

Chris Steller

From: Kochanski, Alexis R (DHS) <Alexis.Kochanski@state.mn.us>
Sent: Friday, March 15, 2019 3:35 PM
To: 'Sen. Michelle Benson'; 'Sen. Jim Abeler'; Sen. Karin Housley; 'sen.jeff.hayden@senate.mn'; 'sen.john.marty@senate.mn'; Sen. Kent Eken
Cc: Chris Steller; James Nobles; Andrea Todd-Harlin; Dennis Albrecht; Katie Cavanor; LaRissa Fisher; Liam Monahan; Patrick Hauswald
Subject: DHS Submission of Legislative Reports 3.15.19
Attachments: DHS CWD 2017-2018 report.pdf; 2019 Combined Problem Gambling Legislative Report 1-16-19.pdf; Homeless Youth Act Report 03132019.pdf; 2019LegislativeReportCECLC.pdf

Dear Legislators,

Please find the following Department of Human Service's legislative mandated reports attached:

1. 2017-2018 Child Welfare Disparity Grants Evaluation Report
2. Cultural and Ethnic Communities Leadership Council (CECLC) 2019 Legislative Report (I want to flag page 43 of the report, "Sustain and Enhance Chief Inclusion Officer Role." Is this consistent with your current practice? Please compare with what the report is recommending and let me know.)
3. A Report on the State's Progress in Addressing the Problem of Compulsive Gambling and on the Percentage of Gambling Revenues that Come From Problem Gamblers
4. Homeless Youth Act

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Thank you.

Best,

Alexis Russell Kochanski, MPH
Director of State Legislative Relations | External Relations

Minnesota Department of Human Services
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From: Kochanski, Alexis R (DHS) <Alexis.Kochanski@state.mn.us>
Sent: Friday, March 15, 2019 2:51 PM
To: Rep.Rena Moran; Rep.Tina Liebling; Rep.Dave Pinto; Rep.Debra Kiel; Rep.Joe Schomacker; Rep.Mary Franson
Cc: James Nobles; Chris Steller; Chris McCall; Danyell Punelli; Doug Berg; Elisabeth Klarqvist; Joe Durham; Pat McQuillan; Randall Chun; Sarah Sunderman
Subject: DHS Submission of Legislative Reports 3.15.19
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Homeless Youth Act Biennial Report

Economic Assistance and Employment Supports Division (EAESD) Office of Economic Opportunity

February 2019

For more information contact:

Minnesota Department of Human Services
Office of Economic Opportunity
P.O. Box 64962
St. Paul, MN 55164-0962

651-431-3808

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For other information on disability rights and protections, contact the agency's ADA coordinator.

Minnesota Statutes, Chapter 3.197, requires the disclosure of the cost to prepare this report. The estimated cost of preparing this report is \$3,500.

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Executive Summary

This report was prepared in response to Minn. Stat. 256K.45, subd. 2, which requires that a biennial report on Homeless Youth Act funding and activities be submitted to Minnesota's legislative committees having jurisdiction. Its purpose is to inform the Minnesota Legislature on the level and nature of needs for homeless youth in Minnesota, provide details on funding decisions and grants made, and give information on outcomes for populations served to determine the effectiveness of programs and use of funding.

The Homeless Youth Act (HYA) provides definitions for runaway youth, homeless youth, and youth at-risk of homelessness, and defines the continuum of services for youth, including outreach, drop-in services, emergency shelter, and housing. In addition, the HYA affords funding to nonprofits and tribal governments to support the continuum of services.

This report outlines the needs and current realities for homeless youth in Minnesota based on findings from the 2015 Statewide Homeless Study¹, as well as data from current Homeless Youth Act grantees and national research. Research shows that on any given night, an estimated **6,000 Minnesota youth, who are unaccompanied by a parent or guardian, experience homelessness**. This includes an estimated 2,500 minors age 17 and under and 3,500 young adults age 18 through 24.

The Homeless Youth Act was funded at \$11.238 million for the 2018-19 biennium. All funds were distributed through a competitive Request for Proposals process. Forty-seven proposals for youth programming were received, requesting more than \$26 million in funding; this is \$9.5 million more than in the last biennium. Thirty-eight agencies received funding.

- Distribution of funds by program activity was as follows:
 - \$1.270 million for emergency shelter services (14 programs)
 - \$3.133 million for drop-in center/outreach services (26 programs)
 - \$6.620 million for housing services (40 programs)
 - \$214,000 used for grant management, data collection and administrative expenses.
- Distribution of funds by geographic area was as follows:
 - Forty-five percent to programs in the Twin Cities metro area
 - Thirty-seven percent to programs in greater Minnesota
 - Fifteen percent to programs in suburban metro areas
 - Three percent to tribal governments.

Also included in this report is information on outputs and outcomes of each Homeless Youth Act program activity (i.e., outreach, drop-in center, emergency shelter and housing). Highlights include:

¹ "Homelessness in Minnesota: Findings from the 2015 Minnesota Homeless Study." Wilder Research, November 2016, www.wilder.org/wilder-research/research-library/homelessness-minnesota-findings-2015-minnesota-homeless-study.

- **Outreach:** 6,185 unduplicated youth were served during community outreach and provided access to basic needs assistance in the form of food, weather-appropriate garments, transportation, and crisis intervention services
- **Drop-in center:** 4,390 unduplicated youth visited drop-in centers 64,665 times
- **Shelter:** 655 unduplicated youth were served in HYA funded emergency shelters
- **Housing:** 1,182 unduplicated households were served in HYA funded housing programs.

The report highlights special initiatives involving Homeless Youth Act funding and grantees during the biennium. These include:

- **Commissioner's Circle of Excellence:** Former Minnesota Human Services Commissioner Emily Piper recognized the work of Life House, a Homeless Youth Act funded program in Duluth, for its contributions to human services and the community.
- **State Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness:** Homeless Youth Act funds are used to support youth-specific strategies and actions in *Heading Home Together: Minnesota's 2018-2020 Action Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness*.
- **Minor Connect Project:** A new pilot project was implemented during this biennium and supported by Homeless Youth Act funds. The project, Minor Connect, targets unaccompanied minor youth (ages 15-17) experiencing homelessness.
- **Safe Harbor program and Homeless Youth Act coordination:** The Office of Economic Opportunity coordinates the administration of the Safe Harbor shelter and housing program and the Homeless Youth Act program. Examples include coordinated grant administration and technical assistance.

