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PORTLAND PARTNERSHIP FOR HOMELESS YOUTH

Initial Progress Report

**In Response to L.D. 2181, Resolve, to Help Homeless Young
People Returning to Home or Safe Living Situations**

**Presented to the
119th Maine Legislature
Joint Standing Committee on Health and Human Services
March 8, 2000**

PORTLAND PARTNERSHIP FOR HOMELESS YOUTH

Summary of Initial Progress Report

Response to L.D. 2181

Resolve to Help Homeless Young People Returning to Home or Safe Living Situations

March 8, 2000

Vision Statement

To create an environment in which youth at risk, who are homeless, can envision and create a productive, healthy and happy future.

Values

- Youth will be fully engaged in the design and implementation of the vision.
- Flexible, easily accessible support will meet basic needs and provide opportunities for youth to fully develop their potential.
- Each youth deserves respect, acceptance and a responsible and ongoing commitment to and from the community.

Background

The city of Portland is confronted by a homeless teen crisis, the scope of which is not fully understood by the community. For many years Portland has been a destination for homeless youth due to its size and availability of services. It is estimated that each year 600-700 different youth access basic services at the Preble Street Teen Center. While data on homeless teens is hard to obtain, approximately 38% come from the Portland, 38.5% come from communities all over the state of Maine, and 23.5% come from out of state.

There are many reasons why an adolescent may not be living at home including, but not limited to, abusive home situations, substance abuse, sexual abuse, and mental health problems. In addition to literally "living on the street," teens may stay in emergency shelters, motels, inappropriate housing (such as abandoned building or cars), or live temporarily with friends or acquaintances. In addition to the disruption such transience causes, these living arrangements put the safety of many adolescents in jeopardy. While the Teen Center is able to provide some basic services to homeless teens – meals, a safe, warm place, referral information and advocacy, telephone access -- Teen Center staff and the other providers recognize that much more can and should be done to help homeless teens create better opportunities for themselves.

Oversight of Process

More than 30 individuals representing public and private agencies and institutions, municipalities, public safety, legislators, and others have come together with a shared vision of improving services to youth who are homeless. The partnership with its diverse and multiple members, encompasses a wide range of perspectives. A fundamental value of this group has called for setting aside usual practices and turf issues in order to develop a system of care based on collaboration. This has allowed for the formation of a common language that will lead to improved services for youth. Early on in our planning the group appointed a steering committee to meet regularly between meetings, shape information gathered by the large group, and prepare agendas and reports for the project.

The Pilot Project

The primary goal of the Pilot Project is to get young homeless teens off the street and into stable, safe housing (and returned to their families, if appropriate). The Pilot project proposes to invest a total of \$150,000 in these areas over a period of 12 months to improve the speed and quality of intervention.

This effort will include:

- Development of holistic individualized plan for each homeless youth that will include mental health, substance abuse, and vocational and educational goals commonly shared by agency staff.
- Improved linkages between community-based providers, state agencies and others. This will lead to more effective and efficient intervention with youth.
- Expansion of Teen Center hours and increased opportunities for meaningful engagement of youth for the purpose of developing and moving forward on individualized plan.
- A "Rapid Response/Self-sufficiency Fund" to support the individual plans where no other monies exist. The funds would be used as a tool to engage the most difficult to engage youth with an outcome of movement along the continuum toward more stable housing and self-sufficiency.
- Training for community providers in areas that may improve speed and quality of intervention to get youth off the street. The goal of this training is to utilize best practices and create a common language among diverse providers.
- Evaluation and recommendations for improved services.

Budget

Preble Street Teen Center expansion of hours and linkages	\$ 76,468
Rapid Response/Self-Sufficiency Fund	\$ 65,532
Training	\$ 5,000
Evaluation	\$ 3,000
Total	\$150,000

Barriers to Effective Services

One of the greatest needs is an appropriate facility to meet the multiple needs of homeless youth. The Teen Center, housed in the Chestnut Street Church for the last 5 years, is too small for the volume of teens that use the facility. Space limitations restrict the kind and quality of services offered to youth. Kitchen facility restrictions at the church make it necessary for staff to bring in prepared food each day for lunch and dinner. Breakfast cannot be served at the Teen Center and homeless youth go to the Preble Street Resource Center for morning meals and back to Chestnut Street for lunch and dinner. Space restrictions result in counselors meeting with youth in cramped quarters; for example, the former girl's bathroom is currently used as a clinic for homeless health services.

Next Steps

This community has enthusiastically embraced a commitment to community planning in order to improve services for homeless teens. Concurrent with the implementation of the Pilot Project we will focus our effort on meeting the immediate needs for this population: a "one-stop shopping" teen center and emergency shelter accessibility 24 hours a day. These immediate needs are key parts of a comprehensive continuum of care for homeless youth.

Initial Progress Report from the

PORTLAND PARTNERSHIP FOR HOMELESS YOUTH

**In Response to L.D. 2181, Resolve, to Help Homeless Young People
Returning to Home or Safe Living Situations**

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PORTLAND PARTNERSHIP FOR HOMELESS YOUTH

Initial Progress Report

Background

The city of Portland is confronted by a homeless teen crisis, the scope of which is not fully understood by the community. For many years Portland has been a destination for homeless youth due to its size and availability of services. It is estimated that each year 600-700 different youth access basic services at the Preble Street Teen Center. While data on homeless teens is hard to obtain, approximately 38% come from the Portland, 38.5% come from communities all over the state of Maine, and 23.5% come from out of state.

There are many reasons why an adolescent may not be living at home including, but not limited to, abusive home situations, substance abuse, sexual abuse, and mental health problems. In addition to literally "living on the street," teens may stay in emergency shelters, motels, inappropriate housing (such as abandoned building or cars), or live temporarily with friends or acquaintances. In addition to the disruption such transience causes, these living arrangements put the safety of many adolescents in jeopardy. While the Teen Center is able to provide some basic services to homeless teens – meals, a safe, warm place, referral information and advocacy, telephone access -- Teen Center staff and the other providers recognize that much more can and should be done to help homeless teens create better opportunities for themselves.

Barriers to Effective Services

One of the greatest needs is an appropriate facility to meet the multiple needs of homeless youth. The Teen Center, housed in the Chestnut Street Church for the last 5 years, is too small for the volume of teens that use the facility. Space limitations restrict the kind and quality of services offered to youth. Kitchen facility restrictions at the church make it necessary for staff to bring in prepared food each day for lunch and dinner. Breakfast cannot be served at the Teen Center and homeless youth go to the Preble Street Resource Center for morning meals and back to Chestnut Street for lunch and dinner. Space restrictions result in counselors meeting with youth in cramped quarters; for example, the former girl's bathroom is currently used as a clinic for homeless health services. (See Appendix B for letters of support for new facility from community leaders)

Planning Process

In 1998, a small group began meeting to discuss the issues around homeless youth population in Portland. Efforts by this group and others led to the passage of legislation to fund pilot projects in Portland and Bangor to improve services to homeless youth. In June, 1999 a larger group representing the Regional Children's Cabinet, the Legislature, the City of Portland, United Way and providers serving homeless youth in Portland convened to begin the development of a comprehensive plan for providing residential, educational, health, career development and social services to homeless youth.

The Portland Partnership for Homeless Youth created a vision statement, values, (see below) ground rules for participation and decision-making and a structure for proceeding. The first phase of our work called for information gathering through interviews with homeless teens, focus groups with frontline workers and exploration of best practices for a continuum of care.

Utilizing this data, the collaborative developed consensus about the critical components of a continuum of care model. A Pilot project was developed to meet the immediate needs of homeless youth while providing valuable information about the best way to serve youth in the future.

Vision Statement

To create an environment in which youth at risk, who are homeless, can envision and create a productive, healthy and happy future.

Values

- Youth will be fully engaged in the design and implementation of the vision.
- Flexible, easily accessible support will meet basic needs and provide opportunities for youth to fully develop their potential.
- Each youth deserves respect, acceptance and a responsible and ongoing commitment to and from the community.

Oversight of Process

More than 30 individuals representing public and private agencies and institutions, municipalities, public safety, legislators, and others have come together with a shared vision of improving services to youth who are homeless. (See Appendix A for member list). The partnership with its diverse and multiple members, encompasses a wide range of perspectives. A fundamental value of this group has called for setting aside usual practices and turf issues in order to develop a system of care based on collaboration. This has allowed for the formation of a common language that will lead to improved services for youth. Early on in our planning the group appointed a steering committee to meet regularly between meetings, shape information gathered by the large group, and prepare agendas and reports for the project.

As we implement the pilot project, the steering committee will continue to oversee the process. Specifically, the steering committee will oversee access to wraparound funds and conduct a periodic review of systems issues, examine new ways to address these issues, oversee the evaluation of the project, and report progress to the Legislature.

The Pilot Project

The primary goal of the Pilot Project is to get young homeless teens off the street and into stable, safe housing (and returned to their families, if appropriate). The Pilot project proposes to invest a total of \$150,000 in these areas over a period of 12 months.

The pilot includes six specific components, each of which is aimed at improving the speed and quality of intervention with homeless youth that are street involved or at

imminent risk of becoming street involved. We will serve both kids who are new to the street and those who have been on the street for a period of time, need a different approach and are more difficult to engage.

1. Providers of services to homeless youth will develop a holistic individualized plan for individual youth. Plans will include mental health, substance abuse, vocational and educational goals, health issues, family and social goals, and legal goals when relevant. All youth will be offered the opportunity to make an individualized plan. This plan will be developed following initial engagement and outreach activities, and, when created with an individual teen, will form the basis of community efforts to help that teen get off the streets. It is anticipated that not all youth will participate in plan development – some will self-select out. In those cases outreach staff and community service providers will continue to try and engage the youth to seek help and services.

A work group consisting of current Teen Collaborative supervisors will be working on a draft of a single community service plan which can be used with teens who are ready to engage in this activity and which can be used in a collaborative manner by providers. The results of this group's work will be shared with the Partnership for Homeless Youth.

RESOURCES NEEDED: none except program and staff commitment to development and implementation of this new activity.

Note: The flexible fund (see #4 below) is critical to the success of the individualized plans.

