

**About this Addendum:** In October 2017, the San Francisco Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing (HSH) published the *Five-Year Strategic Framework*. The Framework lays out the goals, action steps, and timeframes for creating a significant and sustainable reduction in San Francisco among all populations. Because specific planning work addressing youth homelessness was in process at the time of publication, the original Framework included a goal of creating a detailed plan to reduce youth homelessness. Since that time, a community plan has been created, new resources have been secured, and an ambitious strategic goal to cut youth homelessness in half has been adopted. This addendum summarizes the current situation and the need for change, lays out the newly secured and anticipated resources and approaches, and describes the critical next steps to reach the goal. This Youth Addendum amends the HSH Strategic Framework and replaces the section on youth.

## POPULATION FOCUS:

### YOUTH

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**Goal: Reduce Homelessness among Youth by 50% by 2023**

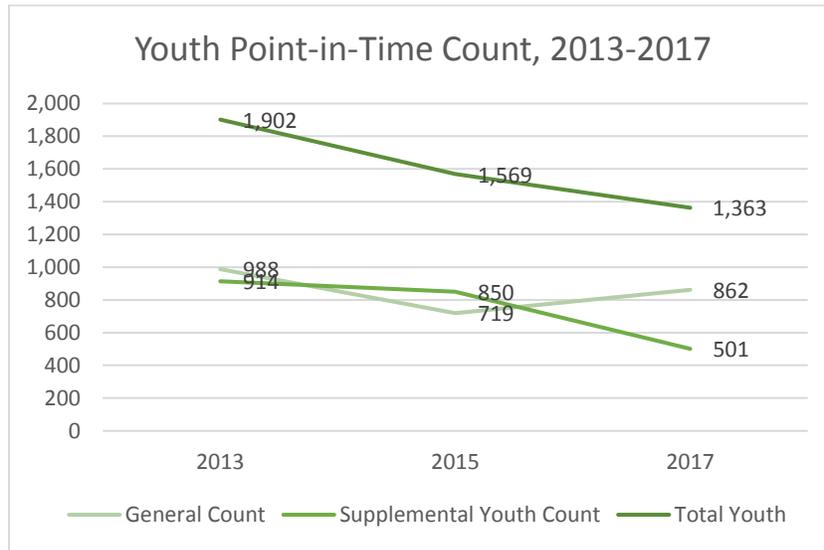
#### ABOUT THE POPULATION

According to the 2017 Point-in-Time Count, 1,363 unaccompanied and transitional-age youth (TAY) comprised 18% of the total homeless population in San Francisco, and 20% of homeless adults.<sup>1</sup> This is a 28% decline from the 2013 count, but still indicates that nearly one in five adults experiencing homelessness in San Francisco are under 25.

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<sup>1</sup> This number is a combination of the youth identified in the general count and those identified in the supplemental count, with duplications removed. Minor children who are unaccompanied are included in this figure but are a small overall percentage of young people identified (104 or 7.6% of youth). Minor children and young adults experiencing homelessness as part of a family unit are identified and supported within the family response system and thus not included in this section.

**Figure 1: Trends in Homelessness Among Youth at a Point-in-Time, 2013-2017<sup>2</sup>**



Because young people experience homelessness in ways that differ from adults and often do not access services designed for adults, accurate enumeration of youth is especially challenging. Since 2013, San Francisco has conducted a supplemental youth count to ensure full representation of youth.

The transitional-age (18-24) population is diverse and faces many and varied challenges. Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and/or Queer (LGBTQ) youth represent nearly half (49%) of the population of homeless youth in San Francisco. Black (26%) and Multi-Racial (35%) youth are significantly over-represented in the population of homeless youth compared to the estimated population of all people between the ages of 15 and 24 (7.4% and 6.5% respectively).<sup>3</sup> Youth that identify as belonging to minority racial groups and as LGBTQ make up a significant portion of the San Francisco youth population experiencing homelessness, and these young people face increased economic, housing, and social and structural barriers.<sup>4</sup>

More than half of youth experiencing homelessness (56%) say they became homeless while living in San Francisco. This is somewhat lower than 69% for the overall homeless population. Some youth arrive after becoming homeless, seeking a place to live safely, and others are mobile, coming into and leaving the City frequently. About 27% have been in foster care.<sup>5</sup> While their circumstances vary, these youth share a transitional stage of life—their needs often differ from those of families and adults that experience homelessness and require different responses.