The report concludes with a summary of service gaps, which include gaps in:

- **Housing** – lack of housing options and long waitlists for housing access
- **Shelter** – lack of shelter beds and the high number of youth turned away from shelters due to no vacancy
- **Targeted services** – lack of specialized services for targeted populations and high disparities among populations.

A complete list of agencies funded with Homeless Youth Act dollars for the 2018-2019 biennium is in [Appendix A](#). The list includes agency office locations, county service area, and funded activities (housing, shelter, outreach and/or drop-in). The statute guiding Homeless Youth Act funding distribution, eligible activities, and report expectations is referenced in [Appendix B](#).

For questions about Homeless Youth Act funding or this report, contact Andrea Simonett via email, andrea.simonett@state.mn.us, or phone 651-431-6327.

Legislation Requiring Report

Minn. Stat. 256K.45, subd. 2, requires a biennial report be submitted to the Minnesota legislative committees having jurisdiction, with statutory text below. The Homeless Youth Act, in its entirety, is in the Appendix.

256K.45 Homeless Youth Act

Subd. 2. Homeless Youth Report

The commissioner shall prepare a biennial report, beginning in February 2015, which provides meaningful information to the legislative committees having jurisdiction over the issue of homeless youth, that includes, but is not limited to: (1) a list of the areas of the state with the greatest need for services and housing for homeless youth, and the level and nature of the needs identified; (2) details about grants made; (3) the distribution of funds throughout the state based on population need; (4) follow-up information, if available, on the status of homeless youth and whether they have stable housing two years after services are provided; and (5) any other outcomes for populations served to determine the effectiveness of the programs and use of funding.

As required by legislation, this report is specifically focused on how the Minnesota Department of Human Services, Office of Economic Opportunity, distributed \$11.238 million in Homeless Youth Act funding for the 2018-19 biennium.

Introduction

This report is submitted to the Minnesota Legislature pursuant to Minn. Stat. 256K.45, subd. 2, Homeless Youth Act.

The Homeless Youth Act (HYA) provides definitions for runaway and homeless youth, and those at-risk of homelessness, and defines the continuum of services for youth, including outreach, drop-in services, emergency shelter and housing. In addition, the HYA provides funding to nonprofits and tribal governments to support the continuum of services. A description of each program activity is in Table 1 – Description of Homeless Youth Act Activities, page 12.

As required by legislation, this report details how the Minnesota Department of Human Services, Office of Economic Opportunity, distributed \$11.238 million in Homeless Youth Act funding for the 2018-19 biennium. Also, as required by statute, is information about:

- Areas of the state with the greatest need for services and housing for homeless youth, and the level and nature of the needs identified
- Details about grants
- Distribution of funds throughout the state based on population need
- Follow-up information, if available, on the status of homeless youth and whether they have stable housing two years after services are provided, and
- Outcomes for populations served to determine effectiveness of programs and use of funding.

Data on Youth Homelessness

According to a report released by Chapin Hall and Voices of Youth Count (October 2018), nearly 4.2 million youth experience homelessness in the U.S. Quantifying the true frequency and characteristics of youth homelessness is a significant challenge because they move in and out of homelessness (couch hopping, staying with friends or family, reconciling with family, etc.), and youth work hard to mask or hide their homelessness. Despite this limitation, research shows at least one in 30 adolescents (ages 13-17), and one in 10 young adults (ages 18-25) experience homelessness.²

In Minnesota, those ages 24 and under, are at the greatest risk of experiencing homelessness. On any given night in Minnesota, an estimated 6,000 youth experience homelessness. This includes an estimated 2,500 minors ages 17 and under, and 3,500 young adults ages 18 through 24.¹ Youth targeted with Homeless Youth Act funds (i.e., under age 25 unaccompanied by a parent or guardian and who may have children of their own) comprise a population that is notoriously difficult to count. Many experiencing homelessness, concerned that becoming involved with public safety net systems, could mean loss of independence, impact their education, or result in legal or other sanctions for their families, may actively strive to avoid detection and “pass” like their

² Morton, M. H., Dworsky, A., Samuels, G. M., & Patel, S. (2018). *Missed opportunities: Youth homelessness in rural America*. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall, University of Chicago.

housed counterparts. In other cases, the identification challenge is more subtle: Youth may think of themselves as couch-hopping, but not homeless; as being in the midst of a family crisis, but not homeless; as sleeping in their car, but not homeless. These factors mean engaging with or even counting youth can be difficult.

All information below, unless otherwise noted, is from the *“Homelessness in Minnesota: Findings from the 2015 Minnesota Homeless Study,”* published by Wilder Research (November 2016).

Demographics:

The number of homeless youth of color is disproportionately high compared to their prevalence in the general population of Minnesota youth. Nearly three-quarters of homeless youth (73 percent) were African-American, American Indian, Asian, Hispanic, or of mixed race, though youth of color comprise just 26 percent of the total population.³ According to the Hennepin County Voices of Youth count, 59 percent of homeless youth were African-American while representing 13 percent of the overall population in Hennepin County. Bi-racial youth comprise only 3 percent of the overall youth population but 13 percent of homeless youth.⁴

formatting

- Eighteen percent of youth identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or were unsure about their sexual orientation.
- Youth first became homeless at age 16, on average.

Connection to education:

- Eighty-six percent of minors attended school on the day of the survey
- The percentage of minors who attended school on the day of the survey has increased over the past 15 years, from 48 percent in 2000 to 69 percent in 2012.

“This is my safe place; they always welcome me.”

A youth speaking about a Homeless Youth Act funded drop-in center.

Homelessness status:

- When asked where youth had stayed in the 30 days prior to the study, three in 10 had stayed outside and half had couch-hopped, jumping from temporary housing to temporary housing, at some point during the month. About two-thirds had stayed in a shelter.
- More than half (56 percent) fit the definition of long-term homeless in Minnesota (homeless a year or more in the present episode, or homeless four or more times in the past three years).
- One-quarter (24 percent) of homeless youth were turned away from a shelter in the past three months because of no available beds.

³ U.S. Census Bureau. 2014 American Community Survey one-year Estimates [statistics from data file]. Retrieved from <http://factfinder2.census.gov>.

⁴ Chapin Hall, University of Chicago. (September 2017). *Youth homelessness in Hennepin County, Minnesota: Findings from the youth count, brief youth survey, and provider survey*. Technical report from the Voices of Youth Count Initiative. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall, University of Chicago.