2. Linkages between core providers of services to street involved youth and community agencies, state agencies and other members of the community will be improved This will be accomplished through continuing the Partnership for Homeless Youth Planning Meetings; the development of strategies for better communications; the development of more consistent approaches to intervention with homeless youth; and through creative use of resources to better integrate direct service staff who are challenged to develop intervention strategies with street involved youth

Several specific recommendations for the development of better communications and linkage between the Department of Human Services and the Teen Center Collaborative have been developed by a work group consisting of DHS staff and Preble Street Resource Center administrators (with input from all collaborative members). Examples of these agency linkages include:

- Regular meetings between DHS staff from Children Services, DHS staff from Child Protective, and staff from Teen Center Collaborative programs to discuss client situations, plan intervention strategies and service needs, and to problem solve situations which arise. This team approach could be used to develop plans on which both Teen Center Staff and DHS staff will work.
- Development of a community-wide commitment, supported by agreements between agencies, to ensure that shelter and drop-in space is available for homeless youth 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

RESOURCES NEEDED: none in the community except for program and staff time commitment.

3. The Preble Street Teen Drop In Center will increase opportunities for meaningful engagement of youth. The Teen Center will increase its hours of operation and focus on adding activities on site and in the community to engage youth and increase the likelihood of youth developing individualized plans for getting off the street. The Teen Center will add Friday night hours and weekend hours in order to be available 7 days a week and to respond to the youths' clear request that weekend hours are needed (from results of youth focus groups). (Note: The extension of Teen Center hours does not currently include being open on holidays, although this is a goal that Teen Center staff and the collaborative have identified.

Increased activities will be made possible by increasing staffing to ensure adequate supervision and availability of group and/or activity leaders. In addition, the Teen Center will allocate .5 of a staff person to work on organizing, supervising, linking youth with other services and community activities and, and at times implementing a range of activities that will engage youth in relationships within their community and away from the street. The importance of creating positive experiences for both the teens and any community member interested and appropriate cannot be overstated.

In order to accomplish these new commitments, Preble Street Resource Center (PSRC) will need to hire two additional staff. Additional costs for essential supervision and for the costs of some activities are included. PSRC will work with existing staff to fill out a weekend schedule (a new commitment for staff) and will create a plan for relief staff to cover weekends when necessary using existing resources.

RESOURCES NEEDED:		Two full time case workers
	Salaries	\$44,733
	P/R tax	\$3,998
	Benefits	\$11,158
	Supervision	\$5,000
	Activities Fund	\$4,000
	Overhead	\$7,578
	Total	\$76,468

4. A Rapid Response / Self-Sufficiency Fund, which can be used to provide the financial resources needed to implement creative, holistic, community plans aimed at getting teens off the street, will be a critical part of the pilot program. The purpose of this fund is to eliminate barriers and to create opportunities and hope for homeless, street involved teens that often feel there is little point to trying to change their lives. Monies will be used when no other funding exists, for innovative approaches to individual teen's needs. It will address the needs of youth that are not eligible for current services and are considered ineligible for categorical funding. For example,

these resources can be used to pay for security deposits, stipends, academic or creative classes, or transportation needs. The fund will also be used to serve youth who have need for immediate shelter or housing assistance when no other funding source is available.

Funds will be accessed through a collaborative planning process at the Teen Center. Existing interagency team meetings currently identify individual teens strengths, deficits and goals, and, with the development of a consistent community service plan (see # 1), are the most effective means of getting these resources to homeless street involved youth. Engagement and assessment activities currently in place will be enhanced by the availability of resources to “hook” teens who have often let service barriers and the lure of the street keep them from creating meaningful plans for stability.

Supervisors at the Teen Collaborative will lead a work group to create a structured, but efficient process by which these resources can be made available to youth. The history of collaborative service planning and the existence of an inter-agency consent form will facilitate this process. Although, the Partnership for Homeless Youth views the Teen Center as core services for homeless, street involved youth, it is essential that the process developed to allocate these resources not preclude the identification of youth who meet the target population by others in the community.

The Steering Committee of the Partnership will review the expenditures of these funds on a regular basis and review systems issues generated as a result of those funds.

RESOURCES NEEDED: \$ 65,532

5. Training for community providers in areas that may improve the speed and quality of intervention to get youth off the street is recommended as part of the pilot project.

We will provide training to all members of the Partnership in best practices of ways to engage difficult to engage youth. We will also utilize youth that have previously lived on the street to assist us in this training.

RESOURCES NEEDED: \$5,000

6. An evaluation component must determine the effectiveness of the pilot project in meeting its outcomes and in demonstrating the value of this incremental step toward the broader goals for the community. The development of meaningful data collection, which includes the number and characteristics of teens served and the impact of the pilot strategies will form the basis for the ongoing development of services for homeless youth.

RESOURCES NEEDED: \$3,000

Next Steps

This community has enthusiastically embraced a commitment to community planning in order to improve services for homeless teens. Concurrent with the implementation of the Pilot Project we will focus our effort on meeting the immediate needs for this population: a “one-stop shopping” teen center and emergency shelter accessibility 24 hours a day. These immediate needs are key parts of a comprehensive continuum of care for homeless youth. This continuum of care for homeless youth will be framed around the following principles agreed upon by the partnership:

Principles

1. Every youth should have access to basic life needs/services.
2. A comprehensive “one stop shopping” teen center shall be available / built / created.
3. All emergency shelters should be accessible 24 hours a day with “one stop shopping” teen center.
4. Every youth should have access to effective caseworker for as long as necessary. The caseworker is the point person for developmental plan for youth to get off the street.
5. Every youth should have a meaningful plan with supportive, collaborative services.
6. The Teen collaborative will include full meaningful participation with all agencies, state agencies and state government.

Appendix

Distribution List for Homeless Youth Coalition

Letters of Support for New Teen Center for Homeless and At-Risk Youth

Vision Statement and Values

What Youth Tell Us

What Providers Tell Us

Information Gathering Subcommittee Report

Minutes from Meeting on Continuum of Care

Schematic: Regional Continuum of Care for Street Involved Youth

Brainstorm Outline: “What Should a Day Look Like for a New Youth on the Street”

Invitation to Technical Assistance Training

Appendix A:

**Distribution List for Homeless Youth
Coalition**

HOMELESS YOUTH COALITION DISTRIBUTION LIST

Kevin W. Concannon, Commissioner
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Philip Thibodeau, President
Jobs for Maine Graduates, Inc.
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Jerry Cayer, Director of
Health & Human Services
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Homeless Health Program
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South Portland, ME 04106

Jane Morrison, Executive Director
Ingraham
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Portland, ME 04101

Appendix B:

**Letters of Support for New Teen Center
for Homeless and At-Risk Youth**

Gerald R. Cayer
Director of Health
& Human Services



Robert B. Ganley
City Manager

CITY OF PORTLAND
Health & Human Services

The 119th Legislature
State of Maine
Augusta, Maine 04333

March 8, 2000

Dear Members of the 119th Legislature:

On behalf of the City of Portland, I am writing this letter of support for a \$500,000 capital request for the homeless and at risk youth teen center. This one time capital request for state funds will be pooled with municipal and private commitments to help fund this important project.

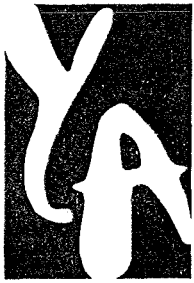
As the City's Director of Health and Human Services, I have been a member of the Partnership for Homeless Youth, the community's response to LD 2181, A Resolve to Help Youth People Returning to Home or Safe Living Situations. Prior to this resolve, a private/public collaboration has been working in the basement of the Chestnut St. Church. The mission of this collaboration is to get homeless teens off the street and into safe and appropriate housing. In order to achieve the programmatic initiatives and goals currently supported by the community collaborative, it is important that we pursue moving from the basement of the Chestnut St. Church into an appropriate facility, that is consistent with the intent of LD 2181. The current facility is outdated and inappropriate—currently the health clinic is operated out of the anteroom to the "Ladies Bathroom".

The City of Portland has already committed \$124,000 to the project, and I have started the process to access an additional \$100,000 in City funds. In addition, the City of Portland through the division of Public Health provides the health care component in this collaborative project.

The Partnership for Homeless Youth is a community collaborative making a difference now. I thank you for your consideration as this private/public partnership continues to move forward for **our** homeless youth.

Sincerely,

Gerald R. Cayer
Health and Human Services



**Youth
Alternatives, Inc.**

*Creating Opportunities
for Maine's Kids
and Families*

The 119th Legislature
State of Maine
Augusta, Maine 04333

To: Members of the 119th Legislature


On behalf of the Board of Directors and staff of Youth Alternatives, Inc., I am writing this letter of support for the \$500,000 Capital Request for the Teen Center in Portland. As President of Youth Alternatives, I have been a member of the Partnership for Homeless Youth, a response to L.D. 2181, Resolve to Help Youth People Returning to Home or Safe Living Situations, for the past year.

Over the course of the past year more than 30 individuals representing public and private agencies and institutions, municipalities, public safety, legislators and others have come together with a shared vision of improving services to youth who are homeless. The partnership with its diverse and multiple members emphasizes a wide range of perspectives. However, after hundreds of hours of deliberation, one constant theme rose to the top with regards to service needs. That is, a one-stop shopping teen center whose mission is to get homeless teens off the street and into stable, safe housing (and returned to their families, if appropriate).

Youth Alternatives Emergency Shelter has been providing shelter services since 1980 and wholeheartedly endorses this request. The current facility is antiquated and because of its location in the basement of Chestnut Street Church is unable to be open key hours of weekdays and weekends.

We enthusiastically endorse this request and stand ready to add further information, as you may deem necessary.

