Youth Experiencing Homelessness Program
Youth Action Board Quarterly Report

YEHP
YAB

Quarter 3, 2026 | July 1st – September 30th

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Executive Summary

The Oregon Department of Human Services (ODHS) Youth Experiencing Homelessness Program (YEHP) Youth Action Board (YAB) is an initiative developed to bridge the gap between youth with lived experience of homelessness, service providers, and state government. The YEHP YAB has played a vital role in amplifying youth voices in statewide youth homelessness programming since its implementation in 2023.

The YEHP YAB is a statewide board of young Oregonians between the ages of 14 – 24 who have experienced, or are experiencing, homelessness. Young people on the YEHP YAB come from diverse backgrounds and regions, offering unique perspectives that help YEHP align programming with the needs of youth across the state. The YEHP YAB offers youth-centered guidance, collaborates with partners on system change efforts, supports program evaluation, creates and delivers training, sits on YEHP hiring panels, and more. YEHP compensates each young person's expertise at a rate of $50/hour for up to 10 hours of work per month.

The following report is an overview of the YEHP YAB's work and impact from July 1st, 2026, through September 30th, 2026 (Q3 2026).

Membership

YEHP YAB membership sits at 9 actively engaged youth ages 18 – 24. Youth represent seven counties across Oregon: Multnomah, Linn, Lane, Coos, Jackson, Deschutes, and Crook counties.

Trends in Q3 membership from 2024 and 2025 indicated that a fall recruitment session would be likely. In past years, YEHP YAB members who resigned did so during the summer and early fall as the result of changes in their personal, educational, and professional obligations. In Q3 2026, however, no YEHP YAB members resigned, so the YEHP YAB opted to skip fall recruitment.

Funding

The YEHP YAB operates on a $120,00 biennial budget via YEHP's general funds. Each quarter, anticipated expenditures are approximately $15,000, dependent on the number of YEHP YAB members, their capacity for engagement and the demand for work. Summer brings new

schedules, internships, new jobs, and many other changes for young people, showing up in the YEHP YAB as decreased availability. Even so, YEHP YAB members contributed over 225 hours to meetings and projects, bringing the YEHP YAB's Q3 2026 expenditures to $11,404.

Activities and engagement

Meetings

Regular board meetings occur every other Sunday, alternating between being led by the Strategic Youth Engagement Coordinator (SYEC) and YEHP YAB members. Regular board meetings are a place for the YAB and SYEC to share updates, collaborate, discuss ODHS priorities, and more. In Q3 2026, there were 7 regular board meetings with an average attendance rate of 81%. 5 out of the 7 meetings were youth-led, meaning a lead and co-lead collaborated to set the agenda, create meeting materials, and facilitate the meeting. Youth-led meetings give young people the opportunity to build confidence. YEHP YAB members report feeling increasingly confident and eager to collaborate amongst themselves outside of meetings. Further, YEHP YAB members find that these leadership and collaboration opportunities contribute positively to their professional development and conduct.

Presentations and trainings

There were few presentation and training facilitation opportunities for YEHP YAB members in Q3 2026, but YEHP YAB members did an excellent job facilitating those requests. In July, the Youth Experiencing Homelessness Oregon Alliance, a group of youth service providers, invited the YEHP YAB to present their YAB-developed "Adultism in Social Services" training to members.

That same week, YEHP YAB members facilitated the same training for the SSP Analyst Office Hours, hosted by YEHP. While the YEHP YAB presented in this setting before, over time, youth presenters share that each training facilitated builds rapport between SSP Analyst Office Hours attendees and youth. YEHP YAB members relay that, while early meetings had quiet audiences, more recent attendee engagement has led to "dynamic conversations", giving the YEHP YAB feedback that has been addressed by developing additional youth-led training.

Beyond presentations, the YEHP YAB considered feedback from "Adultism in Social Services" training sessions to develop a follow-up training that answers a question their audiences have

been asking, “How can we take this training a step further, using this information to support young people’s autonomy?”. The result of the YEHP YAB’s efforts to answer this question is a training titled, “Supporting Youth Experiencing Homelessness with Self-Advocacy”. Training development is nearly complete as of the end of Q3 2026. Next steps include YEHP YAB member review and final adjustments before the training’s debut in November 2026.

