

SALT LAKE VALLEY YOUTH EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS NEEDS ASSESSMENT

March 2024





About **CSH**

CSH is 501c3 nonprofit intermediary organization and CDFI that advances **supportive housing** as an approach to **help people thrive**.



Since our founding in 1991, CSH has distributed more than **\$1.7 billion in loans and grants** that has created over **467,000 homes for individuals and families** exiting long-term homelessness.



[csh.org](https://www.csh.org)

Defining Youth Homelessness

Age

Youth

Defined as individuals aged 13-17

Young Adults

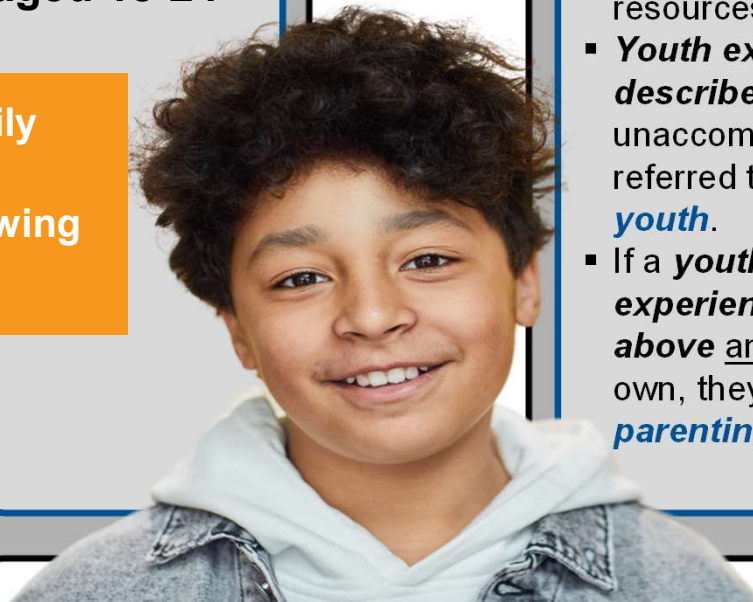
Defined as individuals aged 18-24

NOT accompanied by a family member age 25+ and who resides in one of the following places.



Residing in one of these places

- **An unsheltered location**, such as on the streets, in a car, or in an abandoned building a temporary emergency shelter or a transitional housing program dedicated to serving people experiencing homelessness
- **Staying in a doubled-up situation**, where they **have to leave within 14 days** and have no subsequent place to sleep/reside and no resources to obtain another place.
- **Youth experiencing one of the situations described above by themselves**, meaning unaccompanied by children of their own, are referred to as **unaccompanied homeless youth**.
- If a **youth (under age 18, or ages 18-24)** is **experiencing one of the situations described above** and are accompanied by children of their own, they are referred to as **homeless parenting youth**.



**UPSTREAM
PREVENTION**



Living Situations

FRONT PORCH

- Outreach
- In-reach
- Drop-in(s)
- Crisis Hotline(s)
- Front Door Diversion (aka Targeted Prevention)
- Upstream Prevention

CRISIS & SHORT-TERM HOUSING AND SERVICES

- Crisis Beds/
Emergency Shelter
- Host Homes
- Crisis Transitional Housing

LONG-TERM HOUSING

- Rapid Rehousing
- Permanent Supportive Housing
- Other Affordable Housing/Subsidy
- Home with Family/Reunification
- Longer Term Host Homes
- Longer Term Transitional Housing

Gap in Youth Dedicated Interventions

The total unmet need is calculated by subtracting the annually available units or slots for each intervention from the adjusted annualized need for each subpopulation.

