

**ORANGE COUNTY CONTINUUM OF CARE (CoC)  
TRANSITIONAL AGED YOUTH (TAY) COLLABORATIVE COMMITTEE**

Friday, March 8, 2024  
1:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m.

**Location: Virtually on Teams**  
**Meeting Link: [Here](#)**  
**Meeting ID: 257 959 387 482**  
**Passcode: dAJnf5**  
**Or call in (audio only): +1 949-543-0845**  
**Phone Conference ID: 546 362 324#**

**Committee Chair:** Ami Rowland, Covenant House California

### **AGENDA**

**Welcome and Introductions** – Ami Rowland, Chair

**Public Comments** – Members of the public may address the TAY Collaborative Committee on items listed within this agenda or matters not appearing on the agenda so long as the subject matter is within the jurisdiction of the TAY Collaborative Committee. Members of the public may address the TAY Collaborative Committee with public comments on agenda items after the agenda item presentation. Comments will be limited to three minutes. If there are more than five public speakers, this time will be reduced to two minutes.

To address the TAY Collaborative Committee during the Public Comment period, members of the public are to enter their name and agenda item number in the chat box to be placed in a queue. Staff will call your name in the order listed in the chat box.

Members of the public may also submit public comment by emailing [CareCoordination@ocgov.com](mailto:CareCoordination@ocgov.com). All comments submitted via email or at least 24 hours before the start of the meeting will be distributed to the TAY Collaborative Committee members and all comments will be added to the administrative records of the meeting. Please include “TAY Collaborative Committee Meeting Comment” in the email subject line.

### **BUSINESS CALENDAR**

- 1. California Coalition for Youth (CCY) Briefing** – Ami Rowland, Chair
- 2. Youth Community Integration** – Dee Balliet, Human Services Associate, Abt Associates
  - a. Discussion related to the importance of collaboration among community.
    - i. Youth Action Boards (YABs) need to be made up of young people from multiple systems, agencies, contact points to enhance the feedback, loops, and vibrancy of youth voice.
- 3. Youth Homelessness System Improvement (YHSI) Update** – Becks Heyhoe, Executive Director, United to End Homelessness, Orange County United Way

**Next Meeting:** Friday, May 10, 2024, from 1:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. at Orangewood Foundation located at 1575 17th St, Santa Ana, CA 92705



