



January 25, 2022

TO: Liz Hersh, Director, Philadelphia Office of Homeless Services  
Members, Philadelphia City Council

FROM: Brittany Brown-Christopher, Marion Campbell, David R. Fair, Liam Spady  
PH4Y Co-Chairs

RE: Distribution of American Rescue Plan Funds

Dear Ms. Hersh and Members of City Council:

The Philly Homes 4 Youth Coalition is comprised of over 30 youth-serving organizations and over 40 young people with lived experience of homelessness and housing insecurity. The coalition began in 2016, following the 100 Day Challenge to End Youth Homelessness, a planning process initiated by the Office of Homeless Services. This process resulted in an extensive set of proposals aimed at improving OHS and other City services for transition-age youth (TAY) in the areas of housing, child protective services, juvenile justice services, behavioral health, and other areas.

We understand that the demands on the City and OHS are great and that the challenges of homelessness and housing security cut across all ages. We support our fellow advocates in ensuring that there are responses for all members of our community. However, we write to you today to ask that you give additional priority to taking concrete action with respect to youth and young adult homelessness. The need to do so is urgent, and long overdue.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The Coalition has made requests of OHS and DHS that have not been responded to for several years. [Testimony](#) was provided to City Council on April 13, 2021. No action was taken on the seven requests made at that time. A copy of this testimony is attached.

Addressing youth and young adult homelessness is among the most effective ways we can prevent long term and chronic adult homelessness.<sup>2</sup> By helping young people gain stability and security as they make the transition to adulthood, we are investing in their potential to contribute and be secure in adulthood. We appreciate that OHS has been open to discussion with us, but it is time that you take the concrete actions described below to demonstrate a meaningful commitment to youth and young adults.

## **1. Background**

### **a. Youth and Young Adult Homelessness and Housing Insecurity in Philadelphia**

Youth and young adult homelessness and housing insecurity is a crisis for the Philadelphia community, and this crisis has only worsened during the pandemic. This crisis has impacted Black, Latinx, and LGBTQ youth the hardest. While we know that the current available data significantly underestimates the scope of the problem, it nonetheless shows that transition aged youth between ages 18 and 24 make up at least 9% of the homeless population that the OHS is serving or is aware of.<sup>3</sup> Because of the lack of youth/young adult-specific services, and given the challenges that discourage young adults to present at adult shelters, we believe these numbers are much higher.

Adolescence and young adulthood represent critical developmental periods. Every day young people experience homelessness and housing insecurity is a missed opportunity to support healthy development and ensure that all young people can reach their full potential.<sup>4</sup> To address the problem of youth and young adult homelessness and housing insecurity a targeted plan is needed that considers the special strengths, characteristics, and needs of this age group. We ask that Philadelphia begin this approach through a targeted use of American Rescue Plan funds.

### **b. American Rescue Plan Funds**

Philadelphia will be receiving \$42,007,561 in a one-time allocation from the American Rescue Plan as HOME-ARP funds. These funds can serve individuals who are homeless and who are at risk of homelessness as well as those who are at greatest risk of housing instability.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> In this document we will focus on transition-aged youth, or TAY, who are young people roughly ages 18 to 24 or 26.

<sup>3</sup> OHS reported that there were 1350 individuals who were ages 18-24 served by OHS in FY 2021. This is 9% of the adult population. FY 2021 Data Snapshot, Office of Homeless Services: <http://philadelphiaofficeofhomelesservices.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/FY2021-Data-Snapshot.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> [Missed Opportunities, Counting Youth Experiencing Homelessness in America](#) (Chapin Hall 2018).

