

HYC meeting February 17, 2009

Big announcement: Hillcrest Washington Youth Home has committed to being the lead agency on the homeless youth drop in center. Gail Knight Williams, Executive Director of the Southwestern Foundation, will be assisting in the Welborn Baptist Foundation letter of intent and grant proposal.

This was followed by a discussion on how to utilize the services and staff with the Department of Child Services, both now and with the drop-in center.

We are also interested to see how the \$1.5 billion stimulus package may have an impact on funding homeless shelters and homeless youth, and the case management portion of the drop in center.

Updates on subcommittees:

Homeless Youth Coalition Subcommittees

- **Community Awareness** – Develop channels for making the community at large, faith-based organizations, teachers and public and private agencies aware of the youth homelessness, its causes and available services for homeless youth.

Vanderburgh Homeless Connect is on March 12 and will include a table with homeless youth information. See Mandy Gregory if you are interested in volunteering that day.

Homeward Bound 5K Walk will be June 13; a Homeless Youth Coalition team has been set up. Sign up online.

- **Data Collection** – In conjunction with the Homeless Services Council Data Committee, determine types of information needed and channels for including it in HMIS.

We need to conduct focus groups prior to Summer 09 to identify the number of youth and their needs. Anne Statham is completing a study on 18 to 23 year olds. Marie Opatry will be asked to assist in the focus groups with younger teens.

- **Legislation** – Research existing climate (including licensing, funding and other issues.) Make recommendations on needed state and federal legislation, monitor its progress and coordinate HYC advocacy efforts.

A House bill under consideration and vote this legislative session will remove liability for shelters providing services to youth under the age of 18. Representative Avery is the sponsor of that bill.

We need someone to look at the regulations associated with a drop in center – would this center fall under day care regulations, would the Health Department need to inspect?

- **Services** – Document existing services available to homeless youth and create documentation of our existing continuum of care. Develop and propose plans for the proposed drop-in center/emergency shelter and permanent supportive housing.

The above announcement is related to Services committee. We now need to think about fundraising, location, hiring a full time person to coordinate services and provide outreach. Monroe County Youth Service Bureau has a shelter and may be a good model for us to consider.

- **Prevention** – Document existing services that address the causes of youth homelessness, work with Community Awareness Subcommittee to promote awareness in these programs of their role in preventing youth homelessness.

Next meeting date is March 16 from 11:30 am to 1:00 pm. Not sure the specific room yet but we will meet at Old National Bank. At 1:00 pm we will host a press conference announcing the lead organization in the homeless youth drop-in center. Please plan to stay for the 1:00 pm press conference.

Respectfully submitted,
Cynthia Smith