<sup>2</sup> Applied Survey Research. (2017). San Francisco Homeless Unique Youth Count and Survey

<sup>3</sup> Applied Survey Research. (2017). San Francisco Homeless Unique Youth Count and Survey, and US Census Bureau, Annual Estimates of the Resident Population by Sex, Race Alone or in Combination, and Hispanic Origin for the United States, States, and Counties: April 1, 2010 to July 1, 2017, 2017 Population Estimates

<sup>4</sup> Northwestern Journal of Law and Social Policy (2017). Page, Michelle *Forgotten Youth: Homeless LGBT Youth of Color and the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act*

<sup>5</sup> Applied Survey Research. (2017). San Francisco Homeless Unique Youth Count and Survey

## NEED FOR SYSTEMS CHANGE

San Francisco's youth providers and HSH work closely together and offer a range of approaches that includes drop-in centers, Street Outreach, Temporary Shelter (both emergency shelter and transitional housing), Rapid Rehousing and Permanent Supportive Housing specifically targeted to the needs of youth. Most of the youth system's resources, however, have traditionally been focused on transitional programs. While this is aligned with the life stage and needs of some youth, it leaves gaps for youth with higher needs and those with less severe needs. Because transitional programs are often long and intensive, a more limited number of youth can be served.

The current set of youth resources has not had a comprehensive, coordinated method for access, and youth report that they often have to go many places to seek help or cannot get the help they need.<sup>6</sup> A portion of the adult system also serves transitional age youth (TAY), though that percent is estimated at significantly less than 10% of the available shelter and housing resources, despite the estimated size of the youth population.

In 2017, San Francisco was awarded a two-year demonstration grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), known as the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP), to plan for a systemic approach to meet the needs of homeless youth. This grant provided resources to analyze the current system, identify gaps, and develop a detailed plan with articulated vision and goals. Providers, advocates, and a wide range of youth participated in framing the challenges and shaping the plan, leading to a shared vision for a future state:

*With shared responsibility in San Francisco, our vision is a city where no youth experience homelessness. To that end we will prevent and end youth homelessness using a coordinated community response that offers low-barrier, flexible housing models and uniquely tailored services ensuring that homelessness is rare, brief, and one-time, while empowering youth to define and achieve their own self-sufficiency through immediate and equal access to the continuum of resources, support, and care.<sup>7</sup>*

<sup>6</sup> Findings in *San Francisco Youth Homeless System and Coordinated Entry Framing Report*, Focus Strategies, November 2018

<sup>7</sup> The Coordinated Community Plan can be found at <http://hsh.sfgov.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/San-Francisco-Coordinated-Community-Plan-January-2018-Final.pdf>

## Partner Focus: RISING UP

The Rising Up Campaign is a public-private partnership that aims to provide housing and jobs/vocational training and education for young people experiencing homelessness. Keystone funding partners include the City and County of San Francisco and the philanthropic Tipping Point Community. When fully funded, Rising Up will dedicate \$30 million to provide Rapid Rehousing and secure jobs/vocational training and education for at least 500 youth experiencing homelessness in San Francisco. Rising Up will also support Problem Solving for 450 youth who are homeless or at immediate risk of becoming homeless, to help them achieve immediate solutions to their housing crisis.

Larkin Street Youth Services is the lead provider and community housing, service, and referral partners include Huckleberry Youth Programs, First Place for Youth, 3rd Street Youth Center and Clinic, SF LGBT Center, New Door Ventures, LYRIC, Young Community Developers, and Young Women's Freedom Center. Public Partners include HSH, the San Francisco Unified School District, Human Services Agency, Department of Public Health, the Office of Economic & Workforce Development, the Department of Children, Youth, and their Families, and the San Francisco International Airport.