<sup>5</sup> Eligible individuals include: Homeless, as defined in section 103(a) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11302(a)); (2) At-risk of homelessness, as defined in section 401(1) of the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 11360(1)); (3) Fleeing, or attempting to flee,

The HOME-ARP funds can be used for the four following activities to help people who are homeless, at risk of homelessness and vulnerable populations who are at the greatest risk of housing instability:

- Production or Preservation of Affordable Housing
- Tenant-Based Rental Assistance (TBRA)
- Supportive Services, including services defined at [24 CFR 578.53\(e\)](#), homeless prevention services, and housing counseling.
- Purchase and Development of Non-Congregate Shelter. These structures can remain in use as non-congregate shelter or can be converted to: 1) emergency shelter under the Emergency Solutions Grant program; 2) permanent housing under the Continuum of Care; or 3) affordable housing under the HOME Program.<sup>6</sup>

Supportive services are defined broadly and include services that “assist program participants [to] obtain and maintain housing.”<sup>7</sup> Eligible costs include: needs assessment, moving costs, case management (including service connection and coordination), child care, education services, employment services, food, housing search and counseling services, legal services, life skills training, mental health services, outpatient health services, outreach services, substance abuse treatment services, transportation, utility deposits, direct provision of services.<sup>8</sup>

## **2. Requests to Advance a Proactive Approach to Addressing Youth and Young Adult Homelessness and Housing Insecurity**

As noted above, the following are actions we request OHS take to establish a meaningful and concrete approach to preventing and addressing youth and young adult homelessness and housing insecurity.

### **a. Establish Targets for ARP Fund Usage**

We ask that OHS establish a goal of using at least 20 percent of the ARP funds for targeted programming and supports for transition-aged young people who are homeless, at risk of homelessness, and are at the greatest risk of housing instability.

### **b. Include Specific Activities in the RFP that Have Been Identified as High Need and Effective Practices**

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domestic violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking, as defined by the Secretary; (4) In other populations where providing supportive services or assistance under section 212(a) of the Act ([42 U.S.C. 12742\(a\)](#)) would prevent the family’s homelessness or would serve those with the greatest risk of housing instability; (5) Veterans and families that include a veteran family member that meet one of the preceding criteria.

<sup>6</sup> [https://www.hud.gov/program\\_offices/comm\\_planning/home-arp](https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/comm_planning/home-arp)

<sup>7</sup> 24 CFR 578.53(a).

<sup>8</sup> 24 CFR 578.53 (e)(eligible costs); see also [HOME-ARP Program Fact Sheet: Supportive Services](#).

We ask that the HOME-ARP RFP(s) that are issued during this period include the specific activities listed below. These activities reflect research on best practices and the urgent needs identified by the Coalition.

### **Activity 1: Development of a Specific Program for Recruitment, Retention, and Support of Landlords Willing to Rent to Transition-Aged Youth**

The program should at least include funds for at least two full time staff, signing bonuses for landlords, repairs, landlord/tenant mediation, and support and skills development for renters.<sup>9</sup>

### **Activity 2: 4 Additional Youth Navigators and 1 Supervisor for Navigators**

Youth navigators are advocates with lived experience who help young people connect with the supports and services that they need. Navigators guide and support youth to successfully transition from homelessness to stable housing through individualized and strength-based services, often using a peer support model.

### **Activity 3: Provision of Funds for Rental Assistance and Costs Related to Acquiring and Maintaining Housing**

Programming should provide funds in at least four areas:

- Full and shallow rent subsidy that is paired with financial management assistance.
- Move-In Funds (First/Last/Deposit/Application Fees).
- Flexible funds to secure or maintain housing or prevent homelessness.<sup>10</sup>
- Funds for ID and other vital documents.
- Commit to sustainable funding for tenant-based rental assistance targeted to TAY.

### **Activity 4: Flexible Funds for Prevention Services and Supportive Services that are Critical to Housing Security**

Applicants should be able to apply for funds for the following supportive services that are targeted at TAY and have been identified as critical to housing security. All of these activities are included in HUD's description of allowable activities for HOME-ARP funds:

- Homelessness prevention services.
- Specialized TAY case management (including for special populations such as parenting youth, LGBTQ youth, youth with behavioral health needs).
- Transportation, including public transportation and supports that would enable driving.
- Childcare.

