



# HOPE 4 YOUTH

## Providing Pathways to End Youth Homelessness

**HOPE 4 Youth** has continually expanded to meet the needs of young people experiencing homelessness in Anoka County, but we've outgrown our footprint. We're ready to do more in a facility built with an eye to the future.

The **Building HOPE Project** will allow us to share our successful programs for creating pathways out of homelessness with even more local 16- to 24-year-olds who find themselves without the tools and support they need to thrive.



## OUR MISSION

To provide pathways to end youth homelessness

## OUR VISION

All youth will feel safe, valued, and supported while reaching their full potential. This begins with meeting their basic needs and leads to giving them the tools to thrive.

## OUR STRATEGIC GOALS

- Deepen our impact through high quality, high-impact programs and services
- Create a diverse, equitable, and inclusive organization
- Strengthen business practices to support high performance

## OUR APPROACH

The young people we see at HOPE 4 Youth carry many burdens. We recognize that every young person is on their own journey — no two stories are the same. We are one touchpoint on their journey.

As such, we have a four-fold approach when walking alongside youth.<sup>1</sup>

- 1) Trauma-Informed Care (TIC):** Our staff are trained in TIC service delivery models. Rather than fixing what's wrong, we look at youth in terms of what has happened to them, specifically lived trauma. TIC helps us create safe spaces, build trust, and encourage youth to regain healthy responsibility.
- 2) Strengths-Based:** Many youth experiencing homelessness have been in ongoing survival mode or endured trauma that has removed their fundamental sense of choice. At intake, case managers empower young adults to set goals based on their strengths and areas where they can regain control for long-term self-sufficiency.
- 3) Client-Centered:** Effective solutions must be informed by the youth we serve. The Youth Advisory Council gives young adults the space to make recommendations for program improvement, especially related to including the voices of LGBTQ+ and BIPOC youth.
- 4) Harm Reduction:** Ending youth homelessness relies on the important framework of harm reduction, where we encourage youth goal setting to reduce the negative consequences of drug use, alcohol addiction, or other high-risk behaviors. Without judgment, we offer youth resources for improved sexual, mental, physical, and emotional health.

<sup>1</sup> Informed by "Measuring Up: Youth-level Outcomes and Measures for Systems Response to Youth Homelessness" from the University of Chicago, and the 2014 publication "9 Evidence-Based Principles to Help Youth Overcome Homelessness"





## HOPE 4 Youth PAST

In late 2012, a series of news articles raised awareness about young people in crisis in the north metro. The stories made headlines during the coldest days of winter and sparked an immediate reaction from people who care. In 2013, with a mission defined, partnerships created and donations collected, HOPE 4 Youth opened as the first drop-in center for youth experiencing homelessness in the north metro.

## HOPE 4 Youth PRESENT

If HOPE has a home base, this is it. The Drop-In Center in Anoka is the hub for many of our services. It is a safe, non-judgmental place for all youth who are in need.

No appointment is necessary to visit for a hot meal, to get clothing or hygiene items, or to use the shower or laundry facilities. Case managers at the center also connect young people to stable housing, health and wellness programs, education and employment opportunities and more.

Our housing initiatives include HOPE Place, a 12-unit facility in Coon Rapids, and HOPE Homes, a program that offers support to at-risk young people and caring adults who offer them a place to stay.

## HOPE 4 Youth FUTURE

**Our ability to support even more young people with our proven strategies is constrained only by an existing rental facility with no capacity for expansion.**

A new HOPE 4 Youth Drop-in Center in the Anoka County area would double the space available for youth and young families who are homeless or at risk of losing their housing. A new center would also expand access to our life-changing services that focus on creating:

- ▶ Ongoing basic-needs support
- ▶ Stable housing
- ▶ Employment
- ▶ Education
- ▶ Healthy connections
- ▶ Social and emotional well-being

A new facility would bring our entire organization — administration, caseworkers, volunteers and others — together to efficiently and effectively fulfill our mission, vision and ultimate goal: to end youth homelessness.

“Last year I was sleeping in a car. Now I am sheltered. You saved me!”



## HOPE for anyone who needs it

In 2021, the HOPE 4 Youth Drop-In Center became a “home where there wasn’t one” for 314 young people who needed help, a 45% increase over 2020.

### Youth demographics:

- 20% Under 18
- 20% Young parents
- 58% BIPOC
- 56% Female
- 42% Male
- 2% Nonbinary
- 19% LGBTQ



Here are some of the ways we offered support during 2,474 individual visits logged at our center in 2021:

- 1,450 Individual lunch and dinners
- 1,422 Food pantry bags of free grab-and-go food and hygiene items
- 120 Hot showers
- 190 Loads of laundry
- 840 Visits to our clothing closet
- 250 Hours of internet access for job and school searches
- 162 On-site services by community providers
- 350 Referrals to outside agencies

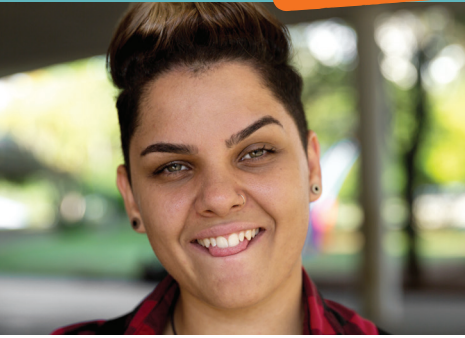
We also assisted with hundreds of school enrollments and work applications and provided \$12,000 in transportation assistance to get youth to class and jobs.