Adverse experiences:

- Nineteen percent of homeless youth had been attacked or beaten while homeless
- One-third (33 percent) of homeless youth stayed in an abusive situation because they did not have other housing options
- Thirty-eight percent of females and 19 percent of males experienced sexual abuse as a child, and 49 percent of females and 42 percent of males experienced physical abuse as a child.

“Homelessness is something I am going through; it does not define who I am or who I will become.”

A youth experiencing homelessness

Physical/mental health:

- Fifty-seven percent of youth have a serious mental illness, with anxiety (37 percent) and depression (32 percent) being the most common
- Thirty-six percent have a chronic physical health condition
- Nineteen percent suffered a head injury followed by the onset of symptoms indicative of a traumatic brain injury.
- In a nationwide study, 29 percent of youth reported having substance use problems, and 69 percent indicated having mental health difficulties while experiencing homelessness.⁵

Parenting youth:

- Thirty-five percent of homeless youth are parents.¹

Geographic areas

National data suggests rates of homelessness are similar for youth in rural and urban communities. In short, while high population areas may have more youth who are homeless (because the population is greater), the actual rate of youth experiencing homelessness is similar. Of youth:

- Ages 13-17, the prevalence of homelessness was 4.2 percent in urban counties versus 4.4 percent in rural counties
- Ages 18-25, the prevalence of homelessness was 9.6 percent in urban counties versus 9.2 percent in rural counties.²

Minnesota data gathered from the Wilder study found:

- The majority of identified homeless youth grew up in Minnesota (72 percent). Compared to 2012, this proportion has decreased slightly (from 76 percent), but is similar to 2009 (69 percent)
- Four in 10 youth (40 percent) were in greater Minnesota.¹

⁵ Morton, M.H., Dworsky, A., & Samuels, G.M. (2017). *Missed opportunities: Youth homelessness in America. National estimates*. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall, University of Chicago.

Foster care system involvement

There is a significant overlap between youth homelessness and those aging out of foster care. A majority of homeless youth (89 percent) had at least one adverse childhood experience, the most common were:

- Living with a substance abuser (61 percent)
- Living in an out-of-home placement (54 percent), and
- Witnessing abuse (60 percent).

According to Wilder Research Center, 54 percent of youth had at least one out-of-home social service placement before becoming homeless. That percentage increases to 68 percent if a correctional placement is involved. The Hennepin County Voices of Youth Count Study found 49 percent of homeless youth spent time in either a juvenile detention center, jail, or prison; with 27 percent of them experiencing foster care.

Consequently, homeless youth associated with and/or aging out of the foster care system are more likely to experience homelessness after transitioning out of systems care. Among youth who left a social service placement in the past year, only 47 percent reported they had a stable place to live upon leaving; 10 percent reported they had to leave placement due to aging out.

According to the National Network for Youth, ensuring that youth in care receive transition planning, orientation to their right for extended foster care, and access to housing, are critical for youth aging out of care to prevent them from becoming homeless.

Homeless Youth Act grantee data

Data below is from Homeless Youth Act funded shelter and housing programs. It does not include outreach and drop-in programs, as this information is not collected from those programs.

Disability status of homeless youth:

- Thirty-six percent reported having a disability of long duration.

Extent of youth homelessness:

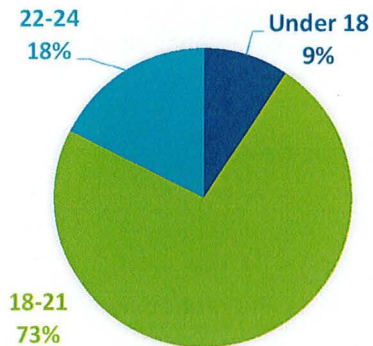
- Twenty-five percent reported experiencing homelessness for the first time.
- Forty-eight percent met Minnesota's definition of long-term homelessness, which means continuous homelessness for one year, or four episodes in the past three years.

Tribal enrollment:

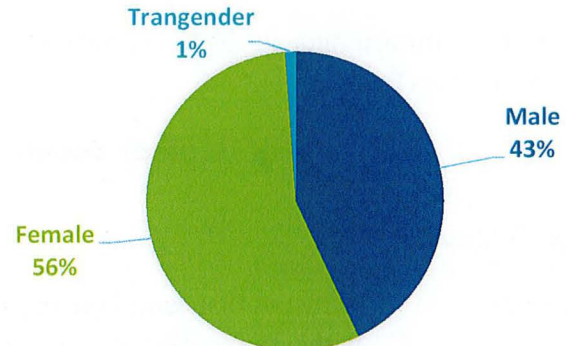
- Forty-two youth were enrolled tribal members.

Demographics:

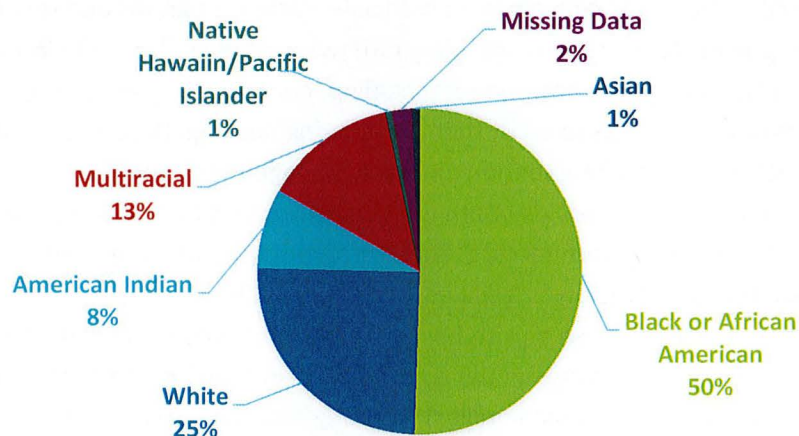
Age – Youth Served in HYA Funded Shelter and Housing



Gender – Youth Served in HYA Funded Shelter and Housing



Race – Youth Served in HYA Funded Shelter and Housing



Details about Grant Awards

Funding Available, Requests and Awards

The Homeless Youth Act was funded at \$11.238 million for the 2018-2019 biennium; \$11.024 million was distributed through a competitive Request for Proposals process, with the remaining \$214k used towards grant management, data collection and administrative expenses. Scoring criteria included, but not limited to, program capacity and program design (accessibility of services, appropriateness of services, cost effectiveness, etc.), program revenue and budget, geographic location and previous performance.

Forty-six proposals for youth-specific programming were received, with 38 agencies receiving funding. These requests totaled more than \$26 million; \$9.5 million more than the last biennium, and \$15 million more than available funding.

