

Runaway and Homeless Youth Act: **Cost and Effectiveness of the Program**

Cost Per Youth Experiencing Homelessness

The cost of youth homelessness for taxpayers, including associated costs such as lost earnings, lost tax payments, public crime expenditures, victim costs, welfare support programs, excess tax burden, and public housing support, is an estimated \$26,433 per year, per individual, and \$869,647 over the lifetime of that individual. If we apply the annual cost per youth to the 4.2 million American youth who experience homelessness every year, the taxpayer burden is over \$111 billion per year. **Over the lifetime of those 4.2 million youth, the economic burden of homelessness and its related social costs is over \$3.6 trillion.**

Fiscal Year	Funding Amount	Number of Grants Awarded	Total spending divided by the approximately 40,000 youth served by RHYA programs	Total spending divided by the 4.2 million youth in need
FY 2020	\$132m	672	\$3,300 per young person/year	\$31 per young person/year
FY 2021	\$137m	682	\$3,425 per young person/year	\$33 per young person/year
FY 2022	\$140m	658	\$3,500 per young person/year	\$33.3 per young person/year
FY 2023	\$146m	657	\$3,650 per young person/year	\$35 per young person/year
FY 2024	\$146m	791 (expected)	\$3,650 per young person/year	\$35 per young person/year
NN4Y's FY 2026 request	\$304m	1,300 (expected)	<i>\$304m would allow more young people to access services</i>	\$71 per young person/year

Performance of RHYA Grantees

The Administration for Children and Families requires that Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA) grantees collect data to assess the outcomes experienced by youth who accessed RHYA-funded programs.

Basic Center Program (BCP)

BCPs provides short-term crisis housing (up to 21 days) for youth in need. They also connect youth to counseling services and strength-based family interventions to reunify youth under the age of 18 with

their families when safe and appropriate, and provide aftercare services to ensure youth remain in safe and stable housing.

In FY 2022, national outcomes for BCPs were as follows:

- 87 percent of youth participants had a safe exit rate, which is discharge from the program into an immediate living situation that is both safe and appropriate (one of 28 specified living situations). The FY22 target rate for this measure was 91 percent.
- 68 percent of youth participants attended school regularly, graduated from high school, or obtained a GED at exit. The FY22 target rate for this measure was 71 percent.
- 29 percent of youth participants were employed or looking for work at exit. The FY22 target rate was exceeded for this measure.

Transitional Living Program (TLP)

TLPs provide long-term housing for youth ages 16-22, coupled with supportive services such as employment, education, and mental health to help the youth achieve successful and sustainable self-sufficiency. Maternity group homes support pregnant and parenting youth experiencing homelessness.

In FY 2022, national outcomes for TLPs were as follows:

- 91 percent of youth participants had a safe exit rate. The FY22 target rate was met for this measure.
- 70 percent of youth participants attended school regularly, graduated from high school, or obtained a GED at exit. The FY22 target rate was exceeded for this measure.
- 82 percent of youth participants were employed or looking for work at exit. The FY22 target rate was exceeded for this measure.

Street Outreach Program (SOP)

SOPs fund street outreach and drop-in centers for youth workers to connect young people with effective services. In FY 2022, 71 percent of youth contacted by SOPs engaged in a deliberate case plan or client assessment, a 3 percent increase over the previous year. The FY22 target for this measure was greatly exceeded.

Preventing and Ending Youth Homelessness Will End Chronic Adult Homelessness

The experience of homelessness as a young person can have severe long-term consequences, negatively impacting an individual's ability to maintain stable housing as an adult. Cities across the country that have conducted surveys of their chronically homeless adult constituents found that many of them first experienced homelessness as a young person. Across studies, 25 percent first experienced homelessness before the age of 18, and an additional 25 percent first experienced homelessness between the ages of 18 to 24. This data highlights that the experience of homelessness for many chronically homeless adults first began when they were under the age of 25. Knowing this, it becomes clear that increasing investments in housing and support services that target young people aged 25 and under are necessary to prevent and reduce chronic adult homelessness.