



YOUTH ADVISORY BOARD (YAB)

Youth Advisory Board Minutes

May 30, 2019

In attendance: Facilitators: Tanya Nelson & Jane Larson

Youth: Kaitlyn A, Darinn J, Amethyst A & Brayleigh K

Pizza, Chips, and Soda were provided

1. Welcome and Introductions
 - a. Completed Sign In sheet
 - b. Discussed participation shirts and gift cards
 - c. Photo Releases
2. Ice Breaker/Activity
3. Discussion of what the Balance of State is.
4. Discussion of what the Youth Advisory Board is and why it's important for youth to be involved and to be heard.
5. Youth Homelessness in our area and what that looks like.
 - a. Point in Time Count- Where should we look for homeless teens?
6. What services/resources do we have in our area to help teens/young adults?
7. What services/resources are we missing from our area?
8. What are some barriers in our community?
 - a. Housing-
 - b. Transportation-
 - c. Other-
9. Meeting ended and we thanked the participants for coming.
 - a. Gift Cards were given out and receipts were filled out
 - b. Group Photo
 - c. Passed out local resource lists

Notes from YAB meeting on May 30, 2019 at Superior High School

Time: 11:15 am – 1:15 pm

4 Youth present: Kaitlyn A, Darinn J, Amethyst A, and Brayleigh K

2 Facilitators present: Tanya Nelson, Jane Larson

Notes from discussion:

In this area homeless teens are “out of sight, out of mind.” Most teens “couch hop, roam the streets, or sleep in their cars” - teen homelessness is “invisible.”

Most people think of “shelters” when they think of homelessness. There are shelters here but they can only be accessed if you are 18 years or older – there is a lack of access to HUD housing/shelters in this area for minors/PG or parenting teens.

Superior does have some shelters but only if you’re 18; there is access to services from the domestic abuse program and the health care clinic, help from the runaway/homeless program, help from the school for lunches/weekend food programs.

Frustration with discrepancy at what age a teen is considered “adult” - for example, at 17 a teen can be tried as an adult in court but cannot access needed services (like shelter, housing) until they are 18 years old. Need more (any) shelter options for teens/minors.

Frustration with age gap regarding consent to have sex without mandated reporting.

Some of the teens wishes include: L-T options for housing – 30 days minimum w/extensions possible (or “until person is on their feet”). Host homes with 1-3 day stays are too short, not enough time. Host homes/shelter beds located too far away from home community are not really options youth will utilize.

Issues causing homelessness: product of upbringing – parental issues, alcohol/drug misuse-abuse, other addictions, cycle of abuse, anger, low income/other financial issues, lack of food or access to food, family issues, LGBTQ, Pregnancy, lack of transportation creating barriers to getting to resources, and lack of low income housing. The youth stated, “This is a community problem – not just a teen problem – and it needs proactive, not reactive, community-wide exposure and responses.” At its most basic level the youth identified homelessness as a “relationship problem.”

Youth identified needing more treatment options; more help developing and maintaining strong, healthy relationships.

Teens identified that fear of mandated reporting often prevents them from asking for help/talking about problems- issues. "Some things should not have to be reported." "I knew when I was in elementary school that I had to lie. Now that I am 18, I can talk without fear of reporting and the fallout that comes from that."

Youth identified several things they want/would like including: the ability to "have conversations with our parents about things that have happened in our families so we can be better parents to our kids;" greater community efforts to let kids know what services/resources are available in the Twin Ports area (including Duluth and Superior) such as the location and hours of the Health Care Clinic, Planned Parenthood, ARCW, CASDA and Plan B, etc.

They indicated that in school they would like the opportunity to participate in small gender-specific groups with students close to the same age. They would like to have a "trusted leader" who is not a mandated reporter.

Additionally, they would like an orientation and mandatory presentation at the beginning of each school year that includes offering a flyer with all available resources for teens listed. They also indicated that it is more powerful, effective, and impactful to hear "student stories" rather than listening to adults.

Lastly, they reported that Kindness and Respect Retreats are helpful and they learned a lot from them that was helpful in building/maintaining relationships with others and self.

The last comment made was, "It always starts in relationships."