Fundable activities

As defined in statute, program activities include prevention, outreach, drop-in, emergency shelter and housing, described in Table 1 below.

Program Activities	Description
Prevention	Activities that contribute to prevention of homelessness. Prevention activities happen within the context of outreach and drop-in programs
Outreach	Outreach programs locate, build relationships with, and meet the immediate needs of youth who are homeless or at imminent risk of homelessness, while working to connect youth with a range of services, including housing. Activities also include cross-training and collaboration with Safe Harbor programs and services.
Drop-in	Drop-in center programs provide youth (who are homeless or at imminent risk of homelessness) with basic needs including meals, a safe place during the day, and supportive services to assist them in securing housing. Drop-in centers provide walk-in access to crisis intervention and case management services.
Emergency shelter	Shelter programs provide youth with walk-in access to emergency, short- and medium-term residential care. These programs provide safe, dignified shelter, including private shower facilities, beds and meals.
Housing	Housing programs can be site-based (i.e., all units in one facility) or scattered-site (i.e., units in apartments in the community), and can include host home models (youth housed with host families). Housing programs assist youth in locating and maintaining safe, dignified housing, and provide support services while being housed. Housing models may be time limited, offering assistance for typically up to 24 months, or non-time limited, such as permanent housing models.

All activities outlined in Table 1 include a range of services including, but not limited to:

- Basic needs and crisis intervention services
- Family connection, counseling and reunification
- Case management
- Individual and group counseling
- Mental health services
- Substance abuse treatment/counseling
- Medical and dental health care
- Transportation
- Housing resources
- Education and employment opportunities
- Recreational activities
- Advocacy
- Food/hot meals
- Assistance navigating systems
- After-care and follow-up services

Role of providers for homeless youth

Community providers that are supported with Homeless Youth Act funding fill a critical role in the community. Youth who are targeted with Homeless Youth Act funding are at an age where they don't quite fit into the systems and services that target children, and don't quite fit into the systems and services that target adults. Homeless Youth Act funded agencies are uniquely designed to deliver services that take into account this population's developmental stage.

Homeless Youth Act funding supports strategies to end homelessness that go beyond simply securing housing; an approach that might work for other populations. For unaccompanied youth, housing options need to be a strategy used in tandem with others, including building a sense of community and belonging, supporting education, and increasing and strengthening connections with positive adults and family. The Voices of Youth Count supports this approach when stating, "The stories of youth surveyed and the opportunities for intervention rarely center on housing alone."⁵ Homeless Youth Act funds support this approach in a variety of ways, including:

- Supporting informal housing options and leveraging youths' existing support networks. Targeting natural points of contact and existing support systems in identifying and responding to youth homelessness.
- Supporting delivery of developmentally appropriate services for this specific age group.
- Funding innovative approaches to supporting youth with employment and education opportunities, and developing independent living skills.
- Supporting programs in delivering services based on best practices as outlined in the Nine Evidence-based, Guiding Principles to Help Youth Overcome Homelessness.⁶ These principles include:
 1. Journey-oriented
 2. Trauma-informed
 3. Non-judgmental
 4. Harm reduction
 5. Trusting youth – adult relationships
 6. Strength-based
 7. Positive youth development
 8. Holistic
 9. Collaboration

The financial importance of providing services and early intervention is outlined in a 2015 study conducted by Foldes Consulting LLC.⁷ This study lays out the economic burden of youth homelessness in Minnesota. The study examined the comprehensive costs of more than 1,400 16-24-year-olds who were homeless or at-risk of homelessness. The study found that:

- Each member of the study group imposed an estimated one-year fiscal and social cost of \$17,152 and \$18,638, respectively. As a group, the 1,451 members of this cohort cost taxpayers an estimated \$24,894,610, and cost society an estimated \$27,049,551. The largest costs to taxpayers were public

⁶ Murphy N. F., (2014). *Developing Evidence-Based Principles for Working with Homeless Youth: A Developmental Evaluation of the Otto Bremer Foundation's Support for Collaboration among Agencies Serving Homeless Youth*. Published doctoral dissertation, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis.

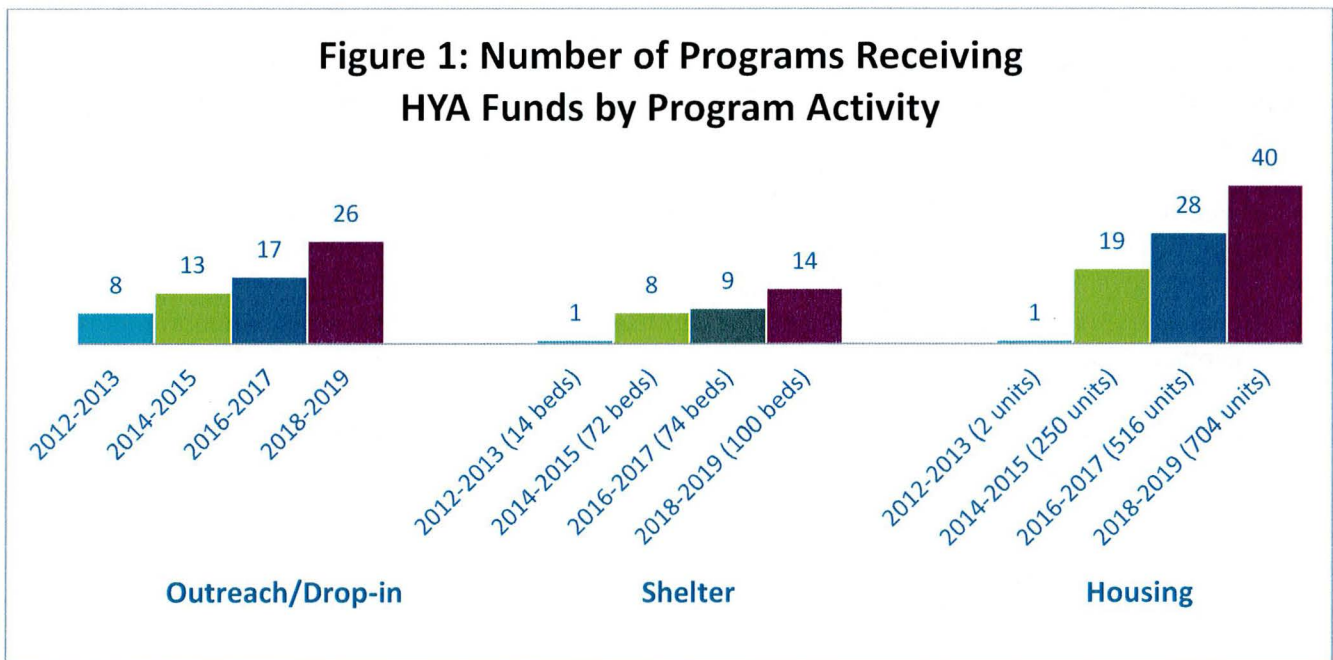
⁷Foldes and Lubov (2015). *The Economic Burden of Youth Experiencing Homelessness and the Financial Case for Investing in Interventions to Change Peoples' Lives: An Estimate of the Short- and Long-Term Costs to Taxpayers and Society in Hennepin County, Minnesota*.

expenditures for the criminal justice system and welfare transfer payments to cohort members. Large costs to society included crime to victims and lost earnings by members of the cohort. These are average annual costs that recur each year that these youth remain disconnected.

