

CJJ 2017 Conference

Preventing Homelessness among Juvenile Justice-Involved Youth

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Homelessness and Juvenile Justice

1 million youth involved with
law enforcement/ justice
system each year.

Nearly 400,000
unaccompanied homeless
youth

Sources: [Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention](#); [National Alliance to End Homelessness](#)

ACYF Street Outreach Program Data Collection Project

**Nearly 44% of youth
interviewed had stayed in a
jail, prison or juvenile
detention center.**

**Almost 78% had
at least one
interaction with
the police**

**Nearly 62% had
been arrested**

How does homelessness contribute to justice involvement?

“Researchers emphasize that criminal offenses or illegal acts committed by runaways and youth experiencing homelessness are frequently motivated by basic survival needs, such as food and shelter; the presence of adverse situations, such as hunger and unemployment; self-medication through use of alcohol and drugs; and a lack of opportunities for legitimate self-support.”

Link between homelessness and justice involvement

- Status Offense Laws
- “Quality of Life” Ordinances
- Survival Crimes
- Family Violence
- Behavioral Health
- Collateral Consequences

Experiences of homeless youth

- 40.5% threatened with a weapon
- 40.8% robbed
- 32.3% beaten up
- 14.5% sexually assaulted

LGBT youth and former foster youth experienced higher levels of victimization.

"For every additional month spent homeless, the likelihood of being victimized while homeless increased by 3 percent."

Source: Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Family and Youth Services Bureau: Street Outreach Program Data Collection Project Final Report (April 2016)

How do we start to address these challenges?

- More prevention and diversion
- Collaboration
- Research
- Training and awareness-raising
- Better transition planning
- Advocacy



Key Questions?

- How do we respond to and support this population?
- How do we ensure individualized, targeted responses?
- How do we avoid net-widening?



COALITION FOR JUVENILE JUSTICE

Collaborating for Change: Goals

- To decrease the number of homeless youth who become involved with the JJ system
- To prevent youth homelessness among justice-involved youth

Project led by CJJ, in partnership with National Network for Youth, National League of Cities Institute on Youth, Education & Families

Funded by Raikes Foundation, Tow Foundation, Melville Charitable Trust



Collaborating for Change

- Cross-sector expert advisory committee
- Policy and practice **guiding principles and action recommendations**
- Publications
- Education/training
- Advocacy



COALITION FOR JUVENILE JUSTICE

Collaborating for Change: Principles

Principle 2. Ensure that young people are diverted from juvenile justice system involvement whenever possible, and that any *diversion programs or services* are appropriately tailored to meet the needs of youth experiencing homelessness.

Principle 3. When juvenile justice system involvement cannot be avoided, ensure that *comprehensive transition planning* begins immediately after—and continues throughout—a youth's confinement or probation supervision.

Minnesota

project currently underway:

“Preventing and Ending
Homelessness for Justice

Involved Youth:

A Statewide Effort to Inform
Policy and Practice”



Why is this important?

In Minnesota, these are the facts:

(as reported in Wilder Research's statewide triennial study)

On any given night, an estimated 6,000
Minnesota youth experience homelessness

41% of
homeless
youth in
**greater
MN** report
having
been held
in a
correctional
facility



**37% of all
homeless
youth**
report
having
been held
in a
correctional
facility

Homeless youth are disproportionately youth of color;
70% of homeless youth are **youth of color**, compared
to to 24% of all Minnesota youth

Why is this important?

Benefits to our State Advisory Group (SAG):

Collaboration across agencies:



- Provides offer an efficient and comprehensive way to get SAG informed from experts outside the JJ field
- Build new relationships outside the criminal justice field

The shift to policy reform vs programming requires our SAG to be more informed about all opportunities to improve how we serve the vulnerable youth population:

- Better data about the population
- Diverse, cross-systems perspectives

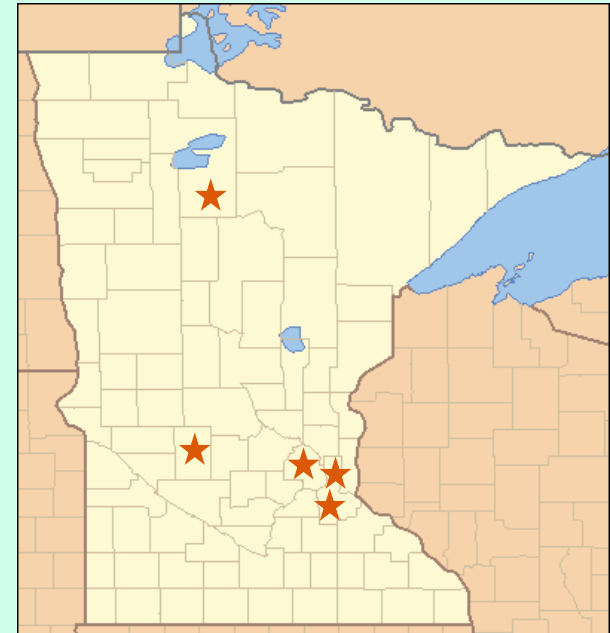
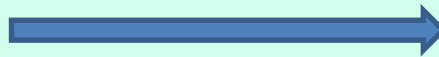
This project aligns with the work of many SAG sub-grantees, allowing the SAG to provide both funding support and new data to inform their programming.

What is the project?

🔍 **Cross-departmental effort to examine the intersection of youth homelessness and the juvenile justice system**

🔍 Specifically looking at 5 Minnesota counties:

- Hennepin, Ramsey, Dakota, Beltrami, Kandiyohi
- Each features a JDC and a unique demographic



🔍 Seeking the following information:

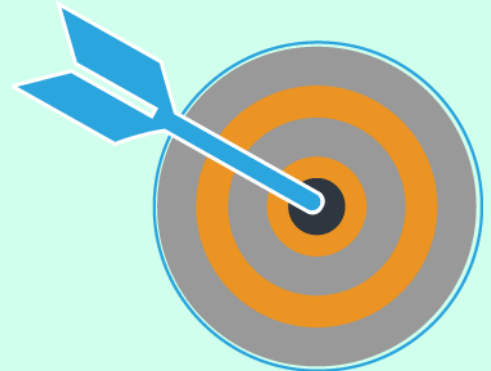
- Who are these youth and how “big” a problem is youth homelessness in your region?
- What are the circumstances as they enter the system (detention and residential placement)?
- What strategies are in place on the front end, during stay, and upon exit via after care to support the stability and wellness of youth served?

What is the project GOAL?

The goal of this project is to
**PRODUCE POLICY AND PRACTICE
RECOMMENDATIONS**

that address the following priorities:

- Developing a common definition of who these at-risk youth are, and a shared understanding of how they are best served across systems.
- Establishing better coordination between the three corrections supervision delivery systems to ensure consistency and effectiveness of transition services for youth.
- Preventing initial juvenile justice system involvement, when possible, as well as a reduction in recidivism.



What is our process?

- ✓ As a core advisory team, we brought stakeholders together to discuss and explore what we thought the problem was
- ✓ We created a need statement, including project scope/scale and workplan
- ✓ Developed the survey tool, scope, and data sources
- ✓ Ongoing technical assistance provided by OJJDP's Center for Coordinated Assistance to States and Center for Juvenile Justice Reform at Georgetown University to guide, refine, and focus our efforts



Then, we leveraged my role as Juvenile Justice Specialist and Compliance Monitor to complete interviews with Superintendents of seven facilities...



...in order to gain:

- Administrative data
- Info about the intake process, programming offered, after care services, and greatest needs



How is SAG involved?

**I participate as JJ Specialist,
informing and engaging SAG monthly**



JUVENILE JUSTICE ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Setting a vision for juvenile justice in Minnesota

- Briefing document and oral report with opportunities for input and review of key decision points related to the project
- Leverage the expertise of SAG members, feeding guidance back to the project team
- SAG members expand partnership networks by promoting project involvement from other department and agencies
- Build my capacity as JJ Specialist, Compliance Monitor, and DMC Coordinator

Preliminary Findings:

- 🔍 Limited or no tracking of housing stability and/or homeless as youth enter and exit
- 🔍 Youth are being held longer due to lack of housing options: no home and ineligible for social service placement (i.e. foster care/group home)
- 🔍 Generational poverty, parent chemical dependency and family homelessness (for youth returning home) is a significant issue
- 🔍 Probation plays a huge role when youth are in placement and up to a year after. Quality and duration of probation services is a primary factor in preventing youth from entering into homelessness
- 🔍 There is potential for education service providers in the facilities to help track and respond to the needs of homeless and highly mobile youth

What's next?

