

- Developing a youth-specific mobile outreach team to identify, engage, and provide support to homeless youth as well as connect them to services.
- Educating community members and businesses to be part of the solution, for example, through opening up rooms or volunteering backyards for tiny homes.
- Expansion of shelter and support services targeted at homeless families with children as well as emancipated youth. For example, by exploring Oakland's DreamCatcher Youth Services as a model for providing a safe landing for homeless, disconnected, and at-risk children.
- Explore coordination and collaboration with the Berkeley Unified School District to provide services to homeless children, youth, and homeless families with children. Examples of items to explore include the following:
 - Development of supportive housing targeted at homeless youth as well as homeless families with children
 - Providing laundry facilities to be offered at Berkeley High, Berkeley Technology Academy, or an off-campus site that families can access
 - Providing scholarships for youth to obtain memberships to the YMCA
 - Providing scholarships to supply \$25 fee waivers for homeless children and youth to be able to attend the PE classes of their choice
- Requesting the City Manager to return with budget recommendations relevant to the allocation of Housing Trust Fund and other monies to provide seed and/or ongoing funding money for housing and other programmatic items mentioned above.

Background

The National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty found that nationally, 38% of the homeless are families, which includes over 1.35 million children. The U.S. Conference of Mayors annually reports that families with children are the fastest-growing portion of the homeless population.

According to the East Oakland Community Project, an estimated 16,000 people experience homelessness in Alameda County, and children comprise 28% of the county's homeless population. The 2015 point-in-time count conducted in Berkeley by EveryOne Home indicates that a disproportional amount of these children are African American and Latina/o.

Youth experience homelessness for a number of reasons including abuse, family conflict, sexual identity, pregnancy, or family poverty. 20% of homeless youth left home over conflict with their parents about LGBTQI status. Youth may have become disconnected from family, school or work. They may be struggling with mental health and substance abuse disorders.

Young people transitioning out of foster care are extremely vulnerable to homelessness. Without a family support network, typically foster youth turn 18 and have nowhere to go

and nobody to turn to for help. Studies repeatedly show that more than one in three foster youth experience homelessness.

Youth who experience homelessness are especially vulnerable to criminal victimization, sexual exploitation, labor and sex trafficking or traumatic stress. [The National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty conclude that 43% of homeless youth were beaten by a foster parent or caretaker and 25% were sexually propositioned by a caretaker.](#)

As a community, we must create systems of support for our homeless or precariously housed youth.

Financial Implications

Staff time.

Contact Person

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