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## SNAPS In Focus: Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program

Here in the federal government, we are committed to ending youth homelessness by 2020. That's why we are so excited about HUD's recent publication of the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP) Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA). We strongly encourage all communities to consider applying.

This NOFA provides \$33 million to help 10 communities, including 4 rural communities, develop and implement a comprehensive and coordinated approach to ending youth homelessness. Additionally, HUD will provide extensive technical assistance and an evaluation, which will show what works to end youth homelessness and then apply those lessons to help end youth homelessness across the country. The YHDP is unique because it requires a high level of coordination between community stakeholders and allows selected communities to use grant funds in innovative ways. On HUD's YHDP page, we have helpful material, including a series of guidebooks on ending youth homelessness that will be helpful for the demonstration and to your community's overall work to end youth homelessness.

With our federal partners, we hosted numerous listening sessions with young people around the country. Their insights were tremendously helpful to developing this NOFA, and you will likely see their influence throughout this demonstration. We expect that youth who have experienced homelessness will similarly contribute to the planning and implementation of local efforts as well. Their voices are critical to ensuring that local projects and systems are as effective as possible.

Ending youth homelessness will require high levels of collaboration and commitment at the local level. We designed this NOFA to be a launching pad for communities to bring together traditional partners – often those that receive funding dedicated to ending youth homelessness – with nontraditional partners, including local and state child welfare agencies, school districts, workforce development organizations, and the juvenile justice system. Our goal is that by involving youth and a broad range of stakeholders in the planning and implementation of the YHDP, communities will develop more complete and responsive strategies that:

- Maximize resources available for youth
- Better prioritize youth for assistance
- Use new and innovative strategies to end youth
- Incorporate evidence-based practices such as positive youth development, trauma informed care, harm reduction, and housing first
- Address the needs of special populations such as LGBTQ youth, minors, and pregnant and parenting youth

To encourage innovation, the YHDP will provide much more flexibility than HUD's Continuum of Care program normally offers. Appendix A describes the types of projects we believe you should consider as part of your strategy, but it is not an all-inclusive list. We expect communities to test new approaches, even if they are ultimately unsuccessful.

To better learn about which approaches are most effective, we are asking communities to develop youth-specific outcome measures. Our technical assistance providers will be able to help you do this, and our evaluation will further explore which strategies were most effective.



We sincerely hope that your community will apply and look forward to working alongside you and your partners as you design and implement your plan to prevent and end youth homelessness in your community. Applications are due November 30, 2016 and you can find all of the NOFA related resources on the YHDP page on the HUD Exchange.

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