Youth REACH MD

Reach out, Engage, Assist, & Count to end Homelessness

www.youthreachmd.com
What is Youth REACH MD?

Maryland’s multi-jurisdictional, comprehensive survey and census of unaccompanied youth and young adults who are experiencing homelessness

- To learn how many youth are experiencing homelessness
- To better understand who they are and their experiences
- To learn how to engage with and help youth experiencing homelessness
- To increase awareness of youth homelessness
- To engage local community members, youth and young adults, and federal, state and local constituencies in preventing and ending youth homelessness
- To track progress in understanding and meeting the needs of unaccompanied homeless youth and young adults over time
- To meet the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness goal to end youth homelessness by 2020
Defining Unaccompanied Homeless Youth

• 24 years of age or younger

• Not in the physical custody or care of a parent/legal guardian

• Lacks a fixed, regular, or adequate nighttime residence

This definition includes youth who are:

• Doubled Up
• Couch-surfing
• Pregnant/parenting
• On runaway
• At imminent risk of losing their housing and have no other alternatives
Youth Experiencing Homelessness

- Have diverse backgrounds and experiences
- Differ from other homeless populations
- Are largely understudied
- Face greater risks for
  - Victimization
  - Exploitation
  - Substance abuse
  - Mental health challenges
  - Poor physical health
  - Inadequate Education
  - Lack of preparation for the workforce

Qoutes from 2017 Survey participants

- People like me need jobs and a place to live and to feel safe.
- We need help.
- Pay attention, not many kids will actually express their problems.
- Help the youth so we can prevent the next homeless generation.
- Through my last two years I spent homeless, self-confidence and a meal were the hardest part...It’s easy to feel like a burden.
- There are others out there like me.
Youth REACH MD History & Progress

2013  The Maryland General Assembly established the Unaccompanied Homelessness Youth Task Force to recommend state action to address youth homelessness.

2014  Based on the Task Force’s recommendations, The General Assembly established a demonstration project to identify the number of unaccompanied homeless youth in six regions of the state.

2015  Youth REACH MD held the first pilot Youth Count in 8 counties

2017  Youth REACH MD held the second expanded Youth Count in 18 counties

2018  Youth REACH MD held its third Youth Count in 20 of 24 counties

2019  Youth REACH MD is focused on increasing local and state capacity to act on Youth Count findings by supporting increased youth engagement within local and state system planning efforts

2020  Youth REACH MD will conduct its fourth Youth Count
Guided by Collaboration across Stakeholders

DHCD
Youth
The Institute
UMB SSW
Continuums of Care
Steering Committee
Participating Continuums of Care

Local CoC planning workgroups are the core of Youth REACH MD
Regional Implementation Support Structure

**Western Region**
- Lead: Frederick County
  - Allegany County
  - Carroll County
  - Garrett County
  - Washington County

**Central Region**
- Lead: Baltimore County
  - Baltimore City
  - Howard County
  - Montgomery County
  - Prince George’s County

**Eastern Region**
- Lead: Anne Arundel County
  - Cecil
  - Harford
  - Lower Shore
  - Mid-Shore
  - Southern MD
The Youth Count Survey

Survey Questions Assess:

- General Location
- Demographics
- Living Situation
- Housing History
- Education
- System Involvement
- Pregnancy and Parenting Status
- Services and Supports Sought/Needed
- Barriers to Accessing Services/Supports
- Income Sources
## Count Components

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Count Type</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Service-Based Count</td>
<td>Youth who utilize the services offered by participating providers during the survey period (e.g. shelters, food banks, libraries, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magnet Events</td>
<td>Youth attending special events designed to draw youth experiencing homelessness during the survey period (e.g. resource fairs) are surveyed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street Count</td>
<td>Youth found through canvassing by outreach teams at key locations where youth are likely to be (e.g. parks, laundry mats, etc.) are surveyed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School-based Count</td>
<td>Youth who may be experiencing homelessness are identified and surveyed by pupil personnel workers or other school staff at school</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Youth Ambassadors

Youth and Young Adults are key to a successful Youth Count. They help by:

- Participating in identification of places youth are likely to be
- Mapping routes for survey administration
- Developing scripts to use when approaching youth
- Administering surveys
- Developing marketing materials and strategies
- Assisting in magnet event planning
- Selecting survey participation incentives
- Acting as ambassadors for the project
- Promoting the count in their communities
Supporting Youth through the Youth Count

It is important to develop strategies to provide assistance for youth identified in the Youth Count.

