FACT SHEET
FY 2023 FEDERAL APPROPRIATION REQUESTS TO PREVENT AND END YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

We need Congress to take action. Enacting these recommendations is critical to ending youth homelessness and vital to stopping youth trajectory into chronic adult homelessness.

Every year 4.2 million youth and young adults experience homelessness on their own, of which 700,000 are youth ages 13 to 17 and 3.5 million are young adults ages 18 to 25.¹

Experiences of homelessness too often prevent youth and young families from joining America’s workforce, transitioning safely and successfully to adulthood, and becoming civically engaged community members. Systemic racism, the current economic crisis, and related family and individual stress threaten to create new waves of youth and young family homelessness.

The federal government provides targeted support to youth experiencing homelessness through the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA) program administered by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) program administered by the U.S. Department of Education.

The following recommendations come from our National Youth Advisory Council, young people who have experienced multiple forms of homelessness throughout the U.S., and our 300+ youth service provider member and affiliate network.

RUNAWAY AND HOMELESS YOUTH ACT PROGRAM (HHS)

Youth experiencing homelessness face a particularly steep climb to adulthood. They are not plugged into networks of support needed for healthy development. RHYA programs provide the support and connection youth need to transition to adulthood successfully. These services and support are also more cost-effective than other systems (child welfare, juvenile, and adult court systems) youth experiencing homelessness come into contact with.

RHYA programs have been chronically underfunded, with only 25% of qualified applicants receiving funding.

America can and should do better.

For FY23, appropriate $300 million for the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA) program to:

• Support approximately 1,400 RHYA projects in communities across the United States that meet our young people where they are. These youth are not eligible for HUD homeless assistance due to HUD’s narrow definition of homelessness and the hidden nature of homelessness among youth.

• Allow approximately 49,034 young people access housing and connect with 70,000 youth via street outreach and drop-in centers. This is far from meeting the need but would significantly increase our country’s capacity to end youth homelessness by doubling the number of young people served. It would also provide a cost savings of more than $12 billion in fiscal costs and over $30 billion in costs to society.³

• Ensure that our young people are not left out of national efforts to end homelessness. Successfully addressing youth homelessness will save money and dramatically reduce future chronic adult homelessness.⁴

EDUCATION FOR HOMELESS CHILDREN AND YOUTH ACT PROGRAM (ED)

In the 2019-2020 school year, public schools identified nearly 1.3 million children and youth experiencing homelessness. Homelessness has a negative impact on attendance, achievement, and graduation that is over and above the impact of poverty. The 2019-2020 national graduation rate for students experiencing was 67.8%, 12% points below other low-income students. The Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) program is the only federal education program that removes barriers to school enrollment, attendance, and success caused by homelessness. Without this specific, targeted assistance, homeless children and youth are unlikely to benefit from any investment in education and are at much higher risk of experiencing homelessness as adults. A lack of a high school degree is the single greatest risk factor

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associated with homelessness as a young adult. The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated homelessness and has created significant challenges in identifying and serving these students. Yet only 24% of local educational agencies receive an EHCY subgrant at the program's current funding level.

For FY223, appropriate $800 million for the Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) program.

**YOUTH HOMELESSNESS DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM (HUD)**

HUD has historically focused solutions and priorities on adults experiencing homelessness. The Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP) is administered as a competitive two-year-grant program through HUD that provides funding for local CoCs to reduce the number of youth experiencing homelessness, including unaccompanied, pregnant and parenting youth. YHDP projects partner with community stakeholders and require communities to convene Youth Action Boards. NN4Y strongly urges HUD to require every CoC to implement lessons learned by YHDP communities and implement YHDP project outcomes to all CoC youth-funded projects. Until HUD takes these steps, we urge Congress to continue to fund YHDP.

For FY223, appropriate $100 million for the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP) with no more than $2 million for Technical Assistance.

**EMERGENCY SOLUTIONS GRANTS (HUD)**

ESG funds may be used for these five program components: street outreach, emergency shelter, homelessness prevention, rapid re-housing assistance, Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), and up to 7.5% of a recipient's allocation can be used for administrative activities. The program provides funding to:

- Engage homeless individuals and families living on the street;
- Improve the number and quality of emergency shelters for homeless individuals and families;
- Help operate these shelters;
- Provide essential services to shelter residents;
- Rapidly re-house homeless individuals and families; and
- Prevent families and individuals from becoming homeless.

For FY223, appropriate $300 million for the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) program.

