

Youth and Young Adult Services Committee Meeting Minutes - 3/17/21

In attendance: Ellen Broadhurst, West Springfield Public Schools, Pamela Fitzpatrick, CHD, Marie Gates, Mental Health Association, Jake Hogue, Berkshire County Regional Housing Authority, Justin Journet, Mental Health Association, Freddie Kemp, Westover Job Corps, Amanda Koch, Berkshire County Regional Housing Authority, Cheryl LaChance, Way Finders, Ann Lentini, Domus, Gerry McCafferty, Hampden CoC, Israel Ortiz, Mental Health Association, Lizzy Ortiz, Hampden CoC, Stacy Parsons, North Adams Public Schools/DESE liaison, Kim Puffer, Domus, Walter Rice, Westover Job Corps, Pamela Schwartz, Network, Tyrese Tillman, CHD, Kelsey Wessels, DIAL/SELF, Eric White, Westover Job Corps

Hampden CoC Update:

Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP) Update:

- All 4 programs are fully staffed up and taking clients (coordinated entry and navigation; rapid rehousing (30 units); permanent supportive housing (8 units); joint transitional/RRH
- 24/7 phone number available to call for service - 413-316-4979
- case-conferencing every 2 weeks, doing housing match, problem-solving, determining appropriate resources
- one of the gaps surfacing is the need for more permanent supportive housing (right now only 8 units funded) - this is for young people who have disabilities who need long-term support - the need is greater than anticipated and this is something that will be addressed going forward

Foster Youth to Independence (FYI): Gandara has entered into an agreement with the Springfield Housing Authority for Foster Youth to Independence vouchers which will provide 3 year housing vouchers for youth aging out of DCF who are at risk of homelessness - the number to be served will be determined by the demand for it and capacity to serve - exciting development

State Pilot to serve Transitional Age Youth (TAY) ages 17.5 years and older who are likely to refuse continuing services with DCF and be at risk of homelessness. The goal is to connect them with community services to create housing stability. The pilot started on 2/1; CHD has hired to staff the pilot shortly

CHD Update: Calls to the youth call line have diminished relative to the start. CHD and Gandara are working closely together, meeting weekly; many youth are in need of flex funds, sometimes just first/last/security deposit. Majority are couch surfers or in shelter - working closely with Friends of the Homeless and Catholic Charities with these young adults. The Rapid Rehousing (RRH) program has identified 24 people who are eligible for RRH, housed 8 so far and will be up to 12 by the end of the week

CHD RRH program - have been able to identify 24 people who are eligible for RRH unit, out of those 24, been able to house up to 8 thus far and will be up to 16 by next week. Almost fully staffed, last hire on board at the end of April. Spanish speaking staff in both projects.

Youth Action Board - meeting weekly, for youth 24 and under, providing opportunities to meet with providers, have learning sessions; provide resources for YYA in community; see the flyer [here](#) and attached.

Education and Employment Committee: met several times; planning an agency "resource fair" in June

Training Institute for youth providers continuing to meet 2x/month, with roughly 35 participants, led by Matt Aronson, on working with youth and young adults - meet 2x/mo with 35 participants - Matt Aronson - training about youth and young adults

Three County CoC

Franklin County Young Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP)

- meeting weekly for case-conferencing
- most programs are up and running, taking referrals
- for their RRH program, one young person housed, 2 in housing search
- through Coordinated Entry, referred 4 youth to Gandara, 4 to MHA
- biggest challenge is finding units; held a meeting with housing search TA to provide useful reminders; outreach strategies to landlords continues

Foster to Youth Independence: The agreement is between Stockbridge Housing Authority and Berkshire Regional Housing Authority; 2 placements thus far, exciting progress. Challenge continues around accessible and affordable housing - available stock is extremely low.

Data Collection

Gerry reported that its Hampden YHDP is looking at how to collect and present data and is interested in learning about 3 County's work on that - happy to cross-reference and collaborate where it makes sense.

MA Youth Count

The survey will be available 4/12-5/24 - with targeted outreach 4/26-5/10. Three County CoC is working out payment for participants (for those who lack access to online payment). Both CoCs are approaching count as a way to engage new people and do outreach in harder-to-reach areas. Stay tuned for more information.

Next meeting date:

Wednesday, May 26

9:30 - 10:30 am