Partnerships

YEHP YAB members continue to show up for a variety of meetings and initiatives with YEHP partners. One YEHP YAB member sits on the Youth Experiencing Homelessness Advisory Committee (YEHAC). They attend quarterly committee meetings with service providers and state agency partners and participate in YEHAC Planning Committee meetings. This YEHP YAB member also presents updates and facilitates training sessions for YEHAC members.

The YEHP YAB continues to work with Maslow Project and their Youth Action Council on the Youth Leadership Curriculum. The goal of this partnership is a guide for youth who have lived experience with homelessness, serving as an introduction to skills needed in advocacy work.

YEHP YAB members are also integrated into YEHP’s Direct Cash Transfers Plus (DCT+) monthly organization meetings. At these meetings, YEHP YAB members report relevant DCT+ updates back to the YEHP YAB and offer youth-centered insight as DCT+ service providers work through different aspects of the DCT+ programming.

The National Homeless Law Center (NHLC) was invited to a YEHP YAB meeting to discuss the rights of youth in shelters, which was a great opportunity for the YEHP YAB to understand what legal protections exist for youth experiencing homelessness. A consideration for future YEHP YAB work surrounds the creation of a youth-facing “Know Your Rights” legal guide.

In-person opportunities

In Q3 2026, YEHP attended the Oregon Cash Table & Basic Income Strategy Meeting in Portland. A YEHP YAB member with DCT+ expertise attended with staff, informing discussions through the lens of advocacy, a detailed understanding of the DCT+ pilot and lived experience.

In September 2026, Point Source Youth (PSY) and YEHP held a DCT+ in-person training for all DCT+ staff across the YEHP’s five DCT+ providers. YEHP, PSY, the YEHP YAB, youth consultants

and provider staff met to understand the impact of DCT+ in their communities and to get up-to-date information about standard processes and procedures for DCT+ administration. The YEHP YAB member in attendance brought updates to share with the full YEHP YAB and contributed their invaluable input in discussions with service providers and youth consultants.

With the PSY National Symposium coming up in October 2026, the Oregon Community Foundation (OCF) had been working with PSY and the five Oregon DCT+ service providers to put together a funding proposal to send one DCT+ recipient from each organization to Baltimore for the event. The SYEC worked with OCF and PSY to include travel costs for one YEHP YAB member to that proposal, which was approved in late September 2026. The SYEC is currently working with OCF, PSY, the YEHP YAB and all Oregon DCT+ organizations to coordinate travel plans to ensure all young people attending the event are prepared, supported and are given opportunities to connect and build community while in Baltimore.

Key projects

Youth homelessness awareness via social media

After several months of coordination, the YEHP YAB's partnership with the ODHS social media team has finally come to fruition. In late September, ODHS posted a video created by a YEHP YAB member which introduces the YEHP YAB's mission, vision, and the work they do, encouraging viewers to ask questions and interact with their social media posts.

This was a very exciting opportunity for the YEHP YAB and ODHS. For the YEHP YAB, talking about their work and opening up conversations to the public increases their reach, builds awareness around youth homelessness in Oregon and gives them the ability to share youth resources much easier. For ODHS, partnering with the YEHP YAB on social media posts may help increase account engagement, especially when it comes to reaching young Oregonians.

To check out the YEHP YAB's first collaborative post with ODHS, see "Appendices".

Understanding the PIT count, addressing data concerns

Last quarter, the YEHP YAB reviewed the 2025 Annual Homelessness Assessment Report (AHAR). Questions and concerns came up around the accuracy of the data for unaccompanied youth

experiencing homelessness, the process of counting young people, and contingencies that come with the existing guidelines for conducting Point in Time (PIT) count.

Acknowledging limitations around making changes to federal guidelines as a statewide board, the YEHP YAB knew action was needed to work towards improvements. After some thought and meeting with a former County Continuum of Care (CoC) PIT count lead, YEHP YAB members decided they wanted to host a virtual meeting to connect all CoCs to discuss how the PIT count can be adjusted to be more effective, and trauma-informed, for youth and young adults – especially those who are couch surfing or experiencing other "hidden" forms of homelessness.

Q3 2026 PIT count work largely focused on identifying the individuals at CoCs who are involved in PIT Count planning. The YEHP YAB was able to create an initial outreach list to gauge interest, with almost all Oregon CoCs responding with some level of interest. The initial meeting is scheduled to happen in October 2026.