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<sup>9</sup> We understand that OHS is currently providing some of these supports, including repair funds. We believe recruiting and retaining landlords for TAY will require a more targeted and concentrated approach through a program

<sup>10</sup> Examples include but are not limited to: paying a "host" for housing, paying rent in a Supervised Independent Living unit for a youth who has aged out of foster care.

- Mental health services designed for TAY (including innovative models).
- Employment support.
- Education support.
- Community engagement.
- Crisis services
- Peer support services
- Training for housing program agencies on Positive Youth Development and youth homelessness

### **Activity 5: Programming to Support Special Populations at Greatest Risk of Housing Instability**

Applicants should be able to apply for any of the above programming or funds for special subpopulations of TAY who are at high risk for housing instability, including, but not limited to:

- Expectant and parenting young people.
- LGBTQ+ young people.
- Young people with behavioral health needs.
- Young people with experience in the child welfare or juvenile justice system.
- Young people with immigration challenges.
- Young people in need of crisis supports, such as drop-in centers.

### **Activity 6: Acquisition of Permanent Affordable Housing for TAY**

We hope that housing developers will include TAY in any general projects but recommend that this specific category be included in the RFP to encourage a targeted approach.

#### **c. Award Increased Points in the Scoring of Responses to the RFP for Programming Targeted at Youth and Young Adults**

We understand that all providers are not in the position to do programming just for transition aged youth but have the interest in serving this population in their general programming and gaining expertise in this area. We ask that OHS award applicants who agree to target transition aged youth within their programming be given additional points when their response is scored to encourage the growth of providers willing and capable of serving transition aged youth.

cc: Members of the Philly Homes 4 Youth Coalition  
 Vanessa Garrett-Harley, Acting Managing Director  
 Eva Gladstein, Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services  
 Jessica Shapiro, Acting Deputy Mayor, Office of Children and Families

Encl. - April 13, 2021 to City Council Committee on Fiscal Stability and Intergovernmental Cooperation



**TESTIMONY**  
**Philadelphia City Council**  
**Committee on Fiscal Stability and Intergovernmental Cooperation**  
**Tuesday, April 13, 2021**

Good afternoon Councilmembers Domb and Bass, and members of the Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on behalf of the Philly Homes 4 Youth Coalition, which represents 30 youth-serving agencies as well as a number of youth and young adults with lived experience of homelessness.

According to the Pennsylvania Dept. of Education, in 2019, there were almost 8,000 students in Philadelphia public schools who were homeless – and 2 out of 3 of them were “either living doubled up with friends or relatives, living in places not fit for human habitation, or living on the street.” A 2020 survey conducted by the University of Pennsylvania found that among youth in foster care – that is, youth under the protection of the government – 43 percent “reported COVID-19 as having a negative impact on their living situation.” Over 7 percent were living on the street at the time they were surveyed.

We’re sure we don’t need to tell you that youth homelessness is a crisis for the Philadelphia community, and it’s one that has only worsened during the pandemic. Also, at a time of increased understanding and recognition of the special challenges facing disenfranchised communities, it is important to recognize that most homeless youth in Philadelphia are Black and Latinx, and a large percentage of these young people are former foster youth and LGBTQ youth.

Our Coalition appreciates the opportunity to share with you some priorities we hope you will consider in your determination of the use of American Rescue Plan Act funding being provided to Philadelphia. We believe these funds provide a rare opportunity to

make significant progress on the solvable problem of homelessness among young people in Philadelphia.

