

Spring | 2011

Giving Hope

The City of Chicago Task Force on Homeless Youth Report



H. E. L. L. O.

Homeless Experts Living Life's Obstacles

a homeless & formerly homeless youth activism group

co-sponsored by The Night Ministry, The Chicago Coalition for the Homeless, & Lakeview Action Coalition

Dear Mayor Daley:

On behalf of the H.E.L.L.O. Homeless Youth Activism Group, we are proud to present to you the City of Chicago Task Force on Homeless Youth's Recommendations, "Giving Hope".

You met with members of H.E.L.L.O. in January 2010 to discuss ways the City of Chicago can better serve homeless youth. After that meeting, you formed the City of Chicago Task Force on Homeless Youth. The Task Force met quarterly for the past year. Based on H.E.L.L.O.'s recommendations, five (5) working groups were formed. Homeless and formerly homeless youth participated in each working group and contributed substantially to the recommendations.

The H.E.L.L.O. Youth Activism Group agrees with and endorses the Task Force Recommendations with one exception. The Housing and Shelter Working Group has recommended the City double housing and shelter capacity for homeless youth by 2016. We feel this recommendation is not nearly ambitious enough. There are currently thousands of homeless youth in Chicago who are unable to access youth specific housing and shelter due to a severe lack of resources. Adding an additional 189 beds over the next five years will do little to solve the problem of youth homelessness. Therefore, the H.E.L.L.O. Youth Activim Group recommends the City triple as oppose to double the youth shelter and housing capacity and do so within three years.

We thank you again for forming the Task Force and giving issues affecting homeless youth the voice and attention they deserve. We hope you will strongly consider the following recommendations and include them in any transition plan as you leave office.

Warm Regards,

H.E.L.L.O. Youth Leaders

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Social Empowerment

Create Opportunities for Fiscal Independence

- Continue to engage youth by providing services that lead to quality jobs and careers.
- Innovate the employment landscape through business partners and education services.
- Ensure resources are available for youth to physically access/attend services.

Engage Homeless Youth

- Create solutions through drop in center services and educational partners.
- Ensure resources are available for youth to physically access/attend services.

Sustainability

Facilitate Growth

- Continue to engage youth by providing services that lead to educational achievement.
- Keep youth safe by ensuring drop in services and housing programs are sustainable.
- Ensure resources are available for youth to physically access/attend services.

Survival Mode

Transition Homeless Youth to Safer Housing

- Continue to engage youth by providing a secure place to live.
- Create solutions through improved housing and shelter strategies and services.
- Ensure resources are available for youth to physically access/attend services.

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Introduction

Youth Homelessness in Chicago

Homeless youth are defined in this report as unaccompanied young people ages 14-25 that do not have a safe, stable place to live. Youth often leave home or are forced out due to physical and sexual abuse, substance abuse by a parent, and long-term family economic problems. Pregnant and parenting teens, LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer) youth, and current and former wards are disproportionately represented in the homeless youth population. During the 2009-2010 school year, the Chicago Public Schools identified 3,682 unaccompanied homeless youth in school. Based on CPS data, data from shelters, and data from other research on homelessness, Chicago Coalition for the Homeless has developed a methodology to estimate total numbers of homeless youth, children, and adults each year including those living doubled up. According to this estimate, there were a total of 11,471 homeless youth ages 18-21 in Chicago during the 09-10 school year. This includes youth who were not in school or were not identified by the schools. Shelter and housing programs in Chicago do not come close to meeting the need for housing for young people. A survey conducted for this report found that the eight programs providing shelter and housing to homeless youth turned away 4,775 requests for housing from youth in a year. When youth are not able to access shelter they are extremely vulnerable to physical and sexual victimization on the streets.

Background on the City of Chicago Task Force on Homeless Youth

The City of Chicago Task Force on Homeless Youth is a network of city and state agency officials, youth providers and advocates, and homeless youth working to address the issue of youth homelessness in Chicago. The group was developed through the advocacy of the H.E.L.L.O. youth activism group.

H.E.L.L.O. stands for Homeless Experts Living Life's Obstacles and is composed of homeless and formerly homeless youth and co-sponsored by The Night Ministry, Chicago Coalition for the Homeless ("CCH"), and Lakeview Action Coalition. The group is rooted in community organizing and positive youth development principles. The youth educate the public, policy-makers and the media about issues affecting homeless and unaccompanied youth while learning to communicate effectively and non-violently. The group is very diverse, consisting of youth of color, pregnant and parenting teens, and LGBTQ youth.