California  
**Coalition for Youth**



# Youth Experiencing Homelessness Is Preventable

January 2024

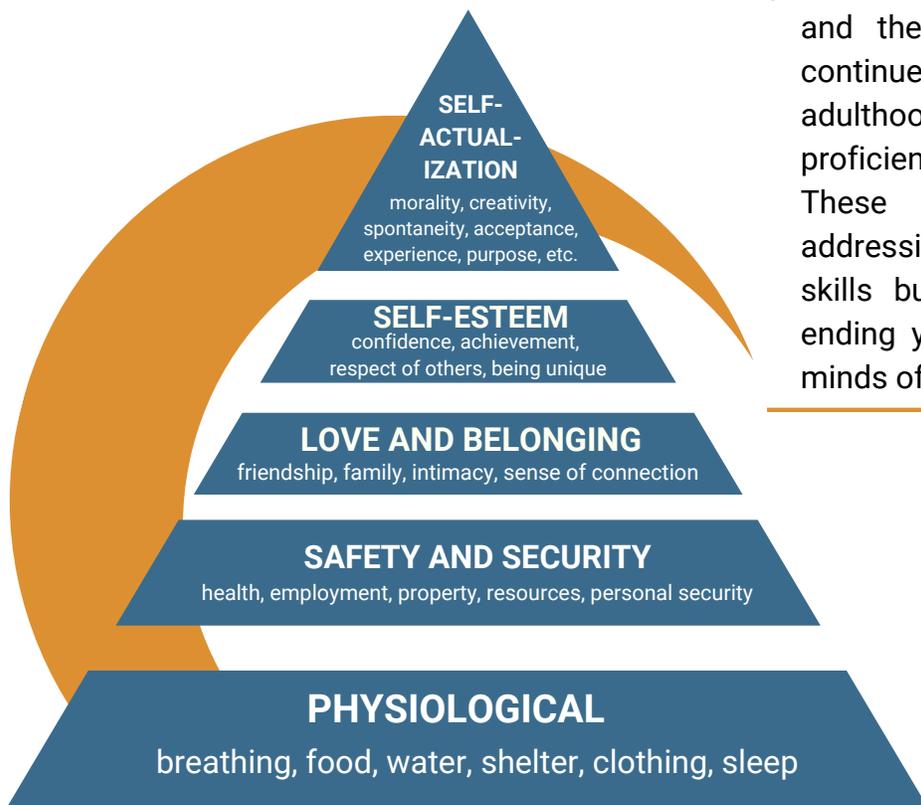
# Introduction

Over the past five years, California has made significant progress in responding to the needs of youth experiencing homelessness. California Coalition for Youth’s (CCY’s) Call to Action, representing our first five-year plan, provided a blueprint that set into motion the expansion of critical housing and services for young people across our State. We are now launching our next plan to reduce youth homelessness to get to functional zero over the next five years. Ending youth homelessness is possible if the State enacts a series of policy changes and allocates appropriate funding to scale proven interventions.

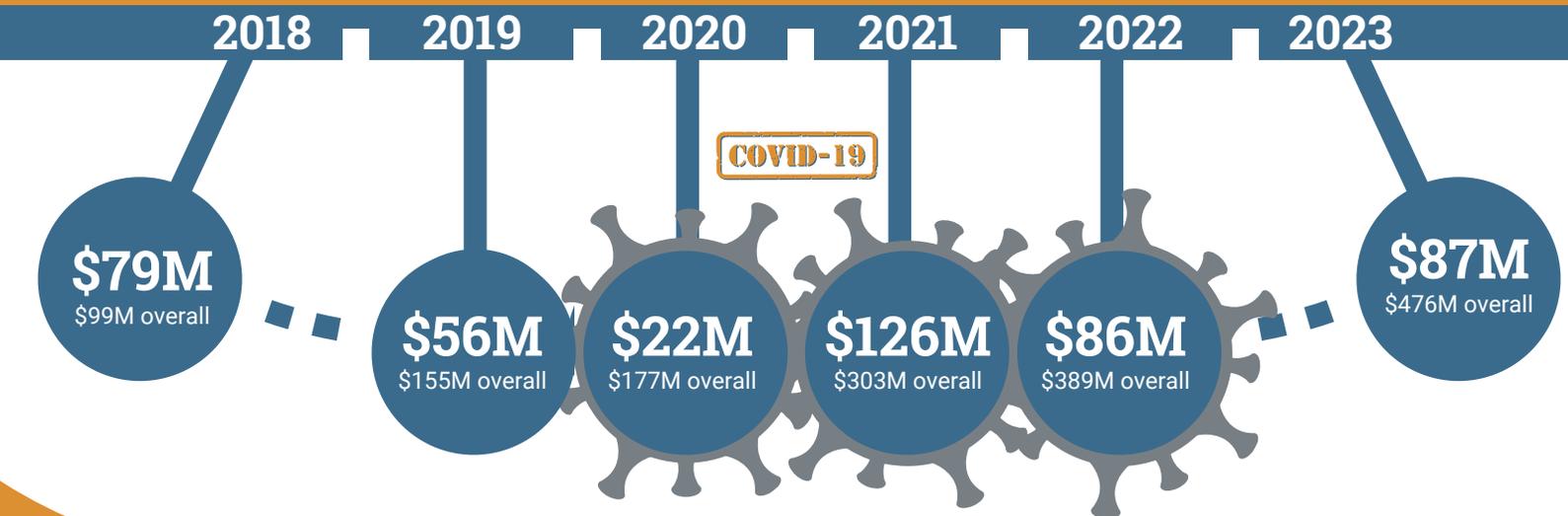
Since CCY’s last five year plan to support the State of California to urgently address youth homelessness, the state and country have dealt with a global pandemic, racial and cultural reckonings, and intense economic fluctuations. Despite these challenges, California has continued to lead the nation in creating and investing in solutions to address generational and childhood poverty, homelessness, and housing insecurity.

