

News Release

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Youth Experiencing Homelessness Will Benefit from Investments in Youth Voice and Service Expansion Opportunities

Organizations serving Oregon youth experiencing homelessness are getting an infusion of over \$1 million in order to maintain service delivery during the pandemic, expand capacity to serve more areas of the state, and better incorporate youth voice in their programs. The funds are made available by federal COVID-19 relief funds and state relief spending and were recently approved by the Oregon Legislature.

Youth experiencing homelessness face barriers meeting basic needs – access to food, clean clothes, a place to shower, a location to access resources, and safe, stable housing. The COVID-19 crisis has had an especially negative effect on impacted youth who are Black, Oregon Tribal Nations, and youth of color. Organizations providing services to this vulnerable population have also experienced serious pandemic-related hardships.

To address this, Oregon's Legislative Emergency Board approved \$1 million of funding in January 2021 to support current ODHS' Runaway Homeless Youth (RHY) grant providers who faced service delivery challenges due to the global pandemic. Providers will begin receiving relief funding in April 2021.

To improve the services available to youth, the RHY program is also providing \$130,000 in short-term, equity-focused grants to 12 direct service providers. In part funded by Federal CARES Act funding, these grant awards expand RHY service into six new counties. Each provider is a new grantee of the RHY program:

- Youth Era (Lane County)
- The Living Room (Clackamas County)
- Lincoln County Shelter (Lincoln County)
- Youth Rising (Klamath County)
- Parrott Creek Child & Family Services (Clackamas Creek)
- St. Vincent de Paul (Lane County)
- Alternative Youth Activities (Coos County)
- Integral Youth Services (Klamath County)
- Alba Collaborative (Multnomah County)
- AntFarm (Clackamas County)
- Family Faith and Relationship Advocates (Douglas County)
- The Next Door (Hood River/Wasco County)

To ensure the voice of youth is lifted in the process of planning, design, and delivery of youth-focused service, ODHS has awarded \$50,000 in Youth Engagement grants. Grants are focused

on supporting young people's involvement on Youth Advisory Boards, including the provision of appropriate compensation for their experience and expertise. Youth Advisory Boards are made up of youth, young adults and stakeholders and are key in the decision-making process that implements housing and services to end youth homelessness. This funding is being awarded with intention to engage Black, Oregon Tribal Nations, and youth of color in Youth Advisory Boards.

10 service providers have been awarded grants:

- Lincoln County Shelter (Lincoln County)
- Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon / Second Home (Washington County)
- Oregon Social Learning Center / 15th Night (Lane County)
- Clackamas Workforce Partnership / Clackamas Youth Action Board (Clackamas County)
- HOME Youth Services (Marion/Polk County)
- Hearts with a Mission (Jackson/Josephine County)
- J Bar J Youth Services (Deschutes County)
- Jackson Street Youth Services (Linn/Benton County)
- New Avenues for Youth (Multnomah County)
- Yamhill Community Action Partnership (Yamhill County)

To learn more about youth experiencing homelessness visit ODHS' [homeless youth webpage](#).