- For each youth experiencing homelessness or at-risk of becoming homeless who becomes a productive and tax-paying citizen at age 20 saves an estimated \$211,059 in lifetime fiscal costs.

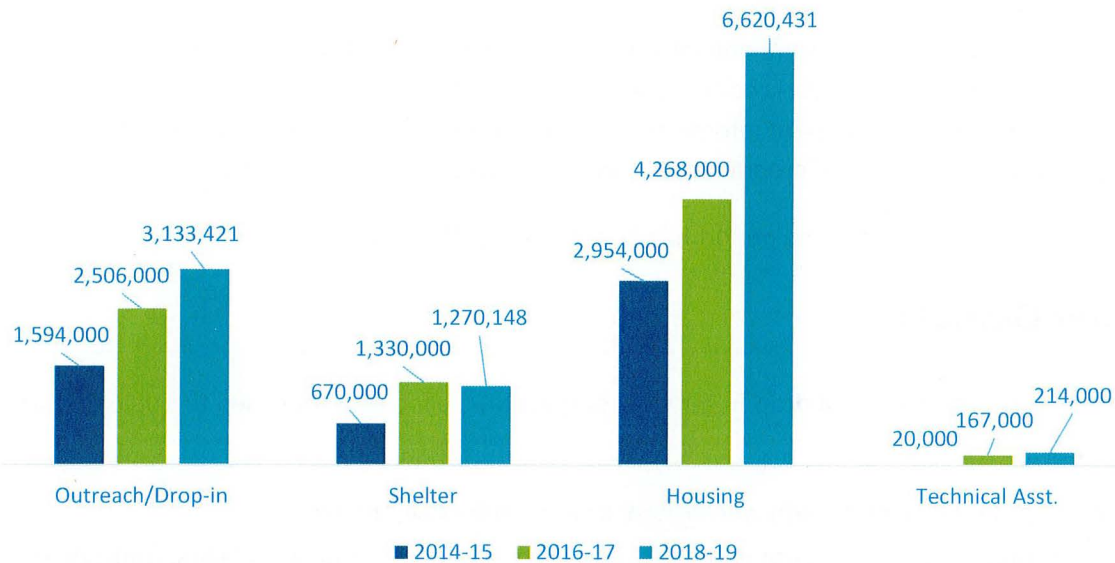
Breakdown of funding

The department provided funding to 38 agencies towards the operations of 80 program activities for youth (many of the 38 grantee agencies provide multiple program activities). Figure 1 below shows the number of awards by program activity, and Figure 2 shows the dollar amount funded by program activity.



Housing and shelter units are offered through a variety of models, including residential or congregate settings, host homes, and scattered-site housing in apartments. In addition, housing may be time-limited in design (i.e., transitional housing or rapid re-housing models), or non-time limited (i.e., permanent housing models).

Figure 2: Distribution of Funds by Program Activity

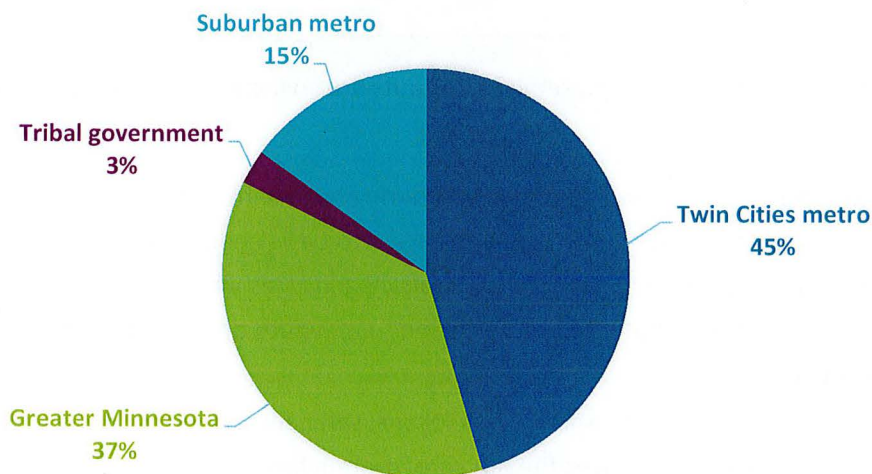


Geographic Distribution of Funds

Distribution of funds was made with consideration of geographic needs. Four in ten (40 percent) of youth identified by Wilder Research in the 2015 homeless study were in greater Minnesota. As seen in Figure 5: Geographic Distribution of Funds, Homeless Youth Act funding distribution was in line with geographic need, of:

- 21 proposals received for projects in greater Minnesota, 20 (95 percent) were funded
- 25 proposals received for projects in the Twin Cities metro area including suburban areas, 17 (68 percent) were funded.

Figure 5: Geographic Distribution of Funds



Outputs and Outcome Indicators

Data reported below is collected through semi-annual and annual reports submitted by Homeless Youth Act funded agencies. Drop-in and outreach data is collected via Excel spreadsheets while housing and shelter data is collected through the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). Since the previous legislative report, these tools have been updated to capture programmatic outputs and outcomes in more detail.

Below is a summary of data collected for the period July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018.

Drop-in Center Outputs

Due to the crisis and short-term nature of drop-in services, outputs are collected as opposed to outcomes, as follows:

- There were 4,390 unduplicated youth who visited drop-in centers 64,665 times:
 - One-hundred percent of those youth received access to food, clothing, showers, transportation and crisis intervention services.
- Drop-in centers provided:
 - 43,965 bus tokens and 1,696 bus cards.
 - 66,161 meals.
 - 133 hours of legal advocacy/services.
- At agencies providing services beyond basic needs:
 - 1,631 youth were connected with on-going case management (as defined by the agency).
 - 461 youth participated in a formalized education program, and 818 participated in a formalized employment/vocational training program.
- There were 1,087 youth connected with the coordinated entry system.