CCY’s plan centers Maslow’s hierarchy of needs and research on the developing brain. Maslow states that humans are motivated by five fundamental needs, organized hierarchically from the most basic to the highest order: physiological, safety and security, love and belonging, self-esteem, and self-actualization. Furthermore, all youth need to develop a set of core life skills to manage and navigate school, work, outside interests, and social relationships successfully. From the perspective of brain development, these skills include planning, focus, self-control, awareness, and flexibility—also known as “executive function” and “self-regulation” skills.<sup>1</sup> The full range of core capabilities,

and the neural network that connects them, continues to develop into adolescence and early adulthood, with another significant increase in proficiency occurring between ages 15 and 23.<sup>2</sup> These frameworks reflect the urgency of addressing a young person’s basic needs and skills building. Doing so is the foundation to ending youth homelessness and developing the minds of our future generation of leaders.



# California's Impact and Investments to Address Youth Homelessness



**\$476 Million** through policies and programs such as Homeless Youth and Exploitation Program, Homeless Emergency Assistance Program, California Emergency Solutions and Housing, Homeless Youth Innovation Program, Senate Bill 918, Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention Program, Youth Exploitation, and other funding streams that became available from 2016-2023 to address youth homelessness.

**We know that when we intervene effectively with young people experiencing homelessness, we re-orient the trajectory of their lives from a place of crisis and suffering to a future of opportunity and potential.**

In order to do so, we must continue to dedicate and align resources around a holistic approach to support young people. The only way to sustainably end homelessness in California is to build our solutions as far upstream as possible to prevent people from sleeping on the streets to begin with. This work must begin by focusing on and supporting our youth. We know that up to 50% of adults experiencing chronic homelessness had their first homeless experience between the ages of 16-24.<sup>3</sup> Additional research estimates 85% of people who experience long-term homelessness, defined in the study as longer than 12 months, come from the "youth-to-adult" pipeline.<sup>4</sup> If we can intervene during or prior to the first instance of instability, we can prevent unneeded suffering and divert future trajectories toward stability.

## What the Numbers and Research Tell Us

Before the pandemic, California already had the highest number of youth experiencing homelessness in the nation. Now, the enduring impact of the pandemic has further complicated their path to stability, contributing to even more youth experiencing homelessness. In California, the number of unaccompanied homeless youth is 10,173, and there are another 2,219 parenting youth and their children experiencing homelessness based on the US Department of Housing and Urban Development's 2023 Point-In-Time homeless count.<sup>5</sup> Yet, California's K-12 educational system, which captures youth doubled-up or couch surfing, reported 8,537 unaccompanied homeless youth, of which 606 were temporarily unsheltered, in the 2022-23 school year.<sup>6</sup>

The recent UCSF Benioff Homelessness and Housing Initiative's California Statewide Study of People Experiencing Homelessness (CASPEH) is the largest representative study of adults experiencing homelessness in the United States since the 1990s, yet it glaringly overlooks a key demographic: youth experiencing homelessness. Only 3% of the participants in the study were adults between the ages of 18-24, or Transitional Aged Youth (TAY), despite the fact that TAY make up at least 7% of the unhoused population in California according to the Point-In-Time counts. Further missing from the study are unaccompanied minors and pregnant or parenting TAY.<sup>7</sup>