Our life-changing work is powered by an inspiring group of generous donors and volunteers who give money and time — and often both:







## Beau's story of HOPE

When Beau Field walked into HOPE 4 Youth, he was already homeless and nearly empty-handed.

"I had all my belongings with me," said Beau. "Everything I owned was in that one bag."

At first, Beau spent nights at a local shelter and visited us during the day. He used the shower and laundry facilities, stocked up on grab-and-go foods, clothing and hygiene items, and joined volunteers and other young people for evening meals.

"I could tell they cared," he said. "They didn't judge me and what I looked like. They just wanted to help."

In 2016, Beau became the first resident of HOPE Place, our transitional housing facility in Coon Rapids. He lived there for two years while gaining the tools needed to thrive in independent, market-rate housing. Along the way, he earned a high school diploma and got a job working as a paraprofessional at a Coon Rapids elementary school.

Beau also focused on improving his physical and mental health. He used the apartment's workout gear to help shed more than 90 pounds, and he found a huge extended family at a local church. Today, Beau is in college, working to earn a degree in education.

He says HOPE 4 Youth helped him find a pathway to a bright future.

"They really care for young people who are lost," he said. "I knew right away they were going to help me. I just didn't realize how much."



## Finding HOPE over a hot meal

We offer fully prepared lunches and dinners to young people who visit. Just fill a plate and grab a chair — no questions asked. A volunteer named Steve says the meals create a place for young guests to be seen and heard by people who care.

"They may not have a single trusted adult in their lives," Steve says. "Often they just need some guidance. I think it's an honor to be that person for these young people."

One youth guest put it this way: "You listen and don't project things on me. You are here for me, a safe space — something I've never had."





## With your help, more HOPE

The Building HOPE Project will expand our ability to serve young people who might otherwise go without the basic support needed to find a way out of homelessness and around other social barriers.

### Building HOPE Capacity

- ▶ Licensed commercial kitchen for preparing healthy meals
- ▶ Large basic-needs pantry stocked with healthy foods and hygiene supplies
- ▶ Storefront and expanded display area for clothing closet donations
- ▶ Bright, roomy dining area for community lunches and dinners
- ▶ Comfortable lounge area for relaxing and socializing
- ▶ Modern computer lab for online school, job applications, and mentorship programming
- ▶ Expanded shower, laundry and personal storage facilities
- ▶ Sorting and overstock storage area for clothing, food and supply donations
- ▶ Private meeting rooms for creating housing, education and employment plans

### Building HOPE Together

Interaction between our young visitors and caring adult volunteers and mentors is key to HOPE 4 Youth's vision that youth feel safe, valued and supported while working to reach their full potential. Our new facility would put all community engagement and support under one roof, creating more opportunities for:

- ▶ Youth socializing activities
- ▶ Support-group meetings
- ▶ Vocational and developmental training programs
- ▶ Volunteer onboarding and training programs

This new facility would bring our entire administrative staff under one roof and would provide space for HOPE 4 Youth to collaborate with other community partners in powerful new ways, including through:

- ▶ Career development programs
- ▶ Virtual mental health counseling and wellness checks
- ▶ Parenting classes for young adults with children
- ▶ Possible on-site medical, dental, and other services

### Building HOPE Investment

- ▶ \$8M Property purchase, design, build, furnish and equip the new facility
- ▶ \$1M HOPE 4 Youth endowment, planned giving and long-term funding campaign



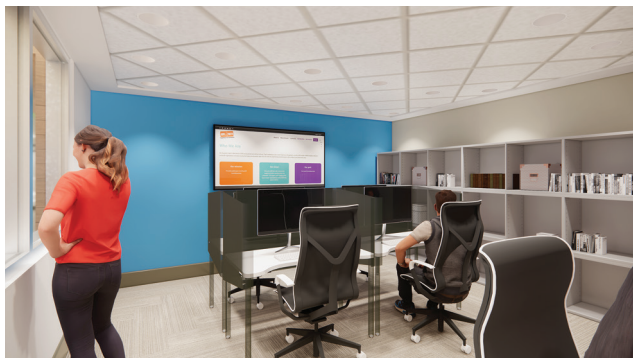
## Building HOPE Concepts



Welcome desk



Meeting room



Computer lab



Multipurpose room



Kitchen and dining area