A meaningful investment in a targeted strategy to prevent youth and young adult homelessness begins with the following seven urgent priorities:

1. Philadelphia is one of the few major cities that does not have a **24-hour drop-in center** for homeless youth and young adults. Accessing the variety of youth services available in the city is made unnecessarily difficult, especially for street homeless youth. A drop-in center would allow our organizations to offer their help in a central location trusted by young people, as well as provide basic help such as showers, clothing, food, etc.
2. Our city also fails to appropriately help what are called “transition age youth” – that is, youth who are aging out of the foster care and juvenile justice systems, several hundred of whom age out every year directly into homelessness. We recommend creating and funding a **Director of Transition Age Youth Services** at the Department of Human Services. Such a role would allow DHS to develop stronger outcome measures and a system for accountability; oversee training and practice improvement at DHS and in the Community Umbrella Agencies; assure that the transition process is followed appropriately; and allow coordination with other systems such as behavioral health, homelessness prevention, and intellectual disabilities that are needed for youth with multi-system concerns.
3. Unfortunately, high and mixed caseloads in the Community Umbrella Agency system often interfere with the provision of the intensity of case management and related services required by these youth. Funding is needed to assure that **each** of the city’s 10 Community Umbrella Agencies is able to dedicate a minimum of **3 full-time Transition Case Managers** solely to youth 14 and older to assure that they are getting the attention and support necessary for a successful transition from care.
4. Also, young people aging out of DHS deserve the case management support of an individual who has expertise in working with and accessing services for transition-aged youth. This is a specialized area of knowledge and skill and we will improve outcomes if we enlist experts to collaborate and plan with young people. Not only will these experts be effective in engaging young people for planning, they can help us maximize the resources we have in the community for young people generally.
5. The City currently provides limited support to two critical programs that help transition aged youth, but nonetheless, almost 200 youth leave the foster care system annually without a stable place to live, as does an unknown number of young people leaving the juvenile justice system. We are hopeful that, with American Rescue Act funds, significantly more public funding can be allocated to the **Achieving Independence Center**, operated by Valley Youth House for youth currently in care and out of care, and **LifeSet**, operated by Turning Points for Children, for youth who have left or about to leave care, both of which provide intensive services to youth aging out and youth who have already aged out of the child welfare system. DHS should also increase the age limit for youth in supervised living arrangements, which would reduce homelessness and trauma for this population.
6. **Peer support programs** have been proven effective at engaging any consumer and programs benefit from respecting the wisdom and skill that comes from lived experience.

We have seen great success in these programs across the country and in Pennsylvania, but they are not available in Philadelphia. A successful effort to attack youth homelessness must engage and listen to young people. To do this it is essential that we start investing in peer support programs as a vital part of our continuum of services.

7. While all of these services are critically needed, nothing would alleviate the increasing rates of youth homelessness more effectively than more youth-oriented housing. **Providing rental assistance and housing** for this group as they make the transition out of care is foundational, so that young people can make gains in areas such as employment and education and training. Developing a program for young people between ages 21 and 24 that assists with the cost of housing as well as supports young people in achieving their employment, educational, and savings goals will benefit the City by investing in young people at a time when they are making important decisions about their future. Stable housing is vital to achieving all of their goals.
8. And finally, we request that American Rescue Plan funds be utilized to **restore funding for the Philly Homes for Youth Coalition** itself. In its 5-year Roadmap to Homes Strategic Plan, in 2018, OHS identified the Coalition as a partner to “develop a coordinated response to youth homelessness” for the City of Philadelphia, also dedicating a full-time staff position to facilitate the Coalition as well as plan other youth homeless services. In FY19, that staff position was eliminated by OHS and the Coalition was awarded a grant in FY20 to support its planning efforts, but this funding was itself eliminated in FY21. We request that Coalition funding continue to be provided at least while the Roadmap to Homes Strategic Plan is in the process of being implemented.

Attached to my submitted testimony is an extensive list of the goals and accomplishments of the Coalition in its short history.

Thank you for your kind attention and consideration.

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***Philly Homes 4 Youth Coalition:  
A History of Partnership and Accomplishment***

In 2016, in an effort to develop the Kenney Administration’s response to the urgent issues related to youth homelessness in Philadelphia, the Philadelphia Office of Homeless Services (OHS) engaged the Rapid Results Institute to assist in developing the 100 Day Challenge to End Youth Homelessness.