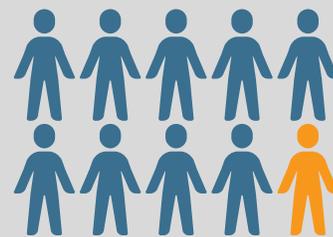
While estimates vary of the actual number of youth experiencing homelessness, the most comprehensive research on youth comes from Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago, which found that certain groups of young people are more likely to experience homelessness based on specific characteristics. **Youth without a high school diploma or GED had a 346%, parenting youth had a 200%, LGBTQ+ had a 120%, and African-American youth had an 83% higher risk of experiencing homelessness.**<sup>8</sup> This stark data show the systemic nature of homelessness and its root causes in poverty, racism, and homo- and trans-phobia.

Lacking adequate data on the true scope of the problem, it has been difficult to scale solutions, and as a result, services for youth experiencing homelessness are oversubscribed because there are simply not enough resources to meet their needs. **Research found the average wait time for a youth looking for any type of housing is 4.5 months.**<sup>9</sup> **Every day of waiting for housing services reduces a youth's chances of staying stably housed by 2%.**<sup>10</sup>

### Opportunities: Providing the Supports Needed

Despite facing these incredible obstacles and the lack of available resources across the state, these young people have strengths and hopes for their own future. CCY believes in these young people and the capacity for California to lead the nation in showing that ending youth homelessness is possible. Over the next five years, implementing these steps will put California on the right trajectory toward this ambitious goal. Embedded in all of these recommendations is the importance of youth voice, choice, and input in decision making, as well as positive youth development, trauma informed care, harm reduction, and cultural competency practices to address the disproportionality of people of color and identifying LGBTQ+ youth experiencing homelessness. Further, many of the recommendations included are an attempt to leverage existing resources to maximize their impact, and when appropriate, to streamline and enhance resources so that youth experiencing homelessness can have the same opportunity no matter where they reside in the state.

1 in 10  
18-25 year olds



1 in 30  
13-17 year olds



experienced a form of  
homelessness over a  
12-month period<sup>11</sup>



## Prevention and Early Intervention

**Our 5 Year Goal** - Every county has robust family support and reunification services that include access to emergency funding to support eviction prevention and housing stabilization, street and community outreach programs, and drop-in (open-access) centers that are effectively connected to school districts and child welfare offices to facilitate early intervention.

### Strategies

- Increase ongoing funding for the California Youth Crisis Line (CYCL) to expand outreach and increase behavioral health staffing on the line to respond to text/chats/calls. **(Budget)**
- Ensure that counties have at least one Youth Homelessness Prevention Center (for unaccompanied minors) and one TAY (ages 18-25) shelter. More may be needed depending upon geography or population numbers. **(Policy & Practice)**
- Create a state grant program to match the federal Runaway and Homeless Youth Act's four funded programs - street outreach, basic center, transitional living programs, and maternity group homes. **(Budget & Policy)**
- Ensure that child welfare agencies are working with former foster youth or youth aging out of foster care to gain access to affordable housing, such as a Family Unification Program (FUP), Housing Choice Voucher, and its partner the Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) voucher program, which can be used for up to 5 years. This can be extremely useful for youth who were not in care on their 18th birthday and would otherwise not qualify for extended foster care. Ensure that HCD's Housing Navigation and Maintenance Program is supporting the FUP/FYI voucher programs focused on former foster youth. **(Policy & Practice)**
- Extend the Chafee Independent Living Program (ILP) eligibility through age 23 and provide resources to support this program expansion in alignment with the federal Family First Prevention Services Act. Work could be done through the Child Welfare Council to look at developing best practices to facilitate successful transitions to adulthood and increase consistency amongst counties within the ILP program. **(Budget & Policy)**
- Expand CalWORKS to include serving unaccompanied homeless youth, who are not expectant or parenting, up to age 25 as part of the Administration's reimagining of the CalWORKs program in order to create a strong safety net for youth. **(Budget & Policy)**
- Address the challenges youth face with housing discrimination due to lack of credit and rental histories. Create a flexible pool of funds for nonprofits and allow them to cosign for youth on rental agreements. **(Budget & Policy)**
- Allow state funded grant programs serving youth to use dollars for diversion and problem-solving. **(Policy & Practice)**



