



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

June 25, 2021
9:30-10:30

Facilitator:	Kendra Avila		
Meeting Attendees:	Tiffany Clarke, Alyssa Anten, Kendra Avila, Benjamin Kaiser, Crystal Kitten, Teresa Newmarch, Stephanie Myers, Samantha Westhouse, Patrick Buhay, Gaby Guzman, Melissa Ware, Becky Diffin, Jacquita Baker, Paige Putans, Jania Lane, Regina Archie, Carolyn Allen (late) <u>Staff:</u> Courtney Myers-Keaton, Brianne Robach		
Time Convened:		Time Adjourned:	

Introductions			
Approval of Agenda		June 25, 2021	
Motion by:	Sam Westhouse	Support from:	Ben Kaiser
Discussion			
Amendments			
Approval of Minutes		May 28, 2021	
Discussion	Tabled until next month as they weren't included in the packet.		
Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project			
Discussion			
<p>AYA Youth Collective was selected as the lead agency for this year's application. The application is a joint effort with the lead agency and CoC staff. AYA has a consultant that they use to support grant writing. If the community is selected as a YHDP community, we will spend the first 6 months working with HUD TA to develop a Coordinated Community plan for what projects would be most helpful for the community to implement.</p> <p>This year's YHDP application has less required attachments, but is similar to the previous years. Courtney brought questions asked in the application for the committee to discuss. It seems that HUD is looking for innovative interventions that could become evidence-based and best practice as well as current best practices.</p>			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Describe at least one youth-focused intervention that is not currently operating in the community that the community wishes to pursue. Include in your response the barriers that currently prevent you from implementing the intervention. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Direct cash payments for youth – to bolster all of the current programs, and to work will for diversion and prevention to quickly provide resources to resolve an episode of housing instability or homelessness and reduce trauma. Barrier – limited funding ➤ Vouchers. Barrier - cannot find a place to accept the voucher. Youth losing hope. ➤ Hotspots for youth to access Describe how existing youth-focused interventions could be improved and their capacity increased. Include in your response barriers that prevent you from improving these interventions. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Interventions around youth experiencing housing instability because of mental health. Barrier - stigma around seeking mental health services ➤ Interventions for youth who identify as LGBTQIA+; currently is a small program 			



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- Access to mental health services expanded to community locations where youth are already present
 - Youth have vouchers but unable to lease up due to housing market and inability/unwillingness of landlords to accept; funds to incentive landlords and/or to pay for arrearages, security deposits, application fees; would want to see partnership and advocacy with municipalities to create permanent housing;
 - Longer-term housing options (2-3 years) for youth struggling with mental health barriers to provide time to become stable
 - Pregnant and parenting young adults, esp. for single adults who identify as male with children; childcare is a barrier for employment and education; barrier with youth who are undocumented and unable to lease in their own name
 - Another barrier is youth who do not have the means to go to college or who have college debt that is holding them back – grants to help pay off college debt for youth.
 - Diversion –educating parents or compensating youth to help pay rent
 - Crisis gap funding – provide short-term support before youth are able to receive DHHS and other public assistance benefits
 - Homeownership – partnership with banks and financial advisors; co-ops or condos for youth to build up equity
 - Partnership with the Rapid or other transportation providers to get youth to and from places of employment
 - Conversations with employers to raise awareness around the barriers youth may be facing to stability – support/job coaching so relationships with employers are stable (both ways)
 - Building a supportive employment program with wraparound supports
3. The factors that are currently contributing to youth homelessness in the community, including how your community identified which factors are most prominent.
- Potential to send a survey to the community around this? Could be 2 rounds, an initial survey to gather responses and determine which answers have the most feedback. The second round would then ask for ranking of the top factors. Attendees identified factors:
 - i. Access to affordable housing; childcare crisis; living wage; youth aging out of foster care; LGBTQIA+ identity; parents experiencing housing instability; undocumented families with parents facing deportation ; institutional racism; rampant inequality; redlining; parent education (kids get kicked out for small reasons); instability caused by income loss due to pandemic; mental health (asked to leave household, or reached time limit at facility); lack of access to healthcare; lack of strengths based services for youth; lack of long term housing solutions; increase in rental rates that are beyond voucher allowance; lack of transportation; use TAY questions
 - 1. (Is your current lack of stable housing... a) Because you ran away from your family home, a group home or a foster home? b) Because of a difference in religious or cultural beliefs from your parents, guardians or caregivers? c) Because your family or friends caused you to become homeless? d) Because of conflicts around gender identity or sexual orientation? e) Because of violence at home between family members f)



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Because of an unhealthy or abusive relationship, either at home or elsewhere?);

4. If selected as a YHDP community, how would stakeholders define success?
- High priority: Youth voice is involved in every aspect of community decision-making
 - All front-facing agencies that work with youth have a very thorough understanding of all the resources available to youth in Kent County and can share relationally to youth
 - We reach functional zero AND youth are stable
 - Youth know where to go if they need support and resources; it is easy for youth to navigate services
 - Youth are making a livable wage
 - Youth reporting that they are achieving 'intermediary goals' after achieving basic stability-- pathways to homeownership, school, whatever they identify

Courtney will send pieces of the narrative as they are available for this group to review and provide feedback. She will also share providers to share with youth for input.

Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
Share sections of narrative for the group to review	Courtney	

Youth Action Board

Discussion

AYA recently received a grant to support youth who participate in YAB and are willing to facilitate this group. Their first info session will be July 8th at noon at 320 State St. They are hoping to have 8-10 members and are looking for diverse representation. Members can be older than 24, but have to have experienced housing instability or homelessness during the ages of 18-24.

Courtney noted that her biggest concern with this YHDP application is losing points if an action board isn't fully operational as last round we scored really high on youth collaboration side and had YAB answer questions directly. Kendra noted that some of the answers from last round still apply and the pandemic was a large reason for decreased YAB participation. However, AYA did an awareness campaign in the fall and have had action at the community-level in the past couple months. It is only now that they have only been able to reconvene this month due to COVID restrictions lifting. Courtney to send application questions for Kendra to send out to youth to provide input, feedback, and suggestions.

Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
Provide application questions for youth to share feedback	Courtney/Kendra	

Youth Functional Zero List Update

Discussion

As of Monday, there are 96 total youth on the Youth Functional Zero (YF0) list; 73 unsheltered and 23 sheltered (at Covenant House, Mel Trotter, or in transitional housing). In May, 30 youth added to the page and 55 exited (27 due to lack of contact, 23 to rental with or without RRH assistance; 5 exit to staying with family or friends). TSA hoping to pull report and prepare a visual that will be presented to the group, hopefully beginning in August. Let Sam know if there are additional areas you want reflected.



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Courtney shared that the CoC is participating with Built for Zero (BF0), a national movement organized by Community Solutions, to focus on reaching functional zero for the chronic population. The Chamber of Commerce approached the CoC and asked us to participate. The framework is similar to the one used to reach functional zero for veterans. Planning groups are meeting regularly. The TA has been very willing to engage with other initiatives, particularly the FUSE (Frequent Users Systems Engagement) project. CoC staff can send BF0 update to the group.

There is the potential to have those who are coordinating different projects that may impact youth attend committee meetings to share brief updates.

Action Items	Person Responsible	Deadline
Community Partner Updates		
Discussion		
None		
Adjournment		
Motion by:	Regina Archie	Support from: Melissa Ware