Sincerely,


Michael J. Tarpinian
President

ACCREDITED



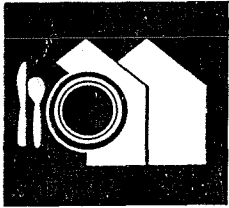
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF PUBLIC CHILD WELFARE
ADMINISTRATORS



United Way

CMA

Member Agency



The 119th Legislature
State of Maine
Augusta, Maine 04333

March 7, 1999

Preble
Street
Resource
Center

To Whom It May Concern,

Mark R. Swann
Executive Director

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

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Peter Rand

Judy Rosen

John Scatterday

Bruce Smith

James Sterling

Sue Till

I am writing to urge you to support the use of State funds to assist in the development of an adequate Teen Center for homeless and at-risk youth in Portland. The one time capital request for \$500,000 will be key in providing the integrated services and consumer opportunities that have been envisioned for these teens by our community. Youth providers and youth themselves have long recognized that a lack of adequate space and facilities has hindered the effort to help youth feel safe and begin the challenging journey off the street and into productive adulthood.

Much has been accomplished in Portland in recent years in the effort to provide a continuum of care for homeless adolescents. Preble Street Resource Center is proud to have been the lead agency in the development of a successful Teen Center Collaborative and to have taken a central role in the Homeless Youth Planning process which continues to define priorities and to develop strategies to improve services to homeless, street-involved youth.

In the last three years the Teen Center at the Chestnut Street Church has created a holistic, team oriented approach to youth which includes health, education, vocational, mental health, and social services. Preble Street Resource Center provides a safe drop-in space that serves as a starting place for many youth that seek basic needs such as food, clothing, and a safe, warm place. It provides the opportunity to connect with a caring knowledgeable caseworker who can become an ally, supporter, and advocate on the road to stability and stable adulthood. Along with our partners including the Portland Adult Education, YWCA, Day One, and City of Portland Public Health Division Homeless Health Team, we offer a range of services in a creative, consumer oriented manner.

However, we are limited by the Church's physical environment in the type and the breadth of programming and services that can be offered to youth. For example, the inadequacy of health related facilities and counseling spaces limits individual and group activities in these vital areas. At times Preble Street Resource's Drop-In space is so full of youth that it impossible to lead group activities, provide a place for crisis intervention, or even a quiet corner in which an eager student can do his or her homework.

5 Portland Street
P.O. Box 1459
Portland, ME 04104
207-775-0026



A United Way Member Agency



Founder of Stone Soup

The Homeless Youth Planning Group in Portland has focused pilot activities and service principles aimed at expanding services and opportunities for homeless youth. A Teen Center space can foster the kind of collaboration which is already progressing, and will support the vision which we have developed to get homeless teens off the street. We imagine a space in which prevention groups regarding drugs or sexual risk behaviors can be offered to youth waiting to be seen at the health clinic, at the same time as a career information and outreach by the Street Academy is happening at the drop-in area. Several other youth could be receiving individual support or counseling regarding housing options or mental health issues in this "teen friendly" space. Adolescents respond to having room to move around, décor that tells them that they are worth caring about, and space that offers peer activities as well as the option for quiet and privacy. We believe that the current space inhibits the possibilities offered to these teens and that support for the development of a new Teen Center will show the legislature's commitment to ensuring that Maine is caring for all of its youth.

Preble street Resource Center expects to take the lead in the development of a new Teen Center Site based on its central role in the collaborative and its experience as the lead agency in the Community Resource Center which serves as a collaborative, multi-service day shelter for homeless adults in Portland. As Executive Director, I am committed to finding the capital resources necessary to build a model Teen Center. The State funds will provide a crucial part of the capital needed to make this important vision a reality.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Swann', with a stylized, cursive script.

Mark Swann
Executive Director



UNITED WAY OF GREATER PORTLAND

ONE POST OFFICE SQUARE • 400 CONGRESS STREET • P.O. BOX 15200 • PORTLAND, ME 04112-5200
207-874-1000 • FAX: 207-874-1007

March 7, 2000

119th Maine State Legislature
State House
Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear Members of the 119th Maine State Legislature:

The United Way of Greater Portland would like to add its voice of support for a one time capital request for \$500,000 in state funds to acquire an adequate facility for a homeless and at-risk youth teen center.

For many years Portland has been a destination for homeless youth due to its size and availability of services. It is estimated that each year 600-700 different youth access basic services at the Preble Street Teen Center. While data on homeless teens is hard to obtain, approximately 38% come from the Portland, 38.5% come from communities all over the state of Maine, and 23.5% come from out of state.

While the Preble Street Teen Center is able to provide some basic services to homeless teens -- meals, a safe, warm place, referral information and advocacy, telephone access -- Teen Center staff and the other providers recognize that much more can and should be done to help homeless teens create better opportunities for themselves.

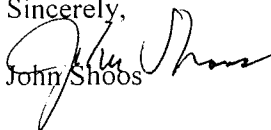
United Way of Greater Portland is a member of the Portland Partnership for Homeless Youth -- a community response to L.D 2181 A Resolve to Help Homeless Young People Returning to Home or Safe Living Situations. The Partnership has worked to create a continuum of care for homeless youth. We recognize that the foundation for coordinated services is a facility to meet the multiple needs of homeless youth. The Teen Center, housed in the Chestnut Street Church for the last three years, is too small for the volume of teens that use the facility. Space limitations restrict the kind and quality of services offered to youth. Space restrictions result in counselors meeting with youth in cramped quarters; for example, the former girl's bathroom is currently used as a clinic for homeless health services.

The United Way of Greater Portland allocated \$130,000 to the Preble Street Teen Center this year. In addition, we support other agencies that work with Preble Street to provide basic services to homeless youth.

We urge the Legislature to provide one-time funding for a new Teen Center for Homeless Youth. We believe it is a vital issue that is best addressed by a partnership of public, private and non-profit sectors.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,


John Shoos



Angus S. King, Jr.
Governor

Kevin W. Concannon
Commissioner

STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

161 Marginal Way
Portland, Maine 04101
(207) 822-2214
TTD (207) 822-2293

March 6, 2000

The 119th Legislature
State of Maine
Augusta, Maine 04333

To Whom It May Concern:

Maine Department of Human Services is an enthusiastic participant and supporter of Portland Partnership for Homeless Youth. DHS and DMHMRSAS are the cofunders of the Pilot Project.

Public and private agencies, institutions, legislators and others have joined together as a community to improve services for youth who are homeless. This collaboration has led to the creation of a shared vision and comprehensive plan to get homeless youth off the street and into stable, safe housing (and returned to their families, if appropriate.) The Pilot Project proposes to improve the speed and quality of intervention with difficult to engage youth. Other critical services included in the plan are improved and expanded Teen Center and emergency shelter accessible 24 hours a day.

Our community is committed to examining barriers to effective services and making the necessary changes to improve the outcome of youth who are homeless.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions you might have.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Andrea R. Paul".

Andrea R. Paul
Regional Executive Manager
Department of Human Services



ANGUS S. KING, JR.
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MAINE
DEPARTMENT OF
MENTAL HEALTH, MENTAL RETARDATION
AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE SERVICES
REGION 1
MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES
175 LANCASTER STREET
PORTLAND, MAINE
04101

LYNN F. DUBY
COMMISSIONER
PETER O'DONNELL
REGIONAL DIRECTOR

March 7, 2000

Jerry Cayer
City of Portland ..
1145 Brighton Avenue
Portland, ME 04102

Dear Jerry,

I am writing in support of your efforts to secure additional funding for the construction of a building that would house services for homeless teens in Portland. As you know through the collaborative partnership that has been fostered in this community, providers of services have met to outline the needs and a continuum of care for homeless youth. One recommendation was to house all homeless youth services in one building. As you know there is somewhat of a fragmented system now with different services for homeless youth being located in different locations.

Our department is supportive of this effort because it will allow the service system to respond more efficiently to homeless youth. Our commitment is also one of resource allocation; our department has committed funding to the Portland Homeless Youth partnership and we also fund an array of services both at the Teen Center and to Homeless Youth providers. We remain committed and will work with you and other members of the partnership to achieve a better Homeless Youth Service System.

Sincerely,


Peter O'Donnell
Regional Director R/1



MAINE STATE GOVERNMENT

PORTLAND ADULT EDUCATION

Centers For Lifelong Learning

196 Allen Avenue
Portland, ME 04103
(207) 874-8160
Fax: 797-5437

57 Douglass Street
Portland, ME 04102
(207) 874-8155
Fax: 874-8154

March 1, 2000

The 119th Legislature
State of Maine
Augusta Maine 04333

I am writing to strongly support the one time capital request of \$500,000 to acquire an adequate facility for the Homeless Teen Center in Portland Maine.

As Co-Director of Portland Adult Education, I have been involved with Homeless Education for more than ten years. I have been the supervisor of the Homeless Youth Education Project in Portland for more than six years. Last year the Street Academy staff of two teachers, worked with more than seventy homeless youth who wished to improve their academic skills. Sixty percent of these youth list non-Portland schools as their last matriculated school.

The Collaborative Program in Portland is a model for other communities. During the last three years, the Street Academy has worked very closely with the Homeless Teen Center. We have a classroom space above the drop-in area. This collaboration has worked wonders. The initial goal of the Collaborative was to provide a safe supportive place for homeless youth. Through our collaborative efforts, we have succeeded in that goal. We now hope to encourage the youth to have aspirations, to get off and stay off the streets. The Street Academy relies heavily on the outreach workers from various collaborating programs to refer appropriate youth. The teachers are now devising plans with the youth that address the following: how to earn a high school credential, how to learn life and job skills, and how to earn a life supporting job. The many other issues of substance abuse, basic needs of daily food and shelter, and medical care are handled efficiently by other members of the Collaborative.

Our Collaborative needs a new space. When we moved into the Chestnut Street Church three years ago, we hoped that this haven would last only a year. We needed time to build a strong collaborative and begin to raise funds. We have done both. Unfortunately, the space realities of an old church do not coincide with the programmatic needs of our Collaborative. Now we need a space that can be designed to meet the needs of the homeless youth: a large drop-in, an eating area, two classrooms, quiet studying space, private counseling areas, and storage for clothes.

Our Collaborative for Homeless youth is making a difference now. With a new building, we could make much more of a difference. The time is right for a new Teen Center.

Sincerely,



Rob Wood
Co-Director



March 6, 2000

87 Spring Street
Portland, ME 04101
207-874-1130
Fax 207-874-1136

Members of the 119th legislature,

I would like to lend my whole hearted support to the request for \$500,000 of one time state funds in addition to \$225,000 from the city of Portland to build an adequate facility to provide comprehensive services to the homeless children from all over the state and country who come to Portland for services.