## Diverse Housing Options

**Our 5 Year Goal** - Young people experiencing housing instability and homelessness have immediate access to a youth-specific housing solution. Every county has a robust array of emergency housing, transitional housing, rapid rehousing, and permanent supportive housing options for youth. Each Continuum of Care uses a robust, youth specific Coordinated Entry System, which uses a trauma informed assessment where prioritization is based on vulnerability, not length of homelessness.

### Strategies

- Require Continuums of Care (CoCs) to have youth-specific Coordinated Entry Systems (YCES) and include youth-specific entry points, assessment, and prioritization scores, and youth appropriate housing and services. Further, the CoC must have housing in their inventory specifically for youth that is a mix of rapid rehousing, transitional housing, and permanent supportive housing. **(Policy & Practice)**
- Create a facilities grant program that allows nonprofit homeless youth service providers to apply for capital and operating costs for youth specific projects. This should support project acquisition and rehabilitation as well as new construction. Priority for grants should go to nonprofits who can provide a cash match. One option would be to expand the Behavioral Health Continuum Infrastructure Program, which should Proposition 1 of the March 2024 ballot pass, will infuse another \$4 billion into the program. Another option would be to ensure the next state Housing Bond has funding dedicated for youth experiencing homelessness. This would mirror state approaches in the Youth Center and Youth Shelter Bond Act of 1988 (WIC 2000-2025), Proposition 1C of 2006 (HSC 53545), and the 8% set aside in Project Homekey (HSC 50175). **(Budget & Policy)**
- Create a low-interest loan program through the California Housing Financing Agency to help nonprofits secure loans to fund capital development projects for youth. **(Budget & Policy)**
- Dedicate at least \$50 million one-time to continue the Homeless Youth and Exploitation Pilot Program (HY Pilot) and the Homeless Youth Emergency Services and Housing Program (HYESH) by the enactment of the FY 26-27 Budget Act. The HY Pilot should be made into a permanent program and expanded to fund at least four new counties. The HYESH should be expanded to fund projects in at least 20 counties, with an increase in the award amount to adjust for inflation (the program currently funds 12 counties). These two programs should become permanent, ongoing programs, and could be funded on a cycle basis in order for every county to have at least one HY Pilot and one HYESH funded program. **(Budget)**
- Provide Landlord incentives to those who house youth. This could be in the form of tax credits to private landlords willing to lease buildings to nonprofits serving youth experiencing homelessness to create youth-specific housing stock more quickly or creating a damage or mitigation fund for landlords who rent to youth. **(Budget & Policy)**
- Create a state-level grant program to expand Host Home programs across the state, with a focus on rural communities. **(Budget & Policy)**



## Aftercare and Follow-up Supports

**Our 5 Year Goal** - All youth are supported to successfully exit programs with step down supports knowing that youth need developmentally appropriate experiences that includes allowances for trial and error.

### Strategies

- Offer short-term rental vouchers (for 6-12 months), follow-up services to support critical educational and employment needs, mental and physical health services, parenting supports, and other basic needs as youth transition to safe and stable housing. **(Budget & Policy)**
- Create a safe launch (safety net) program for youth who experience a setback, such as a layoff or medical challenge, within their first year of successfully exiting programs, to prevent them from falling back into homelessness. **(Budget & Policy)**
- Implement a services-only rate for youth in Supervised Independent Living Programs (SILPs) to support stability for youth exiting foster care (AB 592 (Friedman)). **(Policy & Practice)**
- Ensure youth receiving public benefits, (Medi-Cal, CalFresh, etc.), receive outreach and support with the annual redetermination process at least two months prior to their renewal date. **(Policy & Practice)**

## Health, Behavioral Health, and Substance Use Services

**Our 5 Year Goal** - All eligible youth are enrolled in Medi-Cal and have the support and ability to access services in a timely manner.