Upcoming phases of the project:



Review information from 5 counties (7 facilities); identify common themes, challenges and promising practices



Produce report with overview of current practices and recommendations that will inform state process of updating the Plan to Prevent and End Youth Homelessness by 2020



Develop toolkit/List of action steps to help local jurisdictions enact recommendations in report

What's next?

SAG opportunities to pursue:



Increase awareness, suggest training, and offer supports to probation officers working with youth who are identified as at risk of homelessness or homeless in the system



Provide immediate and concrete recommendations

- Continuum of care connections
- Sharing of best practices



Involvement in additional cross-agency collaboration projects that are similarly structured

(Currently, our SAG is participating in a OJJDP-sponsored trauma study with Hennepin County, as well)



NATIONAL JUVENILE DEFENDER CENTER

**Every child has a right to
“the guiding hand of counsel
at every step
in the proceedings against him.”**

In re Gault, U.S. Supreme Court (1967)

A JUVENILE RECORD CAN AFFECT YOUR FUTURE!



COLLATERAL CONSEQUENCES

Records	Public Benefits
Employment	Public Registry
Education	Fees, Fines, & Restitution
Housing	Voting
Sentencing Enhancements	Immigration

HOW CAN A LAWYER HELP?



A LAWYER CAN HELP WITH...

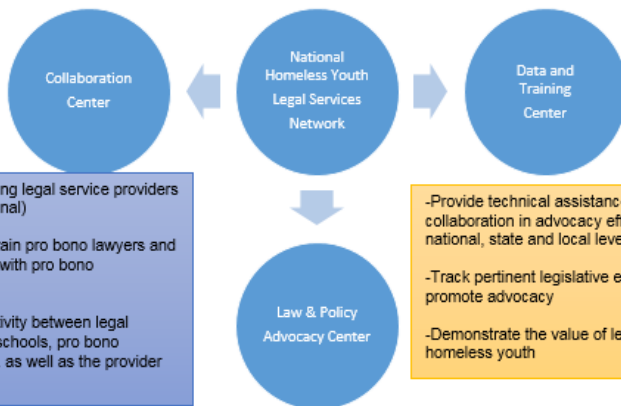
- Education
- Record Clearance
- Housing
- Benefits
- Employment
- Debt/Credit

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- Clearinghouse of legal resources
- Triage and connect to appropriate legal resources
- Lawyer-to-Lawyer connection for interstate/multistate issues
- Identify high risk youth and connect them with local service providers

- Compile existing legal resources, research, and services
- Create a web-based portal tailored to meet the needs of youth, providers, lawyers and advocates
- Promote holistic models and best practices (including cultural competency) through trainings
- Develop and maintain a digital CLE law library



- Engage existing legal service providers (civil and criminal)
- Recruit and train pro bono lawyers and connect them with pro bono opportunities
- Build connectivity between legal services, law schools, pro bono programs, etc. as well as the provider community

- Provide technical assistance and foster collaboration in advocacy efforts on the national, state and local levels
- Track pertinent legislative efforts and promote advocacy
- Demonstrate the value of legal services for homeless youth

The ABA has committed funds to support the development and implementation of a national Homeless Youth Legal Network (HYLN)—a new initiative to increase legal services for youth and young adults experiencing homelessness by fostering greater capacity and connectivity. As a catalyst and convener to address the *legal* issues of homeless youth and improve outcomes for those transitioning from the child welfare system and exiting the juvenile justice system through direct representation, the ABA invites federal partners and national, state and local organizations to join the effort to develop the Homeless Youth Legal Network.

The ABA Commission on Homelessness & Poverty invites your participation as we begin developing a road map to design and implement the HYLN.

For more information, please contact:

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Ways to engage with the HYLN:

- Join our listserv by e-mailing hyln@americanbar.org
- Help us map existing programs and unmet legal needs by taking our survey: <http://bit.ly/2jwUWme>
- Request free Technical Assistance by emailing Amy.HortonNewell@americanbar.org.

A Way Home America: Our Goal



By the end of 2020, prevent and end homelessness among all youth and young adults. Ensure that homelessness among youth and young adults is rare, and if it occurs, ensure experiences of homelessness are brief and one-time.

HOUSING NOT HANDCUFFS

Housing Not Handcuffs is a national campaign to stop the criminalization of homelessness, and push for effective housing policies that end homelessness.

The campaign has developed strategies around policy advocacy, communications, grassroots organizing, and litigation to strategically change local, state, and federal laws and practices that are not working.

For more information

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