



CoC Youth Committee

October 26, 2018, 10:00-11:30

Present: Julie Cnossen, Casey Gordon, Kenya Brown, Samantha Pennington, Kenya Avila, Jake Skala, Heather Nyenhuis, Noelia Garcia, Tiffany Clarke, Shandra, Arielle Goodson, Lauren VanKuelen, Tiffany (Pine Rest), Emily Schichtel, Sierra Salaam, Brianne Czyzio

- 1. Introductions:** Name, Organization, what is your favorite thing about working with youth?
- 2. Youth Committee Feedback and Debrief:**

Casey was at ICCF deployment space and was impressed with organization and logistics. There were questions about capacity before the count, but she thought the group did a great job of making sure everyone had an experienced outreach person on their team. Lots of Youth Committee members had eye opening experiences seeing and feeling for homeless youth.

In terms of date, in the future, it was suggested the count is not done at beginning of the month because at that time people have more funds available. This year, it did intentionally coincide with KISD count day. Would it be possible do it in November to coincide with NHHA Week?

Is there a way to figure out when schools turn the numbers into the state? Casey explained that the schools count on count day, but don't turn the data in for about 3 weeks. Districts didn't understand why they needed to turn the data in now.

People are unsure if the count had the momentum, because this was the first time. There are thoughts that youth would be really interested in the services if there was proper awareness of count day. Other communities across the country have had a big event with music, food, sponsors, etc. Group members are not familiar with homeless youth culture, but are youth willing to come and be recognized, or do they shy away because they do not want organizations in their business; this is dependent on trust and the language outreach staff use. It is helpful to have a list of resources youth can use. Mel Trotter did MSHDA applications with the youth. Emily shared that she went out at midday and went to several camps and encountered very few youth, most likely because it is a time of day when most people are out and about. This should be considered when structuring for next year. Street Reach, KCCA, and HQ did not have any homeless youth stop by. Teams didn't anticipate need for flashlights and batteries. There is a need safety vests, etc. in the future. Other emerging ideas for next year include having a campaign that is messaged a while before the count, and an easy way to identify the outreach staff, possibly get brightly colored shirt. Also, understanding how to connect youth to housing and have those resources available and more time and materials for promotion. It may be helpful to have friends reach out to friends. It would also be beneficial to be involved with youth that are not homeless to raise awareness and to de-stigmatize, so youth homelessness does not feel shameful. It was suggested to have additional staff at The Bridge to handle the crisis line. Teachers/liaisons could encourage students to call in to complete survey – no one called this year, so this was ineffective. One thing that stuck out to Emily is the number of youth who answered yes to being in juvenile detention, jail, or prison. This may indicate that there needs to be more connection with that system. It was hard to get data because the state has been sued too many times for discharging youth to homelessness. She suggested next meeting the group looks at system discharge planning. This could be a place to pull in other agencies.

Kenya thinks with the short timeline the online training was great but looking forward need to more in-depth training. There is room for changing the survey based on YAB feedback. When YAB members reviewed the tool, they were okay with it, but once they were asking those questions to community members it was uncomfortable. This is a possibility for a future training with outreach staff. Plus, all volunteers didn't send back training receipts, so there is no record of how many volunteers participated.

Within a week of the count, 20 youth were connected to housing resources. Contact was made to all youth on the second day, but it was hard to reach out and connect with youth. 44 of 85 youth were literally homeless, so the number of youth that need resources for could be under 50.

It felt very intrusive to come into people's space, there should be a way to let youth know ahead of time that an outreach team is approaching. There were lots of needles, broken glass, and alcohol at some sites. This is a possible chance to get Red Project or Health Department or their resources involved, though some dialogue would be necessary as youth may see this as abrasive, and as assuming things about homeless youth.

To keep this rolling, it may be helpful to have a team of Youth Committee members who are working towards next year's count, or it could be built into each YAB and YC agenda. It could be an agenda item but then action items must be discussed, and work done in between. Having buy-in from Youth Committee to own parts of this work is very important. There is a need to divide into workgroups for people take ownership to take on work. There is strong recommendation that this group start to work on school data in particular, because that is where data is missing.

It would be beneficial to send out a short survey monkey to staff who participated asking about successes, highlights, process points to improve, things that were missing.

3. Youth Data

What is available now?

- The report from HMIS on 10 to 17 year olds can be put into table/infographic/report.
- Things to note: Schools were unable to complete the survey as superintendents are conservative and were concerned because there was a question about gender identity. They did not want parents to get mad. In addition, there were CPS concerns. Next year, it was suggested to possibly have someone drop by from an outside organization to give the survey. Plus, a community push could be very helpful in gaining superintendent involvement.

How do we take this information and make it available and to be shared broadly?

- The 18 to 24 year olds report mirrors the 10 to 17 data. Sierra is trying to deduplicate some of the results, so data can reflect individuals counted on count day, as well as the picture as a whole. But it will be impossible to deduplicate count and school data.
- Some data points do not include location, and some are blank because the youth did not want to answer that question.
- Visual representation will likely be more effective than a giant report. It may be helpful to compare with the 18 to 24 year old report. However, there is a need to be careful in how broad the report is distributed this year with low numbers. This group needs to look at overall numbers and disseminate the narrative.

Kent County Schools Data/Info: Casey Gordon

- Casey shared data from October 3, for youth ages 10 and up who are homeless, sheltered, or couch surfing. This data does not include hotel stays or doubled-up families.
- She suggested that data can feed into each other and Youth Committee could do a report out and talk about areas for next steps. Then, once KISD has fall count official data, that data can be shared out.
- She suggested that the Initial Data Review could be shared while waiting for official data.

How does everyone want to see this information presented?

- There is a need to be thoughtful because people are going to hang onto the first thing they hear, it is harder to make corrections once some data has been shared.
- Given input, Sierra and Emily can work on layout and presentation and come back to group for feedback.
- There has been a lot of pressure to report data, so the committee needs to make sure everyone knows that data will be coming. When sharing, there is a need to be clear that this data is a starting point, not a count of all youth who are homeless in Kent County. And there is a need to talk about process points in the data and how to focus on messaging. Then the committee can focus on broader community asks for specific resources. Plus, even if the data looks pretty, people are going to make decisions based on numbers, so focus on data accuracy. It may be best to do one big report out with as much of the school data as possible. Kenya suggested we use the information to get the word out to Kent County. The committee can present the numbers and tell the community what they actually mean, what we can tell about those numbers, and what resources are needed ASAP to address those who still need help. In addition, there is a need to be careful that we are not saying that we housed 20 youth, so youth homelessness in Kent County is ended, because that is not the case.
- The Youth Committee decided to wait on releasing data until it is in a format that gives output numbers and give contextual information. In the meantime, focus on the number of individuals that are on the list, and how to get the resources needed to those people. The narrative and drill down should be done and then discussed at the next meeting.

4. Agency Updates

Tiffany shared that the Covenant Open House is November 14, at 4:30. They will open a transitional housing program on November 26. Youth between the ages of 18 and 24 can stay at the shelter as long as they are making progress towards their goals. There are 28 individual bedrooms, 6 to 8 youth will be there to start. They expect to start 2019 with their beds full. Email referrals to:

chngr@covenanthouse.org. This project is 100% privately funded.

Parking Lot Topics:

- Process for next year's count.

Next meeting: Nov 16 @10 am at 1120 Monroe. This meeting will be held at 10:30, directly after the Steering meeting.