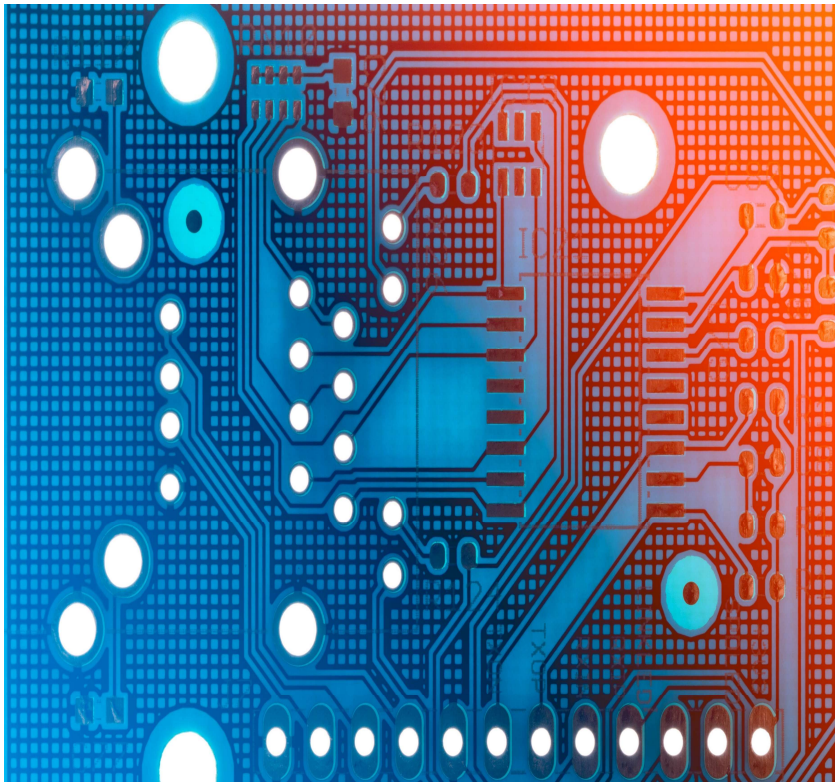
Intervention	Current Inventory	Annual Need	Additional Need (Gap)
Permanent Supportive Housing	12	197	185
Rapid Rehousing	18	253	235
Transitional Housing	19	19	10
Prevention/Diversion	N/A	N/A	147

Cost Modeling to Address the Need

Summary of the cost to address the youth need in Salt Lake Valley:

Intervention	Unit Need	Operating Cost		Service Cost		Total
		Fair Market Rent/yr.	Rent x Need	Service Cost	Service x Need	
Permanent Supportive Housing	185	\$ 12,637	\$ 2.3M	\$ 17,155	\$ 3.1M	\$ 5,400,000
Rapid Rehousing	235	\$ 12,766	\$ 3.0M	\$ 17,155	\$ 4.0M	\$ 7,000,000
Transitional Housing	50	\$ 12,380	\$ 619K	\$ 17,155	\$ 858K	\$ 1,477,000
Prevention/Diversion	147	\$ 13,605	\$ 2.0M	N/A	N/A	\$ 2,000,00
Total Cost =						\$ 15,877,000

System Performance



Throughout the report drafting process, several recurring themes emerged related to the quality and availability of programming to effectively meet the needs of youth experiencing homelessness in Salt Lake Valley. For example, stakeholders applauded the community's response to addressing adult homelessness, however, could not ignore how adult-centric the current coordinated response system is. With investments from the Youth Homeless Demonstration Program SLCo has an opportunity to sustain the strength and momentum of the SLVCEH's YEH Steering Committee including the YAB to create an equitable, responsive, and culturally humble youth system.

Stakeholders recognized that working in siloes across systems and the current services being provided at the program level is not enough to support YEH during an essential transitional period of their lives. YEH and service staff who participated in focus groups vocalized that SLCo has strong youth programs and positive cross-system partnerships but believes it is not enough to meet the population's demands.

Housing Recommendations

To adjust current housing inefficiencies related to short and long-term housing options to help YEH obtain and maintain their housing.



Increase awareness of the youth homelessness crisis in the region and improve equitable access to housing-focused services. SLCo should continue to educate the community on coordinated entry, identifying youth homelessness, including their needs and experiences that shape how they currently show up in the system..



Create Supportive Housing

SLV's housing programs for YEH have proven to be successful, once youth are housed. While the community still sees some returns to homelessness, they have a 100% utilization rate in PSH and RRH projects, with an annual need of 197 PSH units and 253 RRH beds. SLV should create 182 PSH units, 235 RRH beds , 10 Transitional Living beds annually. Additionally, SLV should inspect to serve 147 youth through diversion/prevention programming. .