The YWCA of Greater Portland has been providing a range of services to homeless youth for more than 25 years and was instrumental in the development of the teen center collaborative. For the past four years my staff have been providing mental health services to homeless youth as part of the collaborative of services housed at the teen center at the Chestnut Street Church.

The congregation of the Chestnut Street Church has been supportive of the efforts of the agencies located at the teen center, however the facility is less than adequate for the necessary services. My staff counsel young people in windowless offices that at times are difficult to access. Church activities often conflict with service delivery. Agencies are paying significant rental costs in a facility that lacks necessities such as showers and confidential meeting space.

I am forever humbled to hear the stories of the children that we serve and the kind of significant intervention that is required to help them develop aspirations and focus on their future. Each day YWCA staff is helping young people with issues such as suicide prevention, depression, mental illness, violence, physical and emotional abuse, prostitution and substance abuse. If any of you could spend just one day overseeing the work all of the staff from several agencies working together to support these children, I know that you would be compelled to support this appropriation.

The YWCA Street Program is proud to be a part of the teen center collaborative and hopeful that the 119th legislature will also be willing to take part in this partnership to support some of Maine's most vulnerable children.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Nancy Connolly', is written over the typed name and title.

Nancy Connolly
Executive Director

Adult Enrichment Activities • Child Care Services • Fair Harbor Emergency Shelter • Fair Harbor Residence
Health, Youth & Recreation • Street Program • Teen Parent Services • Women's Residence



A United Way Member Agency

March 3, 2000

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The 119th Legislature
State of Maine
Augusta, ME 04333

Dear Gentlepeople:

I am writing in support for a one time capital request for state funds to acquire an adequate facility for the homeless and at-risk youth teen center. Specifically, \$500,00 of state funds to help fund this important endeavor.

The problem of homeless teens in Portland has been documented for many years. Services have been developed to address many of these needs. In fact, Ingraham is involved in a collaborative venture called Mainestay which addresses housing, case management, and outreach , vocational counseling for many teens who are at the point when they are willing to make major changes in their life.

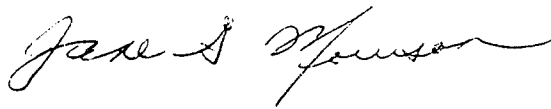
For others, they are not yet ready to "get off the streets." Instead they are going from shelter to soup kitchen to teen center. They are in need of consistent , constant, excellent services to get them off the streets and on with a productive an successful life.

For the past year, Ingraham has been part of a collaborative looking at the needs of Homeless Youth. This has been a broad based group of providers who are involved in working with this population.

One major component is a new teen center. The current building in a church is outdated and inappropriate for the work that needs to be done there. It is my understanding that matching funds have been raised, and the state money would make this a reality.

I would be happy to discuss this request with a committee of the legislature at any time. I urge you to consider closely this request and to take action to help the homeless youth of the State.

Sincerely,



Jane G. Morrison
Executive Director



P.O. Box 231
Cape Elizabeth, Maine 04107
Phone (207) 767-0991
Fax (207) 767-0995

March 2, 2000

Honorable Members
The 119th Legislature
State of Maine
Augusta, Maine 04333

Dear Honorable Members of the 119th Maine Legislature,

Day One has been an active participant in the planning, implementation, and operation of the collaborative project for homeless and at-risk Maine youth. This collaboration involving many state and local agencies has been hard at work since 1993. The Mainestay shelter and the Teen Center @ the Chestnut St. Church are results of this exemplary partnership.

Day One provides a full time substance abuse counselor working directly out of the teen center. Over 90% of the youth using the center have substance abuse problems and are at high risk for the social and health problems associated with chemical use.

Providing substance abuse services to these young people is particularly challenging. They are not receptive to traditional counseling interventions. Only the Teen Center can provide the low barrier client centered approach that allows many of these youth to open up and seek help for their substance use issues. The constantly increasing demand for our counselor's time is evidence of both the need for and effectiveness of this project.

I strongly support the request for a one time capital investment of \$500,000 in State funds to develop a new expanded Teen Center. The existing space is not adequate. These are among the neediest and most underserved of all of our children. They deserve better, and the successful Portland Project has clearly demonstrated that true community collaboration can make a difference.

Sincerely,

David Faulkner
Executive Director

Administration:

Peter M. McPherson, M.Ed., LMSW
Executive Director

Nancy G. Irving, CPA
Chief Financial Officer

Catherine Gentile, M.A.
Director of Educational Services

Robert W. Small, Psy.D.
Director of Clinical Services

Linda S. Butler, Ph.D., LCSW
Associate Director of Clinical Services

Peter Donnelly, Psy.D.
Associate Director of Clinical Services

Judith Ann Ferretti Smith, Esq.
Director of Human Resources

Daniel M. Bonner, B.Sc.
Administrative Coordinator



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Barry Zimmerman
Clerk

March 6, 2000

The 119th Legislature
State of Maine
Augusta, ME 04333

Dear Sir and Madam Legislator:

The Spurwink School has been for a considerable time concerned about the lack of resources available to homeless youth. It is clear that much of the "system" available has been cobbled together in an attempt to address the various critical needs of this population. Only when private and public agencies work in collaboration has there been any appreciable improvement in the care and assistance to these youths. It has been apparent from The Spurwink School's involvement in the homeless youth demonstration project planning meetings that only through the combined effort of the community can a real impact be made on helping the homeless youth population.

The Spurwink School will participate in the demonstration project once it is funded and expects to continue to provide services to homeless youth as it has in the past. I strongly urge creative thinking with regard to how resources can be developed and deployed by all who are invested in youth.

Sincerely,

Peter M. McPherson, M.Ed., LMSW
Executive Director

PMM/egh



COUNCIL ON ACCREDITATION
OF SERVICES FOR FAMILIES
AND CHILDREN, INC.



EMPLOYMENT AND COMMUNITY
SUPPORT SERVICE
FOR ADULT PROGRAMS

Appendix C:
Vision Statement and Values

Portland Partnership for Homeless Youth Vision Statement

To create an environment in which youth at risk, who are homeless, can envision and create a productive, healthy, and happy future.

Values

1. Youth will be fully engaged in the design and implementation of the vision.
2. Flexible, easily accessible support will meet basic needs and provide opportunities for youth to fully develop their potential.
3. Each youth deserves respect, acceptance and a responsible and ongoing commitment to and from the community.

Appendix D:
What Youth Tell Us

What Youth Tell Us

The following information was obtained through individual interviews with DHS consumers, as well as six focus groups held at the Teen Center Collaborative, My Choice, and Outright. It is our belief that group participants represent a realistic cross-section of youth accessing services throughout the city of Portland.

What are the reasons youth end up homeless and on the street?

"They beat you as little kids and when you grow up, you don't know what discipline or abuse is. You grow up confused and run away from home or you get kicked out."

1. Physical, emotional, and sexual abuse dating back to early childhood.
2. Parents inability to support their child financially.
3. Being placed in an incompatible foster placement, and feeling abandoned by DHS.
4. Substance abuse amongst parents as well as group participants. Participants stated the physical and emotional abuse intensified when substance abuse was occurring.
5. Parents' inability to understand their child identifying as gay, lesbian, or questioning led to participants becoming homeless.
6. Becoming evicted, and ultimately homeless, as a result of being pregnant.

What are the reasons that youth stay on the street?

"When my parents said they no longer could take care of me, I did not know what to do. I mean when your own family does not want you, how much worse can you get than that. I felt like no one cared about me and that I was worthless, after four years of being homeless, I still haven't gotten over that."

1. A lack of money, education, jobs, and housing.
2. Low self-esteem and feelings of helplessness contributing to a lack of motivation and hope.
3. Participants stated the freedom of the streets (independence) allows for individual decision making to occur without being fearful of repercussions.
4. Emotional support and acceptance found amongst fellow peers is directly related to the length of time participants remained on the streets.
5. Agencies do not accept the youth as they are.
6. Youth are given housing, food, and a place to "hang all day". Why get a job when you don't have to?

What are the services available for homeless youths?

The Teen Center Collaborative, Preble Street Day Shelter, Lighthouse shelter, Oxford Street Shelter, YMCA, YWCA, Shalom House, Tanif, WIC, Aspire, The Salvation Army, Vocational Rehabilitation Center, Training Resource Center, Catholic Charities, Salvation Army, Goodwill Industries, Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services, Maine Medical, Day One, Youth Alternatives, Fair Harbor Shelter, New Beginnings, Halcyon House, Saint Luke's Soup Kitchen and the Department of Human Services.

How do you find out about services?

1. Friends or other homeless teens.
2. Caseworkers at area shelters.

How do these services help/not help?

The Teen Center Collaborative is *"a pretty good service"* and *"a safe space to get your G.E.D."*

1. The LightHouse Shelter provides teenagers with a clean, safe place to stay. One can watch television, have snacks, and be involved in recreational activities and also, receive counseling services through the YWCA.
2. The Teen Center Collaborative helps individuals with employment, substance abuse counseling, educational programs and counseling.
3. New Beginnings was viewed as the best group home due to the environment, staff, services, and activities.

Not Help?

1. Lighthouse hours should be expanded.
The Lighthouse Shelter should house 18 to 21 years olds due to the fact that it is difficult to sleep and feel safe around older consumers who are often viewed as perpetrators and alcoholics. The low barrier nature of the program enables individuals to remain on the streets due to the fact that it is such a comfortable place to stay.
2. Oxford Street Shelter is a poor place to stay. The Shelter is extremely dirty and participants feared contracting body lice and other diseases. Oxford Street Shelter rules are often not enforced due to low staffing. The ratio of three staff to 140 plus consumers creates an unsafe and unpredictable environment for teens. Such an environment makes it important to develop bonds with older adults for safety. This presents an unhealthy relationship where teens are susceptible to exploitation by older, stronger adults.
3. Staff intervene too much at the Drop-in and are too restrictive.
4. DHS Case Managers do not listen to their consumers. Participants involved found it difficult to trust DHS with their futures
5. The cops are terrible. The police are as crooked as they could be.