Every year, H.E.L.L.O. hosts a homeless youth “art show and speak out”, where youth are invited to submit spoken word and visual arts pieces. Over 200 members of the community attend the show each year. In November of 2009, Mayor Daley attended the Art Show. He spoke briefly and promised the youth in attendance he would meet with them to discuss how the city can better serve homeless youth.

In January 2010, 25 members of the H.E.L.L.O. Group had a private meeting with Mayor Daley and other city officials. The youth shared their stories and gave a presentation on different ways the city can improve services for homeless youth. They identified five different areas in which the city could improve services for homeless youth: transportation, education, jobs, increased shelter beds, and improved drop-in services.

The Mayor also committed to the creation of a city-wide homeless youth task force. The Department of Family and Support Services hosted the task force. Out of the task force, five work groups were developed to work on the specific issues identified by the youth. Each work group met over several months, researched their area of concern, collected information and developed recommendations that the City of Chicago could use to guide a citywide effort to first improve the plight of homelessness experienced by youth and eventually eradicate this problem. Homeless youth were represented on each workgroup and were given a chance to react to the recommendations. Finally, the task force as a whole approved the recommendations. This report represents the recommendations of the city-wide youth task force.

“Homelessness is like being in a dark cave with a small distant light. You want to go toward the light, but you never know if it is just a small crack or a large opening. I feel like this Task Force has been a large opening.”

- Conrad, homeless youth

Summary of Recommendations

1) Housing and Shelter Capacity Work Group

Chicago's homeless youth identified housing as their number one need. Youth reported a critical need for housing and shelter that exclusively serve youth and prevent the safety issues experienced in adult shelters. They also wanted programs that reflect understanding of youth issues (i.e. family situations, sexual orientation, educational needs, employment support, effects of trauma), and the availability of youth shelters in more areas of the city. Short and long term recommendations include:

- Designate an organization to take a lead role in system integration
- Develop a data sharing process
- Double youth housing capacity by 2016
- Add Youth Low-Threshold shelter as a program model, make funding permanent, and add beds
- Create an initiative to expand youth housing that includes corporate partnerships, donated foreclosed properties and property rehabilitation

2) Education Working Group

Homeless youth face many challenges while pursuing their educational goals. The emotional stress associated with housing instability cause many youth to struggle academically or drop out of school all together. Without a quality education, homeless youth will be unlikely to break the cycle of poverty and become self-sustaining adults. The following recommendations were designed to break down the major barriers to educational achievement for homeless youth.

Short and long term recommendations include:

- Restore and Enhance staff at CPS that support homeless students in school
- Add Homeless Liaisons in City Colleges
- Create a pilot with CPS to open some schools early so youth can shower
- Create housing for homeless youth enrolled in City Colleges
- Create a work-study and/or subsidized internship program for CPS students
- Create a Mentoring Program and Educational Advisor for homeless youth looking to go to college

3) Youth Employment Work Group

Employing homeless youth is necessary in order to create sustainable opportunities for youth to move out of survival mode and achieve education and career goals, while contributing to a vibrant, ever-growing employment landscape. Short and long term recommendations include:

- Create a youth employment quality control council to create a holistic approach to moving youth to employment
- Create a professional public relations campaign to engage the community of Chicago in hiring youth
- Hold regular job fairs
- Create a comprehensive transitional jobs model to move youth to quality employment
- Recognize employer partnerships that produce results through mayoral events
- Evaluate outcomes of GED and City Colleges programs

4) Transportation Working Group

Transportation is vital to success in America. For homeless youth to attend school, obtain employment and access other services, they need to be mobile. In Chicago, we are fortunate to have an extensive public transportation system. Affordable access to that system is crucial to their success. Additionally, our youth need to be able to obtain drivers' licenses. For most affluent youth, this is almost automatic. For homeless youth, this can be an almost insurmountable obstacle. Short and long term recommendations include:

- Create a reduced fare monthly CTA pass for homeless youth
- Create a scholarship fund for homeless youth to attend driving school

5) Drop-In Services Work Group

Drop-in programs substantially reduce the risks that homeless youth experience daily. Such programs provide the critical space needed to engage youth of Chicago who are living on the street and help youth build trust with adults. They provide an important first step towards more stable living situations. Short and long term recommendations include:

- Host a conference/forum on the state of homeless youth drop-in services in Chicago
- Create a map and calendar of drop-in resources in Chicago
- Add drop-in centers as youth-specific 311 pick-up sites to bring youth to overnight shelters
- Formalize a training and technical assistance network for drop-in program staff
- Create collaborations with outreach programs and housing programs serving homeless youth
- Add new drop-in programs

Housing and Shelter Capacity Work Group Recommendations

Overview

Housing was identified by Chicago's homeless youth as their number one need. It is nearly impossible to gain employment, education, and ultimately, economic independence without a safe, stable place to call home. The Housing and Shelter Capacity Work Group was made up of youth experts who are currently or formerly homeless in Chicago, as well as service providers and advocates.

