



Youth Experiencing Homelessness Program

Claire Seguin, Interim Director
Self-Sufficiency Programs

January 31, 2023

What's at stake: The safety and well-being of Oregon's young people

Every young person deserves safe, stable housing.

And yet, every night in Oregon, thousands of unaccompanied young people go to sleep in tents, abandoned buildings, makeshift shelters, or on the couches of friends or strangers – all without the security of a home or family.



Oregon Youth Homelessness: By the numbers

8,300

homeless young people in
need of safe housing and
services every year*

5th

highest number of
Unaccompanied Homeless
Youth (UHY) across U.S.**

3rd

highest number of UHY
without shelter across
U.S.**

* Corporation for Supporting Housing Youth Housing Needs Assessment

** U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development 2020 Annual Homelessness Assessment Report

Challenges with counting youth

- Youth don't always see themselves as “homeless” or experiencing homelessness.
- Youth can feel uncomfortable or unsafe in even coming forward for assistance.
- Youth may feel safer staying “off the radar.”
- Limiting definitions of homelessness can create confusion and undercounts are guaranteed.
- Current data sources on youth homelessness are affected by outside factors.



Why do youth experience homelessness?

- Black, Indigenous and youth of color and youth identifying as LGBTQIA2S+ are more likely to experience homelessness.*⁰
- Factors contributing to youth homelessness include family conflict or an unsafe home life, family economic hardship, aging out of the foster care system without supports in place, failing to complete high school, and being a pregnant or parenting youth.**
- In some parts of Oregon, especially rural and coastal areas, the only option may be an adult shelter that can't support the unique needs of young people. Youth may choose instead to live on the street or in other unsafe situations rather than stay at an adult shelter.***

** Youth of Color Disproportionately Impacted by Housing Instability*

*** Voices of Youth Count: National Estimates Report*

**** Better Off in a Shelter? A Year of Homelessness & Housing among Status Immigrant, Non-Status Migrant, & Canadian-Born Families*

⁰ LGBTQ Young Adults Experience Homelessness at More than Twice the Rate of Peers

Gaps in the system

- The adult homelessness system was not designed with youth in mind
- Young people face unique housing challenges, having limited or no credit history, fewer references, and age bias among landlords who see them as unreliable.*
- Other gaps specific to Oregon include:
 - Minimal intentional financial investment in youth-specific homelessness programming
 - Lack of services in rural areas
 - Limited housing opportunities and programs specifically prioritized for young people

**Coming of Age: Reimagining the Response to Youth Homelessness in Canada*



Preventing adult homelessness

- A system moving towards ending youth homelessness includes **preventing** youth from entering homelessness to begin with, as well as having **Crisis Services and Housing** (such as family supports and youth shelter) and **Long-Term Housing Services and Housing** (such as Workforce Development, and youth-specific housing options) that are available.
- **Youth** experiencing homelessness become **adults** experiencing homelessness with a lack of supports and opportunities, with fewer opportunities to reach their full potential.*

* *Voices of Youth Count: National Estimates Report*



YEHP Overview

Funding provided by General Fund and Federal Social Services Block Grant

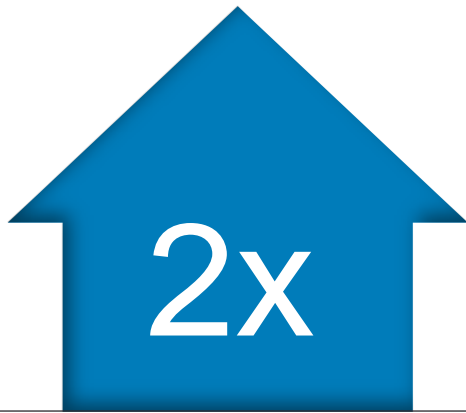
YEHP administers funding to local organizations

Organizations provide services and programming for youth

YEHP Legislative funding

- **Ongoing funding per biennium**
 - \$2.664 million - General Fund
 - \$600,000 - Federal Social Services Block Grant
- **New short-term investments**
 - \$1 million - Oregon Legislative Emergency Board (2021)
 - \$3.6 million - House Bill 2544 (2021)
 - \$472,500 - House Bill 4013 (2022)
 - \$9 million - OHCS Interagency Agreement (2022)

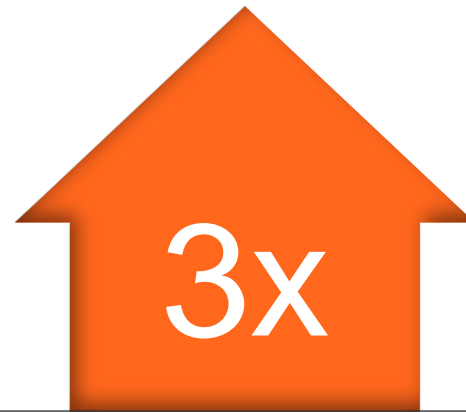
Accomplishments: Ongoing and anticipated results



Service Locations
increased from 12 to
26 counties, better
serving rural areas



Grants & Contracts
increased from 24 to
55, nearly doubling
funding opportunities



YEHP Providers
increased from 13
to 34, almost tripling
program presence



- Host Home Project
- Increased Transitional Living Program investment
- Youth-specific affordable housing units

*Updated 1.25.23



The seal of the State of Oregon is a large, circular emblem in the background. It features an eagle with wings spread at the top, a ship on the water in the middle, a plow and a sheaf of wheat at the bottom, and a banner that reads "THE UNION". The words "STATE OF OREGON" are written around the top inner edge, and "1859" is at the bottom. The entire seal is rendered in a light blue color against a darker blue background.

Thank you

Measuring outcomes

- Moving toward outcome-focused data
- Long-term data reporting from Homelessness Management Information System (HMIS)
- Short-term evaluation of host homes projects and direct cash transfer initiatives
- Narratives and qualitative data

Expected outcomes



Stable housing



Permanent connections



Education and/or employment



Health and social/emotional well-being



Self-sufficiency

Story: Intentionally supporting youth

J is a 23-year-old student from Portland State University (PSU) who was referred through New Avenues for Youth (NAFY) after living in their car for several months.

Between living in their car and other financial hardships, J fell behind on their payments to PSU and was unable to resume school until they caught up on their payments. ARCS Plus was able to move J out of their car and into housing three days after first receiving their referral.

Since moving into their apartment, J has been able to make payments to PSU and will resume classes in the upcoming term. In the meantime, J has been focusing on their mental and physical health, as well as seeking part time work.