**SUMMARY OF FY23 REQUESTS**

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<tr>
<th>Department</th>
<th>Program</th>
<th>FY21 Enacted</th>
<th>President's FY22 Request</th>
<th>FY23 Request</th>
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<td>Department of Health and Human Services</td>
<td>Runaway and Homeless Youth Act Programs</td>
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REPORT LANGUAGE REQUESTS TO IMPROVE THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE RUNAWAY AND HOMELESS YOUTH ACT PROGRAM

Continue previous report language:

• The Committee supports the ability of grantees to provide prevention services, such as counseling and case management, regardless of enrollment in residential services.

• The program is encouraged to notify applicants if grant applications were successful at least 30 days before the grant begins, no less than 30 days before an existing grant is set to end.

• The Committee strongly urges the program to ensure that service delivery and staff training comprehensively address the individual strengths and needs of youth, as well as be language appropriate, gender-appropriate (interventions that are sensitive to the diverse experiences of male, female, and transgender youth and consistent with the gender identity of participating youth), and culturally sensitive and respectful of the complex social identities of youth (i.e., race, ethnicity, nationality, age, religion/spirituality, gender identity/expression, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, physical or cognitive ability, language, beliefs, values, behavior patterns, or customs). The Committee strongly believes that no runaway youth or homeless youth should be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under, any program or activity funded in whole or in part under the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act, based on any of the conditions outlined in this paragraph.

New report language is needed:

In addition, there are two other issues that COVID-19 has made more prominent that we hope you can resolve using report language:

ISSUE 1: The Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA) providers are serving the young people who need their services and are providing services to meet the unique needs of each young person. The young people in need of RHYA provider services cross-systems and siloed funding streams. The needs of young people who experience homelessness are very similar, with many young people experiencing child welfare, juvenile justice, and homelessness. Young people come to RHYA programs on their own, and providers will bring them into their services as RHY young people and then find out after a few days or weeks that they are Child Welfare (C.W.) or Juvenile Justice (J.J.) involved. This creates a challenge for providers who have to shift how they fund what services/housing they are providing to the young person based on the youth’s current system involvement. On top of this, RHYA grant managers do NOT allow RHYA providers to serve J.J. or C.W.-involved youth with any RHYA grant funding. This is the case across all programs (BCP, TLP, MGH, and SOP), making it very challenging for RHYA providers to serve all youth in need of RHY services as the data show that most of them are multisystem involved.

PROPOSED REPORT LANGUAGE: The Committee strongly encourages programs to have the ability to serve youth involved in other systems (such as child welfare and juvenile justice) that are not currently housed by that system.

ISSUE 2: RHYA grant managers have been telling providers that they cannot house youth funded by different funding streams within the program facility funded by RHYA. There is no reason in practice why providers should be prohibited from braiding funding to provide comprehensive services. Further, RHYA providers can’t pay for all they are required to with the small ($200,000 per year) grant award that RHYA provides. Blending funding streams is the only way providers can provide the scope and scale of services required to meet the needs of youth experiencing homelessness. Further, as mentioned above, RHY providers often don’t figure out “who” the young people are served by until days or weeks after they are in their care. They learn after program admission that the young person is CW and/or J.J. involved. Then they have to change who they are billing the bed to.

PROPOSED REPORT LANGUAGE: The Committee strongly encourages programs to have the ability to serve youth funded by systems of care other than the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act to be housed within the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act funded program.
References


3 The over $12 billion in fiscal cost savings was calculated taking the estimated fiscal cost of $248,182 per youth times the estimated 49,034 young people who would access housing and services. The over $30 billion in fiscal cost savings was calculated taking the estimated social cost per youth of $613,182 times the estimated 49,034 young people who would access housing and services.

4 In Los Angeles, 20% of unsheltered homeless adults that they first experienced homelessness when they were under age 18, and an additional 25% when they were young adults between the ages of 18-24. See. Economic Roundtable (2018) Escape Routes: Meta-Analysis of Homelessness in LA. https://economicrt.org/publication/escape-routes. In Seattle, 18% of homeless adults indicated that their first experience of homelessness occurred when they were under age 18, and an additional 27% when they were between the ages of 18-24. See. ASR (2016) City of Seattle 2016 Homeless Needs Assessment. http://allhomekc.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/2019-Report_KingCounty_FINAL.pdf In the state of Minnesota, more than half (52%) of homeless adults surveyed first became homeless by the time they were age 24, with over one-third (36%) first experiencing homelessness at or before age 18. See. Pittman, B., Nelson-Dusek, S., Gerrard, M.D., and Shelton, E. (2018). Homelessness in Minnesota: Detailed Findings from the 2018 Minnesota Homeless Study.

The National Network for Youth is dedicated to preventing and eradicating youth homelessness in America. We work in communities with youth who have experienced homelessness, service providers, and systems to help accelerate the community’s progress in ending homelessness and human trafficking among young people.

TO LEARN MORE:

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