Youth reported a critical need for housing and shelters that exclusively serve youth. Some feedback included:

- Safety issues in adult shelters
- Lack of understanding of youth issues such as family situation, sexual orientation, educational needs, and employment support
- Lack of facilities in areas frequented by homeless youth

The goal of the Housing and Shelter Capacity Work Group was to look at the system capacity and gaps and to develop recommendations for both long- and short-term changes that address the unique needs of our youth.

System Capacity and Gaps

As the first step in assessing system capacity and service gaps, we determined that we needed to survey existing youth providers. Chicago Coalition for the Homeless conducted the survey process. Additionally, the work group reviewed some existing capacity information provided by CCH. A snapshot of current capacity shows:

There are 189 youth beds in Chicago with 8 agencies providing housing exclusively for youth. Of those beds, 28 are available on an emergency basis and the rest are long-term programs with waiting lists. Those same 28 beds are the only ones available to minors, although some long-term programs will accept minors with parental consent. The average annual cost to provide supportive housing to a homeless youth in Chicago is approximately \$16,700/year (This is consistent even when the youth is pregnant and/or parenting). The system is made up of a mix of shelter beds (for stays of up to 180 days) and transitional housing beds (up to 2 years). All programs offer case management services.

There is a broad array of support services offered including:

- o Mental Health Counseling or Referrals
- o Life Skills
- o Career Readiness
- o Educational Assistance
- o Parenting Skills
- o Advocacy
- o Street Outreach
- o Drop-in Services
- o Transportation Assistance
- o Child Care Assistance

The survey asked youth providers to share monthly and annual turn-away numbers, which likely include some duplication, but were the best tool available during the survey period. The eight providers reported **turning away 4,775** youth requests for housing because of lack of bed space. In addition, they reported that **706 youth of those youth were under the age of 18**, many of those with children of their own.

The H.E.L.L.O. youth also expressed a concern that the system did not offer a “low threshold” shelter that would provide a safe place for youth to sleep and would meet the youth where they are (reducing restrictions such as curfews, etc.). DFSS has since funded a seasonal pilot low threshold shelter on the north side during the work of the group.

Housing and Shelter Capacity Work Group Recommendations

Short-Term Recommendations	Description of Project	Need(s) Addressed	Cost(s)	Potential Funding Sources	Partners	City's Role
Develop a "Master Plan" to expand youth housing/shelter capacity. <i>(Implementation in 2011-2012)</i>	DFSS should take a lead role in system integration--bringing various city, state and federal agencies and service providers together to create a "Master Plan" to expand capacity and eliminate duplication. This will also allow the system to benefit from economy of scale.	Homeless youth housing capacity	\$0	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ DFSS ❖ Service Providers ❖ IDHS ❖ DCFS ❖ HUD ❖ DHHS ❖ IHDA 	Coordinator
Develop a data-sharing system that is public and transparent. <i>(Implementation in 2011)</i>	DFSS data from monthly turn away reports, housing calls to 311, etc. should be made accessible and transparent to the public to increase awareness and help secure resources.	Access to information to produce better results.	\$0	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ DFSS ❖ Service Providers 	Disseminate information

