

FACT SHEET
**SUMMARY OF POLICY
 PRIORITIES TO END
 YOUTH HOMELESSNESS**



**All Members of Congress Should Support the Following Policies
 to Prevent and End Youth and Young Adult Homelessness**

Health and Human Services

Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA) Program

The following vital programs are made possible by RHYA funding:

<p>1 STREET OUTREACH</p> <p>education, prevention, treatment, counseling, connection, and referrals to vital services to prevent sexual abuse and human trafficking for youth at-risk of and experiencing trafficking and homelessness</p>	<p>2 BASIC CENTER</p> <p>temporary housing with counseling, therapeutic family intervention, connection to education, and supportive services for minors experiencing homelessness for youth under 18</p>	<p>3 TRANSITIONAL LIVING</p> <p>longer-term housing with supportive services, including Maternity Group Homes for pregnant and parenting youth</p>	<p>4 NATIONAL COMMS SYSTEM</p> <p>24/7 national phone, text, and online communications system which connects youth and families in crisis with prevention services and reunifies families</p>	<p>5 NATIONAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CENTER</p> <p>training and technical assistance to all RHYA grantees</p>
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ASK: Cosponsor and Pass the Runaway and Homeless Youth and Trafficking Prevention Act of 2023 (S.3125/H.R.6041) to reauthorize the vital RHYA program to make these critical updates:

- Add new provisions to combat trafficking and prohibit discrimination.
- Increase the length of stays in Basic Center Programs from 21 to 30 days, or longer as state law allows.
- Increase grant award amount and overall program funding.
- Increase the allowable age for Transitional Living Programs to up to 25-year-olds.
- Fix the current 20-bed per building issue.
- Include a new funding stream focused on preventing homelessness among youth.

ASK: \$300 million for FY25 appropriations because:

- RHYA programs are vital to scaling up youth-centric community responses to serve the 4.2 million youth who experience homelessness on their own every year.
- RHYA programs are effective and the only targeted federal funding of housing and service options for minor-aged youth and families in crisis **outside** of the child welfare and carceral systems.
- \$300 million will support approximately 1,400 RHYA project grants in communities across the US that meet our young people where they are.
- \$300 million will allow approximately 49,034 young people to access housing and 70,000 youth to connect via street outreach and drop-in centers.



4.2 million youth and young adults experience homelessness every year in America.

*Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago,
Missed Opportunities*

NATIONAL NETWORK
 for **YOUTH**

Department of Education

McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) Program

The McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) program, strengthened by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), is the only federal education program that removes barriers to school enrollment, attendance, and success caused by homelessness. Under this law, every Local Education Agency (LEA) must have a designated Homeless Liaison responsible for ensuring students experiencing homelessness are identified and provided with the necessary supports to ensure their educational success.

This federal funding goes to State Education Agencies (SEAs) who then make subgrants to LEAs. These EHCY subgrants are used for outreach, identification, enrollment assistance, transportation, school records transfer, immunization referrals, tutoring, counseling, school supplies, professional development for educators and community organizations, and referrals for community services.

ASK: \$800 million for FY25 appropriations because:

- Only 24% of LEAs receive EHCY subgrants. Insufficient funding restricts schools from properly identifying homeless students, ensuring their access to school, and connecting them to community supports.
- In the 2020-2021 school year (SY), 41.9% of students experiencing homelessness were chronically absent, more than twice the rate of housed students (20.3%), and significantly higher than the chronic absence rate among homeless students in the previous 2019-2020 SY, which was 27.3%.
- The 2019-2020 SY national average graduation rate for homeless students was 68.2%. This is 13% below other low-income students (81.3%) and nearly 18% below all students (86.5%).
- A bipartisan amendment to the American Rescue Plan Act provided \$800 million in funding specifically dedicated to support the identification, enrollment, and school participation of children and youth experiencing homelessness, including through wrap-around services. These funds, known as the American Rescue Plan - Homeless Children and Youth Funds (ARP-HCY), have reached 44% of school districts to date - nearly double the number of LEAs reached with previous annual funding allocations.

Housing and Urban Development
Youth Homeless Demonstration Program (YHDP)

This funding is given to HUD Continuum of Care (CoC) to fund solutions to youth homelessness. These community plans must be developed with youth with lived experience of homelessness. The funding covers a two-year period, with a requirement to maintain the same annual funding for youth projects within the CoC after the initial grant expires.

ASK: \$100 Million for FY 2025 Appropriations because:

- There have been six rounds of grants providing funding and support to 94 CoCs.
- This funding allocation is critical to ensure every community has the necessary resources to provide housing options and services to young adults experiencing homelessness.
- There are 387 total CoCs and we ask for continued funding until every CoC has received this grant and achieves a carve out of funding to serve young adults experiencing homelessness.

Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG)

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

ASK: \$300 Million for FY25 appropriations

ESG funds the following critical support:

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



Summary of Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 Appropriations Requests

ASK: All Members of U.S. Congress should include the following requests in their personal letters to the Appropriations Committee:

These programs need the following funding and should face no decrease in funding:

- **\$300 Million** for the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA) program.
- **\$800 Million** for the Education for Homeless Children and Youth (EHCY) Program.
- **\$100 Million** for HUD Youth Homeless Demonstration Program (YHDP).
- **\$25 Million** for HUD Youth Homeless System Improvement (YHSI) grants.
- **\$300 Million** for the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) program.

Learn more: <https://nn4youth.org/policy/fy-24-federal-appropriations>

Housing for Homeless Students Act, H.R.7278

Fix the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) Student Rule

Current Issue: Youth can't live in Low-Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) funded housing and be a full-time student. This means that young people are forced to either attend college part-time or forego higher education entirely.

Solution: A simple no-cost legislation that would fix this issue, so that youth can live in LIHTC-funded housing and still attend college full time.

Ask: U.S. Representatives should cosponsor the bipartisan H.R.7278. U.S. Senators should reintroduce a bipartisan Housing for Homeless Students Act. U.S. Congress should pass the Housing for Homeless Students Act so youth don't have to choose between an education and accessing affordable housing.

Learn more: <https://nn4youth.org/housing-for-homeless-students-act/>

Homeless Children and Youth Act (HCYA) of 2023, H.R.5221

Federal Definitions of Homelessness Should Not Be Different

ASK: U.S. Representatives should cosponsor H.R.5221. U.S. Senators should reintroduce a bipartisan Homeless Children and Youth Act.

Youth experiencing homelessness stay wherever they can, frequently moving between living situations. Research has found that homelessness among young people is a fluid experience – they may be sleeping in a car one night, at a shelter the next, and on an acquaintance's floor the following week. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) current prioritized definition of chronic adult homelessness reflects the ways adults – not youth – experience homelessness.

Whereas a young person may meet the criteria for homelessness under certain federal definitions and programs, but not qualify for HUD services.

Learn more: <https://nn4youth.org/policy/federal-policy-on-youth-homelessness/hcya>