Outreach Outputs

Due to the crisis and short-term nature of outreach services, outputs are collected as opposed to outcomes, as follows:

- There were 6,185 unduplicated youth who were served during outreach:
 - One-hundred percent of those youth received access to basic needs assistance in the form of food, weather-appropriate garments, transportation, and crisis intervention services.
 - Outreach workers documented 15,336 interactions with youth during outreach.
- Outreach workers provided:
 - 41,802 supplies (socks, nutritious snacks, bus tokens, safer sex kits, etc.)
 - 16,646 referrals to available services (health care, drop-in facilities, employment programs, etc.)
 - 2,309 connections to the coordinated entry system.

Shelter Outputs and Outcomes

There were 655 unduplicated youth heads of household served in shelter, with 100 percent receiving basic needs services in the form of shelter, food, clothing, showers, referral to medical and mental health services, transportation and case management.

- Due to the nature of emergency shelter, some youth receive short-term services, while others receive a longer term, deeper level of service intervention. Of those youth who received a deeper level of service intervention:
 - 260 had an individualized case plan.
 - 205 were connected to education-related support services, and 235 were connected with employment-related support services.
 - 251 were assisted in connecting and building a relationship with a family member or other positive, supportive adult.

Housing Outputs and Outcomes

- There were 1,182 unduplicated youth heads of household served in housing:
 - 519 of the 657 youth who exited the program during the reporting period moved into stable housing upon exit
 - 875 youth were connected with employment-related services; 13 percent of those served obtained employment during the reporting period, while an additional 10 percent maintained employment obtained prior to program entry.

Special Initiatives

Commissioners Circle of Excellence

Minnesota Department of Human Services Commissioner Emily Piper recognized the work of Life House, a Homeless Youth Act funded program in Duluth, for its contributions to human services and the community. The commissioner's Circle of Excellence Awards recognize excellence among human services providers, counties, tribes, advocacy groups, and other organizations that work in partnership with the Minnesota Department of Human Services to help people meet their basic needs so they can live in dignity and achieve their highest potential.

State Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness

In January 2018, the Minnesota Interagency Council on Homeless, comprised of the heads of 11 state agencies, the Governor's Office, and the chair of the Metropolitan Council, updated *Heading Home Together: Minnesota's 2018-2020 Action Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness* to reflect the strategies and actions that will guide

efforts to prevent and end homelessness. Homeless Youth Act funds are used to support specific strategies and actions in the plan related to youth homelessness. The State Plan is [here](#) and on the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency website.

Minor Connect Pilot Project

A new pilot project was implemented during this biennium and supported by Homeless Youth Act funds. The project, Minor Connect, targets unaccompanied minor youth (ages 15-17) experiencing homelessness. Under this pilot, Hennepin County has a new resource available for any homeless minor youth experiencing homelessness, without their parent or guardian, filling a gap in serving this population. The pilot ensures that a systematic and coordinated response is used to address homelessness among this population. Minor Connect is underway and has received referrals for over 69 youth from July 2018 to January 2019.

Safe Harbor Program and Homeless Youth Act Coordination

One of the greatest risks of sexual exploitation is homelessness, which is why the Office of Economic Opportunity staff is committed to coordinating administration of the Safe Harbor shelter and housing and the Homeless Youth Act programs. A few examples of how the Homeless Youth Act and the Safe Harbor shelter and housing funds are coordinated include the following:

1. Both the Safe Harbor shelter and housing and the Homeless Youth Act funds are administered by the Minnesota Department of Human Services, Office of Economic Opportunity. The staff overseeing these two programs work in close partnership on grant management and administration, and in the provision of training and technical assistance.
2. Recent increases in Safe Harbor funding have helped to create additional shelter and housing options. This has expanded the continuum of services available for youth experiencing homelessness who are also victims of sexual exploitation. This gives Homeless Youth Act grantees a referral option for youth who would be better served by a highly specialized program targeting youth who have been sexually exploited.
3. Some Safe Harbor funds are currently being used to offer specialized training to youth workers, including Homeless Youth Act grantees. These trainings include ways to identify and appropriately respond to youth experiencing sexual exploitation, as well as ways to partner with and refer to the Safe Harbor network of services.

Service Gaps

Programs funded with Homeless Youth Act dollars continue to provide comprehensive, responsive, youth-specific services. However, gaps in services exist due to funding limitations, systemic shortfalls, and ever changing community needs. Below are key areas for growth in youth-specific services throughout Minnesota.

Housing

Minnesota has a severe gap between the number of homeless youth needing housing and the housing stock available (including emergency, transitional and affordable housing). The state is divided into 10 regions called Continuums of Care (CoC). These regions coordinate housing and other supportive services for homeless individuals and families. As part of this process, CoC regions manage the waitlist for services and housing in their areas of operation.

Across Minnesota's Continuum of Care regions during October 2018:

- **Urban areas:** More than 250 youth were prioritized and are waiting for housing
- **In suburban areas:** 262 youth were prioritized and are waiting for housing
- **In rural/outstate areas:** 253 youth were prioritized and are waiting for housing.

This 30-day snap shot highlights a consistent trend throughout the state of the youth waitlist exceeding statewide inventory. This waitlist exceeds the filled, 761 available permanent housing units (permanent supportive housing, rapid re-housing, and other permanent housing) specifically identified for youth throughout the state.⁸

Shelter

According to the Housing Inventory Charts (HIC),⁸ 180 youth dedicated shelter beds are available for an estimated 6,000 experiencing homelessness on any given night in Minnesota. This includes an estimated 2,500 minors (age 17 and younger), and 3,500 youth ages 18-24. In addition:

- Twenty-four percent of youth were turned away from shelter due to lack of space in the three months leading up to the survey
- Forty-seven percent of youth have been homeless for a year or longer
- Thirty percent of youth reported they stayed outside at least once in the past month.¹

The 2018 annual report information gathered from scattered site, facility-based, and motel voucher emergency shelter programs funded by the Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO) found that more than 1,083 youth (between the ages of 18-24) accessed adult shelters. Because OEO funds a limited number of emergency shelter beds, the total number of youth accessing adult shelters is even higher statewide. Adult shelters may lack the capacity to provide the safety and supportive services of youth-specific facilities. Due to the limited number of youth shelter beds, many youth end up staying outdoors or in other, unsafe places.¹

⁶ U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. (2018). *HUD 2018 Continuum of Care Homeless Assistance Programs Housing Inventory Count Report*.