Housing and Shelter Capacity Work Group Recommendations Continued

Long-Term Recommendations	Description of Project	Need(s) Addressed	Cost(s)	Potential Funding Sources	Partners	City's Role
Double youth housing and shelter capacity <i>(Implementation by 2016).</i>	Adopt a “zero tolerance” policy for youth homelessness, meaning the city should not accept any youth living on the streets. Increase service funding over the next five years that would allow the system to serve twice as many youth by 2016.	Homeless youth housing capacity	Based on the current average annualized cost per bed of \$76,600 for emergency and \$30,800 for transitional, total cost to double capacity would be approximately \$6,900,000 per year and would result in twice as many beds by 2016.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CDBG • CSBG • DHHS • HUD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ DFSS ❖ Youth Service Providers ❖ IDHS 	Adopt policy; budget funds; RFP process.
Expand homeless youth housing/shelter system to include low threshold shelter model and provide funding for model. <i>(Implementation by January 2012)</i>	Building on data from the “Low-Threshold Shelter Pilot”, expand Chicago’s program model to include youth low-threshold and include funding in Chicago’s budget for continuation of pilot and expansion to new locations.	Homeless youth housing capacity	Based on the current pilot costs, a shelter operating for 12 months would cost approximately \$18,000 per bed. Evaluation of the pilot is necessary to determine need and associated costs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CDBG • Skyway • Parking meters • HUD 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Youth Service Providers ❖ DFSS ❖ IDHS 	Conduct evaluation of The Crib with The Night Ministry; adopt model; budget funds; RFP process for expansion.
Expand housing for homeless youth, including partially emancipated minors through public/private collaboration <i>(Implementation by 2012)</i>	Create an initiative through a partnership with large banks such as JP Morgan Chase (REO Community Revitalization Program) and the National Community Stabilization Trust to acquire donated foreclosed properties. Property rehab could be funded through the Neighborhood Stabilization Program. This initiative should include transitional housing for partially emancipated minors, filling a critical gap in the system.	Homeless youth housing capacity	Estimate for rehab cost that would expand system by 189 beds is \$3.2M (assumes donated property and existing funding streams such as NSP, HOME, and tax credits). This initiative would not result in additional costs to the City, but rather a dedication of existing resources to serve homeless youth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSP • HOME • Tax credits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Chicago Dept. of Housing and Economic Development ❖ DFSS ❖ IHDA 	Create partnership (2011); select developer and service provider (2011-2012); rehab units required to meet 38 beds/year.

Education Work Group Recommendations

Homeless youth face a myriad of challenges while trying to achieve their educational goals. Many drop out of high school and never have the opportunity to obtain a diploma or advance to college. Fifty percent (50%) of homeless youth age 16 or older reported having dropped out of school, having been expelled, or having been suspended¹. The instability in their personal lives makes it incredibly difficult for homeless youth to stay on track academically. Without a proper education, homeless youth in Chicago will struggle to break the cycle of homelessness and poverty.

Chicago Public Schools' Students in Temporary Living Situations Program (STLS) provides educational support to homeless students enrolled in CPS schools. Last year (2009-2010 school year) there were 15,027 homeless students enrolled in CPS schools, a 20% increase from the year before. Of those homeless students, 3,682 were unaccompanied, or living without a parent or guardian. While the number of homeless students is expected to continue climbing, critical support and resources have been cut back. Homeless students present a unique set of needs. During the Education Work Group meetings, homeless and formerly homeless youth identified numerous barriers they encounter while striving to attain their educational goals. These barriers include housing instability, difficulty with attendance, lack of support and resources from school, inability to meet their basic needs, balancing school and employment, among others. The following recommendations were designed with homeless students, service providers, and CPS and City College staff to break down those barriers.

¹ **National Runaway Switchboard Statistics on Runaways from Peer-reviewed Journals and Federal Studies**, "Homeless and Runaway Youth Receiving Services at Federally Funded Shelters. *United States General Accounting Office*. GAO/HRD-90-45".

Education Work Group Recommendations

Short-Term Recommendations	Description of Project	Need(s) Addressed	Cost(s)	Potential Funding Sources	Potential Partners	City's Role
Restore and enhance CPS Students in Temporary Living Situations Program (STLS) staff <i>(Implementation in 2011)</i>	CPS will restore the positions cut from the STLS Program, including two consultants, one administrator, one manager and seven VISTA volunteers. CPS will also expand the number of youth workers assisting homeless youth in high schools (there are currently 4 youth workers).	The STLS Program is critical to meeting the educational needs of homeless children and youth. The numbers of homeless students increased significantly over the past few years to a record high of 15,027 in 2010. The STLS staff provides training, support and resources to approx. 660 CPS schools.	\$200,000 (annually) *may vary depending on consultant hours.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Title I Funds • McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ CPS ❖ Chicago Coalition for the Homeless ❖ City of Chicago 	Hiring staff
Create a system of homeless liaisons in the City Colleges and collect data on the number of unaccompanied homeless youth enrolled in City Colleges <i>(Implementation in 2011)</i>	Each City College will identify and train an appropriate staff person to act as a liaison for homeless students enrolling in and attending the college. A 'best practices' guide will be created and disseminated to liaisons. Each liaison will act as the key contact person for homeless students and assist the student in accessing resources. The City Colleges will also track the number of unaccompanied homeless students enrolled each year. Data will include graduation/completion rates.	Instability and lack of support often lead to struggles in school and poor academic performance for homeless students. Having a point person at each college will ensure homeless youth are receiving the specialized services they need. Collecting data on the number of homeless students in the City College system will aid in understanding the size and demographics of the population and how both CPS and the City Colleges can better serve homeless students.	\$5,000 (estimate) *does not include staff time	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ CPS ❖ City Colleges ❖ DFSS ❖ Chicago Coalition for the Homeless 	Facilitate and ensure execution
"Early Arrival" Pilot Project <i>(Implementation in 2011)</i>	Four CPS high schools with high homeless populations will open early each day to allow students to use shower and bathroom facilities to take care of hygiene needs prior to the start of school. Hygiene products will be acquired through donations. The pilot will run for one semester prior to evaluation.	Homeless students in inadequate living arrangements often do not have the opportunity to take care of their hygiene needs on a daily basis.	\$3,000 (per school per semester) *cost will vary depending on donations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Title I Funds • In-kind donations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ CPS, STLS Program 	Facilitate execution; assist acquiring in-kind donations.

