



**Philly Homes for Youth Coalition
Cross-System Asks
January 2020**

Problem: To ensure that transition age youth ages 14-21 have the resources and support they need to transition successfully to adulthood, significant improvement in cross-system coordination and accountability is required. Lack of coordination results in an increased risk for older youth to exit the care of public systems and enter the homeless assistance system or cycle in and out of unstable housing situations.

Goal 1: Improve the use and collection of data around the service needs and resources provided by the child welfare and juvenile justice systems for transition age youth. Enhanced data transparency will increase understanding about the needs of this population and enhance cross-system collaboration to prevent homelessness.

1. **DHS & Office of Juvenile Probation:** Request that DHS and the Office of Juvenile Probation publish annual data related to the needs and services for youth aged 14-21 involved in child welfare and juvenile justice systems. *The Coalition requests that DHS and the Office of Juvenile Probation work with the Coalition to determine and hone the reporting parameters (e.g. what defines “discharges to stable living arrangement”). If any specific data components are not currently being collected, the Coalition requests that DHS and the Office of Juvenile Probation create a plan with the Coalition to begin collecting this data.*

Specific data that the Coalition requests includes:

- A. The protocols for transition and re-entry planning and how they address housing stability and security.
- B. The service array for youth ages 14-21.
- C. The numbers of youth between the ages of 17 and 21 who are discharging from

- a. the Juvenile Justice and Child Welfare system
- D. The number discharged to a stable living arrangement, including aggregate discharge placement outcomes; e.g. number of youth who discharged to kin vs. youth who discharged to independent living); and the number of youth discharged without a permanency option or resource.
- E. A description of how each agency assists youth in obtaining their vital documents.
- F. The number of youth between the ages of 14 and 21 who have their vital documents on file.
- G. The number of youth between the ages of 14 and 21 discharging both systems who leave the system with their vital documents
- H. The number of youth between the ages of 14 and 21 discharging both systems who leave the system without their vital documents

2. DHS: Collect data on needs and resources for aging-out youth: Work with CUAs to conduct a survey of aging-out foster youth and an analysis of case records to identify major needs of such youth and the resources to address them.

3. DHS: Pilot program proposal: Launch a pilot with selected CUAs in which the participating CUAs would identify specific CUA case managers to specialize in serving older youth in placement. Evaluate whether the outcomes for young people being served by these case managers would vary from those being served through the regular case management system.

4. DHS Juvenile Justice Services: Allocate funds for a one-stop reintegration center (on the Achieving Independence Center model) for youth discharged from the juvenile justice system.

5. DHS Pilot program proposal: Request funds under the Independent Living Grant to expand services at the Achieving Independence Center to a cohort of young people being discharged from the Juvenile Justice system. Provision of IL services to juvenile justice youth is allowable under the IL grant. Several other counties in Pennsylvania, including Chester and Lycoming provide IL services for juvenile justice youth and serve youth exiting child welfare and juvenile justice systems in the same life skills programming centers.

Goal 2.: Improve cross-system coordination and service delivery to ensure that young people at risk of or experiencing homelessness receive the support and resources they need successfully transition to adulthood

1. **School District:** Allocate funds for additional staff for the School District to assist with coordinating services for youth who are homeless and at risk of becoming homeless; and for training and support for District staff, including a designated sum to be used to provide flexible assistance for students.
2. **DBH:** Request that DBH and CBH annually report in a publicly available document (note: the Coalition requests to work with DHS and CBH to determine and hone the reporting parameters)
3. The number of youth between the ages of 18 and 21 who are discharging from the Juvenile Justice and Child Welfare system and are receiving or are identified as in need of receiving behavioral health services. Describe the specific services and support they provide for youth aging out of these systems. The number of youth between the ages of 18-21 receiving behavioral health services who have not been involved in the child welfare or juvenile justice systems.
4. **HHS:** Appoint a staff position with the responsibility for identifying issues and policies affecting transition-aged youth among the city departments included in the Health and Human Services Cabinet, and provide that position the authority to develop policy and take actions to improve coordination among HHS departments and assure accountability in service delivery and outcomes.

Goal 2: Enhance and expand age-appropriate resources for older youth to ensure they can access the resources they need to successfully transition to adulthood

1. **OHS:** Allocate funds for a drop-in center (or multiple drop-in centers across the city) for transition aged youth who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless that would be a hub for service delivery and coordination (It could also be the key, but not only, point of entry for youth).
2. **HHS:** Allocate funds to staff regularly scheduled vital document “clinics” for young people and for fees to acquire documents.

Goal 3: Increase accountability and transparency of existing cross-system efforts to address youth homelessness.

1. **HHS:** Request a report from the Deputy Managing Director for Health and Human Services on progress in addressing this commitment made in *Together We Thrive: Philadelphia’s Agenda for Health and Well-Being 2017* (<http://www.phila.gov/hhs/PDF/TogetherWeThrive.pdf>), and who is responsible in each identified city department for spearheading work on their goals and for reporting out on these deliverables and at what intervals