

## **Youth and Young Adult Services Committee Meeting Minutes - 9/18/24**

*In attendance: Tanja Alessi, CSO, Ellen Broadhurst, social worker, Lynn Guertin, Ware FRC, Keith Hedlund, CHD, Charlie Knight, consumer/activist, Hayley Nelson, Hampden CoC, Miosoty Rivas, Springfield YAB, Pamela Schwartz, Network, Cinnamon Smith, Westover Job Corps, Devin Streeter, Gandara, Herlinda Tuesca, CAPV, Mark Watkins, Gandara, Tasia Williams, STCC*

### **Hampden CoC Update:**

- FY24 last quarter : 440 youth served; 58 pregnant and parent
- since 7/1: 308 served, 48 pregnant or parenting
- on bynames list: 159 people, 85 are at risk or couch surfing, 74 actually experiencing homelessness; 16 living outside; 22 in shelter; 26 in transitional housing; 10 unknown
- coordinated entry list - 141 active clients (note the discrepancy between the bynames list number and the coordinated entry number are a function of some programs not being connected to the coordinated entry meetings - but still identifying young people - Hayley is working now to close this gap)
- rehousing: 7/1-9/1: 22 young adults rehoused (GREAT WORK!)
- using FYI (Foster to Youth Independence) vouchers - 14 young adults have vouchers; 9 lease-ups since January
- Youth Action Board - 46 participants in FY24; meetings are underway for this year

### **Three County CoC Update**

- FY24 last quarter - 143 youth served; 36 in CoC housing; 89 in shelter; 8 rehoused; 57 entered shelter
- 7/1-9/1/24: 102 youth served; 31 in CoC housing; 51 in shelter; 2 rehoused; 14 entered shelter
- bynames list:
- Impact of state (EOHS) youth dollars alone: July and August - 54 youth served; 12 new intakes; providing emergency hotel funds for 6 youth
- re: demographics of EOHS funds: 70% white; 30% multi-racial; 17% latinx; 13% non-binary
- in general seeing more movement in rehousing efforts; using mobile vouchers to support the rehousing work
- by-names list: 63 YYA as of 9/17/24

### **Discussion:**

- Noted increase in the number of young adult parents seeking shelter and housing - young adults being evicted from their family homes when faced with pregnancy
- Discussed the intense challenge of finding affordable apartments (average 900 sq ft one bedroom is going for \$1,500/\$1,600/month)
- Noted the key to finding affordable apartments is RELATIONSHIP-BUILDING with landlords - through the personal relationship as providers who are on call to assist with

any issues that may arise, landlords become open to renting and in fact seek out the provider when there is a vacancy - this has been key to the successful rehousing efforts

### **EOHS budget cuts**

The FY25 state budget cut the youth homelessness line-item by roughly \$450,000. For our region, that has meant a cut of \$100,000 to the 3 county CoC and a cut of \$40-50K to the Hampden CoC. For Hampden, the City of Springfield was able to absorb the cut. For 3 County, DIAL/SELF absorbed the cut and has had to do some staff restructuring.

### **Network budget and policy updates**

- The Affordable Homes Act passed on August 1 - a very significant investment in affordable and public housing along with policy advances (eviction record sealing, accessory dwelling units, fair housing etc.) Read more at our [blog post here](#). This year will focus on implementation (our voices are needed here, too - stay tuned!)
- Strategy discussions are beginning around the next Legislative Session (begins Jan.18) and the FY26 budget. The Network is representing western MA around our statewide advocacy tables and will circle back with recommendations for review.
- Discussions around winter shelter needs are in motion, recognizing the significant gap between the number of people living outside and the number of available shelter beds. The Network is coordinating provider conversations and communicating with the state about the region's needs. The state is aiming for a total of \$12 million in winter overflow shelter funds statewide.

**Next quarterly meeting date: Wed., 12/18, 11 am**