Education Working Group Recommendations Continued

Short-Term Recommendations	Description of Project	Need(s) Addressed	Cost(s)	Potential Funding Sources	Potential Partners	City's Role
City Colleges should become a SNAP Employment and Training Provider for the State of Illinois	Homeless students at the City Colleges could spend time in class and attending tutoring and those hours would count towards and employment and training program qualifying them for SNAP (food stamp) benefits.	Currently full-time students at city colleges cannot receive SNAP benefits (food stamps). By making this change, they would not lose SNAP benefits when they become full-time students.	\$0	N/A	❖ City Colleges ❖ IDHS	Advocate with the City Colleges and IDHS to put in place process to make this happen.

Education Working Group Recommendations Continued

Long-Term Recommendations	Description of Project	Need(s) Addressed	Cost(s)	Potential Funding Sources	Potential Partners	City's Role
<p>Independent housing program for unaccompanied homeless youth enrolled in City Colleges <i>(Implementation by 2013)</i></p>	<p>The housing program will be contained in a single building comprised of 8-10 individual units and common space. A service provider will operate the program. The program will function similar to a college dorm with a low level of social services. The program will have the capacity to serve 8-10 youth at a time.</p>	<p>Unaccompanied homeless youth enrolled in City Colleges do not have the same stable and low-cost housing options as other students. Many remain homeless while in school and struggle academically due to their housing instability.</p>	<p>\$800,000-\$1,000,000 (estimate based on costs of similar projects) Each additional year: \$200,000</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ TIF ❖ NSP ❖ CHA subsidies ❖ Donated, bank-owned property ❖ Private funding ❖ Student financial aid 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Chicago, Dept. of Housing and Economic Development • DFSS • UCAN • A Safe Haven Foundation 	<p>Assist provider in obtaining property and funding for rehab, management and operation.</p>
<p>Work-study and subsidized internship/job program in CPS high schools <i>(Implementation by 2012)</i></p>	<p>The work-study program will allow CPS juniors and seniors to work part-time while receiving an hourly wage or stipend and earning credit toward graduation. Appropriate employers will be recruited and screened by program staff. The program will prioritize homeless and other at-risk youth.</p>	<p>Many unaccompanied homeless youth seek employment rather than completing high school because they need to find ways to meet their basic needs. This program would create strong incentives for staying in school.</p>	<p>\$250,000 (estimate- more research necessary to determine annual costs)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Corporate sponsorship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chicago Public Schools • Alternative Schools Network • DFSS • Youth Ready Chicago 	<p>Provide funding and resources to expand youth summer jobs program to year-round; assist in recruiting employers.</p>
<p>Mentoring program and educational advisor for homeless youth <i>(Implementation by 2012)</i></p>	<p>Program will connect homeless youth in school with a college-educated mentor who will support the youth while they are in school. The program will be managed by an educational counselor/advisor with expertise in post-secondary education and financial aid.</p>	<p>Mentors and the advisor will provide homeless youth with the support and guidance needed to make smart decisions about their education.</p>	<p>\$150,000 (estimate- more research necessary on annual cost of program)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ City corporate funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chicago Hopes • CPS • City Colleges • Chicago Youth Centers 	<p>Funding and implementation</p>

Youth Employment Work Group Recommendations

Employing homeless youth is necessary in order to create sustainable opportunities for youth to move out of survival mode and to achieve educational and career goals, while contributing to a vibrant, ever-growing employment landscape. The Youth Employment Work Group felt it was important for all stakeholders involved to look at the issues through the lenses of a youth and an employer. We need to speak each other's language and create a culture of achievement and accountability. There must be a healthy mix of feedback and involvement from practitioners, employers, youth, and community leaders.

