

Unaccompanied Homeless Youth Meeting Minutes – 11/14/18

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In attendance: Peter Cofoni, DCF, Emily English, Gandara Center, Rosemary Fiedler, HCC, Lisa Goldsmith, DIAL/SELF, Gerry McCafferty, Hampden CoC/Springfield, Rebecca Muller, Gandara/Grant Works, Lizzy Ortiz, Mercy Medical, Mena Regan, CHD, Jean Rogers, CHD, Pamela Schwartz, Network (apologies if I forgot anyone else or added someone who wasn't there – I lost the sign-in sheet!)

Statewide Youth Count Check-in We collected feedback for Lisa as she is talking with statewide youth count coordinators shortly. The feedback included: preference to do count every other year instead of every year; focus on more qualitative data, i.e., what is driving homelessness, since a pure “count” is difficult to obtain, factor in more “upstream” variables, increase capacity to ascertain patterns

EOHHS grant updates: Hampden CoC received its grant for \$316,000. The City will issue an RFP to allocate the funds. Working with CHD, Safety Zone and Gandara will for outreach, rapid rehousing and a shelter component (planning underway). Funds will also be allocated to conduct a needs assessment. Community Action – for 3 county region – is waiting on contract.

Data Update: Gerry shared that work continues on the youth “by name list.” Roughly 40 youth on the list but it is challenging because youth are seen briefly, then not seen again for a while, then re-emerge. The by-name list at least affords a sense of the patterns and makes clear the challenge of being best positioned to serve when the “brief touch” occurs at

different intersection points.

Discussion of racial equity reports: See attached Hampden County report [here](#); 3 County all populations report [here](#) and 3 county youth report [here](#). We discussed the racial equity reports for Hampden and Three County CoCs. One shared general finding (see reports for details): young African Americans are over-represented in the homeless population relative to their percentage of the general population in Hampden County; latinx are over-represented in the Three County region. In Hampden County, for young people of color who are not parenting, they are more likely to more quickly get re-housed than white youth. This may be related to the fact that the people doing the re-housing work are also people of color and are able to better connect.

It is also relevant to note that 71% of young people in Hampden County are young people. This is especially pertinent to the upcoming family re-procurement process: we need to focus on reaching populations most at risk, including people of color, extremely low-income, LGBTQ, and those without a GED or high school diploma.

This conversation segued into a discussion of young people at greatest risk of homelessness: those leaving foster care or juvenile justice system (nationally, over 1/3 of youth who are homeless were in the foster care system; close to half who are in the juvenile justice system or jail experience homelessness). And the correlation between these populations and teen pregnancy is extremely high.

We agreed we need to focus our efforts on coordinated entry with DCF and DYS, building a two-way communication system that maximizes the potential for successful intervention. As a start, Peter Cofoni of DCF will reach out to DCF regional supervisor to see if she can attend our next meeting.

Next meeting date: Friday, December 14, 9:15 am – 10:30 am,

Kittredge Center, Room 301, HCC