### Strategies

- Work with the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) to streamline all Medi-Cal Managed Care Plans contracting processes with homeless youth providers for the new statewide benefits available to homeless youth through the Enhanced Case Management and Community Supports benefits. **(Policy & Practice)**
- Work with DHCS to mandate counties funded by state dollars reform their referral and intake process to prioritize foster and homeless youth to go to the front of the line for behavioral health services. **(Policy & Practice)**
- Work with DHCS and Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission (MHSOAC) to ensure youth experiencing homelessness are served in each county's integrated plans, including across the various funding buckets (such as housing interventions and full-service partnerships).<sup>12</sup> **(Policy & Practice)**
- Create and expand a diverse range of youth-specific in-patient, outpatient, and drop-in substance use treatment programs. **(Budget & Policy)**
- Provide incentive dollars to homeless youth service providers to help enroll (or re-enroll) youth in Medi-Cal and allow funds to support providers helping youth gain skills in understanding healthcare coverage.<sup>13</sup> **(Budget & Policy)**
- Fund mobile eligibility workers to address enrollment questions or application challenges, which are the first step for youth to even have access to any services. **(Budget & Policy)**



## Education, Employment and Economic Stability

**Our 5 Year Goal** - All youth are connected to meaningful career pathways with opportunities for upward mobility and to gain strong financial literacy skills.

### Strategies

- Expand school capacity by: (a) increasing awareness among school staff about how to identify youth in crisis and connect them to resources and providing funding to assure resources are ready when needed; (b) providing training for teachers, counselors and staff so they can more effectively engage youth and respond to their needs; (c) expanding district homeless liaisons' FTE so that they have the capacity to effectively identify, track, and support youth in schools across the district; (d) requiring school districts to develop plans and dedicate resources through their Local Control Funding Formula, Local Control Accountability Plans to work for the unique needs of homeless students; and (e) strengthening connections and partnerships between schools and community-based organizations that serve at-risk youth and families. **(Policy & Practice)**
- Revise California's definition of truancy, in which a "pupil shall be classified as a habitual truant, as defined in Education Code Section 48262" after receiving their third unexcused absence (truancy report), to include a screen for the youth's housing status. **(Policy & Practice)**
- Expand the California Department of Social Services' (CDSS) Guaranteed Income Pilot to serve unaccompanied homeless youth.<sup>14</sup> **(Budget & Policy)**
- Return CalFresh benefits for youth under 25 years of age to the levels provided during the pandemic. **(Budget & Policy)**
- Work with California Conservation Corp, Workforce Development Boards, and Workforce Investment Act-funded programs to provide more intensive employment supports and pathways into employment. Programs should extend time limits and reduce barriers to enrollment. **(Policy & Practice)**
- Expand pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programs for youth. Provide paid stipends to youth in apprenticeships.<sup>15</sup> **(Budget & Policy)**

## Organizational Sustainability, Capacity Building, Sustainable Wages, and Partnerships

**Our 5 Year Goal** - Nonprofits supporting homeless youth are treated as essential partners and compensated at fair and just levels, with staff earning a living wage.



### Strategies

- Provide ongoing funding for the Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention Program, with an increased set aside for youth experiencing homelessness. **(Budget & Policy)**
- Allow homeless youth providers to claim for their true cost of caring for youth who are from other systems of care such as foster care, juvenile justice, or immigration systems rather than the current method of flat fees that fails to reimburse for actual costs. **(Policy & Practice)**
- Increase shelter bed rates to adjust for local economic conditions and implement periodic reviews of baseline rates. **(Budget & Policy)**
- Ensure government contracts support sustainable wages and annual cost increases. **(Budget & Policy)**
- Support implementation of the California Youth Empowerment Commission, which is anticipated to hold its first meeting in Q1/Q2 of 2024. **(Policy & Practice)**
- Support the California Interagency Council on Homelessness' Youth and Young Adults Working Group, which is anticipated to be formed in FY 24-25. **(Policy & Practice)**



## Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

**Our 5 Year Goal** - Youth of color, LGBTQ+, and members of other historically marginalized communities are no longer disproportionately represented in the homelessness response system, and systematic barriers are dismantled.