Youth Employment Work Group Recommendations

Short-Term Recommendations	Description of Project	Need(s) Addressed	Cost(s)	Potential Funding Sources	Potential Partners	City's Role
Create a Youth Employment Quality Council <i>(Implementation in 2011)</i>	Create a Quality Council made up of local businesses, service providers and city personnel to oversee all youth job development programming. The Quality Council would design a holistic approach, including systems and processes, to move youth from unemployment to quality permanent employment. The council would call on a core group of employers to be founding partners (i.e. Dominick's, Bank of America, Whole Foods).	<p>Access to quality jobs with quality employers.</p> <p>Community engagement in youth issues.</p> <p>Greater interest in the needs of youth- both personal and professional.</p>	Nominal	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Local employers ❖ Chicago Chamber of Commerce ❖ Youth providers 	Recruit employers and coordinate council activities
Create a public education campaign <i>(Implementation in 2011)</i>	<p>Develop a substantive campaign to engage the community (business, community leaders, etc.). Campaign will educate the community on current and potential issues involving youth, violence and poverty and the importance of meeting the needs of youth in both the short and long term.</p> <p>The campaign will demonstrate what will happen to the employment landscape if current unemployment trends continue to rise within the youth demographic.</p>	<p>Access to quality jobs with quality employers.</p> <p>Engaging community in meeting the needs of youth.</p> <p>Greater understanding of problems of youth poverty and violence.</p> <p>Addresses the rise in youth unemployment rates and the "under-employed" landscape for employers.</p>	\$30,000 – print materials, consultant time, staff support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Corporate dollars 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Youth providers 	Lead the campaign design and coordinate efforts with all stakeholders.
Have DFSS Career Development Centers host regular career fairs and employer-engaged events <i>(Implementation in 2011)</i>	Create regular job fairs for youth, supported and promoted by area employers and practitioners.	<p>Access to quality jobs.</p> <p>Internship site support.</p> <p>Youth job readiness.</p> <p>Communicates the culture of business to youth.</p>	N/A	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Local employers 	Add to current Career Development Center's scope.

Youth Employment Work Group Recommendations Continued

Long-Term Recommendations	Description of Project	Need(s) Addressed	Cost(s)	Potential Funding Sources	Potential Partners	City's Role
Create long-term job model moving youth toward quality employment <i>(Implementation by 2013)</i>	The comprehensive transitional job model will include outcomes such as a high school diploma/GED achievement and permanent job placement. The program will include specialized skill training and opportunities for permanent employment. The model will be inclusive of non-profits, City and private sector support.	Access to quality jobs Meeting youth's educational needs Greater achievement of educational goals	\$35,000 (Admin. Costs) \$468,000 for wages for 100 youth City College costs (Paid via WIA funds)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WIA • CDBG 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ City Colleges ❖ Employers ❖ Service providers ❖ CPS ❖ Carpenter, Electrical, Plumbing unions 	Coordinate service plan and provide training and support to service providers and employers.
Ongoing employer recognition through special events <i>(Implementation by 2013)</i>	City will recognize meaningful employer partnerships that produce results. Performance results will be shared at bi-annual Mayoral events including youth, employers, and Chambers of Commerce.	The recognition will act as an incentive for employers to invest in youth and the community through human capital, internships and job placement.	Nominal (\$5000)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City corporate dollars 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Chamber of Commerce 	Measure results; communicate outcomes; host events.
Measure outcomes of GED and City College Programs <i>(Implementation by 2013)</i>	To ensure youth advance in careers, it is important to openly measure success rates of government funded GED programs, City College graduation rates, and other specialized training programs funded through government sources.	Data and statistics will highlight the strengths and weaknesses of educational programming.	\$50,000+	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City corporate dollars 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ CompTIA Educational Foundation 	Purchase required software and create reporting guidelines; manage information input.

Transportation Work Group Recommendations

Transportation is vital to success in America. For homeless youth to attend school, obtain employment and access other services, they need to be mobile. In Chicago, we are fortunate to have an extensive public transportation system. Affordable access to that system is crucial to their success.

Additionally, our youth need to be able to obtain drivers' licenses. For most affluent youth, this is almost automatic. For homeless youth, this can be an almost insurmountable obstacle. They do not own automobiles, do not have access to a family vehicle, may have had to drop out of a regular high school due to homelessness and no longer have access to driver's education classes. Employment opportunities abound that pay relatively well and are "entry" level where the requirement is just a driver's license. Opportunities such as delivery drivers, car porters at auto dealerships, oil change jockeys, etc. are beyond their reach. Youth without a driver's license are locked out simply due to lack of access to driver's education and a vehicle to take the test.

Addressing these concerns will assist our youth in becoming successful.