SLCo should make significant investments in implementing quality intermittent housing interventions like non-congregate shelters and other short and long-term housing solutions for YEH. Focus group participants raised concerns regarding the quality of their living environments, both in shelters and apartment units for themselves and their families.



Advocate for the cities within Salt Lake County to review and update land use and zoning policies to be more inclusive to Affordable and Supportive Housing development.



SLCo has an opportunity to improve the coordination of care amongst youth service providers and systems to ensure there is a clear pathway for YEH to access services at critical points of their housing journey (or crisis). SLCo should leverage YHDP to increase the number of formalized partnerships to expand the access, consistency, and availability of services to implement a whole-person care approach to providing YEH pre-tenancy and tenancy support services.

Tenancy Support Services Recommendations

Social & Emotional Well-being: A significant amount of youth participating in focus groups reported needing social and emotional support during their tenancy journey. Housed young adults reported periods of loneliness during their transition from a shelter or transitional living program into more long-term housing. While they enjoy the sense of independence, it sometimes can feel isolating. YEH residing in shelters identified inequities in power dynamics between staff and residents, as well as limited staffing capacities to expand (“or be creative”) with programming to help get housing and promote positive well-being. Below are recommendations for youth-serving programs and systems to better serve youth in SLV based on their experiences.

- **Build the workforce’s capacity to serve youth** by providing intensive training on how to engage with YEH with Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), entering the homelessness system from jail, history of sexual assault, and/or foster care.
 - **Empower youth voice and decision-making** by incorporating the feedback of YEH into all youth-serving CoC projects and local programs. This could include requiring policies/procedures for incorporating youth voices, including youth on interview panels, developing/implementing an on-site YAB, creating Affinity Groups, and creating tenant councils for PSH/RRH/Transitional Living residents into CoC programming.
 - **Develop a standardized case-management approach for pre-tenancy and tenancy support services for YEH that promotes Positive Youth Development.** This service provision approach should include healthy staff/youth ratios, youth-centered planning, housing-focused engagement, therapy, life skill development (budgeting, food preparation, community navigation), safety, and/or prevention planning.
- **Improve YEH’s access to healthcare,** including but not limited to, affirming services for youth with non-traditional gender identities and disabling conditions (mental health, substance use, learning disorders, etc.) Access can include formalized and informal partnerships, with a preference given to MOU-driven partnerships. SLCo can accomplish this by using Support Services Only funds and/or building a more robust referral system to the Fourth Street Clinic and Valley Behavioral Health.
 - **Expand access to Legal Aid Assistance** for undocumented youth and their families, as well as youth exiting the juvenile justice system.
 - **Develop and implement a positive peer navigation or support program** to assist YEH with obtaining and maintaining housing.
 - **Advocate and support the State of Utah in its pursuit of a Medicaid 1115 waiver.**

