**Youth Homelessness Prevention Plan Committee**

March 30th, 2017: Meeting Notes

***Present:*** *Ashley Greenfield (HPC), Ari Kisler (VCRHYP), Anna Berg (YDP), George Seiffert (OEO), Taylor Small (NCSS), Laurel Chen (VSHA), Connie Sandahl (NEKYS), Bethany Pombar (VCRHYP, Co-Chair), Judy Rex (DCF, Co-Chair)*

**Introductions**

*Committee members introduced themselves and touched on the following questions:*

*What is your agency’s primary goal and purpose? What role can you and your organization play in preventing and ending youth homelessness?*

Judy – co-chair of Committee; role is to bring information back to DCF

Bethany – co-chair of Committee; role is to support Committee’s connection to statewide and national scene

Laurel – new job position is to support capacity building with VCEH; previous work was with adolescent population so feels close to the topic

Connie – NEKYS provides a variety of homelessness programs for youth in their community

Ashley – chairs the Rutland County CoC and runs the Family Supportive Housing Program

Ari – provides support to VCHRYP’s TLPs, as well as focusing on database and other behind-the-scenes work

Anna – focuses on bringing youth engagement to statewide tables

George – works with Housing Opportunity Grant program and has a long history of working with low-income Vermonters

Taylor – provides adolescent services at NCSS, including TLP services

***Bethany provided the background to forming the Committee:***

Committee is a joint committee of the Balance of State CoC and the Chittenden County CoC. We’ll regularly report back to both CoCs and build buy-in from both groups. We’ll be looking at what other key stakeholders need to be involved, as we make decisions here. We’ll bring recommendations to both CoCs for votes when we want things to be finalized.

Back in November, VCRHYP attended the New England Summit to End Youth Homelessness, along with staff from DCF such as Commissioner Ken Schatz and staff from YDP. This sparked some good, interesting thinking and there was energy around creating a youth plan. Around the same time, HUD put out the NOFA for the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project. Daniel from VSHA and Bethany reviewed the proposal, but neither had the capacity to pursue the grant opportunity at that time. They decided, however, to take the energy that opportunity created and jumpstart this process instead. Now we’re working on our own timeline and we can build this movement from the grassroots level.

**Envisioning Our Work**

*Groups of two met to discuss their visions, hopes, and fears about ending youth homelessness. Groups then reported back to Committee:*

* creating intentional space for teens/adolescents (teen center, transitional apts. etc.)
* making mentorship available to them
* co-occurring disorders need to be addressed when talking about homelessness, recognizing complex service needs is part of the process to ending youth homelessness
* bring in more natural supports, looking at YDP model of extended foster care through adult living partners, have youth identify who cares about them and then have services provide support to those adults
* systems need to adapt to people who want to help instead of asking people to adapt to what the system needs
* traditional college experiences provide a transition for many youth from living at home to living on their own in a structured environment, how can we create a similar experience for youth that do not follow that traditional path?
* shared understanding of youth homelessness and systems of care is needed
* local continuums and counties should map their resources and bring that information to the larger table to apply for funding opportunities
* create a coordinated community response
* lack of affordable housing, transportation, economic development are the barriers, focus on community economic development to start making things happen to meet the need
* staff need to help develop supportive relationships between youth and adults, think creatively about where these people are (not just looking within the family)
* bringing education into the conversation (VT Adult Learning, Agency of Education), hope that income is tied to something meaningful which can come from job training or career options
* peer-to-peer support can help address complex issues

*Additional discussion:*

* How does the Housing First model map onto youth services? VT youth housing currently favors transitional living over Housing First model, but there are examples of this working in other communities.

**Defining Partners**

*Committee discussed who else should be involved in this process, either as an official part of the Committee or as a key stakeholder that informs our conversation. Partners designated with an asterisks (****\*****) seemed most appropriate to recruit as committee members.*

* Education**\*** – alternative education providers, traditional education providers, post-secondary education providers
  + Suggestions: Vermont State College, McKinney- Vento liaisons, Adult Basic Education, high school completion programs
* Youth employment**\*** – could provide insight into opportunities and challenges of employment for youth, workforce development exploration can lead to permanent connections
  + Suggestions: Jobs for Independence program, WIOA, YouthBuild
* Housing providers**\*** – public housing providers, affordable housing providers, private housing providers, home-share programs
  + Suggestions: Home Share Now, Home Share VT, Housing Trusts
* Juvenile Justice**\***
  + Suggestions: BARJ, Diversion
* Parent Child Centers
* LGBTQ youth services
  + Suggestions: Outright VT
* Mental health providers
* Substance abuse providers
* Youth
* Law enforcement
* Legislators

*We’ll continue to think who becomes a committee member versus tapped as a key stakeholder as our work moves forward.*

