

# COMPREHENSIVE SOLUTIONS TO ENDING YOUTH HOMELESSNESS (YOUTH HOMELESSNESS DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM)

Prior to COVID, our nation was already experiencing a crisis of unaccompanied youth and young adult homelessness. As a result of the past two years of school closures, growing economic insecurity, and extreme situations faced by so many communities, even more youth are experiencing homelessness and are at increased risk. Service providers need additional resources and flexibility to support them. In response, it is critical to leverage the lessons and models from HUD's Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP) by appropriating dedicated, comprehensive funding to address/prevent youth homelessness within all Continuum of Cares (CoC) nationwide.

## **COVID-19 Impact**

Youth and young adults are still reeling from the impacts of COVID. Emerging findings showcase:

- **2.9 million young adults had too little to eat, and 2.4 million had little to no confidence to pay their rent** or mortgage during the pandemic.<sup>1</sup>
- Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) communities have been disproportionately damaged by COVID;<sup>1</sup>
- More than 1 in 4 Black young adults (28%) experienced food insecurity -- more than twice the rate of their White peers (12%).<sup>1</sup>
- As of August 2021, the **unemployment rate for Black youth (17.2%) remained higher than it did for other groups, 220% higher than their White peers (7.8%).**<sup>2</sup>

More needs to be done to address the disparate impacts of COVID and the economic recovery in communities of color, in order to address youth and young adult homelessness and housing instability, and to reduce the inflow of young people into homelessness.

As we consider targeted relief for FY22 in recovery from COVID-19, we respectfully urge you to include dedicated funding for youth and young adults. Since its inception in 2016, the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program has produced several valuable best-practices and lessons that can be adopted **in all communities** to reduce the prevalence of youth homelessness. These practices rely on a coordinated community-wide systems approach that centers and is led by those most impacted in communities. These lessons in systems change and service delivery can be infused into all CoCs nationwide, significantly raising our national capacity to end youth homelessness.

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<sup>1</sup> Morton, M. & Daniels, G. (forthcoming). *The Untold Story: Youth & Racial Dimensions of COVID-19*. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.

<sup>2</sup> Mathematica compilation based on the Bureau of Labor Statistics' monthly Labor Force Statistics from the Current Population Survey (<https://www.bls.gov/cps/data.htm>).



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## [YOUTH HOMELESSNESS DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM]

Specifically, we recommend including the following resources for **Comprehensive Solutions to Ending Youth Homelessness** within HUD’s Continuum of Care (CoC) grant program for FY23:

- **Part 1: \$219 million within the CoC line item reserved for youth-specific projects, to award three-year projects to CoCs that can demonstrate effectiveness in ending youth homelessness.** The CoC would be required to demonstrate certain operational design and performance metrics in order for their youth-specific projects to be eligible to receive this dedicated funding.
- **Part 2: \$49 million over three years for ‘Youth Homelessness System-Change Planning Grants.’** These one-time awards would fund only the system-change components of YHDP that have been found successful through the demonstration sites. The objective of Part 2 planning grants is to advance the capacity of the CoC so that they have the operational design and knowledge necessary to meet the performance metrics required for Part 1 projects. This includes the integration of youth focused performance metrics and systems-level benchmarks into ongoing CoC operations.
- **Part 3: \$10 million increase for technical assistance within the CoC program, to include a set-aside of TA to exclusively support Part 2 projects as communities engage in systems-change.** These technical assistance dollars would be paired with the direct investment to communities through Part 2 and would flow through traditional CoC technical assistance contracts.

All three line items are essential to local communities and underfunded to meet national need. On behalf of the more than 200 organizations and 13,000 youth development professionals that comprise Youth Collaboratory, we respectfully request \$295 million in aggregate for comprehensive funding to address/prevent youth homelessness within all Continuum of Care (CoC) nationwide in Fiscal Year 2023.

	<b>FY 2022 Final</b>	<b>POTUS FY2023</b>	<b>FY 2023 Request</b>
Youth-specific Projects	\$107,000,00	<i>Not less than \$82,000,000</i>	\$219,000,000
Youth Homelessness System Change planning	not less than \$25,000,000	<i>N/a</i>	\$49,000,000
Technical Assistance	up to \$10,000,000	\$10,000,000	\$10,000,000
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>\$107,000,000</b>	<b><i>Not less than \$82,000,000</i></b>	<b>\$278,000,000</b>

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