



**Grand Rapids/Wyoming/Kent County CoC
Youth Committee
MEETING MINUTES**

April 23, 2021
9:30-10:30

Facilitator:	Kendra Avila		
Meeting Attendees:	Kendra Avila, Li Kaplan, Paige Putans, Ben Kaiser, Sam Westhouse, Becky Diffin, Melissa Ware, Crystal Kitten, Samantha Westhouse, Tiffany Clarke, Casey Gordon, Alyssa Anten, Toni Wolford, Stephanie Myers, Julia Newell, Patrick Buhay, Carolyn Allen Staff: Brianne Robach, Courtney Myers-Keaton		
Time Convened:	9:35	Time Adjourned:	10:35

Introductions			
Review of Agenda		April 23, 2021	
Motion by:	Sam Westhouse	Support from:	Crystal Kitten
Discussion			
Amendments	Add outreach and shelter update		
Approval of Minutes		March 26, 2021	
Motion by:	Li Kaplan	Support from:	Melissa Ware
Discussion			
Amendments	None		
Result	All in favor, motion passes.		
CE Process Overview			
Discussion			
<p>Recently, the Coordinated Entry (CE) process based on the policies adopted last fall was implemented for families. A similar process will be implemented for other populations over the coming months. Sam Westhouse, from Salvation Army, overviewed the Coordinated Entry process for families. When families (adult(s) with child(ren) or pregnant) call HAP, they go through a Community Housing Connect assessment. HAP also does a pre-screen for available resources. Families will then be connected to a Solutions Specialist who can connect them to resources including RRH, PSH, and shelter based on choice and eligibility. When youth call, they go through the standard process and are added to by-name list. If youth families (pregnant or parenting youth) call, they are connected to a solutions specialist through CHC and to the by-name list.</p> <p>The work of solutions specialists is similar to what folks in the youth space are currently doing. They work to provide supports and resources to families while they are searching for a housing resource.</p> <p><u>CE Committee Structure</u> Courtney indicated that she anticipates discussing how the Coordinated Entry Committee is structured in the next few months as there are many population specific committees and initiatives in the community that may overlap. The goal is to make sure the right people are at the right tables without having to be at all the committees. She has seen different options across the country including a workgroup from committees focused on the CE process and population-specific case conferencing groups guided by a CE Governance Committee. Feedback from this committee would be helpful in informing conversations around this topic.</p>			



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Casey shared that having multiple points of entry is helpful, but can be confusing. Simplifying and streamlining the process to remove barriers and increase access would be important. Some communities have separate processes for how populations move through the system. Further conversation around how well this process would work for youth would be important.

Melissa indicated that it would be important to get feedback from youth based on their experience in the system. Ben suggested a focus group to hear directly from youth.

Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline

Shelter/Outreach Update

Discussion

Casey shared that they have been seeing an increase in need at Kent ISD. She asked what trends outreach and shelter teams are seeing.

AYA is seeing a rise in youth living unsheltered. Some members who spent the winter in shelter are now moving into encampments. In addition, they are seeing youth with vouchers that have expired or who have lost placements. They are working to creatively problem solve.

Arbor Circle has seen a general rise in numbers and increase in youth led families

HAP has been having housing choice voucher pulls, but are seeing that some youth are not able to lease up. Common reasons include credit, record, or rental history.

Melissa shared that to her this highlights a need for more transitional housing to support youth while they move into a permanent resource. Their team has been using resources and expertise to support youth in the transition. She is happy to connect offline regarding Transitional Housing.

Mental Health: Network180 can support those up to age 25 who are struggling with a mental health crisis. They also have out-patient services where insurance is not required. To access, call 616.336.3909. All youth will be screened over the phone and scheduled for a full assessment. Their Mobile Crisis Response Team also assists adults now, call 616.333.1000

DHHS: Paige shared that they are also finding youth who have vouchers and not being able to find places to use them. She is hoping to connect on approaching landlords in a more systematic way across agencies. The Salvation Army received an allocation for a position that will be working directly with landlords. This will be a great resource once this person has been hired.

Casey shared that at Kent ISD they see similar issues as well as families who are unable to afford their housing after their Rapid Re-Housing assistance ends so they become homeless again.

The group will continue conversations around youth access to vouchers and resources.



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Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
Continue conversations around youth access to resources	All	
Youth Action Board Lead Agency		
Discussion		
<p>Kendra attended a learning session around what it looks like to build a thriving youth action board (YAB). One thing that was discussed was an agency that leads the creation and facilitation of an action board. Courtney recognized that there has been previous tension within lead agency conversations. In the past, Arbor Circle really led this effort and had a key staff person facilitating the action board. She is hoping to thoughts from the committee about engaging in this type of model.</p> <p>Casey strongly feels that the CoC should consider providing funding towards an action board and having a partnership agreement with another agency who leads the work. In the past, she felt that youth on the YAB felt constrained given the funding regulations. If the YAB were housed within the CoC, she would want to identify additional funding to support the board's action.</p> <p>Ben indicated that it can be difficult for a youth-led group without an understanding of the tools and power available. He suggested defining what areas the YAB has power and how the action board will engage prior to re-engaging the action board.</p> <p>To continue the conversation, Kendra will send more info on different action board models. All committee members will discuss feedback and thoughts via email.</p> <p>There has been previous conversation around what it would look like to have a youth focus group to get feedback around an action board.</p>		
Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
Provide action board models to the group via email	Kendra	
Provide thoughts and feedback on models via email	All	
Discuss youth focus group on action boards		
Youth Committee Secretary		
Discussion		
Tabled to next month.		
Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
Youth Functional Zero List Update		
Discussion		
<p>As of today, there are 82 unsheltered youth (families and singles) on the list and 18 youth (families and singles) in shelter for a total of 100 youth in Kent County experiencing category 1 homelessness. Most families were connected with supported solutions. HAP is also currently filling RRH and PSH program openings.</p>		
Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
Community Partner Updates		



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Discussion			
<p>AYA – they will be open for in-person services beginning on Monday with appointments from noon-5:00pm. Youth can call to make appointments. Virtual services will still be available.</p> <p>Next meeting: May 28th.</p>			
Adjournment			
Motion by:	Ben Kaiser	Support from:	Li Kaplan