The YHDP process catalyzed significant movement on youth homelessness, including creating the Youth

**Youth Policy Advisory Council (YPAC)**

Youth are the experts of their own experiences and their input is our most valuable resource in designing strategies to reduce homelessness among youth. The Youth Policy and Advisory Committee (YPAC), created in 2016, is made up of youth with lived experience and knowledge of homelessness. Members of the YPAC actively participate in decisions that are being made about housing and services for youth who are homeless or unstably housed in San Francisco.

Policy and Advisory Council (YPAC) of youth 24 and under, bringing new funding and capacity to providers serving youth experiencing homelessness and forming a Youth Homelessness Oversight and Action Council (YHOAC) consisting of providers, public funders, and youth. (See side bars on the Coordinated Community Plan and YPAC.)

It also laid the groundwork for the development of Coordinated Entry for Youth, a system change to ensure that youth are able to access resources in a clear and consistent way through youth-oriented Access Points. All youth will be offered Problem Solving services to attempt immediate resolution of a

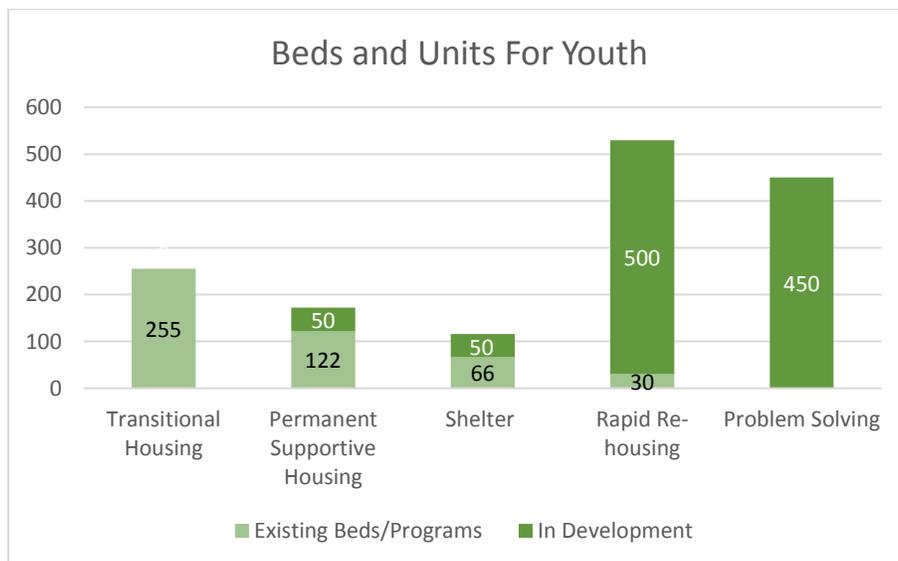
housing crisis, and those who are assessed as highest need will be prioritized for quick enrollment in youth-targeted housing resources.

### REDUCE HOMELESSNESS AMONG YOUTH BY 50% BY 2023

Modeling developed by HSH indicates that homelessness among youth can be reduced by half by the beginning of 2023. This will require the implementation of critical system changes, such as coordinated entry, greater flexibility across programs, and the addition of significant new resources for Rapid Rehousing, Problem Solving, and other housing models. HSH has adopted this as its Strategic Framework goal for youth.

Figure 2 below shows the current inventory and planned expansions in resources specifically targeted to serve transitional-age youth.

**Figure 2: Inventory of Beds and Units for Youth**



Accelerated progress toward this goal is already being made. Between FY17-18 and FY18-19 resources for addressing youth homelessness have more than doubled. Rising Up, a new public private partnership, launched in October 2018, will raise \$30 million from combined federal, state, local, and private sources to fund at least 500 rapid rehousing slots linked to jobs/vocational training and education, and problem solving for 450 youth (see Rising Up sidebar). The Federal YHDP grant will also fund additional capacity, including contributing to the Rising Up expansion of Rapid Rehousing, creating 10 new units of Permanent Supportive Housing (in addition to 40 already in the pipeline) and supporting the creation of 10-15 Host Homes. Host Homes will provide a new housing intervention in San Francisco, utilizing existing housing stock and community activation to house more of our City's youth. This pilot provides a non-institutional, community-based housing option for LGBTQ youth and youth of color and will increase the limited supply of housing for pregnant and parenting youth. HSH is planning to open a TAY Navigation center which will provide safety, stability, and an entry point into permanent housing for youth living outside.

