

News Release

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A ‘Needs Assessment’ report offers recommendations for state allocations of housing and service funding for youth experiencing homelessness

(Salem) – The Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH) and Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS) today announced the results of a statewide analysis that examined the need and pipeline for housing and services for youth experiencing or at risk of experiencing homelessness. Unique in the study was a comprehensive effort to recruit and engage youth across the state with lived experience of homelessness to inform and design housing and services programs that may receive state funding.

The report offers recommendations to state lawmakers for youth-specific housing interventions, housing and services. The project was born from the 2020 session of the Oregon State Legislature after a proposed bill requested a study to understand better the level of appropriations required to address housing and service gaps statewide for young people. Today, presenters at the Statewide Symposium on Youth Experiencing Homelessness Programing (YEHP) shared the report titled, *Oregon Statewide Homeless Youth Needs Assessment*.

“We appreciate the work that CSH has done to engage with community partners across the state, as well as with youth and young adults who have experienced, or are currently experiencing, housing instability and homelessness,” said Dan Haun, director of the Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS), Self-Sufficiency Program. “ODHS will use the results and recommendations from the statewide assessment to inform our ongoing efforts towards supporting youth in our Oregon communities.”

“We applaud ODHS for their leadership and collaboration throughout this project. The project serves as a model for other states on how to engage the voices of youth with lived experience when designing housing and service programs that better utilize public resources to address the reality of youth homelessness,” said Annie Bacci, Director, Mountain West at CSH. “We are excited that this assessment will inform new appropriations from the 2021 legislative session,” Ms. Bacci added.

The needs assessment required a comprehensive system modeling process that 1) outlined the “optimal” housing and services array across five regions to estimate the statewide level of need; 2) completed a statewide financial model outlining the costs of identified housing and services needs from the regional system-modeling; and 3) provided a summary report and recommendations on the findings of the needs assessment.

CSH worked with ODHS to recruit critical stakeholders from state systems in juvenile justice, child welfare, education, healthcare and homeless system partners. They also conducted an intensive effort to recruit and engage youth. CSH then segmented the youth into groups under 18 and 18-24 to address the needs specific to each age group. CSH arranged to compensate the youth for their time and expertise.

“We led each regional team through a process of mapping out an ideal system for ensuring youth had the lowest barriers to safe and affordable housing and the services they would need to thrive. We are most excited that these youth leaders are still engaged and have begun the process of forming a statewide youth advisory board that will work with leaders to design supportive housing and services,” said Ms. Bacci.

The report is available on the ODHS Runaway and Homeless Youth website or can be viewed by visiting the direct link:

<https://www.oregon.gov/dhs/CHILDREN/Homeless-Youth/Documents/CSH-YH-Needs.pdf>

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About CSH

The Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH) is the national champion for supportive housing, demonstrating its potential to improve the lives of very vulnerable individuals and families by helping communities create more than 385,000 real homes for people who desperately need them. CSH funding, expertise and advocacy have provided \$1 billion in direct loans and grants for supportive housing across the country. Building on 30 years of success developing multiple and cross-sector partnerships, CSH engages broader systems to fully invest in solutions that drive equity, help people thrive, and harness data to generate concrete and sustainable results. By aligning affordable housing with services and other sectors, CSH helps communities move away from crisis, optimize their public resources, and ensure a better future for everyone. Visit us at www.csh.org.

About ODHS Runaway and Homeless Youth Program

The Oregon Department of Human Services' Runaway and Homeless Youth Program is responsible for coordinating statewide planning for delivery of services to youth experiencing homelessness and housing instability. Learn more at <https://www.oregon.gov/dhs/CHILDREN/Homeless-Youth/Pages/index.aspx>