

Youth Homelessness and Juvenile Justice System Involvement



Available data indicate that youth experiencing homelessness face disproportionate levels of contact with juvenile justice systems. Recent estimates suggest that **46% of youth who have experienced homelessness have been held in juvenile detention centers** at some point, relative to 15% of youth in the general population.



4.2 million

youth and young adults are estimated to **experience homelessness** each year.

1.4 million

public school students were **identified as homeless** in 2019.

~57%

of youth experiencing homelessness are estimated to have **prior records of fostercare, juvenile justice involvement or both.**

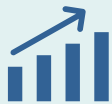
Risk Factors and Disparities



LGBTQIA+ youth are 120% more likely to experience homelessness than non-LGBTQIA+ peers. 40% of youth experiencing homelessness self-identify as LGBTQIA+.



Youth with less than a GED or high school diploma are **346% more likely to experience homelessness** than peers who've completed high school.



Black and Hispanic, non-White youth face an **83% higher and 33% higher risk of reporting homelessness**, respectively.



System-involved youth are at higher risk of experiencing homelessness; juvenile records can serve as barriers to housing and can disrupt education, employment, and other factors that promote self-sufficiency.

Key Definitions

U.S. Department of Education, McKinney-Vento Definition of Homeless Assistance Act

- Homeless children and youth who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence
- Sharing housing due to economic hardship or loss of housing (e.g., doubled up)
- Living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or campgrounds
- Living in emergency or transitional shelters
- Sleeping in places unfit for human habitation (e.g., park benches)
- Living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations etc.

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Runaway and Homeless Youth Act

- Individuals who are less than 21 years of age . . . for whom it is not possible to live in a safe environment

State Spotlights



- 1 Massachusetts wrote a **State Plan to End Youth Homelessness**, using input from community stakeholders and youth with lived experience.
- 2 Washington created an **Interagency Work Group on Youth Homelessness** to develop shared goals, outcomes, and action plans around preventing youth homelessness.
- 3 Colorado established a statewide **Office of Youth Homelessness Services** to provide information, coordination, and support services for infrastructure around resources for youth experiencing homelessness.

Promising Interventions

Host Homes provide youth experiencing housing instability (age 18–24) with affirming, stable, short-term housing for 1–6 months, wrap-around case management services, and peer support. While in host homes youth have time to repair their relationships with self-identified and chosen family and/or make decisions about other housing options with the support of a caring housing case manager and affirming adult mentor.

Rapid Re-Housing provides youth age 18–24 with a tailored rent subsidy for up to 2 years and comprehensive case management. Youth receive a lease in their own name in housing of their choice. Wrap-around services include financial planning support, independent living skills, and mental health supports.



Direct Cash Transfers provide youth aged 18–24 experiencing homelessness with \$1250 per month for up to 2 years. Optional services including coaching, peer support, connections to care, financial coaching and housing navigation accompany financial support.

Family & Kinship Strengthening models provide mediation, family and individual counseling to resolve disputes between youth and their families to repair family bonds that continue to exist even after youth have left home.

Featured Resources

[USICH: Tools for Ending Youth Homelessness](#)

[2020 State Index on Youth Homelessness](#)

[Chapin Hall: Youth Homelessness Resources](#)



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