identify youths who require more than 24 months of rental assistance.

## Governance & Partners

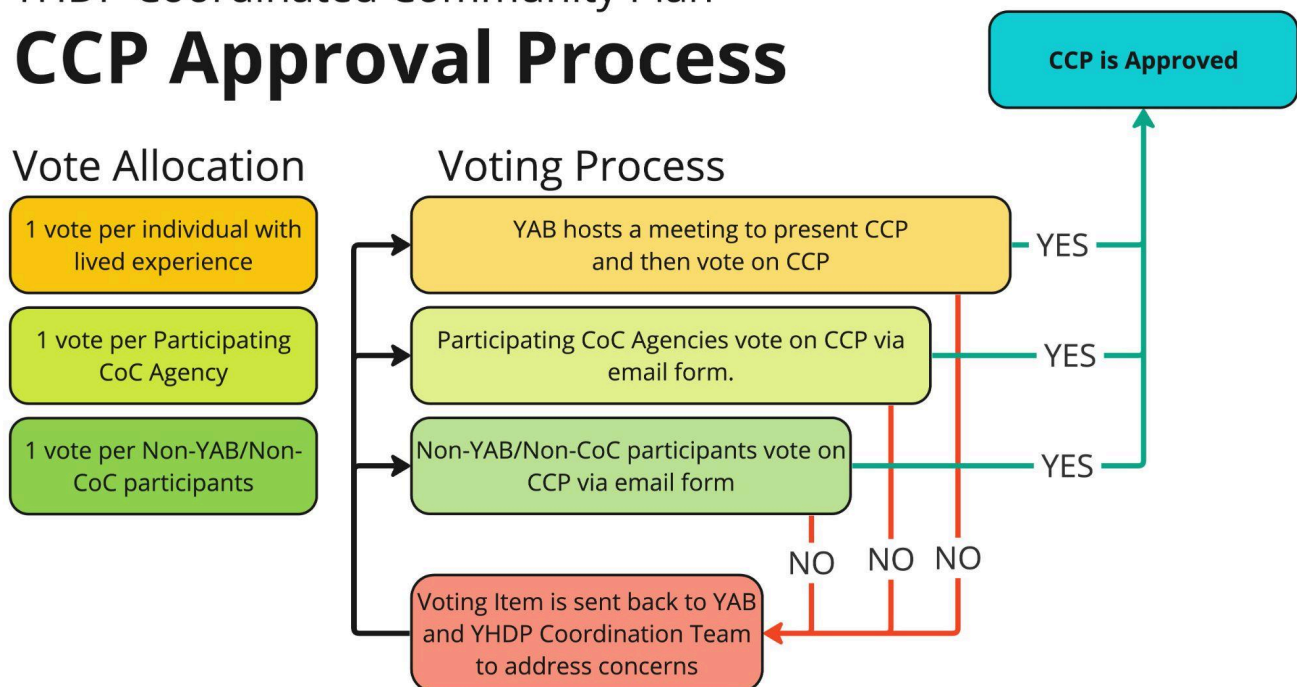
### Introduction

The governance framework of the YHDP CCP is founded on principles of equity, actively integrating strategies to authentically represent the community through a diverse stakeholder presence. Central to this framework is the Youth Action Board (YAB), which plays a crucial role in steering decision-making and strategizing to address youth and young adult homelessness.

Meanwhile, the CoC Board holds the responsibility for final approvals on all funding decisions, ensuring that financial resources are allocated effectively to support the program's goals. As the CCP was developed, it was clear that not only a process for approving the plan within the CoC framework should be outlined, but also a framework to ensure that the YAB structure becomes a more active part of the CoC's annual and long-range planning efforts to address homelessness.

### Plan Approval Process

## YHDP Coordinated Community Plan CCP Approval Process



The decision-making framework for the approval of the Comprehensive Community Plan (CCP) is structured around three voting blocks: the Youth Advisory Board (YAB), Continuum of Care (CoC) Agencies, and Non-YAB/Non-CoC participants. This process ensures diverse perspectives are considered, with vote allocation granting one vote per individual with lived experience, one vote per CoC agency, and one vote per non-YAB, non-CoC participant.

The YAB Cabinet will organize a meeting to present the CCP to the YAB membership and others with lived experience, offering an opportunity for direct deliberation and voting. Meanwhile, CoC Agencies and

Non-YAB/Non-CoC participants will cast their votes on the CCP through an email form, allowing for a broad engagement from all stakeholders.

