

**Southern Nevada Homelessness Continuum of Care Board  
Youth Working Group**

Thursday, August 20, 2020 | 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.  
Zoom Teleconference

**Champions:** Arash Ghafoori and Melissa Jacobowitz

**I. Welcome & Introductions**

Melissa Jacobowitz (NPHY); Meg Pike (CCSD); Joe Taylor (StepUP); Elika Nematian (Three Square Food Bank); Aishia Henderson (Graduate Student Capella University); Danita Osborne (CCSS); Kim Moore (SWHYC); Dr. Ray Macfarlane (The Center); Laura OBrist (NSHE); Nora Saldivar (BitFocus)

**II. Funding Opportunities**

a. **Nevada Grant Office:** [http://grant.nv.gov/covid\\_19\\_grants/](http://grant.nv.gov/covid_19_grants/)

Clark County mentioned they are still waiting for the YHDP NOFA to be announced, it could be a few weeks out according to HUD; regarding the CoC annual competition, it was expressed that there may not be a general competition this year as efforts around COVID-19 are being prioritized.

**III. COVID-19 Response**

SWYHC: HELP is following the same standard procedures, all youth must be masked in all common areas but they can use the restroom or eat in the common areas unmasked. They are still doing intakes and have increased their numbers to allow more youth to enroll. They are expecting a large spike in the homeless youth population once the moratorium is lifted in September. One of the challenges they are facing is obtaining social security cards for youth as it is taking over 12 weeks via mail and youth are reluctant to send their birth certificates via mail.

NPHY: The DIC has been modified in terms of general hours of operation but all basic needs services are available, including meeting with case managers and family reunification. NPHY's Emergency Shelter Program is at reduced capacity so each youth has their own room and the transitional housing program is still operational: youth in these programs are attending therapy remotely. Outreach activities will be moving forward, including community and street outreach while being done safely.

CCSD: School starts on Monday via distance learning. There is a statewide campaign to ensure all students are accounted for and they understand who needs internet and computers ([connectingkidsnv.org](http://connectingkidsnv.org)). Shelters have received Chromebooks, but there are more hotspots available including Chromebooks for students in need. CCSD has created a dashboard to keep track of individuals in need of resources. CCSD staff are delivering supplies on Mondays and Wednesdays. If you need Chromebooks or hotspots please reach out to Title I HOPE. CCSD is waiting for the second round of funding to come through so they can purchase more resources to distribute to youth in need.

StepUP: The StepUp office is open to visitors at this time to conduct intakes. They are still having case managers work remotely, with workers coming in a couple of days a week. A couple of staff have retired and they are not rehiring for these positions at this time. NPHY has been connecting foster youth to StepUP. Aged-out and former foster youth (18 – 21) are eligible for CARES Act funding.

CCSS: CCSS offices are still closed to the public, but services can be received over the phone via intake. COVID CARES Act money was distributed through the CHAP program, to assist individuals who are not stably housed or at risk of losing their housing due to unemployment, but this program recently

closed and is no longer open to new applicants. They are working on a plan to work toward housing families quickly and aiming to house 3,500 households within 3 years. They are also rolling out new CE training sessions regarding emergency shelter and community matching.

The Center: Most programs are taking a hybrid approach, being offered online or via small groups. They received funding from United Way to assist individuals with housing. They are working with the Bright Star Foundation to launch housing programs and will know within a month if the Center will have expanded housing. Youth groups at The LGBTQ Center are meeting in person Tuesdays 4p (13-17 years old) and 6p (18-24 years old), and online Thursday evenings. The Center's health services clinic has also re-opened.

Three Square: Elika Nematian, Advocacy & Compliance Manager, stated Three Square issued an emergency plan and has closed pantries to switch to drive-thru distribution centers. They also have a senior delivery program, where seniors can call and place an order and are working with partner agencies to deliver food to individuals. Afterschool program lunches had to be discontinued over the summer, but they are looking into restarting these services during the school year. Three Square recently launched the Pandemic Electronic Benefits Transfer (P-EBT) program to help school-aged children who would have received FRL or Breakfast program over the prior school year (March, April, and May); there is no application process so individuals should receive this benefit automatically. This program provides \$5.70 per school day; the Division of Welfare and Supportive Services (DWSS) will be administering the funds to EBT cards or checks to clients' last known address. If any children or youth need an update of address as of March they can call DWSS to get the benefit added to their EBT card.

BitFocus: BitFocus is performing data quality checks at this time. If there are any updates to providers' housing inventory please contact [nevada@bitfocus.com](mailto:nevada@bitfocus.com) with any updates.

NSHE: NSHE is currently hiring for a student worker with former foster care experience who is taking classes at CSN. The new Chancellor starts on September 1<sup>st</sup>. They are working with Title I HOPE to discover homeless students as well as identify current and former foster youth. NSHE will be presenting workshops with Legal Aid about how to address homelessness during COVID-19 (moratoriums, etc.). Funds have been reallocated for direct student support, including summer scholarships for youth, food security gift cards through the To Catch a Dream foundation, and to obtain resources for remote instruction/tech support/added food security (are pending approval). Legal Aid has a foster youth tool kit and School House Connection also has resources available concerning financial aid assistance for youth at-risk of homelessness.

#### **IV. Young Adults in Charge Update**

On August 3<sup>rd</sup> YAC sent a letter of Support to the Clark County Board of Commissioners in favor of the Commissioner Jones' "source of income" housing discrimination protective ordinance: protecting those who are evicted due to COVID-19 from facing income discrimination in terms of obtaining housing. This measure was passed by the Board of Commissioners. On August 13, YAC member, Theresa Butler, presented to the CoC Board on behalf of Young Adults in Charge. On August 18, together with the NPHY Ambassadors, YAC attended a virtual screening of the film "Following Their Lead: Youth in Action" concerning youth action boards across the country addressing social issues and engaged in a discussion. Since COVID YAC members have been meeting remotely every two weeks with the next YAC meeting taking place on Tuesday, August 25 from 5 to 6 pm; youth with lived experiences of

homelessness ages 12 – 24 are welcome to attend. Email [youngadultsincharge@gmail.com](mailto:youngadultsincharge@gmail.com) for more information.

## **V. Discussion**

Aishia Henderson performing a research study about the current data system used to collect data on unaccompanied homeless youth who are homeless in Southern Nevada. She mentioned that she understands that HUD and the VA supportive housing project are sharing data, and she is investing how youth providers can do the same with sharing data concerning homeless youth. She is looking to see how youth providers collect and use their data, even if they do not use HMIS. To qualify for participation in the study you must meet one of the following criteria: provide a supportive service to unaccompanied homeless youth (12 – 25); use a data system to collect data on this population; or and provide administrative data management support services. Please reach out to Aishia ([ahenderson57@capellauniversity.edu](mailto:ahenderson57@capellauniversity.edu)) to schedule an interview via zoom for under 40 minutes. Volunteers who participate will be provided an incentive. Ms. Jacobowitz shared that FYSB is debuting a new data system in September (switching from RHYPoint to an RHY-HMIS repository); they are requiring all grantees to upload data in HMIS and then HHS will have data uploaded into their system.

## **VI. Adjournment**

**a. The next YWG meeting will take place on September 17, 2020, via Zoom.**