

Balance of State Continuum of Care Youth Advisory Board

Kenosha Human Development Services, Inc.

March 24, 2017

- I. **Members present:** Lisa Haen, Veronica Judon, Elena H, Rashaad G, Nik W, Josh, Janeachia R, Lexis C, Jalil G, Shayla P

- II. **Brief Overview of the Balance of State Continuum of Care** – Lisa presented an overview of the BOSCOC and explained new efforts to address youth homelessness as well as the importance of obtaining youth input on various policy and planning issues.

- III. **Point-in-Time**
 - a. PIT Description – Veronica explained the PIT process and outreach activities

 - b. Questions for feedback:
 - i. Where do youth stay outdoors in your community? Anywhere?
 1. Kenosha – a lot of youth go to First Step Services. Some youth living in cars – a lot of different places – moving around. Most youth couch surf or stay with friends – go to the Pershing McDonalds since the 24-hour McDonalds on Sheridan Road is no longer open 24 hours.
 2. Beloit – A lot of homeless people, mostly adults living in tents. They have Project 1969 – focused on females – 8 units for - 16 to 24-year old's can live in the home for 18 months then they look for permanent housing – section 8. Mostly youth are doubled up – living with friends. Tents under Bridges.
 - ii. Any suggestions where providers should canvass during the January and July PIT? Kenosha – Johnny Midnights parking lot – Walmart parking lot – but there is really no one place that youth congregate.
 - iii. Other feedback about youth experiencing homelessness?

It is important to talk about reasons why youth become homeless. Youth discussed situations leading into their homelessness

 - black sheep of the family
 - ran away from home
 - mostly family problems
 - kicked out
 - had to make tough choices family gave – stay home and get a dead-end job or become homeless and finish school.

What are some things that would help end youth homelessness –

- need to know resources –
- need more resources for youth without kids
- need more opportunities – keep youth off the street – some type of training so I can learn and grow – more responsibility
- some type of guidance – support from an adult
- Need hope and something to look forward to
- Need goals
- Need to feel like you are worth something – need to find what your unhappy with and fix it – be happy – be yourself

IV. **Shelter Standards:** Had a brief discussion about the shelters in Beloit and Kenosha to gain an understanding of how the shelters work.

a. Questions about Homeless Shelters:

- i. Should a person be able to enter a shelter at any time?
 1. Yes – everyone has different schedules
- ii. Should a person be required to be sober?
 1. Most said yes but discussed perhaps if someone is in need they should get shelter. May require to sober up - as long as the person is not violent and is able to maintain themselves and are not a distraction or harmful.
- iii. Should a person be kicked out for not doing chores?
 1. Yes –
 - a. if you do not take responsibility then you should not be there
 - b. Rules you need to follow them
 2. No –
 - a. you should be responsible for yourself –
 - b. not fair if you are assigned a chore that someone messes up - sometimes on purpose
- iv. Should a person be able to go to school?
 1. Yes, they should be able to go to school – if you are a youth you should already be in school – need that high school diploma
 2. Adults with a high school diploma should also be able to pursue education
- v. Should a person be able to work and enter back into shelter at any time?
 1. Yes, absolutely. The shelter staff should know your schedule and when to expect your departure and return.

- vi. Should shelter's conduct criminal background checks?
 - 1. No – you cannot always judge a person based on their criminal history.
 - 2. Yes – what about rape charges and other violent offenses? It is important to know who is entering shelter.
 - 3. Youth agreed that a criminal back ground check should be conducted but not held against a person depending on what the crime is.
- vii. Are youth treated differently in Shelters? Anyone have experience in shelter?
 - 1. No – experience was that shelter staff did not treat youth differently.

b. Discussed the Beloit AmeriCorps Youth Build program – Fresh Start – provides youth opportunities. They are doing construction right now – rehabbing a house. Certified in CPR and construction.

V. YAB will continue to meet on a Quarterly basis – youth were asked to think about any topics they would like to discuss in the future at this meeting and let us know.

VI. Distributed gift cards to Walmart and took a picture.

Meeting over at 12:30 pm

Respeccfully submitted,

Lisa Haen, MS

Associate Director

Kenosha Human Development Services, Inc.