Targeted services

Agencies need additional support to build capacity to provide specialized services for specific populations. Equipping agencies with these tools and resources increases the likelihood youth will receive appropriate services in a respectful, comprehensive manner.

- LGBTQ youth:
 - Forty percent of youth experiencing homelessness in Minnesota identify as LGBTQ.¹
 - Research indicates that youth who identify as LGBTQ have a 120 percent increased risk of experiencing homelessness than their heterosexual or cis-gender identifying peers.⁵
 - Minnesota has only two LGBTQ homeless youth-specific service agencies, although additional agencies provide LGBTQ case management, facilitate groups, and/or targeted services.
- Young parents:
 - Nationwide, young parents have three times the risk of experiencing homelessness than their non-parenting peers⁵.
 - In Minnesota, 35 percent of homeless youth are parents, and 25 percent of them have their child/children with them.¹
 - A lack of programming for young parents, especially subsidized housing options, limits the capacity of service providers.
- Sexual exploitation:
 - Youth experiencing homelessness are more likely to fall victim to sexual exploitation and human trafficking when compared to youth not living on the streets.⁹
 - Twenty-eight percent of youth living on the street engage in 'survival sex' in exchange for food, shelter or money.¹⁰
 - If a youth has already been a victim of abuse, it increases the odds that they will exchange sex for shelter, food or other basic needs (often called "survival sex").¹¹
- Culturally competent services:
 - American Indian and Alaska Native youth are at a 2.2 times higher risk of experiencing homelessness compared to their similarly aged peers.**Error! Bookmark not defined.**
 - Black/African-American youth are at an 83 percent higher risk of reporting homelessness than any other race.⁵
 - Hispanic/non-white youth are at a 33 percent higher risk of reporting homelessness, and the least likely to access emergency shelter.⁵
 - Youth organizations should be able to provide culturally competent services to improve staff ability to understand, communicate, and effectively interact with a diverse population. In addition, deeper analysis and appropriate responses need to be developed to address racial inequities in youth homelessness statewide.

⁹ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Family and Youth Services Bureau. (2013) Report to Congress on the Runaway and Homeless Youth Programs Fiscal Years 2010 and 2011. Retrieved from acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/fysb/rhy_congress_2010_11.pdf

¹⁰ Jody M. Greene, Susan T. Ennett, & Christopher L. Ringwalt, *Prevalence and Correlates of Survival Sex Among Runaway and Homeless Youth*, 89 Am. J. Pub. Health 1406, 1408 (1999), at <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1508758/pdf/amjph00009-0102.pdf>.

⁶ Kristen Finklea, Adrienne L. Fernandes-Alcantara, & Alison Siskin, Congressional Research Serv., R41878, Sex Trafficking of Children in the United States 6 (2014).

Conclusion

For questions about Homeless Youth Act funding or this report, contact Andrea Simonett, human services program consultant, via email andrea.simonett@state.mn.us, or phone 651-431-6327.

A complete list of agencies funded with Homeless Youth Act dollars for the 2018-2019 biennium are in [Appendix A](#). The list includes agency office locations, county service area, and funded activities (shelter, outreach and/or drop-in). The statute guiding Homeless Youth Act funding distribution, eligible activities, and report expectations are in [Appendix B](#).

Appendix A: Homeless Youth Act Grantees

Agency	Counties targeted (primarily)	Activity
Ain Dah Yung	Ramsey, Hennepin	Housing
Arrowhead Economic Opportunity Agency, Inc.	St. Louis, Itasca	Outreach, shelter, housing
Avenues for Youth	Hennepin, Ramsey	Outreach, shelter, housing
Beacon Interfaith	Hennepin, Ramsey	Housing
Bois Forte Tribal Council	St. Louis	Outreach, housing
Catholic Charities of St. Cloud	Stearns, Benton, Sherburne, Wright, Anoka, Morrison, Todd, Mille Lacs, Cass, Chisago, Wadena, Crow Wing, Isanti, Kanabec, Pine, Morrison	Shelter, housing
Catholic Charities of St. Paul and Minneapolis	Hennepin	Shelter, housing
Center City Housing	Olmsted	Housing
Evergreen Youth	Beltrami, Cass, Clearwater, Hubbard, Mahnommen	Outreach, drop-in, housing
Face to Face Health and Counseling Service, Inc.	Ramsey	Drop-in, housing
Hope for Youth	Anoka and North Metro Suburbs	Drop-in, housing
Inter-County Community Council, Inc.	Pennington, Red Lake, Polk, Clearwater	Housing
Lakes and Pines Community Action	Atkin, Carlton, Pine, Chisago, Isanti, Kanabec, Mille Lacs	Outreach, shelter, housing
Lakes & Prairies Community Action Partnerships, Inc.	Clay, Wilkin	Outreach, housing
Leech Lake Reservation Housing Authority	Cass, Beltrami, Itasca, Hubbard	Outreach, housing
Life House	St. Louis	Drop-in, shelter, housing
Lutheran Social Service (Brainerd)	Crow Wing, Todd, Morrison,	Outreach, shelter
Lutheran Social Service (Duluth)	St. Louis	Shelter, housing
Lutheran Social Service (Mankato)	Blue Earth, Nicollet, Le Sueur, Brown, Waseca, Sibley, Watonwan, Faribault, Steele	Outreach, drop-in, shelter, housing
Lutheran Social Service (Rochester)	Olmsted, Rice, Goodhue, Wabasha, Dodge, Mower, Fillmore, Winona, Houston	Outreach, shelter, housing

Agency	Counties targeted (primarily)	Activity
Lutheran Social Service (Metro youth services)	Ramsey, Hennepin, Dakota, Washington, Anoka, Scott, Carver	Outreach, shelter, housing
Lutheran Social Service (Willmar)	Kandiyohi, Renville, Chippewa, Swift, Meeker, McLeod	Outreach, shelter, housing
Mahube-OTWA	Mahnomen, Hubbard, Becker, Otter Tail, Wadena	Housing
Mid MN Legal Assistance	Hennepin	Outreach
MoveFwd	Hennepin	Outreach, housing
Northfield Union of Youth	Dakota, Rice	Drop-in, shelter
Oasis for Youth	Hennepin	Drop-in, housing
Open Doors for Youth	Sherburne, Wright	Drop-in
Pillsbury United Communities	Hennepin	Outreach
Salvation Army—Booth Brown	Ramsey	Shelter
Scott-Carver-Dakota CAP Agency, Inc.	Carver, Scott	Housing
The Bridge for Youth	Hennepin	Housing
The Link	Hennepin, Dakota	Drop-in, housing
United Community Action Partnership	Lincoln, Lyon, Redwood, Cottonwood, Jackson, Renville, Kandiyohi, Meeker, McLeod	Shelter, housing
YMCA Greater Twin Cities—Emma B. Howe	Hennepin, Ramsey, Washington, Anoka	Outreach, housing
YWCA Duluth	St. Louis, Carlton, Lake, Douglas	Housing
Youthlink	Hennepin	Drop-in, housing

Appendix B: Homeless Youth Act Statute

256K.45 HOMELESS YOUTH ACT.