### Strategies

- Expand access to legal aid services and reentry services for youth in order to provide services to youth who are justice-involved, those who are unhoused or at risk of homelessness, and exiting juvenile justice facilities. **(Budget & Policy)**
- Streamline public benefits programs by requiring all counties to align their programs as part of the regional homeless planning process so that youth are universally eligible and can access the same benefits across jurisdictions, meaning they do not have to go through the eligibility process when they are in a new county. **(Budget & Policy)**
- Address barriers facing older minors who are unhoused and meet the definition of abuse or neglect with entering the child welfare system. This could be through addressing challenges with the Welfare and Institutions Code (WIC) Section 329 and WIC Section 331 processes. **(Policy & Practice)**

Embedded in all of the above strategies is the importance of youth voice, choice, and input in decision-making as well as positive youth development, trauma informed care, harm reduction, and practices that are rooted in cultural humility and cultural competency and are LGBTQ-affirming.

### Conclusion

Youth homelessness is unacceptable and avoidable; no young person should have to choose between school and the streets or between meaningful work and the street economy. No young person should be sleeping on a city bus or camping on a sidewalk. No young person should go hungry or continue to be ignored by our systems. It is imperative that California take action now to put an end to this crisis and prevent future youth and young adults from experiencing homelessness. We can solve youth homelessness. Now is the time, and the Administration and Legislature can make it happen.



Since 1972, the California Coalition for Youth's (CCY) has and is driven by our mission to improve and empower the lives of California's youth, focusing on youth experiencing homelessness, disconnection, and instability. Through advocacy and partnerships, we're impacting public policies, programs, services, and investments so that every youth in California receives the services, resources, supports, programs, and caring people they need to live and thrive.

## Sources

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8. Morton, M.H., Dworsky, A., & Samuels, G.M. (2017). Missed opportunities: Youth homelessness in America. National estimates. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.
9. Morton, M.H, Rice, E., Blondin, M., Hsu, H., & Kull, M. (2018). Toward a system response to ending youth homelessness: New evidence to help communities strengthen coordinated entry, assessment, and support for youth. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.
10. Ibid.
11. Morton, M.H., Dworsky, A., & Samuels, G.M. (2017). Missed opportunities: Youth homelessness in America. National estimates. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.
12. Should Proposition 1 - the modernization of the Mental Health Services Act - be approved by voters at the March 2024 primary, then the MHSOAC will be renamed the Behavioral Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission.
13. Similar to AB 82, trailer bill language enacted as a part of the 2013-14 budget.
14. Any government-sponsored direct cash transfer programs or compensation programs should also include unaccompanied youth as well as pre-documented youth. With any form of cash or payment method, gift cards should be avoided to compensate youth as they cannot be used to pay rent or bills.
15. San Jose Conservation Corp Charter School (SJCC+CS) recognized that 30% of their Corps members were housing insecure and being priced out of Santa Clara county. Their program provides Corps members with valuable job skills as they build Portable Dwelling Units (PDUs) from the ground up. SJCC+CC provides wraparound support services.



The California Coalition for Youth is a 501(c)3 and we welcome donations to continue doing our work to improve and empower the lives of youth, with a focus on youth experiencing homelessness, disconnection, and instability.



Scan QR Code with your phone to make a donation today. We, also, accept checks made out to "California Coalition for Youth" mailed to: P.O. BOX 161448, Sacramento, CA 95816