

(1) Retooling the Crisis Response System

- Increase access to prevention and early intervention services for minors and their families, such as family counseling, respite care, poverty reduction, family support in schools, family reunification services, etc.
- Increase crisis housing and services for homeless youth and youth at risk of being homeless who are between the ages of 12 and 24.
- Include appropriate responses for meeting the needs of and providing services to unaccompanied homeless youth who are not system-involved (child welfare or juvenile justice), including transitional housing services.
- Provide supportive services specifically designed to meet the needs of transition-aged youth, including those who are rapidly rehoused.
- Include and prioritize homeless youth ages 12 to 25 on vulnerability indexes and assessments for housing and other services, as is done for aged 60 and older.
- Create a youth-specific assessment to determine the appropriate placement and services for young people who are homeless. This assessment will be useful for the implementation of coordinated assessment.

(2) Goal to Prevent and End Chronic Homelessness

- Preventing and housing youth who experience homelessness prevents these young people from becoming chronically homeless adults. Expanding youth-appropriate housing and services for homeless youth will save lives, decrease chronic homelessness over time and decrease costs associated with long-term homelessness. Therefore, when defining the goal to prevent and end chronic homelessness it is necessary to:
 - Recognize that the causes of youth homelessness are different from those of adults, and the circumstances that lead young people to be ejected from or leave their homes are complex. The goal should be defined as increased effective prevention of youth homelessness and increased readily available crisis response and longer-term solutions for young people who become homeless. This means that:
 - (1) Every community has appropriate services for homeless youth aged 12 to 24.
 - (2) There are no waitlists for services and housing for homeless youth so that each young person in crisis has access to safe and appropriate housing and services.
 - Provide services and housing that are youth-appropriate and take into consideration the developmental, social and legal needs of unaccompanied homeless youth, including transitional housing.
 - Increase the stock of affordable housing throughout the United States so that transition-aged youth who can successfully live independently have a place they can afford to live and will not unnecessarily be placed in permanent supportive housing. This would allow those with the greatest need to access these limited community resources.
 - Develop protocols for transition-aged youth to be moved into adult permanent supportive housing when they will require these services into adulthood. This would allow youth programs to have the capacity to house additional young people who are in need of developmentally appropriate supportive housing and services.

(3) The Role of Health Care in the Effort to Prevent and End Homelessness

- Determine how health care, especially under Medicaid as expanded under the Affordable Care Act, can be used to provide services and housing to homeless youth and youth at risk of homelessness (pay for case management, housing, mental and behavioral health services, etc.).
- Develop protocols for enrolling homeless youth in Medicaid and other services as expanded under the Affordable Care Act that will remove existing barriers to enrolling and receiving services, including exceptions to parental signature requirements for minors.
- Remove barriers that prohibit unaccompanied homeless minors from accessing the health care services they need without a parent or legal guardian present.
- Develop and distribute to homeless youth providers a resource guide that details all the information relevant to homeless youth providers regarding the Affordable Care Act and how to access services that homeless youth need.
- Encourage all states to fully implement the Affordable Care Act and expand Medicaid.

(4) Using Data, Setting Goals and Defining What It Means to End Homelessness

- Include multiple sources of data in setting goals and defining what it means to end youth homelessness (i.e. U.S. Department of Education Numbers, HUD Point-in-time count, CDC's Youth Risk Behavior Surveys, etc.).
- Encourage Congress to fund the Prevalence, Needs, and Characteristics of Homeless Youth in America study as authorized under the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA (P.L. 110-378)).
- Implement standard definitions for homeless youth that enable runaway and homeless youth who are couch surfing to qualify for all housing and supportive services available.
- Conduct an initial inventory, to be updated on an annual basis, of federally funded youth-specific housing that includes the full continuum of services including crisis intervention housing, transitional housing, and supportive housing.
- Develop data-sharing protocols with other systems, including the education, child welfare, mental health, substance abuse treatment, and juvenile justice systems.