Facilitated by a newly-created staff position dedicated to planning around youth homelessness in Philadelphia, the 100 Day Challenge involved over 30 provider agencies providing services to homeless youth and young adults; several city agencies, in addition to OHS, including the Departments of Human Services (Dependent and Delinquent youth) and Behavioral Health and Intellectual Disabilities, the Juvenile Probation Office, the Philadelphia Housing Authority, and the Managing Director’s Office; the School District of Philadelphia; and the newly-established Young Adult Leadership Committee (YALC), members of which co-chaired the process with the OHS youth homelessness coordinator.

The 100 Day Challenge created several subcommittees to focus on five specific areas where recommendations would be developed. They were:

- Coordinated Entry
- Prevention, including transition planning for dependent and delinquent youth
- Housing
- Mental Health
- Communications

The Coalition members united around an overarching recommendation: that ending youth homelessness in Philadelphia requires an unprecedented level of collaboration and mutual support among city health and human service agencies and private service agencies, as well as support from private sector businesses, the media, academia, other community institutions, and young people with lived experience of homelessness themselves.

In that context, the 100 Day Challenge process unanimously agreed to an extensive array of specific recommendations for immediate and longer-term enhancements to interagency collaboration, policy and practice within various public agencies. Primary among these recommendations were:

- Improvements to DHS policy and practice related to youth transitioning out of foster care, youth eligible for extended care, and youth returning to care;
- Improvements to service planning for delinquent youth in the Juvenile Probation Office and Family Court;

- Expansion of the School District’s resources to address the needs of the thousands of students who experience homelessness every year (as indicated by the Youth Risk Behavior Survey);
- Initiation of new and flexible access to youth-sensitive mental health, substance abuse, and intellectual disability services;
- Enhanced access to critical documents needed by youth to move toward adulthood, including birth certificates, legal identification, etc.

At the conclusion of the 100 Day Challenge process, the members of the committees agreed that the work of assuring implementation of the recommendations of the Challenge required ongoing planning and advocacy. They unanimously agreed to form the Philly Homes 4 Youth Coalition to continue the partnership with OHS and other city agencies in implementing the recommendations and assuring a robust response to the crisis of homelessness and young adults in Philadelphia. “Charter” member organizations of the new Coalition included:

### ***Coalition Goals and Accomplishments***

The goal of the Philly Homes 4 Youth Coalition is to create a sustainable infrastructure in Philadelphia where every young adult experiencing housing instability can be connected to a safe and stable place to stay and receive the supportive services they need to sustain long-term housing stability, and to implement prevention strategies to reduce the number of young people entering the homeless services system.

In order to affect real change, the coalition proposes for policy and systems change in four key areas: prevention of youth homelessness, coordinated entry and assessment, continuum of housing services, and provision of culturally appropriate support services, including child welfare and behavioral health services. In each area, the Coalition has had several key accomplishments since the coalition’s founding:

To help prevent youth homelessness, the coalition has:

- Engaged the Philadelphia Department of Human Services in an intensive effort to improve transition planning for youth exiting foster care. This effort, which has involved representatives both of the Department and youth agencies, is seeking to operationalized an extensive series of recommendations for improved policy/practice for transition planning, extensions of care beyond the age of 18, and resumption of care. DHS established three focused workgroups to work on both policy and practice changes which are expected to begin formal implementation in 2020. As a result, “Preventing youth from aging out of DHS into homelessness” was identified as a 2017 citywide Health and Human Services cabinet goal.
- Improved reentry planning for youth exiting the juvenile justice system by drafting recommendations for improved policy/practice for youth in the delinquent system related to enhancing planning and services while youth are in the system, re-entry planning, and aftercare services.