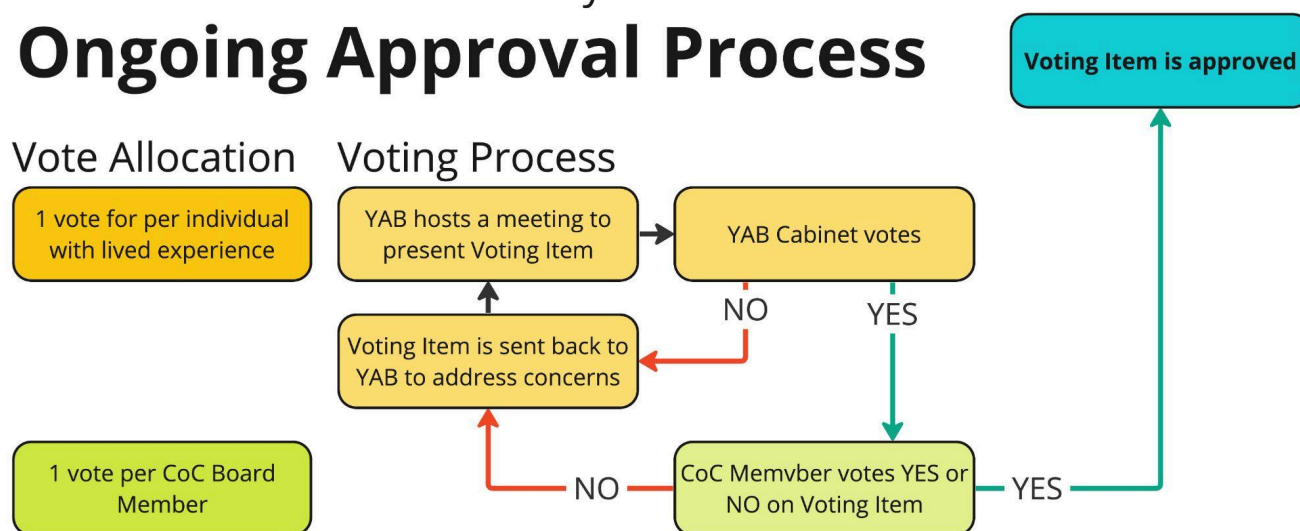
If the CCP does not secure approval, the plan will be returned to the YAB alongside the YHDP Coordination Team to address any identified issues. This iterative approach ensures that the CCP reflects a consensus across all involved parties and that those with lived experience drive the direction of the work. This systematic and inclusive voting process underscores the commitment to ensuring that all voices are heard and that the plan put forward is both representative and actionable.

The plan will be approved by majority vote in support.

## Ongoing Decision-Making

### YHDP Coordinated Community Plan

## Ongoing Approval Process



The image above outlines the ongoing project approval process for the YHDP Coordinated Community Plan (CCP), detailing both vote allocation and the voting procedure. Votes are allocated as follows: one vote is given to each individual with lived experience and to each CoC Board Member.

As for the voting process, the Youth Advisory Board (YAB) first hosts a meeting to present the voting item. Following this, the YAB Cabinet (consisting of YAB officers) casts their votes. If the Cabinet approves, the voting item is then considered approved. If not, CoC Members vote on the item.

Should the CoC Members disapprove, the item is sent back to the YAB to address any concerns. This process ensures that the YAB and CoC Board Members both have significant input into the decision-making process and that any issues must be resolved collaboratively before moving forward.

It is important to note that no major changes to initiatives are allowed once votes have been cast. Should there be a need for significant amendments to the initiatives, these changes must undergo the complete voting process again, ensuring transparency and collective agreement.

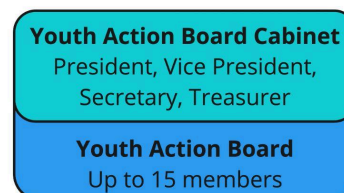
Ongoing approval will be approved by majority vote in support.

## Youth Action Board (YAB)

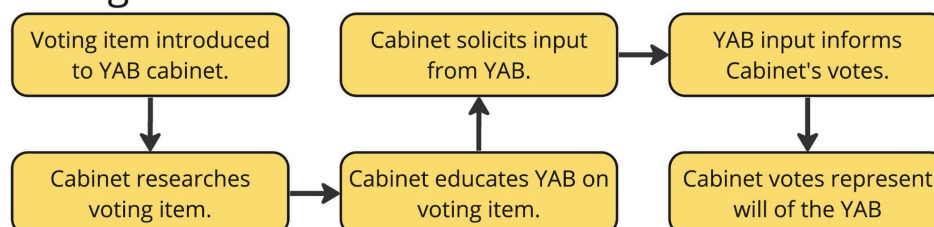
The structure of the Youth Action Board has cabinet roles of President, Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary and a general membership of up to 15 members.

# Youth Action Board (YAB)

## Structure



## Voting Process



The voting process of the Youth Action Board is a structured procedure that begins with the cabinet undertaking initial research and learning about the topics at hand. Following this, the cabinet is responsible for sharing all pertinent information with the general membership, ensuring that every member is well-informed. Before making any decisions, the cabinet solicits input from the general membership to inform their votes, valuing the perspectives and insights of all members. The final decision-making step is the cabinet vote, which determines the course of action for the YAB.