Transportation Work Group Recommendations

Short-Term Recommendation	Description of Project	Need(s) Addressed	Cost(s)	Potential Funding Sources	Potential Partners	City's Role
Youth CTA Pass <i>(Implementation by June 2011)</i>	CTA will make available to identified agencies a 30-day Youth Connect pass at the reduced fare of \$35 per month. There will be zero cost to the City.	Transportation	\$0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Homeless service agencies will purchase the pass. CTA grants reduced fare. 	❖ CTA	Help maintain connection between providers and CTA
Long-Term Recommendation	Description of Project	Need(s) Addressed	Cost(s)	Potential Funding Sources	Potential Partners	City's Role
Driving School Scholarship <i>(Implementation by 2013)</i>	City will fund a scholarship for homeless youth to attend driving school and use driving school vehicles to take the driving test. Twenty (20) youth would be eligible for the scholarship each year at the rate of \$420 per student. A lower rate may be available through partner driving schools.	Transportation and employment qualification	\$8,400 (\$420 per student)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City corporate dollars 	❖ Driving Schools	Approve funding for scholarship

Drop-In Work Group Recommendations

The Drop-In Services Work Group is comprised of youth workers, young people, organizers, and social service administrators with substantial experience in meeting the needs of young people experiencing homelessness and housing instability. We recognize that drop-in programs substantially reduce the risks that homeless young people experience each day. We value drop-in programs as a critical space to engage young people most impacted by both homelessness and institutional violence: LGBTQ youth, pregnant and parenting youth, youth of color, youth impacted by the criminal legal system, youth impacted by the sex trade and street economies, drug-using youth, HIV+ youth, DCFS-impacted youth, youth with mental health issues, youth with disabilities, and gang-impacted youth. Drop-in programs are important spaces to build long-term relationships and can be a critical public health strategy (HIV prevention and linkages to care, violence prevention, crisis support/safety planning) and can emphasize community resilience (reduce depression, provide opportunities for healing and identity integration). Anecdotally, it is youth from these communities who experience the most discrimination attempting to access health care, social services, and housing programs.

Drop-in services, or spaces that integrate the provision of basic needs with a combination of case management, counseling, educational/vocational services, youth development and leadership opportunities, health services, and/or HIV/STD testing, have provided thousands of young people across Chicago with opportunities to reduce their risks and improve their health. Drop-in programs, such as the Broadway Youth Center and Casa Corazon, demonstrate the power and cost-effectiveness of organizational collaboration, resource sharing, holistic approaches to homeless intervention and prevention. Since July 1, 2010, the Broadway Youth Center has worked with 412 different young people through our drop-in program for youth experiencing homelessness and housing instability. In any given month, we average about 700 contacts. More than 150 of these young people are engaged in individualized, youth-led case management. Like many drop-in programs, we serve as a critical, long-term case management option when emergency housing and transitional living programs aren't an option. Through long-term relationship building within drop-in settings, young people are more likely to access or engage in services that require increased disclosure—like case management, educational/vocational services, or counseling; or services that may have institutionally harmed them in the past—like medical services or HIV/STD testing.

According to a 2008 study, *Predictors of Drop-in Center Attendance among Homeless Adolescents*, “even though evaluations of the impact of drop-in centers are sparse, one study showed that youth who accessed substance abuse, mental health, and case management services through a drop-in center had significant improvements in mental health and housing stability, and reduced substance abuse up to one year post-baseline”. Most importantly, however, the “drop-in centers afford opportunities to establish trusting relationships with drop-in staff, which can be an important first step towards intervening in the homeless trajectory.” Alongside the following recommendations, we urge Chicago key stakeholders to create systems to document best practices and create longitudinal and qualitative studies that convey the struggles and successes of drop-in and outreach programs targeting homeless and street-based youth.

