



# Youth Homelessness

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# Homeless Youth

- A ***homeless youth*** is an individual between the ages of 12 and 24, inclusive, who is living on their own without a parent or guardian and lacks a stable or permanent address.
- Many of these youth are ***non-system youth*** who are not, or have never been, a part of either the foster care or juvenile delinquency systems and are not eligible for many state and federal programs and services.

# Reasons for Homelessness

- Domestic violence in the home
- Physical, sexual, emotional abuse and neglect
- Substance abuse in the home
- Criminal justice involvement by family member(s)
- Conflict with parents – LGBTQ youth
- Family homelessness

# Consequences of Homelessness

- Engagement in survival sex
- Victimization, including Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC)
- Alcohol and drug abuse
- Mental health problems – PTSD, Depression, Anxiety, etc.
- Physical health problems – TB, Hepatitis, STDs, HIV/AIDS, etc.
- School failure/dropout

# San Diego County Youth Homelessness

- Estimated 2,000-3,000 unaccompanied homeless youth in San Diego County ages 12-24, inclusive.
- Over 20,000 students were identified as homeless by the San Diego County Office of Education.
- Point in Time Count – Approximately 57% of the homeless youth counted were non-system youth.
- Transition Age Youth (TAY) Academy Drop In Centers (1,000 youth) – 66% non-system youth.

# San Diego County Resources

- \$180,000 State funding through Homeless Youth and Exploitation Program (HYEP).
- 17 shelter beds for non-system youth under age 18 – funded primarily through federal, private and State HYEP funds.
- No dedicated shelter beds for TAY (18-24 year olds).
- 230 TAY beds for system youth through Transitional Housing Placement-Plus and Transitional Youth Housing funds.
- 60 TAY beds for non-system youth – funded primarily through federal and private funds.

# San Diego County Planning Efforts

- Unaccompanied Youth Task Force
- Regional Continuum of Care Council
- Regional Task Force on the Homeless
- 5 Year Work Plan Toward Goal of Ending Homelessness in Downtown San Diego – 2011-2016

# The Face of Homelessness

At the age of 16, Lakeisha ran away from home after years of sexual abuse by her step-father. Despite several calls to child protective services, Lakeisha was not placed in the child welfare system. While on the streets, Lakeisha, met her “boyfriend” Juan who promised her the world. After a period of time, Juan began commercially sexually exploiting Lakeisha and forced her into prostitution. She became pregnant at age 17, ran away from Juan and ended up back on the streets. SDYS outreach team found her and encouraged her to come to our shelter where she was given emergency services, provided a comprehensive assessment and developed an individual life plan. After a lot of ups and downs, Lakeisha was stabilized. However, because she was never in the foster care system, her options were limited. Fortunately, Lakeisha was able to placed into one of the few slots available for non-system youth in our program for Transition Aged Youth, where she was provided an apartment and a comprehensive array of support services. She gave birth to her daughter while in the program and is doing well. Lakeisha is learning parenting skills, life skills and has successfully been enrolled into the local community college.



# California Homeless Youth

- Approximately 1/3 of CA's counties have direct services for homeless youth; funded primarily through federal and local funds.
- Funded emergency shelter beds for homeless youth in CA decreased from 587 beds in 1990 to 555 beds in 2010, while CA's population of homeless youth has increased dramatically.
- State funding for homeless youth is directed through the Homeless Youth and Exploitation Program (HYEP). The program receives \$1.1 million and funds 4 individual programs in the state. Funding for this program has not changed since its creation in 1988.

# Homeless Youth and Exploitation Program

- Created to serve homeless youth in San Francisco, Los Angeles, Santa Clara and San Diego County.
- It is one of two state programs dedicated to serving homeless youth; the other is the California Youth Crisis Line.
- Both programs are housed under the Office of Emergency Services (programs were initially created under the Office of Criminal Justice Planning).
- Four programs serve approximately 5,000 youth annually.

# Facts on Homeless Youth in California

- Approximately 300,000 youth in grades K-12 experience at least one day of homelessness each year in California based on the latest CDE report.
- 12,000 – 13,000 homeless youth at any given time in California.
- 28% of homeless youth in the nation live in California.
- California is second worst in the country in sheltering homeless youth - 76.3% of our homeless youth are unsheltered.

# Thank you

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