

Youth and Young Adult Services Committee Meeting - 1/20/21

In attendance: Shaundell Diaz, Three County CoC, Emily English, Gandara Center, Pam Fitzpatrick, CHD, Lisa Goldsmith, Three County CoC, Jake Hogue, Berkshire County Regional Housing Authority, Kim Lee, Mental Health Association, Ann Lentini, Domus, Chris Macharie, Gandara Center, Stacy Parsons, North Berkshire School Housing Partnership/DESE Coordinator; Phil Ringwood, DIAL/SELF, Walter Rice, Job Corps, Pamela Schwartz, Network, Jennifer Sunderland, Springfield Public Schools

Hampden County YHDP:

All 4 YHDP programs are underway. The dedicated phone line for youth in search of assistance is up and running 24/7 - **413-316-4979**. Excellent collaboration between Gandara Center and CHD in operating this intake line. Executive Board for the youth project is meeting regularly, with 2 active committees at this time, one on racial equity planning; the other on education and employment.

Additional state funding via the FY21 budget has been made available (\$130,000 for each CoC), which will be used in Hampden County to expand staffing at Gandara's Brighter Futures shelter.

A new pilot program is underway (Springfield and Worcester are the two pilot communities statewide) to work with DCF to engage youth who are aging out of the foster care system but are refusing continued DCF services - goal is to provide age appropriate support and interventions to prevent future homelessness.

Gandara and CHD are working with their housing navigators to standardize protocol based on state guidance - focusing on housing navigation, youth choice and anti-adultism.

Noting an increase in the number of young parents seeking assistance. Working on building collaborations with DHCD and Friends of the Homeless and Catholic Charities.

More young people are being assessed as part of the Coordinated Entry effort.

On staffing:

CHD: Coordinated Entry project is fully staffed; 3 out of 4 of the Rapid Rehousing (RRH) positions are filled

Gandara: almost fully staffed - but hiring now

On placements: Gandara: RRH 6 units filled; transitional 1 unit filled; 4 being prepped, youth identified; others in process

CHD - 30 RRH beds - 6 people identified off by-names list, looking for units

The Youth Action Board is meeting weekly.

Three County YHDP:

Staffing is still slow but making progress. DIAL/SELF all staffed up; placed 1 youth in housing, others in process.

Meeting weekly for YYA Case Conferencing meetings. Reviewing systems.
Monthly YYA committee meetings that are focused on the implementation of the whole plan, focusing on project outcomes (last meeting on centering race in outcomes)
Trainings - integrating trauma informed care in data collection, also RRH trainings
Connecting in Berkshire County on Moving To College Scholarship. Monthly meetings. Working with Berkshire Community College.

Additional state funding for FY21 of \$130,000 will be allocated for a pilot emergency housing project through Louison House in North Berkshires - Berkshire Regional Housing Authority providing case management; also will add flexible funds in all 3 counties that will target emergency housing. DIAL/SELF is supporting BCRHA around building emergency response. Also supporting the purchase of a vehicle to allow for covid-safe transport of individuals.

Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) program - good news on finding a landlord partner; also new policy that allows referrals directly instead of having to wait for DCF referral - this will allow for better targeting of highest need youth

Point in Time Count - HUD count will take place on 1/27. MA Youth Count is also happening this year. Planning meeting coming up on 1/28.

Discussion re: resources for young people in need of substance use treatment. Considered reaching out to Ben Cluff at DPH. Or Ruth Jacobson-Hardy? Referrals via the chat box included:

scloutier@wayfinders.org or cnavarro@wayfinders.org

<https://www.opioidtaskforce.org/> <https://www.opioidtaskforce.org/covid-19-resources/resources-for-individuals-in-recovery/>

Emily English at Gandara Center - eenglish@gandaracenter.org - oversees sober living programs- can connect people to the team

Meeting frequency/next meeting date:

In view of the regular meetings happening on a CoC level, this Network Committee should meet every 2 months. Pamela will report back in advance on a format for the meeting to maximize information sharing. We will meet next on:

Wed., 3/17, 9:30-10:30 am.