Drop-In Services Work Group Recommendations

Short-Term Recommendations	Description of Project	Need(s) Addressed	Cost(s)	Potential Funding Sources	Potential Partners	City's Role
Host a Forum: The State of Youth Drop-In Services Across Chicago <i>(Implementation in 2011)</i>	Homeless youth service providers and city officials will collectively host a daylong conference to discuss the state of drop-in services and integrative models of preventing youth homelessness.	Opportunity to collectively share information about existing resources, forge new and strengthen existing collaborations and share best practices. The forum will also serve as a springboard for future conversations about expanding the capacity of drop-in programs and data collection efforts.	\$1000	Chicago Community Trust Donor's forum Technical Assistance Funds	❖ Youth providers ❖ City of Chicago ❖ Chicago Alliance to End Homelessness	Provide meeting space; participation in planning and hosting forum.
Create a Resource and Services Map <i>(Implementation in 2011)</i>	We recommend the creation of a map and calendar of Chicago's drop-in resources and services to highlight both gaps and potential opportunities for collaboration.	This map and resource guide will 1) identify gaps and potential opportunities for collaboration and 2) educate youth, service providers and city officials about existing resources and their geographic locations.	\$0	N/A	❖ Youth service providers ❖ Chicago Coalition for the Homeless ❖ DFSS ❖ DCFS	City will disseminate this information to networks
Youth-Specific 311 Pick-Up Sites <i>(Implementation in 2011)</i>	DFSS and youth providers will collaborate to add three (3) youth drop-in programs (North, South, West) to the list of pick-up sites for youth 18-24 experiencing homelessness. If possible, the DFSS van would offer 2-3 available options for shelter.	The change will 1) promote linkages from youth drop-in programs to adult emergency housing opportunities, 2) minimize the barriers homeless youth often experience when attempting to access DFSS assistance through a hospital or law enforcement setting.	\$0	N/A	❖ Youth service providers ❖ DFSS ❖ DCFS ❖ Chicago Safe Place	City will implement and communicate changes to 311 staff; create linkages with Chicago Safe Place for transit of youth 18 and under.

Drop-In Services Work Group Recommendations Continued

Long-Term Recommendations	Description of Project	Need(s) Addressed	Cost(s)	Potential Funding Sources	Potential Partners	City's Role
Create Trainings and Technical Assistance Network <i>(Implementation in 2012)</i>	The network will engage drop-in workers, case managers, youth and administrators in training and technical assistance. The network's efforts will inform the City's prioritization of homeless youth issues and prevention of youth homelessness. The network will be housed within a non-profit and organized by one (1) staff person, volunteers and interns.	The network will assist in reducing institutional harms and increasing access to services for young people least likely to engage in traditional social service models. The network will also enhance organizational capacities through staff development, creation of 'best practices' and the sharing of innovative strategies and models.	\$50,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Youth providers ❖ Chicago Alliance to End Homelessness ❖ Chicago Coalition for the Homeless ❖ DCFS 	Funding opportunities
Outreach, Drop-In, and Housing Collaboration <i>(Implementation in 2011)</i>	Increase the capacity of drop-in programs through collaborations with outreach and housing programs serving homeless youth with the goal of minimizing duplication of services and creating financial incentives for partnerships and collaboration. A full-time coordinator would create a comprehensive outreach calendar that staggers resources.	The collaboration will consolidate the responsibilities and effectiveness of programs in order to meet the needs of as many young people as possible. The collaboration will create 'best practice' standards while ensuring that community-based efforts can adapt to the changing needs of youth in their communities.	\$50,000-\$80,000 annually (if paired with Tech. Assistance Network) \$30-\$50,000 annually	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private funding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Youth providers 	Provide meeting space and participate in collaboration; assist with funding.
Create New Drop-In Programs and Expand Existing Drop-In and Outreach Programs <i>(Implementation by 2016)</i>	Chicago will expand existing drop-in programs for homeless youth and create five (5) new youth drop-in programs (represented across each region of the City). Expansion of existing programs will allow for additional resources to expand service hours and provide additional supplies and staff.	Expansion of drop-in programming will increase the capacity of existing programs to meeting the needs of homeless youth and prevent youth homelessness. New programs throughout the City will allow more youth to access drop-in services.	\$1.5-1.75M	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City of Chicago 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ DFSS ❖ Youth providers 	City will assist with funding.

Conclusion

The City of Chicago Task Force on Homeless Youth respectfully submits these recommendations to Mayor Daley. We hope they can be presented to incoming Mayor Emanuel during the transition process to serve as a road map for how the City of Chicago can partner with other city and state entities and non-profits to address youth homelessness in Chicago. We also advocate that Mayor Emanuel support the continuation of the Task Force in order to work on implementation of the recommendations.

City of Chicago Task Force on Homeless Youth Report Endorsers

Chicago Alliance to End Homelessness
Chicago Coalition for Homeless
Chicago Transit Authority
City Colleges of Chicago
Counseling Center of Lake View
Diversified Behavioral Counseling Council
Heartland Alliance for Human Needs and Human Rights
H.E.L.L.O. (Homeless Experts Living Life's Obstacles)
Howard Brown Health Center-Broadway Youth Center
Illinois Department of Children & Family Services
La Casa Norte
Lakeview Action Coalition
New Moms, Inc.
Streetwise
The Night Ministry
Teen Living Programs
Unity Parenting & Counseling
UCAN, (LGBTQ Host Home Program)
Youth Network Council