

# Affordable Housing Conference 2010

April 2010

## Runaway and Homeless Youth



All ages races and ethnic

groups

Services

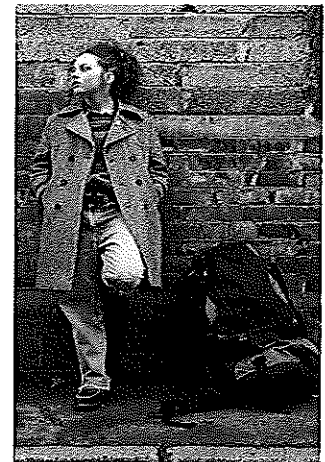


Characteristics of a Runaway and Homeless Youth

- ◆ Exposure to Trauma-Domestic Violence, abuse/neglect, poverty, sexual exploitation....
- ◆ Transient- "staying" rather than "living" at different locations.
- ◆ Unaccompanied Youth— Often Chronologically Adults while developmentally younger.
- ◆ Survivalists— adapt to surroundings (often at a cost).
- ◆ Accompanied Youth— homeless families due to disaster, economic hardship, divorce, domestic violence.....

- ◆ Outreach
- ◆ Crisis Intervention
- ◆ Case Management
- ◆ Counseling
- ◆ Safe Shelter, Host Home, Housing!
- ◆ Life Skills Training
- ◆ Advocacy

- RHY a Characterization
- Geographical Circumstances
- Partnerships
- Shelter to Interdependence
- Support Services
- Funding Strategies



### Panelists

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Helping Youths, Adults and Families in Crisis

arbor circle



**Staircase Youth Services**

Youth & Family Crisis Intervention Services

1-888-267-6086

Open all day every day

Lake, Manistee, Mason, Missaukee, & Wexford Counties



WEBSTER HOUSE Youth SERVICES

## Host Homes

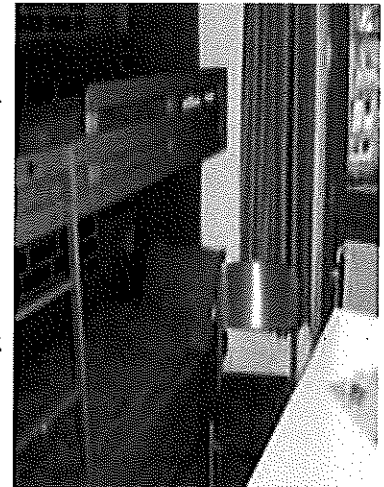
Host homes are a cost effective strategy for providing youth safe housing within their 'home' community. Youth are encouraged to attend school and maintain supportive relationships. Host Homes are a primary approach to services in 'rural' communities and provide a concrete alternative to shelter in all geographic areas. Host Homes are provided through policies outlined by the State of Michigan's *Child Placing Licensure* rules as well as 'best practice' strategies that continue to evolve as the needs of youth evolve. For under age youth a licensed foster home would be utilized. Those providing Host Home environments are required to cooperate with background check; criminal checks, CPS registry clearance, and Home Inspections. For those youth under age 18 consent for services must be achieved by a legal parent or guardian. When necessary Child Welfare is asked to step in and offer support for those youth where consent is a barrier. Youth are provided a full scope of services utilizing a Positive Youth Development philosophy and approach. 'Host Parents' are inclusive of a case plan and provide support in accordance to the plan created.

## Shelter Based

Shelter Based programming not available in all communities. Youth Shelters are intended to be 'temporary' and are typically providing safety and support services to a younger population with a specific goal toward 'REUNIFICATION'. When reunification is not possible staff will work with alternative options that are agreeable to the youth, family, and in accordance with 'best practice'. Child Welfare (CPS) is contacted when necessary. Shelter's historically have a minimum of 4 and maximum of 20 beds available for a stay up to 20 days. Shelter services are congruent with a full scope of support services that are offered to the youth, parents/guardians, and all familial or supportive members willing to participate. Shelter based services function under specific *Child Caring Licensure* rules and are monitored by the State of Michigan. Shelter based support services are more costly to operate than a host home model. However, a shelter does not have recruitment of 'Homes' concerns and operates under one license versus licensing of each home when necessary. Shelter based services continue to be more cost effective than foster care.

## TLP

TLP or Transitional Living Programming is offered in a variety of venues for the older Homeless Youth (16-22). Congregate Shelter, Host Homes, Scattered Site apartments to name a few. Transitional Living Services typically allow for a greater length of stay depending on funding sources. Federal TLP offers support up to 18 months. In compliment to the 'Housing First' more programs are working toward the Scattered Site or Host Home models. Congregate living remains a viable option for some youth as they work toward developing the skills and resources necessary for independent living. No Licensure required for providing shelter, host home or congregate living for those 18 and older. For those under 18 programs are required to hold the Child Caring or Child Placing license.



## Positive Youth Development

The *Positive Youth Development* approach is predicated in the understanding that all young people need support, guidance, and opportunities during adolescence, a time of rapid growth and change. RHY programming at its core adheres to a Positive Youth Development philosophy supporting youth toward....

- ◆ Self-Assurance
- ◆ Self-sufficiency
- ◆ Healthy, Successful Decision Making

### Key Elements

- ◆ Healthy messages about their bodies, behaviors and interactions.
- ◆ Safe/Structured places to study, recreate and socialize.
- ◆ Strengthened relationships with adult role models i.e. parents, mentors, coaches, teachers, and community leaders.
- ◆ Skill development in literacy, competence, work readiness and social skill.
- ◆ Opportunities to serve and improve self.

### Scope of Services

- ◆ Cultural and Human Diversity
- ◆ Basic Child and Adolescent Development
- ◆ Models and Establishes positive relationships with youth
- ◆ Communities that embrace youth
- ◆ Age appropriate activities
- ◆ Involves and Empowers Youth
- ◆ Identifies Risk Factors and works toward reduction of such.

## Community Partners

Communities are encouraged to work cooperatively with their RHY provider. Current times of mission and initiative will serve youth best through a comprehensive strategy of collaboration. RHY services have been in existence for over 35 years in many communities with established organizations that are consistently evolving in a 'best practice' approach to providing services to Runaway and Homeless Youth. *Runaway* being a "70s" term does not do justice to describing the scope of circumstances of how and why youth may be away from home. Communities are answering the call of current initiatives and in so doing must assure that today's Youth are considered. *Homeless Youth* are complex in the effort to define them and to serve them. It is critical to secure methods of a continuum of services that offers as broad of an approach as there are youth in need.

### Suggested Partners

- ◆ Continuum of Care
- ◆ McKinney Vento Liaisons
- ◆ Homeless Shelters
- ◆ RHY Providers
- ◆ Domestic Violence Agencies
- ◆ Municipalities
- ◆ Law Enforcement
- ◆ Juvenile Justice
- ◆ Child Welfare
- ◆ School Systems
- ◆ Community Mental Health
- ◆ Private Sector