Some Options include:

• ‘Need Help’ cards to collect information for follow-up assistance
• List local resources for youth on the Youth REACH website
• Have a designated contact to connect youth with during the count
• Make your local hotlines aware of the Youth Count
Highlights from the 2018 Youth Count Findings
## 2018 Youth Count Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Continuum of Care</th>
<th>Under 25, Unaccompanied &amp; Unstably Housed</th>
<th>UHY meeting HUD Definition (Category I)</th>
<th>Total Youth Identified via Survey or HMIS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anne Arundel Co</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baltimore City</td>
<td>281</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>1,504</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baltimore Co</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carroll Co</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frederick Co</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Howard Co</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Shore</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-Shore</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Montgomery Co</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>317</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prince George's Co</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern MD</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington Co</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>816</strong></td>
<td><strong>251</strong></td>
<td><strong>2,957</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A Few Key Statistics

Highlight needs for parenting youth, education services, & decreasing disproportionality

14% were under the age of 18
78% identified as a person of color
59% identified as male
17% identified as LGBTQ

30% were a parent of a child
51% of these parents had custody of at least one child
9% were currently pregnant (of those able to become pregnant)

51% reported not having a high school diploma or GED
38% are currently enrolled in school
21% of these youth are in high school
Some Top 3s...

**Places Stayed in the Last 2 Months:**
- House/apt of a friend (44%)
- Shelter/Motel (27%)
- House/apt of another family member (20%)

**Reasons Not with Parent/Guardian:**
- Family conflict (32%)
- Wanted to leave (29%)
- Youth drug/alcohol use (14%)

**Sources of Income:**
- Family/friends (28%)
- Part-time Job (27%)
- None (17%)
- SNAP Benefits (17%)
Institutional History

Frequent contact with public service systems suggests places to identify and support youth.

**Foster Care**
- Age Left Foster Care:
  - >18, 22%
  - 16-18, 30%
  - 11-15, 20%
  - 6-10, 16%
  - 0-5, 13%

**Residential Treatment**
- 32%

**Jail**
- 39%

**Juvenile Detention**
- 33%

YOU COUNT
Needed Services*

Youth report needing an array of services beyond housing, especially food and job training

*Note: youth could select multiple responses
**Reported Barriers to Help**

*Transportation and waiting lists remain most common; highlights areas for improvement*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Barriers to Help</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No transportation</td>
<td>313</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Put on a waiting list</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lacked required documents</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Didn't know where to go</td>
<td>156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Received all help needed</td>
<td>146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Didn't qualify</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Didn't hear back</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Said they couldn't help</td>
<td>113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I didn't follow through</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Went to the wrong place</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Didn't feel comfortable</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Didn't like how I was treated</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paperwork requirements</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language Barrier</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: youth could select multiple responses*
Lessons Learned
Keys to a Successful Youth Count

• A broad array of community partners engaged in the planning
• Youth involved as much as possible
• Local knowledge driving the planning process
• Creative, targeted outreach methods
• Youth-centered methodology

These keys help reach youth not connected to traditional services
Some Local Impacts of Youth REACH MD

• Assistance to local youth identified through the Youth Count
• New CoC committees and/or youth advisory boards to address youth homelessness
• CoC applications to HUD and SAMHSA grants to establish new services for youth experiencing homelessness
• Additional grant funds awarded to CoCs and service providers to address youth homelessness
• Development and expansion of permanent supportive housing programs, youth drop-in centers
• Adult service providers focusing on recognizing and better serving youth
• Development of local strategic plans to address youth homelessness
• Participation in national initiatives to end youth homelessness
• Development of local outreach teams geared towards reaching youth
When is the Next Youth Count?

Between **March 1 - April 12**

Each CoC picks 2 weeks for service and school counts and up to 10 days designated street outreach.
Questions?

For more information and resources, go to

YouthReachMD.com

or contact

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