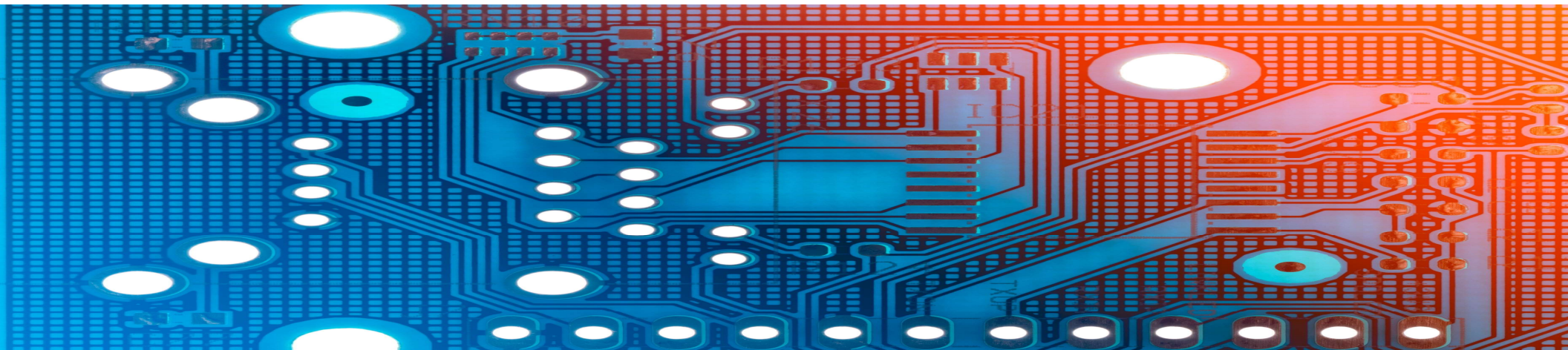
Tenancy Support Service Recommendations

Education and Employment: YEH in SLV expressed varying needs when identifying what supports and services would be most beneficial to their personal growth. However, youth did recognize that education and/or employment has a direct impact on their ability to obtain housing and become more self-sufficient.

- *Develop and sustain deeper relationships with intentional cross-systems collaboration*, like the Department of Workforce Services (DWS), Juvenile Justice Youth Services (JJYS), and foster-care liaisons. YEH (sheltered and housed) reported they could benefit from more support when working with DWS, to help their voices be heard about the types of employment opportunities offered and explored, ensure consistency with DWS staff, and other workforce solutions.
- *Offer ongoing support groups on budgeting and financial awareness*, especially for tenants of supportive housing
- *Increase access to technology via Wifi, computers, tablets, and other educational/employment resources.*
- *Expand staff, shelter residence, RRH/PSH, and transitional housing residence education on FAFSA and other educational grant opportunities for YEH.*
- *Embed employment and education supports within youth services.*
- *Develop partnerships with local higher education systems*, while leveraging the current McKinney Vento liaisons, to promote youth empowerment and economic development.
- *Implement service plans that address the family system, including educational needs, such as two-generational approaches.*

As we enter this phase of a more youth-responsive system, we must identify the barriers that are hindering SLCo's success based on the qualitative and quantitative data sections of this report. One of the outcome of this process is for SLCo to become a community that uplifts Positive Youth Development through all programs funded using YHDP funds. Additionally, SLCo must design a youth-focused system that has the adaptability to meet the needs of individuals with intensive and minor service needs.

The following are recommendations for new and existing investments in housing and services for YEH in Salt Lake County, Utah.



System Recommendations

1. Incorporate the voices of People with Lived Experience

- Outreach and encourage BIPOC, LGBTQIA2s+, and other minority organizations to participate in YHDP programming.
- Ensure that youth voices, youth empowerment, equitable outcomes, and youth leadership are the foundation of youth programming in Salt Lake County through policies and codification when possible.

2. Expand Cross-System Collaboration

- Dedicate a position at the CoC to advance cross-systems collaboration with JJYS, DWS, foster care, and the YAB.
- Formalize coordination with Juvenile Justice Youth Services (JJYS), Department of Workforce Solutions (DWS), foster-care, managed care organizations
- Establish protocols for identifying YEH or at risk of homelessness to deploy diversion and prevention strategies identified by the community.

3. Build the capacity of Salt Lake County's Youth Homelessness Response

- Provide training modules on proven best practices such as Trauma-informed Care (programming and universal design elements), cultural humility, [Two-generational Approaches](#), [Standards for Quality Supportive Housing](#).
- Leverage national training centers for free trainings like True Color United's Equity Hub.
 - [True Colors United's Equity Hub](#) is described as a hub of expertly designed free trainings and resources to help organizations and individuals better address the unique needs of LGBTQ YEH.

4. Expand Access to Services and Supports

- Design youth crisis response services that are available 24/7 via call, text, or an in-person drop-in.
- Support CoC programs by adopting cultural and linguistic practices, including translating key programmatic documents into Spanish and/or other languages.

Youth homelessness is not the consequence of one system's inability to effectively serve youth at risk of homelessness or experiencing literal homelessness. While the community recognizes that the causes of youth homelessness are complex, SLCo's approach to ending youth homelessness must be as refined, intentional, and holistic.



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Safety Resources

If you are having thoughts about harming yourself or concerns about a loved one please call the 24-hour UNI crisis line at (801) 587-3000.

[Download SafeUT](#)

Dial 988

[Visit The Trevor Project](#) (for LGBTQ young people)

[National Runaway Safeline](#)