- Expansion of human resource and enhanced coordination with Philadelphia schools to identify youth at risk of homelessness and targeting practical supports to keep them in school and address their social challenges.
- Designed and launched an ongoing campaign to help youth obtain vital documents like birth certificates and social security cards, which are critical to efforts to help youth achieve a level of self-sufficiency.
- In addition to the above, PH4Y has proposed an extensive series of recommendations to the Mayor's Health and Human Services Cabinet and the Mayor's Office of Children and Families related to:
  - Establishment of a full-time, permanent staff position in the Managing Director's Office to encourage and oversee integration of youth homelessness activities across all MDO departments;
  - Significant improvement in data collection related to youth homelessness in all city departments, especially the Office of Homeless Services, the Dept. of Human Services, the Dept. of Public Health, the Dept. of Behavioral Health and Intellectual Disability Services; and Juvenile Probation Office/Family Court.
  - Establishment of specialized case management services for youth aging out of the foster care system;
  - Establishment of new and targeted behavioral health services for homeless and housing-unstable youth aged 14-24.
  - Funding of a 24-hour drop-in center for youth who are experiencing housing instability;
  - Establishing a transition and aftercare center for youth experiencing housing instability who are exiting the juvenile justice system;
  - Enhanced coordination with the School District on services to students experiencing housing instability.

Negotiations are ongoing with the Commissioners of the respective city departments on implementation of these recommendations.

To improve the Coordinated Entry & Assessment, the coalition has:

- Launched a pilot of TAY-VI-SPDAT tool, which is now being used in the City's coordinated entry system to assess and prioritize youth experiencing homelessness for placement;
- Utilized youth and provider voices to inform Philadelphia coordinated entry planning system via the launch of the Young Adult Leadership Committee, a youth advisory board with the goal of advising the Board and the Office of Homeless Services on ways to make the system better for youth.
- Ensured that youth know how and where to access services if they experience housing instability and that services are low-barrier and trauma-informed via the Juvenile Law Center's Youth Matters Philly app.

As a result of these efforts, the Office of Homeless Services has established a dedicated Youth Access Point for homeless youth in Philadelphia to seek help and

continues to support the Young Adult Leadership Committee and included it in its planning and implementation of youth-oriented services. The Coordinated Entry and Assessment Committee was disbanded in 2018, when OHS adopted and implemented its recommendations.

To support the Continuum of Housing Services, the committee has:

- Successfully advocated for an increase in the number of youth-designated housing beds in Philadelphia. A total of 162 beds/units have been added through eight organizations, and an additional 150 are proposed in the Mayor's budget for FY 2021.
- Researched innovative housing models in order to fill gaps in the continuum of services and expand the array of resources available, including host homes, rapid rehousing supports, crisis housing and youth peer specialist outreach teams.
- Improved the quality of services youth receive through all phases of the housing process by equipping staff with tools and training, which was a result of findings compiled from focus groups with youth regarding their experiences.
- Urged the creation and continuous updating of a user-friendly, transparent housing inventory. Established a series of "Operating Principles" for youth-serving organizations, specifying the commitment of adopting agencies to youth-focused and youth-involved service delivery. The Coalition is developing assessment tools for the Principles to help agencies self-assess their responsiveness to and inclusion of youth in their service delivery. Five organizations have agreed to pilot the effort..

To improve Supportive Services, the committee has:

- Actively participated in the annual Youth Count, an extension of the Point in Time Count that allows for a more accurate count of youth experiencing homelessness. Funding for homeless youth services is dependent on this count, and accuracy helps to ensure that the proper resources are directed toward support services.
- Participated in the development of the Youth Matters Philly app and website to make available in a single portal access to the resources needed by youth experiencing homelessness and provide up to date resources.
- Established a series of specific proposals to the Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual Disability Services, as well as its subsidiary, Community Behavioral Health, to mental health support services for youth being served by the homeless services and child welfare systems by including mental health supportive services in their array of services..
- Increased opportunities for employment training and job opportunities for youth being served by the homeless services and foster care systems through advocacy to Philadelphia Works and other workforce development agencies.

In addition, the coalition co-hosted a Forum on Youth Homelessness in November 2017 for over 100 stakeholders, including Philadelphia Mayor Jim Kenney and City Council members, to highlight findings from Voices of Youth Count study by Chapin Hall. Youth leaders co-moderated the Forum and spoke on panel.