Subdivision 1. Grant program established. The commissioner of human services shall establish a Homeless Youth Act fund and award grants to providers who are committed to serving homeless youth and youth at risk of homelessness, to provide street and community Outreach and Drop-in programs, emergency Shelter programs, and integrated supportive Housing and transitional living programs, consistent with the program descriptions in this section to reduce the incidence of homelessness among youth.

Subd. 1a. Definitions. (a) The definitions in this subdivision apply to this section.

(b) "Commissioner" means the commissioner of human services.

(c) "Homeless youth" means a person 24 years of age or younger who is unaccompanied by a parent or guardian and is without Shelter where appropriate care and supervision are available, whose parent or legal guardian is unable or unwilling to provide Shelter and care, or who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. The following are not fixed, regular, or adequate nighttime residences:

(1) a supervised publicly or privately operated Shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations;

(2) an institution or a publicly or privately operated Shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations;

(3) transitional Housing;

(4) a temporary placement with a peer, friend, or family member that has not offered permanent residence, a residential lease, or temporary lodging for more than 30 days; or

(5) a public or private place not designed for, nor ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.

Homeless youth does not include persons incarcerated or otherwise detained under federal or state law.

(d) "Youth at risk of homelessness" means a person 24 years of age or younger whose status or circumstances indicate a significant danger of experiencing homelessness in the near future. Status or circumstances that indicate a significant danger may include: (1) youth exiting out-of-home placements; (2) youth who previously were homeless; (3) youth whose parents or primary caregivers are or were previously homeless; (4) youth who are exposed to abuse and neglect in their homes; (5) youth who experience conflict with parents due to chemical or alcohol dependency, mental health disabilities, or other disabilities; and (6) runaways.

(e) "Runaway" means an unmarried child under the age of 18 years who is absent from the home of a parent or guardian or other lawful placement without the consent of the parent, guardian, or lawful custodian.

Subd. 2. Homeless youth report. The commissioner shall prepare a biennial report, beginning in February 2015, which provides meaningful information to the legislative committees having jurisdiction over the issue of homeless youth, that includes, but is not limited to: (1) a list of the areas of the state with the greatest need for

services and Housing for homeless youth, and the level and nature of the needs identified; (2) details about grants made; (3) the distribution of funds throughout the state based on population need; (4) follow-up information, if available, on the status of homeless youth and whether they have stable Housing two years after services are provided; and (5) any other outcomes for populations served to determine the effectiveness of the programs and use of funding.

Subd. 3. Street and community Outreach and Drop-in program. Youth Drop-in centers must provide walk-in access to crisis intervention and ongoing supportive services including one-to-one case management services on a self-referral basis. Street and community Outreach programs must locate, contact, and provide information, referrals, and services to homeless youth, youth at risk of homelessness, and runaways. Information, referrals, and services provided may include, but are not limited to:

- (1) family reunification services;
- (2) conflict resolution or mediation counseling;
- (3) assistance in obtaining temporary emergency Shelter;
- (4) assistance in obtaining food, clothing, medical care, or mental health counseling;
- (5) counseling regarding violence, sexual exploitation, substance abuse, sexually transmitted diseases, and pregnancy;
- (6) referrals to other agencies that provide support services to homeless youth, youth at risk of homelessness, and runaways;
- (7) assistance with education, employment, and independent living skills;
- (8) aftercare services;
- (9) specialized services for highly vulnerable runaways and homeless youth, including teen parents, emotionally disturbed and mentally ill youth, and sexually exploited youth; and
- (10) homelessness prevention.

Subd. 4. Emergency Shelter program. (a) Emergency Shelter programs must provide homeless youth and runaways with referral and walk-in access to emergency, short-term residential care. The program shall provide homeless youth and runaways with safe, dignified Shelter, including private shower facilities, beds, and at least one meal each day; and shall assist a runaway and homeless youth with reunification with the family or legal guardian when required or appropriate.

(b) The services provided at emergency Shelters may include, but are not limited to:

- (1) family reunification services;
- (2) individual, family, and group counseling;
- (3) assistance obtaining clothing;

- (4) access to medical and dental care and mental health counseling;
- (5) education and employment services;
- (6) recreational activities;
- (7) advocacy and referral services;
- (8) independent living skills training;
- (9) aftercare and follow-up services;
- (10) transportation; and
- (11) homelessness prevention.

Subd. 5. Supportive Housing and transitional living programs. Transitional living programs must help homeless youth and youth at risk of homelessness to find and maintain safe, dignified Housing. The program may also provide rental assistance and related supportive services, or refer youth to other organizations or agencies that provide such services. Services provided may include, but are not limited to:

- (1) educational assessment and referrals to educational programs;
- (2) career planning, employment, work skill training, and independent living skills training;
- (3) job placement;
- (4) budgeting and money management;
- (5) assistance in securing Housing appropriate to needs and income;
- (6) counseling regarding violence, sexual exploitation, substance abuse, sexually transmitted diseases, and pregnancy;
- (7) referral for medical services or chemical dependency treatment;
- (8) parenting skills;
- (9) self-sufficiency support services or life skill training;
- (10) aftercare and follow-up services; and
- (11) homelessness prevention.

Subd. 6. Funding. Funds appropriated for this section may be expended on programs described under subdivisions 3 to 5, technical assistance, and capacity building to meet the greatest need on a statewide basis. The commissioner will provide Outreach, technical assistance, and program development support to increase capacity to new and existing service providers to better meet needs statewide, particularly in areas where services for homeless youth have not been established, especially in greater Minnesota.