Youth recommendations

The YEHP YAB recommends continued work to form authentic relationships with Oregon CoCs. Doing so will help the YEHP YAB understand barriers CoCs are facing in their communities to identifying and locating youth experiencing homelessness across the state, ultimately giving YEHP the insight needed to determine what steps can be taken, if any, to support CoCs and service providers during PIT counts.

Secondly, the YEHP YAB recommends identifying interactive training opportunities for the YEHP YAB to participate in as a group to continue developing skills in leadership, interpersonal communication, advocacy and self-sufficiency. YEHP is currently seeking more information to learn what this may look like.

Finally, YEHP YAB members recommend planning an in-person event for YEHP YAB members in 2027. They would like to see a larger event hosted by YEHP and the YAB, giving them the opportunity to showcase skills learned and the projects they've dedicated their time to in the previous months.

Impact

In Q3 2026, current and former YEHP YAB members contributed to a publication that may help eligible young people with lived experience of homelessness learn about resources that are available to support their pursuit of higher education.

Following a July press release by ODHS, The Oregonian reached out to highlight Tuition and Fee Waivers for Youth Experiencing Homelessness. The reporter interviewed a current YEHP YAB member and waiver student, a former YEHP YAB member who utilizes the waiver and another former YEHP YAB member who saw the gap in support for youth experiencing homelessness and advocated for changes to the Foster Youth Tuition and Fee Waiver via 2022 HB 4013 which extended these tuition waivers to youth experiencing homelessness who meet certain criteria.

To read the full article from The Oregonian, see “Appendices”.

Success stories

Authentic partnership with young people thrives when the successes of young people are acknowledged and celebrated, no matter how big or small. While most YEHP YAB members share personal and professional wins often, this section highlights a couple of those stories.

In Q3 2026, YEHP YAB members were empowered to step out of their comfort zones and try something new. One young person decided to lead a YEHP YAB meeting for the first time, and, after working with the SYEC to build the agenda, they successfully facilitated the meeting. Another young person was interested in designing the YEHP YAB Newsletter, but they were hesitant to jump into something new, including using software they were unfamiliar with. The SYEC encouraged them to connect with a previous newsletter designer for help and, after designing a newsletter together, this young person is tackling their first solo newsletter design. So far, they’re really enjoying utilizing their creativity in the work and they’re eager to share the final product. The next YEHP YAB Newsletter will be published in early November 2026.

Finally, a YEHP YAB member with previous experience developing written statements and YEHP YAB newsletter articles decided to take on the new experience of leading a training development team to create a new youth-led training for youth service providers, “Supporting Youth Experiencing Homelessness with Self Advocacy”. This young person noted expanding

their professional development, gaining new collaborative and interpersonal communication skills through assembling a team, connecting with stakeholders for input, developing training objectives, and supporting other young people in their contributions to the project.

Upcoming priorities

In Q4 2026 and beyond, the YEHP YAB is prioritizing several focus areas, including partnerships with Continuums of Care, identifying opportunities for youth training, planning an in-person event for 2027, and building consistency around social media. Specifically, the YAB hopes to:

- Work with Oregon Continuums of Care to fill the gap between young people with lived experience and CoCs, especially related to PIT count planning;
- Understand existing gaps for unaccompanied youth experiencing homelessness in Oregon that make it difficult for CoCs to identify youth during PIT counts;
- Work with the SYEC to identify training opportunities of interest to YEHP YAB members;
- Plan an in-person engagement for YEHP YAB members in 2027;
- Form a YEHP YAB social media-focused subgroup to coordinate efforts with the ODHS social media team manager, plan content, schedule posts and identify YEHP YAB members interested in creating planned content.

Appendices

Social media posts

9/25/26: Introduction to the YEHP YAB

- Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/p/DduWTfjvW7N/
- Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/share/r/19AYDprX1m/
- LinkedIn: https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7509352939182780416

YEHP YAB voices in the news

Check out the Oregonian article, “College tuition waiver opens doors for hundreds of Oregon students who experienced homelessness”: https://www.oregonlive.com/education/2026/07/college-tuition-waiver-opens-doors-for-hundreds-of-oregon-students-who-experienced-homelessness.html