



Homeless Youth Coalition

March 16, 2009

Present: Crystal Sisson, Gail Knight Williams, Charlie Castleman, Birdie Harrison, John Casavant, Tonya Staup, Kat Isbell, Bill Curtis, Courtney Edwards, Eric Freeman, Barb Bennett, Randy Lewis, Luzada Hayes, Charles Sutton, Wyeth Hatfield, and Cynthia Smith

Grant Application Update. Hillcrest and the Homeless Youth Coalition are not applying to the Welborn Baptist Foundation at this time. We need to work diligently on forming positive relationships with key stakeholders in the community who have an effect on homeless youth, e.g. Dept. of Child Services (DCS) and law enforcement.

Data Collection. We need to collect data on the number of youth who are homeless, particularly the number of unaccompanied youth. Individual members of the coalition need to identify the number of youth they are serving who are homeless. Through a *Destination: Home* license, with HYC as a "program" under that license, we can make use of the HMIS system. We'll need to designate users for data entry and reports. Next year we will need to consider how to fund the license for HMIS.

Funding Considerations. We may want to consider focusing our funding pursuits not on the number of youth served, but based on service units, such as case management services, meals served, parent reconciliation meetings, etc.

Outreach Services. Almost all drop-in centers use some type of outreach services. These outreach services will require collaboration with other service providers. These service providers have a role of providing linkages to services in the community. We need to identify those community services that are willing to serve youth.

Area Youth Shelters. There are licensed shelters for youth in Evansville, e.g., Youth Care Center, Hillcrest, United Methodist Youth Home. However, these are not shelters a youth can voluntarily enter. Life Choices allows for voluntary entry for the population it serves.

Establishing Protocol. We will need a clear protocol for agencies to follow so we do not violate any rules. We need to report to DCS and local police department. But, how to do this without pushing away the youth is the challenge.

Location of the drop-in center. No firm place yet, but we want to have available shower facilities, safe place, meals to eat. Some locations that have been mentioned are Zion UCC, St. James. Bill Curtis has been in contact with the Downtown Ministerial Association. We might also consider how to collaborate with Wired Café (now at Fourth and Court).

Immediate Shelter Needs. Also asked was "What do you do when a youth needs immediate shelter?" There really is not an answer currently. Outreach services could help to identify immediate needs and provide some assistance. Aurora does provide outreach services to all, but staff members are not trained to deal with youth issues, and their current hours for outreach may not be effective for youth.

Updates on subcommittees:

- **Community Awareness:** Sign up for the Homeless Youth Coalition team for Homeward Bound walk on June 13 at www.homewardboundindiana.org
- **Data Collection:** We need to conduct focus groups prior to Summer '09 to identify # of youth and their needs. We also have a request from the Data Committee about topics, issues that impact HYC.
- **Legislation:** Patty and Cynthia will continue to research the regulations associated with drop-in centers and work with Bill Curtis and Hillcrest to talk to DCS and law enforcement about their concerns.
- **Services:** Develop and propose plans for the proposed drop-in center. This must be done immediately. Hillcrest must know what the HYC is thinking in terms of the drop-in center. Identify immediately what services should be in place at a drop-in center. We will not build it and see if the youth come. We must design the center for the youth.
- **Prevention:** We need immediately the list of youth programs, their funding sources, and capacity (if applicable) that will help to prevent homelessness in youth.

Next meetings: April 20 12:00 noon at ONB Blue & Gold Room.

The May meeting will be May 18 at 12:00 noon at the EVPL Central Library (downtown).

Media Conference was held at 1:00 pm to announce Hillcrest's leadership with the drop-in center.