In addition to expanding capacity, changes and improvements in the system include launching Coordinated Entry for youth and implementing youth-specific data collection in the ONE System to strengthen the ability to coordinate care and track outcomes. Strengthening the system will include continuing work on equity and intersectionality throughout the system, working with other City departments to effectively and creatively use existing resources, and centering the voices of the youth experiencing homelessness. Youth will have access to a range of services that are critical to ending their homelessness, including family reunification and permanent connections, education, employment, and behavioral health services.

To make the system more responsive with all resources, HSH will work to lower access barriers and build in greater flexibility in TAY program models, allowing youth to move across housing programs as their needs change.

In addition, as high-priority youth 18 and over are also eligible for housing from the adult system, HSH and its partners will work to analyze barriers to youth access or stabilization in this portfolio by improving integration and responsiveness between the youth, family, and adult systems. The City's Moving On Initiative

## Coordinated Community Plan

The Coordinated Community Plan lays the groundwork to reduce youth homelessness and to improve the system to serve youth. Between September 2016 and October 2017, representatives of more than 40 public and private organizations and youth advocates formed the Youth Homelessness Oversight and Action Council (YHOAC). This group met over many months to review the status of youth homelessness, study best practices, and recommend new program designs and system innovations. Plan goals focus in four main areas:

- Create a system approach to addressing youth homelessness including coordinated entry to prevent homelessness where possible and identify, assess, and prioritize the needs of the most vulnerable youth experiencing homelessness.
- Create and expand flexible and low barrier housing options targeted to the needs of TAY and provide movement across programs.
- Expand and coordinate wrap around services to meet a variety of youth needs, including health, behavioral health, employment, and education.
- Support a systems-level culture change led by youth voice and action.

The complete plan can be found at:

<http://hsh.sfgov.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/San-Francisco-Coordinated-Community-Plan-January-2018-Final.pdf>

(MOI) will provide youth in permanent supportive housing with opportunities to transition to more independent housing situations with continuing subsidy support.

## NEXT STEPS

Key next steps include:

1. Continue to collaborate with youth in all decision-making and in oversight of the system as it develops.
2. Complete the launch of Rising Up, including raising \$30 million in combined public and private resources; with \$10 million in public and millions of dollars in private funding committed as of the writing of this report. The resources will rehouse at least 500 youth with Rapid Rehousing and job/vocational training and education, and provide Problem Solving to at least 450 youth over the next three years.
3. Complete planning and launch Coordinated Entry for youth to identify, assess, and prioritize the needs of youth experiencing homelessness, including establishing youth-focused access points, by Spring of 2019.
4. Implement problem-solving strategies, including family reunification, to prevent at-risk and homeless youth from needing to enter the Homelessness Response System through immediate resolution of their housing crisis whenever possible.
5. Finalize the selection of a site and open a youth-targeted Navigation Center, offering 50 - 75 additional beds for prioritized unsheltered youth, by end of 2019.
6. Ensure all housing and service options are low-barrier, coordinated, equally accessible and have a Housing First orientation with high-quality, client-centered services.
7. Create movement through the system, including the ability to support youth transitioning out of time-limited programs into long-term independent housing.
8. Set goals for equity and inclusion that address intersections of identity and center the voices of youth experiencing disproportionate barriers by developing interventions to assist them in accessing responsive services.
9. Strengthen collaboration with the Human Services Agency and Adult and Juvenile Probation Departments to work towards the goal of preventing homelessness for all youth as they exit foster care and justice systems. Additionally, work with the Department of Public Health and Department of Children, Youth and Their Families to fully integrate education, employment, and behavioral health services more seamlessly with programs serving youth experiencing homelessness.
10. Based on an analysis of current barriers, work to better integrate the Adult and Youth systems, and ensure that age- appropriate services and program models are offered as needed in Adult-targeted programs to ensure TAY are welcomed and well-served.
11. With full implementation of the ONE System, improve youth-specific data collection and ability to analyze outcomes for all programs and communities, including improved analysis for evidence of racial disparities in access, services, or results, and especially any impact of the intersectionality of race, sexual orientation, and gender identity on outcomes for youth.