What makes you feel safe on the street?

"Hanging out and identifying with other homeless teenagers helps you feel better, like your not the only one out there alone."

1. Being with someone you love and having companionship.
2. Established relationships amongst fellow peers.
3. Staying neutral within the homeless culture in an effort to avoid conflicts.
4. Safe space such as the Preble Street Drop In allows teens a shelter where there is no threat of fights, violence, or drugs.
5. Nothing!

Do you think about education? What has been your experience with education?

"It is extremely difficult to get back into high school once you drop out. People look at you like a failure."

1. Portland Public High School staff and faculty are not sympathetic to the needs of homeless teenagers as they relate to homework and assistance. This results in homeless teenagers dropping out.
2. Transportation to and from school is extremely difficult.
3. Participants who used Street Academy services felt as though it was a worthwhile and rewarding experience. Staff attempt to accommodate the specific needs of each individual.
4. Having a learning disability makes school difficult.

Where do you go for emotional and financial support?

1. Mental/emotional health support is received through the YWCA's Street Program.
2. Substance abuse support is received from a Day One Counselor.
3. Friends
4. Primary care physician
5. Outright
6. Family
7. Drug abuse
8. DHS
9. Pan handling
10. Stealing

Would it help if teen directed services were expanded? How? If you were given money to do things that would help, what would you do?

"People don't stop being homeless on weekends and holidays."

"Work services. That way it shows people you are willing to help yourself. Instead of you guys getting rid of the garbage, why can't we haul the garbage out. You know what I am saying, cause we are the ones eating the food."

1. The Teen Center Collaborative should remain open after transitional housing shelters close. This would enable teenagers an option during inclement weather and during the winter months.
2. Oxford Street Shelter should receive extensive renovations.
3. Transitional housing shelters should offer recreational and educational opportunities. These should include workshops, which could focus on issues such as personal finance, cooking/nutrition, and life management.
4. Create a group home that is non-judgmental and low barrier for teenagers.
5. Service providers need to listen more and be less critical.
6. The Preble Street Drop In needs laundry and showers. Clean clothes and hygiene is important when searching for jobs and housing.
7. Preble Street Resource Center needs to expand their night and weekend hours. The Center is too restrictive and needs more supplies such as: clothes, hygiene

- products, lockers, vouchers, showers, and laundry.
8. Make them more accessible.
 9. Make the General Assistance process easier.
 10. Centralize/consolidate the services so that one does not have to go to "six" different places to get help.
 11. More public service announcements and fliers to increase the visibility of the Teen Center and the Preble Street day shelter.
 12. Implement a self-defense program at the shelters thus increasing self-esteem and safety.
 13. Develop more housing opportunities.
 14. Develop independent living programs.
 15. Include minors in the subsidized housing process.
 16. Remove the six-month barrier to services for women.
 17. Develop better transportation systems.
 18. Expand services for expecting teens.
 19. Provide long term solutions to problems encountered by homeless youth.
 20. Provide longer placements for those youth needing extra support.
 21. Provide services for kids not in custody.
 22. Provide services for gay youth housing.
 23. Allow youth to empower themselves by requiring them to become involved with the deliverance of services i.e., allowing youth to cook and serve meals.
 24. Money for a security deposit.
 25. Laundromat at the Teen Center.

If you had three wishes, what would they be?

"Serenity to accept the things I can't accept, courage to change the things I can, and wisdom to tell the difference"

"I'd give myself the wish of love. To be able to give love and receive love and know what it is"

"I'd change homelessness"

1. To have a job.
2. To have my own place to live.
3. To go back to school and finish.
4. To make money and be happy.
5. To have a place to live and be stable.
6. To have enough food to eat.
7. To have a family.
8. To have children.
9. To have family support. To have a good father and family.
10. To have a mentor.

Appendix E:
What Providers Tell Us

What Providers Tell Us

(Information Obtained From Direct Care Staff)

The following information was obtained through individual and group interviews held at: Teen Center Collaborative, Lighthouse Shelter, Portland Public Schools, Outright, Department of Human Services, Portland Public Library, Mainstay, YWCA, Community Policing, Preble Street Resource Center, Juvenile Probation, My Choice, Youth Alternatives and Roads.

In your experience, why do kids leave home?

1. Living conditions are intolerable and unsafe.
2. Kids feel they are a burden to their parent's and leave home.
3. Kids in rural areas want to be where the action is; therefore, they come to Portland.
4. Kids are questioning their sexuality, gay/lesbian non-acceptance by immediate family.
5. Abuse from parents and relatives (mental, sexual, physical, and emotional)
6. Parents using drugs/selling drugs.
7. Kids become involved with the law and are eventually released to shelters.
8. Street life is romanticized so they want to explore.
9. Rebellion = No rules "I set the rules" It is viewed as "cool" to be on the streets.
10. Youth are removed by the state as the result of abuse.
11. Single moms with boyfriends. Do not want to listen to boyfriend's rules.
12. Lack of love and nurturing at home.
13. Youth have learning or behavioral issues that parents are unable to deal with. They eventually become overwhelmed and drop their son/daughter off on the streets.

What percentage of kids in your program has been homeless? Other referral issues or characteristics?

80-100% are "system" youth - DHS or DOC
Do not know. The students are not identified as homeless
Substance abuse is between 80 and 100%.
Pregnancy is increasing - much of it planned
High unemployment

What do youth do day to day when they are homeless?

Youth....

1. Network with other youth in an effort to secure services
2. Sit around, loiter, and hang out at popular spots i.e., library, parks,
3. Engage in violent behaviors
4. Try to improve their lives by seeking employment
5. Are highly focused on drugs/alcohol and other ways to escape their reality.
6. Attend school
7. Reside in shelters
8. Are victimized or are victimizing others
9. Attempt to find solutions to their problems
10. Push limits and seek attention

11. Attend counseling
12. Volunteer within the community
13. Become involved in prostitution, petty crimes, assaults, and theft
14. Become detached from all services (school, health care, medications, employment)

What do teens want from you agency, from you?

"A Place to be"

"They want to be heard".

"Education, accountability, and consequences".

Youth want...

1. Support, guidance, structure, consistency and advice
2. Food, clothing, housing, diapers, bus tickets, clean needles and safety
3. Access to school and educational support
4. A sense of what normalcy feels like
5. To be accepted, validation, encouragement and a fresh start
6. An opportunity to prove themselves
7. Respect
8. Companionship and someone to listen to them
9. Child care
10. Boundary and limit setting
11. Parenting skills
12. To leave them alone
13. Understanding
14. Safe place to go as well as protection
15. Employment
16. Community support
18. Mental health services, therapy and medications
18. Love

How much do youth come and go from your agency?

Youth are constantly moving from one shelter to another.

What do you and staff do to help?

1. Listen to what youth have to say and what they do not say
2. Provide school supplies, and information on resources
3. Connect them with the school nurse, social workers, and guidance counselors
4. Provide food, clothing and lodging
5. Provide alternative schooling that offers them late arrival and early release - Special Ed.
6. Refer them to agencies
7. Provide mediation and crisis intervention
8. Facilitate transition to school
9. Provide healthy positive experiences with adults

How does being homeless or on the streets affect youth?

"It's the difference between being a 'somebody' and being a 'nobody'"

It...

1. Increases exposure to unsafe behaviors, violence, substances, physical, sexual abuse, unsafe sex, pregnancies, AIDS, STD's
2. Decreases ones self-esteem and increases hopelessness
3. Makes it very difficult to succeed in school. Participation in school clubs and sports rarely occurs due to a fear of peers finding out they are homeless. No sense of security and a low self-worth makes it difficult to be in a class and work with peers.
4. It hardens them and they become more violent
5. Exposes youth to sexual perpetrators who prey on street youth
6. It limits their choices and makes them fearful and distrustful of authority figures
7. Creates a different set of values related to survival
8. Lowers their self-esteem and self worth
9. Takes away their motivation
10. Increases their chances of becoming addicts
11. Delays developmental growth

How much do youth come and go from your service? From being off the street?

Youth are constantly going back and forth, from one placement to another.

How do you define success?

When youth are able to "stay alive".

When youth...

1. Feel good about something they have done
2. Have the educational background to support lifelong learning and continue their education.
3. Set goals and are able to reach them
4. Are back in school, attending school, and obtain their high school diploma or G.E.D.
5. Develop a sense of trust
6. Connect with workers and find their inner strength
7. Realize they are allowed to make mistakes
8. Become stable mentally and maintain their sobriety
9. Are not arrested
10. Are able to obtain a job and open a bank account

Are there successful interventions/specifcics that you think we could learn from?

When...

1. Programs meet kids where they are at
2. Interventions happen immediately

How do we instill hope and or a sense of future for youth?

We...

1. Give youth the power to make their own choices and hold them accountable for those choices
2. Treat youth as individuals
3. Provide positive relationships with caring adults by modeling, mentoring, and not giving up on them
4. Believe in them, provide validation, and build self-esteem
5. We provide an oral history by giving examples of success stories
6. Offer them opportunity and allow them to be judged by their peers
7. Build upon strengths and help them identify successes
8. Create clear boundaries and expectations
9. Provide consistent structure that they can rely upon
10. Set "high expectations" and provide positive reinforcement so they are able to meet these expectations
11. Remind them that they do have choices.

What is working well in the provider system? In the community? What helps services work well for youth?

1. Collaborations
2. Coordination with overlap
3. Having staff go with clients to appointments
4. Cooperation and communication between providers.
5. Weekly staff coordination, supervision, team meetings, and case management

Is their duplication of services being offered to youth?

Information about services does not follow the child from one agency to another so there is a room for duplication.

Whom do you typically work with when homeless youth come for services at your program?

1. DHS
2. City of Portland
3. School social workers
4. Teen Center Collaborative (YWCA Street Program, Preble Street Resource Center Drop In, Portland Public Health Clinic, Day One substance abuse and Portland Adult Education's Street Academy)
5. Department of Corrections
6. Sweetser, Spurwink
7. Trackers
8. Outright
9. Mentors
10. 22 Park Avenue
11. Women's residence - YWCA
12. Teen Parents - YWCA
13. Preble Street Resource Center

14. Portland Adult Education
15. Portland Public Schools

Are there changes you would make in existing services?

