

San Francisco Youth Homeless System and Coordinated Entry Project FRAMING REPORT

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Purpose of Report

- Assessment of current youth homeless system & recommendations for youth CE design and system changes
 - Building upon Strategic Framework and YHDP Plan
 - Support HSH goal of reducing youth homelessness by 50% by December 2022

Information Sources

- Key stakeholder interviews (11)
- Youth focus groups (3)
- Youth feedback from YDAP meetings
- Document review
- Community examples (LA, CT, Seattle)
 - *Note: no separate data analysis*

Findings: System Strengths

- Strong youth development focus and commitment
- Positive working relationships between providers
- Coordinated supportive housing access process
- YDHP Plan and expanded youth engagement

Findings: System Challenges & Gaps

- Lack of standardized entry processes for most resources; one provider manages access to most shelter and transitional housing
- Transitional housing viewed as not sufficiently housing-focused; concerns that many youth leave unhoused
- Poor linkages to Adult System

Findings: System Challenges & Gaps

Gaps in system; feedback indicated there is not enough:

- Shelter and housing
- Targeted prevention and diversion
- Support for Parenting TAY and TAY couples
- Behavioral health services for TAY
- Targeted employment services and supports for youth

Findings: System Challenges & Gaps

- Geographical issues – most housing (esp. Adult) in central city area; many youth in (or prefer) Haight and Bayview
- Need for more standardized and expanded staff training
- Discrimination/safety concerns, particularly for LGBTQ and trans-identifying youth
- Lack of shared data and system-level data
- Youth input not reflected at program design level

Youth CE: Lessons from Other Communities

Ensure Cross-Population System Integration: some system level integration necessary to ensure that youth have equitable, or preferred, access to all system resources

Focus on Ensuring Highest Need Access: highest need youth must be not only be prioritized but assisted to get timely access to assistance, including Navigation

Reduce Program Entry Barriers: prioritization does not ensure access if program barriers remain.

Youth CE: Lessons from Other Communities

Deploy Diversion/Problem-Solving: problem solving critical to ensure system flow and quick resolution for many; problem solving for youth has special features and needs

Build in Cross-System Linkages: Linkages to a variety of mainstream and community resources particularly important for youth.

Manage Data Systems Expectations: operating CE in data systems still challenging to many communities.

Recommendations: Youth CE

1. Ensure overall approach is not overly bureaucratic or automated; seat or empower an Advisory group especially for first year
2. Ensure access points address community concerns, including being mobile, youth-oriented, diverse, and with access to more than homeless services
3. Provide targeted, high quality problem-solving to all youth; ensure staff are trained to identify safety issues

Recommendations: Youth CE (Cont.)

4. Do not fill beds for minors through CE; improve coordination among City and agencies serving minors
5. Use results of adult assessment blitz to inform approach to prioritization for youth
 - Consider higher priority for youth with mental health challenges, at risk of violence, with strong SF ties
 - Work with behavioral health care TAY SOC to assess for mental health needs
 - Delay decision about incorporating TAY shelter in coordinated entry process until process fully functioning

Recommendations: Youth CE (Cont.)

6. Use targeted case conferencing to inform referrals at start, and to trouble shoot CE process; ensure case conferencing does not enhance subjectivity
7. Open ONE system records for sharing across providers, but keep case notes private.
8. Produce and share system level outcome data

Recommendations: Youth System

1. Assess and make changes in youth programs to become more housing-focused, especially transitional housing
2. Explore whether need to reduce beds for minors/rebalance the shelter inventory
3. Define functions of drop-in and outreach programs in relationship to CE access points
4. Consider establishing Ombudsman for youth

DISCUSSION