## Current Objectives of the Coalition

Prevent youth from experiencing homelessness through improved policy and practice, and enhanced resource allocation with a focus on youth exiting public systems of care (schools, child welfare, justice).

- Assure the adoption of the Coalition's full recommendations for policy and practice enhancements for youth exiting foster care.
- Assure the adoption of the Coalition's full recommendations for policy and practice enhancements for reentry planning for youth exiting juvenile justice system.
- Assure the increase in resources in Philadelphia public, charter and private schools to identify and support youth who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.
- Create family reunification resources and supports for youth experiencing housing instability.

Create a coordinated youth and young adult system in which the system is able to identify, screen and refer youth in need, and youth experiencing housing instability know where and how to access services.

- Identify all youth who are experiencing homelessness and create a system to monitor time to placement.
- Utilize youth voice and provider voice to inform Philadelphia coordinated entry planning.
- Ensure that youth know how and where to access services if they experience housing instability and that services are low-barrier and trauma-informed.

Create a robust continuum of youth-centric solutions for young people experiencing housing instability, including emergency and long-term housing options.

- Increase number of youth designated housing beds.
- Implement innovative housing models in order to fill gaps in the continuum of services and expand the array of resources.
- Improve the quality of services youth receive through all phases of the housing process (from the front door and throughout the continuum), by equipping staff with tools and training.
- Create and maintain a user-friendly, transparent housing inventory.

Provide a comprehensive range of supportive services to support independent living skills development and long-term housing stability for youth experiencing housing instability.

- Create behavioral health support services specifically targeted to youth aged 14-24 who are homeless or at high risk of homelessness.
- Increase opportunities for employment training and job opportunities for youth being served by the homeless services system.

- Support educational success and enhance educational opportunities for youth being served by the homeless services system.
- Support independent living skills development opportunities for youth.

### **Measures of Success**

Prevent youth from experiencing homelessness:

- Improved transition planning for youth exiting foster care and reentry planning for youth exiting juvenile justice system through revision of the DHS Community Umbrella Agency Guidelines in accordance with the recommendations of the Coalition’s Prevention Committee, and the creation of training and technical assistance for CUA case managers and DHS staff on their implementation, by June, 2020.
- Enhanced coordination with Philadelphia schools to identify youth at risk of homelessness by hosting regular meetings with School District officials.
- Establishment of an evidence-based “Family Finding” program at OHS to support the reunification of youth experiencing housing instability with family and related supports.

Creation of a coordinated youth and young adult system that meets the needs of youth experiencing homelessness.

- Development of a system to identify all youth who are experiencing homelessness and monitor the time that elapses prior to being housed.
- Improvement the Philadelphia coordinated entry system by publishing annual policy recommendations developed with the input of youth who have gone through that system.
- Promotion of ways to ensure that youth know how and where to access services if they experience housing instability through the Youth Matters Philly app/ website and a dedicated youth homelessness 24-hour hotline.

Creation of a robust continuum of youth-centric solutions to homelessness.

- Increased number of youth designated housing beds by 150 beds by July 1, 2020.
- Implementation of the innovative housing models proposed by the Coalition in 2018-19 in order to fill gaps in the continuum of services and expand the array of resources, monitor and publish quarterly reports on progress.
- Promotion of the Coalition’s “Operating Principles” for youth service providers to ensure that services are youth involved, low-barrier and trauma-informed.

Provision a comprehensive range of supportive services to support independent living skills and long-term stability.

- Deployment by DBH/IDS of a minimum of 5 youth navigator/peer specialist teams to conduct street outreach to homeless and near-homeless youth and to facilitate entry into appropriate youth-competent behavioral health services.
- Increased opportunities for employment training and job opportunities for homeless youth by the creation of a minimum of 50 new training slots for employment.
- Increase in the number of staff at the School District of Philadelphia dedicating to identifying youth who are homeless or experiencing housing instability and connecting them to appropriate supports.