"Change the allocation of funding in the state to develop or help fund independent placement or residential settings for these teens to get them off the streets".

"There are many good options for pregnant or parenting girls in Portland but if you are looking for a 17 year old addicted boy, you can forget it".

"Make accountability and consequences a part of their learning process. Make sure their education continues to help them gain self-esteem. Require service from them for services given, again to promote self-esteem."

"Non categorical funding needs to exist".

1. Position a DHS worker in school to review students who are in need of services.
2. Create housing. There is not enough housing for all homeless youth, categorical and non-categorical.
3. Offer daycare at the high school.
4. Provide literature for the community on the daily challenges homeless youth encounter as well as the services that are available for them.
5. Provide housing/shelter to youth with children under the age of 18, without parental permission.
6. Provide support and benefits for couples who are married.
7. Provide more educational services for those not old enough to take the G.E.D.
8. Create a place where kids can be all the time with no interaction with adults. Develop recreational opportunities for kids, such as Ping-Pong, pool, groups, etc.
9. Create an adolescent detoxification unit.
10. Create a vocational rehabilitation program for teens.
11. We need more adolescent psychiatrists.
12. We need more programs before crisis occurs.
13. Schools need to call about students who are truant. Hold parents and youth accountable and responsible for not being in school.
14. Change the perception and philosophy. Kids view being homeless as a "rite of passage". There is therefore "no shame in being homeless."
15. Increase communication between community businesses and homeless youth.
16. Develop teen service section at the library.
17. A "gatekeeper" is needed for all SA/MH/CM services- this system needs to be centralized
18. Increase advertising about services for youth using television and public service announcements.
19. Decrease competitiveness between agencies for grants/funding.
20. Increase transitional services for youth ages 18 to 21 years old.
21. Increase placements for youth ages 14 to 15 years old that are not involved with DOC or DHS.
22. Develop low barrier transitional substance abuse housing.
23. Create foster homes for DHS kids in the Portland area so kids can stay in their community.
24. Involve the community/businesses in kid's education through alternative educational experiences.
25. Provide access to clothing for job interviews.

26. Increase involvement of local businesses: paid internships, mentoring, apprenticeships, incentives to businesses to hire homeless youth.
27. Involve kids in community projects and pay them to volunteer at meals.
28. Decrease economic positioning amongst social service agencies.

What difference does age make in youth's experiences and in the services they receive?

1. Developmental age is an issue. Youth may have difficulty understanding their needs, and how services can help.
2. Issues of consent determine eligibility.
3. When a youth turns 12, sometimes parents and or guardians feel they are old enough to fend for themselves. They therefore allow their son or daughter to roam the streets.

How does guardianship affect youth that are homeless?

1. Guardians are hard to track down and sometimes are not involved.
2. Parents are sometimes unwilling to provide consent for placement/therapy.
3. Youth cannot get funding because their parents are collecting benefits for them.
4. Youth who have been homeless less than sixty days may not be able to get permission from parents for school or health care (records).

Emancipation?

Most of the youth are not ready developmentally and it does not take the place of parents.

How does funding impact services?

"Managed care is problematic. Services are driven by insurance companies rather than physicians, counselors and clients. Kids are discharged in severe crisis and homeless youth are billed for services".

"It has a direct impact on relationships within the community when you have to compete against another provider for money".

"Licensing establishes criteria/restrictions. Funding is based on what the agency is about not about the youth's needs".

1. It restricts the number of staff
2. There is no wrap around money to take care of the basics
3. No way to help kids move -Trucks and drivers
4. Cuts in childcare have hurt young parents
5. Funding is based on what the agency is about not about the youth's needs
6. Limits recreational activities.
7. Money goes to adults and the very young. Teens are often overlooked.
8. Youth without Medicaid sometimes are denied placement
9. Staff turnover is high due to inadequate salaries
10. Limits resources for youth (group home improvements, activities for kids)
11. Federal funding is time limited. Grant funded programs do not have replacement funding.
12. Doctors do not want to provide for Medicaid clients

Are there any sub-populations that present challenges?

"Green kids who have not been involved with systems or the streets".

1. Gay, lesbian and questioning youth. Youth are afraid to access services.
2. Teen parents

Training needs?

1. Special education needs, issues related to learning disabilities
2. Eating disorders
3. Adolescent development
4. Low barrier intervention strategies
5. Substance abuse
6. Non-traditional teaching approaches
7. Training for community and school personnel on homeless issues.

Appendix F:

**Information Gathering Subcommittee
Report**

INFORMATION GATHERING SUB-COMMITTEE REPORT

10/7/99

Members: Scott Hensley (PSRC); Kate David (DHS); Joel Beaulé (Street Academy); Jon Bradley (PSRC); Scott Stoll (Public Health); Lisa Neff (YWCA)

1. The Sub-committee developed a set of focus group questions for homeless youth and did 4 groups at the Teen Center, a group at my Choice, a group at Outright, and several individual interviews with youth in DHS placement who had been homeless on the street. A total of 33 youth participated in this information gathering. Each group was either taped or had a note taker. A summary of youth input will be available to all members by 10/14. (A smaller group has taken responsibility for reading notes and transcripts and writing summary. Technical difficulties caused a brief delay in this process).
2. The Sub-committee explored the video project and after much discussion and exploration with the video production team about confidentiality issues and strategies for taping, resolved to recommend a new sub-committee be formed to work on this project. Scott Stoll has agreed to be the liaison between the video committee and the supervisors at the Teen Center to ensure that decisions related to taping are made quickly. Michael Quint is chairing this new sub-committee. Sarah K. from YWCA has joined this new Sub-committee.
3. The Sub-committee is in the process of planning to gather information from line staff who works with homeless youth. Staff from the committee will do focus groups with line staff and will also hand out and collect a brief questionnaire. A draft of focus group questions and questions for the questionnaire are attached. The plan is to contact agencies and ask to come to scheduled staff meetings. Exceptions will be made with specific informants (e.g. school personnel, probation officers who will be interviewed individually). The target date for completing these groups is 11/15. Programs targeted for information gathering: Fair Harbor; MainStay; DHS case workers; Youth Alternatives Shelter and Roads; YWCA Teen Parent Program; My Choice; Public School (guidance and teacher sample); Day One; Outright; community policing; Teen Center partners; Lighthouse; Preble Street Resource Center staff; New Beginnings

The Sub-committee needs member agencies to alert program administrators/supervisors about this project so that the groups can be scheduled.

Any additional recommendations for information gathering from direct service staff.

The Sub-committee also needs additional staff to help facilitate and to take notes at groups.

FOCUS QUESTIONS FOR STAFF GROUPS (DRAFT)

YOUTH

In your experience why do kids leave home?

What % of kids in your program have been literally homeless, on the streets? Other referral issues or characteristics.

What do youth do day to day when they are homeless?

What do teens want from your agency, from you?

What do you and staff do to help?

How does being homeless or on the streets affect youth?

How much do youth come and go from your service, that is come back after being off the street?

How do you define success? How does the organization?

What % of youth do you feel you have success with? What affects success?

Are there success interventions/ specific situations that you think we could learn from?

How do we instill hope/ a sense of future for kids?

SERVICES

Who do you typically work with when homeless youth come for services at your program?

What is working well in the provider system? in the community?
What helps services work well for youth?

Is there coordination in work being done with individuals? When yes and when no?

Is there duplication between services offered youth? If so, when? When not?

Are there changes you would make in existing services?

Do you have ideas of things to do to improve the services for homeless youth?

What new resources in the community would help ?

ISSUES

What difference does age make in youth's experience and in services?

How does guardianship impact youth that are homeless?

Is emancipation an option? Positive or negative impact?

How does funding impact services in your experience?

How does licensing impact services?

How does DHS involvement impact services? What has been your experience with DHS?

How does DMH involvement impact services ? What has been your experience with DMH?

Are there sub-populations who present unusual challenges? (E.g. Pregnant teens or parents; gay and lesbian youth; mental health consumers; youth in criminal justice system; others) When do barriers increase? Decrease?

What training needs would help line staff?

STAFF QUESTIONNAIRE (DRAFT)

1. What is working well in your work with homeless youth?
2. What would you change within your organization?
3. What would you change about the system of services?
4. How big an issue is staff burnout? What would help?
5. Are you given support for overcoming systems barriers or do you have someone else in your organization to bring systems barriers to?

Recommendations for change to improve homeless youth's experience in Portland?

Other comments for the Youth Planning Group

Appendix G:

**Minutes from Meeting on
Continuum of Care**

TO: Homeless Youth Coalition

FROM: Lisa Neff

DATE: December 14, 1999

RE: Minutes from the 12/13/99 meeting regarding Continuum of Care Flow Chart

Present: Christine O'Leary, Joseph Carpenito, Mark Swann, Andrea Paul, Kate David, Scott Stoll, Lisa Rosene, & Lisa Neff.

Points of Entry

The group agreed to multiple points of entry to ensure access to street involved youth.

Single Point Person

1. Follows client and assures youth and services are linked.
2. Could be called tracker, monitor, social worker, etc.

Assessment

Although the specific details of the assessment tool will be decided by another group (yet to be identified), the following issues were noted as critical to this topic.

- Dynamic Process/ongoing
- Youth comes away with concrete plan
- Standardized tool no matter where you access entry.
- Everyone covers same topics with youth
- Everyone offers same services to youth
- Aggressive Outreach
- Age appropriate
- Eligibility/Medicaid
- Confidentiality
- Housing
- Individualized Plan
 - Follows Youth
 - Funding follows plan
 - Identify existing strength & services (eliminate duplication of services)

Housing (Proposed Plan)

Model:

Emergency Housing (low barrier)---Drop In Center---Transitional Shelter---Transitional Living/Independent Living. Outreach and services permeate all programs in this model.