Interested youth seeking to join the YAB are encouraged to interview current YAB members. These interviews are promptly arranged by the Cabinet or other available YAB members, with the aim of integrating new members into the next scheduled meeting. Regarding term limits, nominations for cabinet positions are considered annually under three circumstances: if a position becomes vacant, if a cabinet member reaches the age limit of 25 and is transitioning out of youth services, or if there is expressed interest in a cabinet seat by another member. In these instances, candidates are given the opportunity to campaign to the YAB, which then decides through a vote. As for aging out, the YAB maintains an inclusive policy that allows individuals to continue contributing their valuable lived experience and support, even after surpassing the service age limit, ensuring they can still play a vital role in guiding the YAB and aiding in the recruitment of new members.

The Youth Advisory Board (YAB) played a pivotal role across various stages of project development, ensuring initiatives were closely aligned with youth interests and needs. In system mapping, YABs offered invaluable insights into the dynamics and priorities within youth ecosystems, identifying key stakeholders and areas of action. During project selection, they ensured the chosen initiatives resonated with young people and addressed their most pressing concerns, advocating for inclusivity and relevance. In the design phase, YAB members contributed to co-design processes, providing feedback to fine-tune project details and infuse innovative solutions that leveraged current trends and technologies. Finally, in implementation, the YAB will

save as project ambassadors and have a key roll in quality control and continuous improvement, actively engaging in leadership roles and offering real-time feedback to adjust and improve project execution.

## Youth Recruitment & Compensation

The Youth Advisory Board (YAB) selects members through interviews, assessing lived experience with homelessness and dedication. Cabinet members compensated at \$15/hr and general members at \$10/hr. Funding sources include the Continuum of Care and the National Network for Youth.

The YAB's strategy for recruiting youth aging out of foster care, exiting institutions, or studying at local higher education institutions, employs a collaborative and multi-dimensional approach. Through existing partnerships with higher education institutions, RHY service providers and the YAB offer internships, resource fairs, and presentations to directly engage and inform students about available supports. Additionally, the Pathfinders program connects with youth in juvenile correctional systems, providing them with resources such as street outreach, drop-in centers, and anti-violence programs.

YAB members, many of whom have personal experiences with the foster care system, act as a referral source, leveraging their stories to build trust and encourage participation among peers. IMPACT's is seeking to deepen collaboration with foster care providers like Wellpoint and Children's Wisconsin to strengthen referral pathways, ensuring a smoother transition for youth in need of support.

The recruitment plan emphasizes targeted outreach, supportive engagement, and continuous feedback to adapt and improve the process. By leveraging community partnerships and the lived experiences of YAB members, the initiative seeks to create a comprehensive support network that facilitates successful transitions for vulnerable youth.

Milwaukee has allocated initial funding to establish a system wide network of lived expertise in 2024, enhancing the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP) investment in this area. The city has pledged ongoing support for the Lived Expertise Project in future budgets through standard Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) planning funds, outlining a strategy for sustained financial support.

Approximately \$5,000 was reallocated from other budget areas to kickstart the project this year. This is in anticipation of a significant increase in planning funds, at which point substantial investments will be made. Our assignment involves developing a budget after running a pilot project in the latter half of this year, within a newly formed work group.

## Stakeholders & Partnerships

The creation of Milwaukee's CCP for addressing youth homelessness has been a collaborative effort, drawing on the strengths and expertise of a wide array of stakeholders. Central to the process has been the YAB, which has remained engaged since the initial application, providing vital input and guidance throughout the process. Key agencies such as Walker's Point Youth & Family Center and Pathfinders have played significant roles, contributing to the CCP through various stages from writing to approval. Their involvement, alongside that of public welfare agencies, local and state governments, and health and legal entities, highlights a community united in purpose.



*This meeting included MPD, Pathfinders, YAB members, Jack N Jill foundation, high school students, youth council members all gathered for an advocacy and educational day about youth homelessness, and ways that young people and older adults could become better aware of the needs of vulnerable young people. This included writing letters to elected officials regarding legislation that impacts homeless youth.*

The partnership list reflects a diverse coalition, from the Milwaukee Public Schools' Homeless Education Program to the United Way, along with affordable housing providers and local advocacy groups. They have all contributed to the CCP's development by offering services, participating in listening sessions, providing housing, and integrating youth feedback. Moreover, the participation of legal authorities, including the District Attorney and judges, illustrates a system-wide commitment to addressing barriers and creating opportunities for youth. With a shared mission, these partners have laid the groundwork for a robust response to youth homelessness, ensuring that every element of the community is mobilized for this common goal.

