***Unique needs and recommendations for serving unaccompanied minors include:***

* BoS CoC partners should increase low-barrier services available to minors to increase program engagement, this could include:
  + provision of gateway services like youth groups or counselor hours offered in local schools; teen centers or special drop-in nights with youth activities in local community spaces; access to showers, hygiene products, and clothing including socks and coats; or free meals.
  + peer-led engagement opportunities and outreach efforts.
  + Increased program connections with community partners such as McKinney-Vento liaisons, school guidance counselors, and law enforcement to increase early identification and appropriate referrals.
* Youth under 18 are precariously housed more often than their older counterparts and need increased access to prevention and diversion supports.
* Minors seeking housing supports should have immediate and ongoing access to case management that includes family reunification, family engagement, and/ or building permanent connections within a youth’s self-defined support network.
* More options for housing 16 and 17 year olds should be explored as this population most often cannot access housing supports beyond Transitional Living Programs, which are limited and often have waitlists.
* The crisis shelter system, including warming shelters, emergency shelters, and basic center host homes, is not attractive or always accessible; the system should enhance best practices for sheltering minors.
* Minors receiving housing supports or identified as precariously housed should be connected to more educational support to reduce drop-out and maintain a passing GPA.

***Unique needs and recommendations for serving pregnant and parenting YYA include:***

* Longer lengths of time in emergency shelters indicate a need to reduce barriers to housing stabilization and increase a variety of housing options to meet their needs.
* YYA parenting households may need more housing search support to find larger units near work, school, childcare, and other supports.
* As a highly vulnerable population, more specific housing supports are needed to divert from homelessness.
* Pregnant and parenting YYA need additional service linkages, system navigation and care coordination to manage both parent and child needs.
* Parenting YYA need access to flexible funding to pay for care expenses including child care, diapers and formula.
* Pregnant and parenting youth may need support for relationship management with co-parent, access to counseling can strengthen success in housing projects.
* Young parents need peer connections, housing providers should create opportunities for parenting youth households to connect with one another.

***Unique needs and recommendations for serving LGBTQ YYA include:***

* Housing providers, particularly crisis bed providers, should ensure there are gender affirming (match their identity instead of sex assigned at birth, including considerations for YYA who do not identify as either M or F) or gender free (no gendered considerations at all) beds that youth and young adults can access that do not separate or stigmatize YYA.
* All housing program staff should be fully trained in LGBTQ competency and be prepared to support:
  + ID recovery and changes --birth certificate, passport, driver's license,
  + job placement programs that address and support youth and young adults who may need to navigate workplace harassment and discrimination, and
  + substance abuse programming that addresses LGBTQ youth's unique experiences including minority stress.
* Case management meeting locations should have access to gender neutral bathrooms.
* LGBTQ YYA need access to health and sexual education that includes and affirms a wide variety of sexual orientations and gender expressions and housing providers should make connections to youth service providers who can offer this.
* LGBTQ YYA have increased risk of not completing high school. Additional educational supports should be wrapped around them youth to reduce drop-out and maintain passing GPAs.

***Unique needs and recommendations for serving YYA who intersect with the Child Welfare and Juvenile justice system include:***

* Expanding the Youth Development Program (YDP) to serve more youth and young adults as they transition to independent living including providing additional housing supports such as the expansion of the availability of extended care funding.
* Increase permanency planning for young adults age 18-24 who are not ready to live independently.
* Explore Home Share programs tailored to this population that match youth and young adults with appropriate homes and provides training, mediation, stipends and other supports to ensure successful and sustained placement.
* Increase partnerships between DCF, BARJ, schools and youth housing providers to support youth participating in juvenile justice supports who may be precariously housed or homeless.
* Develop peer support opportunities for youth and young adults exiting custody, such as youth to youth mentoring with young adults who have successfully transitioned being paired with youth about to exit.
* DCF and agencies serving DCF involved youth should expand opportunities for and connections to mentoring programs to support adult connections.
* Explore increasing post-care contacts for DCF and YDP closed cases for at least 12 months to monitor ongoing housing stability and safety and re-engage youth, young adults, and families where housing is not secure.

***Unique needs and recommendations for serving racial and ethnic minority YYA include:***

* Longer lengths of time in emergency shelters indicate a need to reduce barriers to housing stabilization for Black youth.
* Housing staff should be fully trained in implicit bias, cultural competence, diversity and inclusion and provide trauma-informed services that address cultural trauma as well as personal experiences.
* Increase hiring rates for people with diverse racial and ethnic identities in housing programs.
* Housing providers should allow space for and support diverse cultural expressions and traditions.
* Support services that affirm racial and ethnically diverse youth and young adults including job placement and housing programs that also help youth navigate harassment and discrimination.

