Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program
Quarter One Executive Summary

This executive summary highlights the work of the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP) collective to reduce youth homelessness through the coordinated community plan. Specifically, this report focuses on key outputs, quality and outcome measures. The YHDP data partner, Measurement Resources Company (MRC), worked collaboratively with CSB and YHDP partners to gather insights from the following data sources: focus groups with youth served by partners, CSB client-level data, Franklin County Court eviction records, partner internal client tracking, and a collective impact survey distributed to partners.

Collective Impact Partners:

- Community Shelter Board
- Community Housing Network
- Center for Healthy Families
- Home for Families
- Huckleberry House
- Kaleidoscope Youth Center
- Star House
- YMCA of Central Ohio

Types of services delivered through the collective:

- The Drop-In Center is a supportive location providing resources, basic supports, and temporary overnight shelter.
- Outreach Programs are community-based programs intended to reach individuals living unsheltered, in places not meant for human habitation.
- Emergency/Crisis Shelter is designed for short-term stabilization, providing resources, basic supports, and overnight shelter.
- Rapid Re-Housing is a housing-first solution designed to house youth as quickly as possible.
- Transitional Housing is designed to be utilized for six months to two years in combination with supportive services to build self-sufficiency.
- Permanent Supportive Housing is for those disabled youth experiencing long-term homelessness who benefit from intensive supportive services.

Key Takeaways from Youth's Perspective

How TAY get connected to housing partners:

Prior to being connected with housing at partner organizations, youth in focus groups mentioned living in emergency shelters and being referred through academic avenues (e.g., college advisors); family shelters; and other shelters.
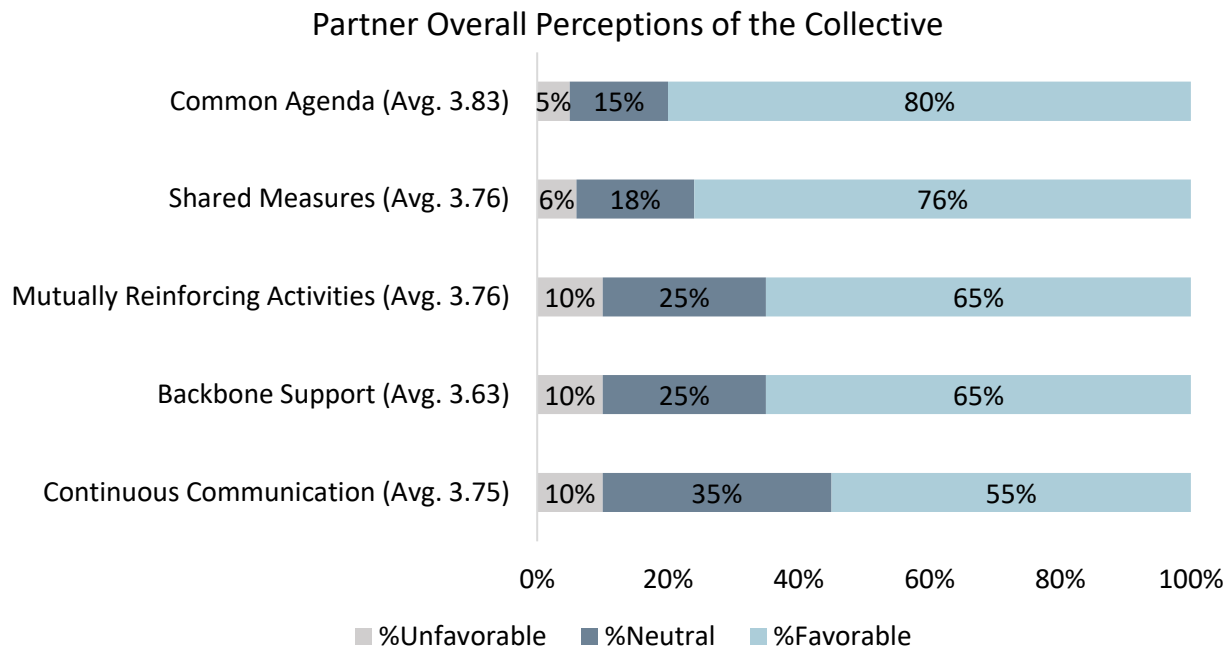
Elements youth like about current services:

- Connection to health services
- Opportunities to do laundry or learn how to cook
- Opportunities to engage in classes or mental health counseling
- Having friendly case managers and being able to shift scheduled meetings around

Opportunities for Improvement:

- Make resources and programs more accessible
  "Without a phone or service, it's nearly impossible to find resources and do what we need to do."
  "Once you're housed, it's hard to get help. Just because I'm housed doesn't mean I don't need help."
- Provide on-site health support
  "They should have an on-site nurse. Things happen out here. You have people coming from all different walks of life. Some people do drugs, some are suicidal. People and kids get hurt or sick. There could be a person who gets there before the ambulance does."
- Increase safety measures on buses and on-site especially at night and on weekends.
  "We need someone here on the weekends. There are always problems on the weekend, and I can't knock on the office door and let them know. There's no security."
  "Sometimes the COTA bus is dangerous, especially if you have to stay late at work or your schedule changes. We need safety coming to and from work. I feel like people follow me when I get off the bus."
- Create opportunities for building community in residential sites
  "We should have a Christmas party. I love Christmas and if we just come together, drink hot cocoa, play a Christmas movie, eat some snacks, play some Christmas music...it will give us an opportunity to meet people and be more close-knit. Some of us don't have people to go to."
  "People hear things happening, but they don't say anything because they don't know them. This would make people care more about each other."
- Build compassion among businesses and organizations that regularly interact with youth who experience homelessness
  "People discriminate against us because we're homeless. All the restaurants surrounding the [organization] will refuse us service. If you have [organization] as your address, you get called names. Workers have rant sessions about homeless kids. Bus drivers are really bad about homeless people; they're very rude if your hair is a mess or you have a big bag. Sometimes, if you're the only one at a stop, bus drivers won't stop for you."

Key Takeaways from Partners' Perspectives

YHDP (funded and non-funded) collective impact partners were given a survey designed to understand partners' experiences and perceptions of how the collective (i.e., youth system) is doing at creating, sharing, and achieving a shared vision of ending youth homelessness in Franklin County. This survey is based on the Collective Impact Principles of Practice.[1] Partner responses were generally favorable,[2] indicating a strong foundation for the collective impact evaluation process to successfully achieve its goals. However, there is great opportunity to improve in each area of collective impact.

Partner Overall Perceptions of the Collective

Component	%Unfavorable	%Neutral	%Favorable
Common Agenda (Avg. 3.83)	5%	15%	80%
Shared Measures (Avg. 3.76)	6%	18%	76%
Mutually Reinforcing Activities (Avg. 3.76)	10%	25%	65%
Backbone Support (Avg. 3.63)	10%	25%	65%
Continuous Communication (Avg. 3.75)	10%	35%	55%

■ %Unfavorable   ■ %Neutral   ■ %Favorable

Strengths supporting the YHDP work in the words of Partners:

- "The housing system is strong and communicates well with each other."
- "I believe that the community has taken an important initial first step in providing housing options. However, additional funding must be secured to provide the heavy lifting associated with teaching job readiness, financial literacy, and soft skills training needed to empower our youth for employment."
- "strong partners that are invested in the work"

To improve the collective impact model to reduce youth homelessness:

- Adopt strategies that allow partners to effectively communicate with one another
  - "CSB administrators not always on same page in communicating directives"
- Build partner agreement on how success of work is measured

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[1] https://www.collectiveimpactforum.org/resources/collective-impact-principles-practice
[2] Scale scores were computed for each of the five components on scales ranging from 1- Strongly Disagree to 5-Strongly Agree. Scales scores were classified as favorable, neutral, unfavorable based on the following: >/= 3.5 = Favorable; < 3.5 and > 2.4 = Neutral; </= 2.4 = Unfavorable.

- o "I feel as though there was a tremendous amount of work on the front end of this grant, but a lack of urgency as the grant continues."
- Build a shared understanding of the approach the collective needs to take to address youth homelessness
    - o "Not addressing the problem at the source; unwillingness to do something different to engage in transformative change"
    - o "Lack of focus on ending homelessness. There is a greater focus on sheltering instead of housing and the false belief that poverty can be cured by case management and services."
- Build alignment of individual partner work to goals of the collective
    - o "There still seems to be a gap in being youth-centric as a collective, youth are still being served in a system designed for adults (not developmentally informed)."
- Encourage innovation with and among collaborative partners to advance the work
    - o "Antiquated thinking. A one-size-fits-all approach to problem-solving. I would like to see more resources allocated to assisted daily living skills."

Quarter One Recommendations:

- Continue to refine and standardize data collection across partners.
- Increase safety measures for youth.
- Increase client-led community-building activities.
- Improve engagement within the local community to decrease discrimination.
- Incorporate use of best practices in serving youth. (i.e., Near Peer Mentors, etc.)