**Committee Basics**

*Bethany shared information about procedure, timeline, etc. for the Committee:*

* Voting and quorum policies will match those of the CoCs: 2-week vote warning, quorum being 60% of the fixed committee (will need to determine official members of committee before being able to determine what is 60%)
* Group consensus should be the first priority when making big decisions
* We will need to report back to both CoCs as a sub-committee: we’re well integrated with VCEH, but will need to be mindful about staying connected to the Chittenden County Homeless Alliance as well. We have one representative from Spectrum who also sits on the CHA, who can help ensure information is shared.
  + Once the Chittenden County CoC has their CoC Support Specialist position filled, we could ask that person to join the committee.
* Meeting schedule plan: meet every other month, give ourselves time between meetings to get real work done, if we create workgroups that will give them time to meet as well
* Timeline: we’re hoping to have a plan to move out of committee within a year, but we have flexibility
* Committee is currently receiving HUD technical assistance for the next 6 months
* Next meeting: Doodle poll showed that May 11th worked best for everyone
  + Bethany requested changing the time from 1-3pm to 10-12pm that day, those attending confirmed this would work, Bethany will email others and be in touch

**Shared Definitions**

*Ari presented a Proposal on Definitions draft. The Committee reviewed the document and discussed:*

* Pregnant and parenting youth definition mentions that there is “no person over the age of 24 in the household,” this likely doesn’t affect family access to services, as long as the youth parent is indicated as the head of household
* Suggestion made to change the language in the definition for runaway/unaccompanied minor so that it is gender-neutral
  + Committee agreed
* Youth advisory board definition came from HUD’s YHDP NOFA and is very specific
  + Rutland has a youth board run by a McKinney-Vento liaison, but it is not connected to the Rutland County CoC
    - Ashley will gather more information about this
  + Ari suggested that this definition be removed from the list at this time and that the Committee have an ongoing conversation about what we envision working here in Vermont
    - Committee agreed
* Suggestion to add definition Basic Center Program and other federally-funded youth housing programs
  + Ari suggested that VCRHYP provide basic information about their federal programs and Coalition members to inform the Committee
    - Committee agreed
* Ending Youth Homelessness definition is based on the benchmarks and criteria specified by USICH
  + Ari asked Committee to review the summary before our May meeting and plan to discuss what we want to adopt for our plan

**Proposed Framework**

*Bethany presented a Proposed Framework document and provided information to the Committee:*

* This should be viewed as a living document that changes as the Committee continues its work.
* The list of Committee Goals may change and shift as we work together and determine what our priorities are.
* The list of Core Outcomes for Youth comes from USICH and have been newly adopted by HUD in their Final RHY rule
  + We should keep these at the front of our mind and make sure we remain beholden to the youth we serve and the outcomes they should have.
* Process consists of three stages: Assess, Design, and Implement
  + Our plan would be released between the Design and Implement stages.
  + The Committee should consider how it continues to support the plan’s implementation after it is released, which may require occasional meetings beyond the original one-year timeline.
* Spheres of Change are divided into three sections: Systems, Services, and Supply
  + Creating a plan can seem overwhelming, but these three spheres help outline what questions we’re looking to answer through our work together.
* Committee should review document at each meeting to make sure we are aligning our work with our framework.

**Next Steps**

* Our next Committee Meeting will take place on May 11th, 2017.
  + Committee members agreed that this location (Hartford Town Hall) works well.
* Judy, Bethany, and Ari have a call scheduled with the HUD TA providers on Monday
* Discuss data analysis: who can we engage to help us tell our story?
  + VCRHYP will bring a list of what data we currently have access to.
* Inventory of resources: our HUD TA providers are working on an inventory of federally-funded services in VT, CFCPP just announced that they have signed a contract to begin work on their inventory map
* Our HUD TA providers can attend and present on what they have found exists in other state plans.
* Further discuss youth engagement/youth voice/youth advisory board

**Handouts Provided**

*Committee Documents*

* Proposed Framework for Youth Homelessness Prevention Plan Committee
* Ending Youth Homelessness Definition: Draft
* Proposal on Definitions: Draft

*National Resources from United States Interagency Council on Homelessness*

* [Preventing and Ending Youth Homelessness: A Coordinated Community Response](https://www.usich.gov/tools-for-action/coordinated-community-response-to-youth-homelessness)
* [Ending Youth Homelessness Guidebook Series: Mainstream System Collaboration](https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/Ending-Youth-Homelessness-Mainstream-System-Collaboration.pdf)
* [Ending Youth Homelessness Guidebook Series: System Planning](https://www.hudexchange.info/resource/5138/ending-youth-homelessness-a-guidebook-series/)
* [Ending Youth Homelessness Guidebook Series: Promising Program Models](https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/Ending-Youth-Homelessness-Promising-Program-Models.pdf)