There are opportunities for further stakeholder engagement by strengthening connections with the criminal justice and foster care systems. There's an urgent need to address the criminalization of homeless youth, who often face incarceration as their only alternative. Enhancing support within the criminal justice system is crucial to ensure these youth have access to the necessary resources and support to prevent them from ending up homeless upon release. Similarly, establishing stronger ties with the Department of Children and Families and the foster care system is essential for providing a safety net for youth exiting foster care. Additionally, improving the referral process for Family Unification Program (FUP) vouchers—in collaboration with the housing authority, the City of Milwaukee, and state child welfare agencies—can streamline access to housing and support services for vulnerable youth.

## Cross-System Partners

The Cross-System partners on this project are Pathfinders, Walker's Point Youth and Family, the Youth Action Board, Milwaukee Coalition on Housing and Homelessness Continuum of Care, Department of Children and Family Services, and Milwaukee County Department of Health and Human Services.

## Stakeholder Chart

| Partner            | Partner's Name & Role                      | Involvement                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|--------------------|--------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Youth Action Board | Power of Paths (POP)<br>Youth Action Board | POP YAB has been involved since writing the initial application, attended all sessions hosted and facilitated by the CoC and YHDP TAs, referred partners, twice weekly hosts their own meetings, attends Round 7 community calls, attends Milwaukee YHDP Meetings, and is a part of the CCP application writing, review, and approval. |

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|                                                                    |                                                     |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Continuum of Care and Emergency Solutions Grant Program Recipients | Walker's Point Youth & Family Center                | As the only youth provider that is both CoC and ESG funded, Walker's Point has been involved since the inception of the initial application, attended almost all sessions hosted and facilitated by the CoC and YHDP TAs, and is a part of the CCP writing process, review, and approval.                                            |
| Local and State Government                                         | Milwaukee Continuum of Care Lead Agency             | The lead agency has been a core member of the CCP Coordination team throughout the process.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| Runaway and Homeless Youth Program Providers                       | Pathfinders and Walker's Point                      | Have been involved since writing the initial application, attended all sessions hosted and facilitated by the CoC and YHDP TAs, referred partners, attended weekly planning meetings, attended community calls, education sessions, Milwaukee planning meetings, and is a part of the CCP application writing, review, and approval. |
| Health, Mental Health, and Substance Abuse Agencies                | DHHS Behavioral Health Division                     | Shared thoughts on process improvement for engaging youth.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Juvenile and Adult Corrections and Probation                       | Justice Point, Legal Aid                            | Ongoing service providers.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Local and State Law Enforcement and Judges                         | Milwaukee County District Attorney, Kori Ashley     | Clear bench warrants that interfere with housing; Judge solicits input from the YAB and connects youth to resources.                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
| Public Housing Authorities                                         | Milwaukee County                                    | Coordinating with the Coordination Team to apply for additional youth-focused Family Unification Project and Foster Youth to Independence vouchers.                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Affordable Housing Providers                                       | Cardinal Capital                                    | Partner with Coordinated Entry and low-income housing providers.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Local and State Educational Agencies                               | Milwaukee Public Schools Homeless Education Program | Identify youth experiencing homelessness and refer them to the Coordinated Entry system and provide other services such as resource navigation.                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| Institutions of Higher Education                                   | University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee                   | Assisted with the establishment of the YAB and provided interns.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |

|                                                                                                                             |                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Non-Profit Youth Organizations                                                                                              | Pathfinders, Walker's Point Youth & Family, Wisconsin Association of Runaway Homeless Youth Services (WARHS)                                                                                                      | Participated and led the CCP creation, listening sessions, system-mapping, project design, mission and vision, YAB older adult support. WARHS provided consultation and lessons learned from previous YHDP projects. |
| Landlords                                                                                                                   | Kilbourn Harmony Housing<br>Berrada Properties<br>Smart Asset<br>Ardell Property Management<br>S2 Real Estate<br>CCM Clark Square<br>3J Assets<br>Russell Biancuzzo<br>Jazmine Duncan<br>Moore & Moore Properties | Providing housing                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| Privately Funded Homeless Organizations                                                                                     | Courage                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Participated in listening sessions                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Local Advocacy, Research, and Philanthropic Organizations                                                                   | United Way                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Provided in-kind donations and strategy around educational support for youth.                                                                                                                                        |
| Organizations that serve culturally specific (Black, Latino, Indigenous, people with disabilities, LGBTQ, etc.) communities | Diverse and Resilient, Courage, Milwaukee LGBT Community Center                                                                                                                                                   | Participated in the launch event and listening sessions                                                                                                                                                              |
| Continuum of Care Board                                                                                                     | MCHH Board of Directors                                                                                                                                                                                           | Review CCP through its development.                                                                                                                                                                                  |

## Signatures of Support

To be submitted at later date.