***Unique needs and recommendations for serving YYA who have lived in households with domestic and/or sexual violence and/or who are direct victims of dating, domestic or sexual violence:***

* Expanding definitions of HUD’s homeless categories mean more YYA qualify for support under Category 4, outreach and education to enhance screening in to housing supports are needed for assessment partners.
* YYA fleeing violence have safety planning considerations and may need more choices available to them to meet those needs, including support re-located to another area and increased privacy considerations.
* Legal advocacy, representation, and resources (court advocacy, financial, relief from abuse orders, emancipation, etc.) may be needed.
* Credit and financial resources may have been harmed by abuser, specific support to rebuild or reduce ongoing impact should be provided.
* Housing providers should enhance partnership and service connections to trauma/healing-centered mental health supports and agencies who support domestic and sexual violence victims and survivors.
* YYA fleeing D/SV often have increased need for medical care and access to sexual and reproductive healthcare, support to access these services should be prioritized.

***Unique needs and recommendations for serving YYA who have exposure to sexual or workplace exploitation and trafficking include:***

* Increased training for support workers to for screening and early identification of warning signs and exploitation, including ensuring that screening is ongoing throughout case management and not just at entry/ exit.
* Non-stigmatizing, trauma-informed case management that includes safety planning, harm-reduction, and addresses youth’s sexual health is essential.
* Safe housing is key for victims and should be offered without preconditions for engaging in other services or reporting their abuse to authorities.
* YYA who to want to make a report to law enforcement should be connected with appropriate legal representation so they know their rights and what to expect prior to reporting.
* YYA should be given opportunities to make informed decisions about what services and supports they want to regain power, choice and control in their lives.
* YYA with exploitation or trafficking histories should be connected to services that can offer non-stigmatizing sexual education.

***Unique needs and recommendations for serving YYA engaged in secondary and post-secondary education include:***

* Ensure youth and young adults have access to necessary documents required by schools, such as birth certificates, school records, and immunization documents.
  + Note that McKinney-Vento allows for immediate enrollment of homeless students regardless of completion or availability of necessary of paperwork and documentation.
* Youth and families experiencing precarious housing may be eligible to McKinney-Vento and Title 1 supports even though they might not be eligible for some HUD homeless services. Support workers should be trained in different eligibility requirements to refer and connect youth to appropriate resources. These funds can help provide supplies needed to complete assignments or participate in school activities.
* McKinney- Vento liaisons should develop family engagement strategies, ensure supports are youth-centric, and have plans for coordination with other community partners who can help provide youth and families wrap-around care.
* Students experiencing homelessness may be more tired and/or stressed, they may be hungry, have a hard time getting to or staying in school all day, and they may be experiencing behavior management challenges. School and support workers should ensure trauma-informed approaches and reduce consequences of misbehavior or truancy if possible.
* Students who have been verified homeless by RHY, M-V or HUD service providers can apply for the FAFSA as independent students, without including their guardians’ income information. This can help leverage additional financial aid supports to make post-secondary options more attainable. School and community support workers should stay connected with youth who may be interested in college to ensure they have the verification needed to access this benefit.
* Homeless youth and young adults in college may not have places to go during holidays and school breaks. Schools should retain some open housing all-year.
* College students who were homeless or precariously housed may be able to leverage food assistance programs to reduce food insecurity while attending school. More education should be done to ensure caseworkers, colleges, and students know of these supports.

***Unique needs and recommendations for serving YYA with employment supports:***

* Housing providers and employment support agencies should cross-train on service availability and eligibility requirements to support referrals and case coordination.
* More resources need to be developed for youth who do not meet the eligibility requirements for WIOA and Voc Rehab supports.
* Service providers supporting employment should establish strong connections to local employers and find ways to strengthen their relationships with YYA including providing education on TIC and PYD, and challenges precarious housed and homeless youth might face that impact how they participate in the employment environment.
* All housing providers and case managers serving YYA should work with youth to develop career pathway goals.
* Providers should consider co-location of care provision or care consolidation so youth do not need to attend multiple meetings.

***Unique needs and recommendations for serving YYA mental health or substance use disorders:***

* YYA with disability status need more access to PSH and RRH projects. The Coordinated Entry system should explore how to mitigate the low placement rate of youth with disabilities.
* YYA with disabilities need peer support and opportunities to share personal experience in a non-judgmental environment, human connection that reduces isolation, and stigma reduction.
* Housing providers should have harm-reduction oriented policies in place for serving YYA with disabilities that includes screening for suicidal ideation and referral to treatment providers.

***Unique needs and recommendations for serving YYA “urban travelers”:***

* The impact these youth have on systems is unknown; BoS CoC should conduct a youth count in warmer months and conduct street outreach to connect with the population, concurrently conducting a brief survey with these YYA could help grow understanding of their needs.
* Youth serving agencies could make hygiene necessities, showers, snacks and water available for travelers to help build trust and connections.
* Peer outreach workers may be seen as more relevant or friendly to these populations, helping them know about local resources and building relationships.