HOUSING DEFINITIONS

DROP- IN CENTER (Point of Entry to Rest of Community Resources)

- 1. Three meals**
- 2. Extended Hours**
 - 8 AM – 8PM (will overlap emergency housing facility)
 - Full Coverage
- 3. More Outreach**
 - More staff in center
 - More staff out of center: to other agencies as well as clients (teen parents, other shelters, Outright)
- 4. Basic Services**
 - Showers
 - Laundry
 - Phone
 - Mail
 - Food
 - Storage
- 5. Core Services**
 - Medical
 - Education
 - Employment
 - Computer Access
 - Substance Abuse Services
 - Legal
 - Mediation
 - Mental Health Counseling
 - Crisis Services
 - Recreation
 - “Case Work” Services: based on relationships; staff person advocates, connects to services, etc.
 - Transportation
 - Life Skills
 - Groups

EMERGENCY HOUSING **Very Low Barrier**

- 1. Options**
 - Host Homes (flexible stays, services available)

- Emergency Shelter (very low barrier)
 - Easy Access
 - Open 3PM – 8AM everyday (3PM addresses after school needs)
 - Youth has own space (half walls)
 - Provides Services: Substance Abuse, Mental Health, etc.

TRANSITIONAL SHELTER

1. Short Term
2. Maine Stay model minus eligibility
3. Dorm Style (like Women's Residence at YWCA)
4. Scattered Sites with support

Appendix H:

**Schematic: Regional Continuum of Care
for Street Involved Youth**



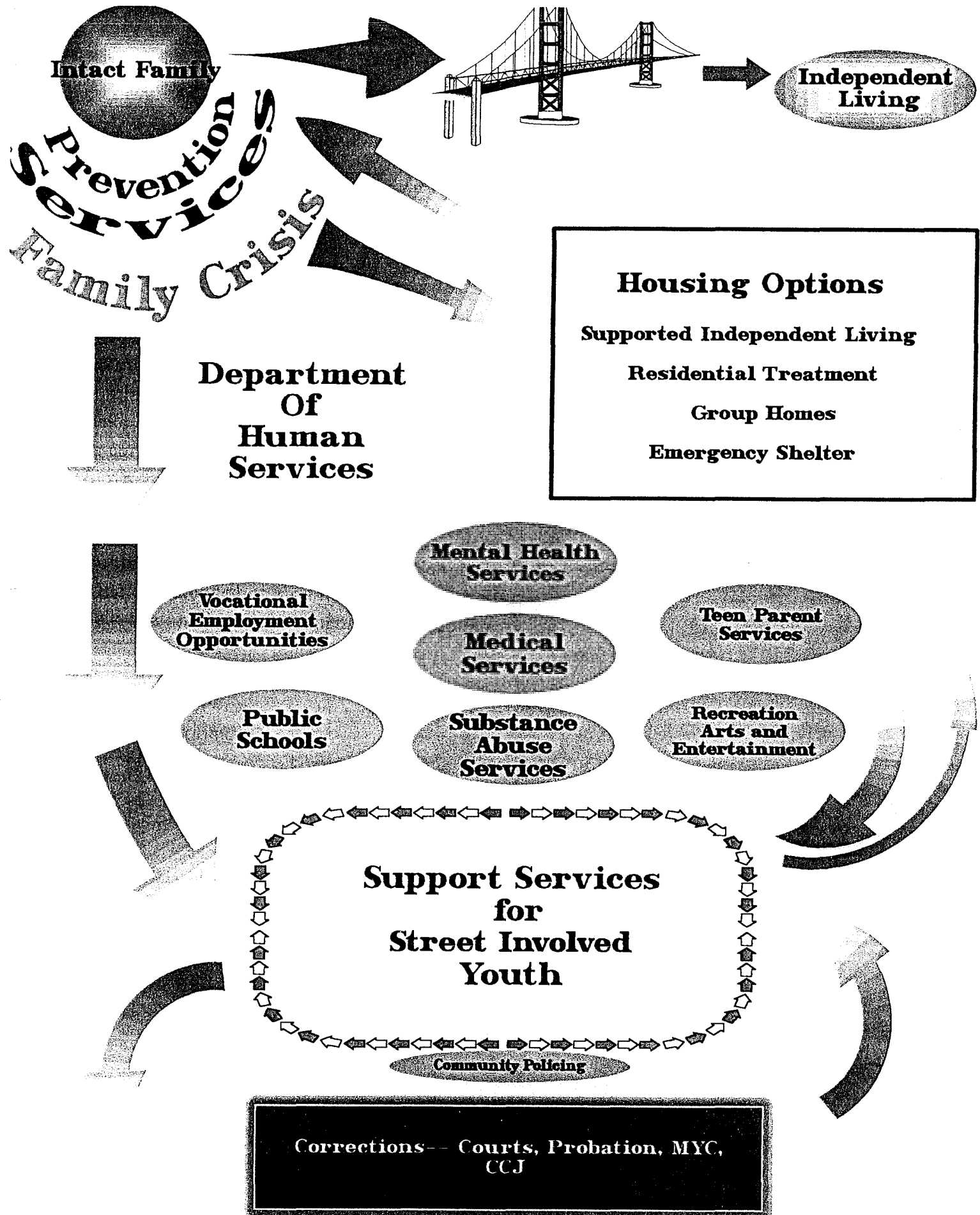
Regional

Continuum of

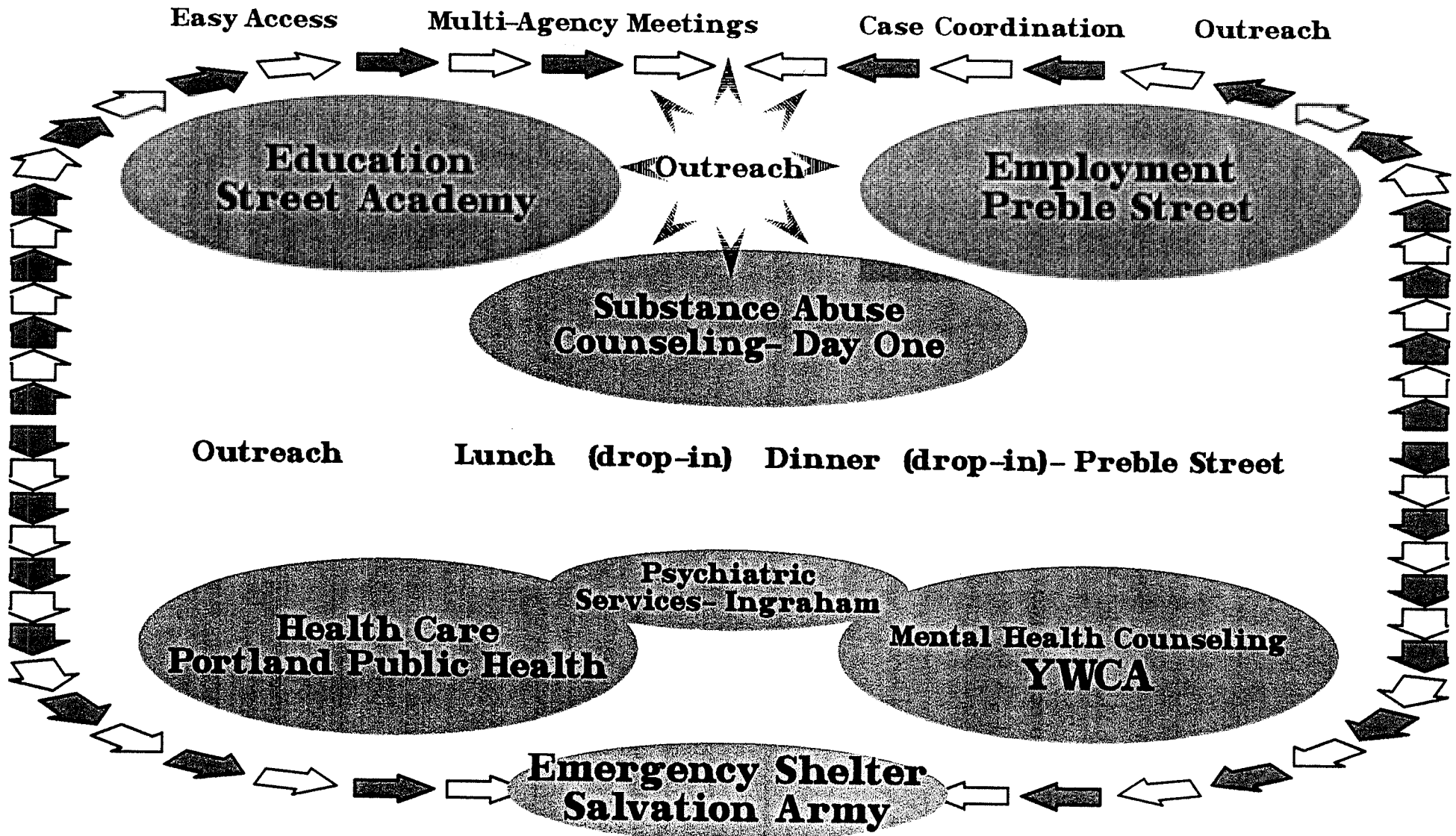
Care for

Street Involved

Youth



Support Services for Street Involved Youth



Education

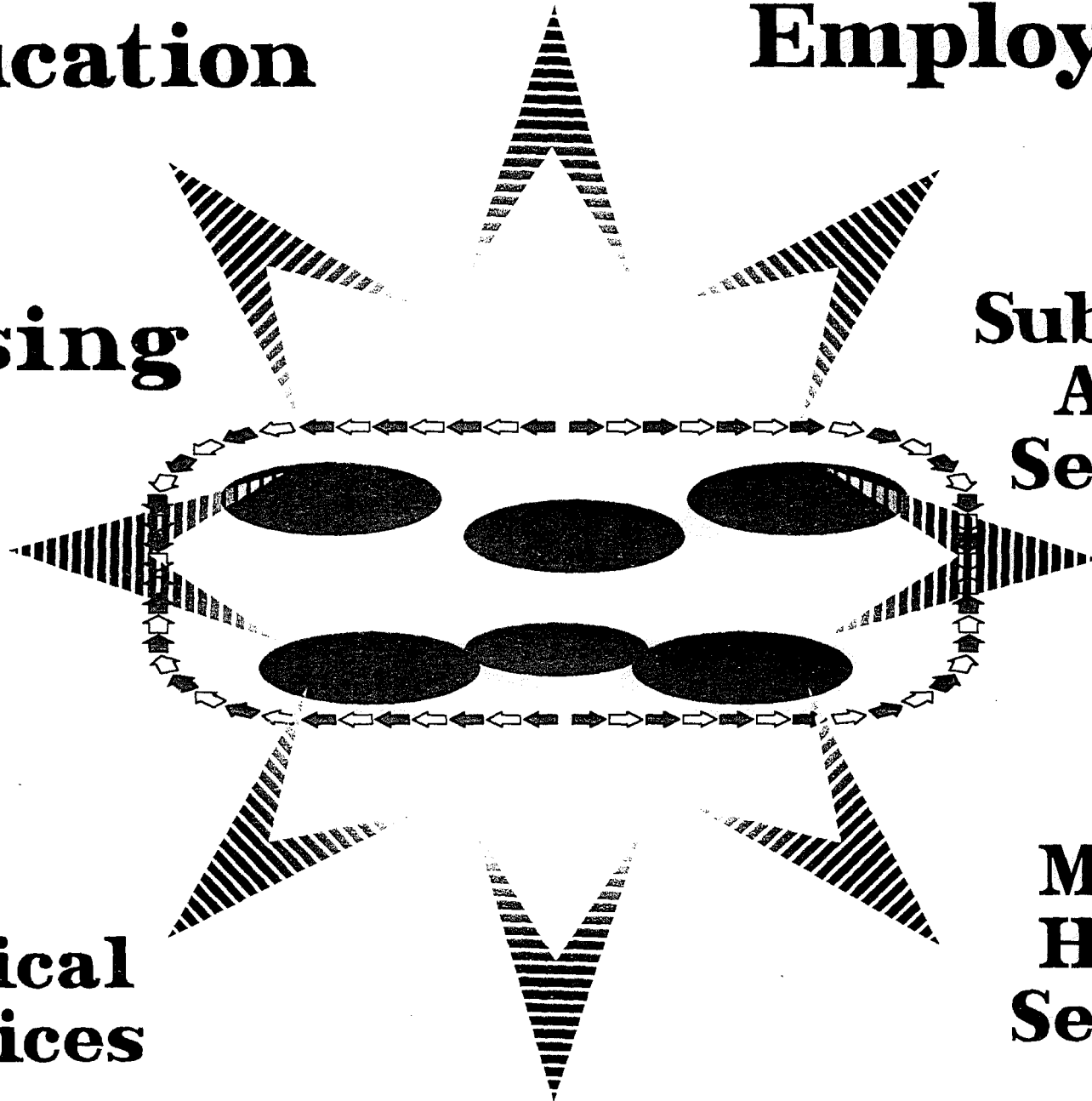
Employment

Housing

**Substance
Abuse
Services**

**Medical
Services**

**Mental
Health
Services**



Statewide



Bangor

Lewiston

Portland

Appendix I:

Brainstorm Outline:

**“What Should a Day Look Like for a New
Youth on the Street?”**

WHAT SHOULD A DAY LOOK LIKE FOR A NEW YOUTH ON THE STREET?

BRAINSTORM LIST

≈ OUTLINE ≈

I. PRINCIPLES

Services aimed at getting kids off the street ASAP

No stupid rules

The less barriers, the better

Make sure the rules are respectful of what kids want - Don't create more barriers

Be careful of assumptions based on age or on anything

Youth-centered services for all needs

For kids to feel respected as the experts in their own lives

Little, if any, judgment

Create a culture of higher expectation, elevating expectations for kids

Some decisions that kids need adults to help them make

Walk the line between support and enabling

II. ADVOCACY

Lower the stigma

Educate Medicaid about homelessness crisis, etc.

III. RESEARCH

Best practices - What does the research say about what works with these kids?

IV. ELIGIBILITY

Non-categorical services

Consistent standard of care for all kids

Better define services for youth ages 18 - 21

V. OUTREACH/ENGAGEMENT

Information - E.g., a poster to tell kids where to go for help

Poster → point of contact - a list where kids can go for services

Visible outreach for kids who won't come to shelters

Work quickly → be available in multiple places → focus on keeping kids from staying on the streets

Engage immediately

Targeted engagement during the first day

Find a window of opportunity and hook them as soon as possible

VI. ASSESSMENT

Holistic approach to why the youth is on the street

Assessment needs to be done so that it isn't seen as a barrier

Assessment for where they really are at - e.g., reading level, poverty - to get what they say they need

Assessment - What needs does this youth have?

Define what assessment entails → plan that includes kids' participation for their futures

Single protocol/form

Use assessment to present to DHS and that assessment would not be redone

Flesh out what the assessment will be. Multi-layered. (How will it be done? Who will do it? When is it done?)

VII. CASE PLAN

Individualized case plan options

Create stuff for each kid

Kids need to be invested

Maximize coping strategies

Short and long term path of getting out of homelessness

Funds for individualized plans for getting off the streets

Discretionary funds - Using incentives to keep kids focused on getting their lives together

VIII. TERMINATION

Criteria for when kids terminate

Exit strategy - Hope for the future

IX. SERVICES

Accessibility/Range of Options

Services that are accessible, relevant and coordinated

Services available 24 hours/7 days - consistently available, not just crisis services, but whatever might be needed

Accessible services all the time - A person, not a phone

Options for all kids

Maximize choice

Consistent standard of care for all kids, if they stay on the street - Can get Medicaid, food stamps, etc., quickly. (Tie this to assessment)

Basic Needs

Getting basic needs met

Place to go for information

Safety

Protection from predators, including peers

Welcome bags containing necessities and more

Clothing, toothbrush, basic necessities

Money - How to get it

A Place to Be

Some place to be during the day

Making sure kids have options where they can feel comfortable. E.g., if explosive and can't be in a group environment or gay and feel uncomfortable in a group environment of straight kids

Shelter/Housing

Clean, safe bed

Shelter

Alternative shelter for kids new to the streets (e.g., for the first 1-5 nights)

Non-categorical (i.e., no label needed), safe housing options

Safe homes

Should we look at foster homes or host homes for kids new to the streets?

Crisis Intervention

Crisis intervention (not clinical, mental health) - How can we healthily stabilize the situation with the kids that results in making plans, etc.?

Services aimed at the crisis in their lives; and services aimed at helping kids think long term

Medical Services

Medical Services

Specialized Needs

Focus on specific specialized needs (e.g., sexual issues)

Pregnancy/sexual issues

Ethnic issue - Make sure we understand what their issues are, e.g., food traditions, cultural issues

Support/Counseling

Support - Someone to talk to

Identify natural supports

Build on natural supports (identify and use them)

Someone to talk to about substance abuse

Counseling that doesn't look and feel like counseling

Street Youth as Peer Helpers

Being with kids in a similar circumstance

Making contacts with seasoned street kids who support their getting off the streets

Seasoned kids who could serve as mentors (former street kids) - i.e., caring, supportive kids

Education

Educational support

Vocational/educational needs - system that they don't have to "fit"

Someone who will treat educational needs of equal importance - Assess and link youth to services (early on)

Family Contact

Assist kid to communicate with someone from "home" - a sibling, grandparent, etc. E.g., provide a calling card

Outreach to families → family assessment

X. ROLE OF CASE MANAGER

Sponsor - something more than a case manager - forms a relationship based on "no fail"
Always available even if things not going as planned
One person who will work and advocate for each child regardless of need
Single person who stays with youth the whole way
Enable a person (case manager) to span agencies to see that things get done
Synthesize information in order to keep kids on a path to short and long term plans - Try to keep kids from being overwhelmed
Helping achieve self-sufficiency - Help understand accountability

XI. ROLE OF OTHER ADULTS

Caring adult(s)
Highly skilled clinicians who are relaxed and "accessible" and can relate

XII. INTERAGENCY CONNECTIONS/LINKAGE

All Agencies/Services

Seamless linkage to other services (that there is always a way out?)
Ensure no duplication of effort
A means to share information
Confidentiality? How do we deal with it in the context of trying to identify kids early and get them off the streets?

Department of Human Services

Connection to DHS → a quick way to get a decision from DHS as to whether they should be involved - Make it work more smoothly
Connections with Bureau of Children and Family Services (DHS) around abuse
Abuse reporting in the context of culture (ethnic diversity)
Reporting to DHS that happens in a way that doesn't disengage kids

Schools

Communication with schools to do more about prevention - about kids who disappear

Police Department

Better communication with the police department

XIII. EVALUATION

Standards for completion of tasks on behalf of kids - Performance indicators

How do we know when we are doing a good job?

System needs to be self-evaluative, flexible and easily changeable when things aren't working as planned or designed or need adjustment

Method to collect data that is transparent to the child, including their needs, who they are, demographics, etc., → planning

Ongoing improvement processes for whatever is put into place and can make changes based on experience

Appendix J:
Invitation to Technical Assistance Training

PORTLAND PARTNERSHIP FOR HOMELESS YOUTH

Vision Statement

To create an environment in which youth at risk, who are homeless, can envision and create a productive, healthy & happy future.

Values

Youth will be fully engaged in the design and implementation of the vision.

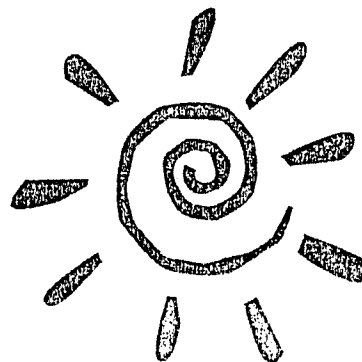
Flexible, easily accessible support will meet basic needs and provide opportunities for youth to fully develop their potential.

Each youth deserves respect, acceptance and a responsible and ongoing commitment to and from the community.

PROGRAM AGENDA

- | | |
|------------|---|
| 9:00 a.m. | Welcome and overview |
| 9:15 | Review of Continuum of Services & Models |
| 10:15 | Break |
| 10:30 | Review and Identification of Challenges and Opportunities to Creating a Continuum of Services |
| 12:00 p.m. | Lunch (Provided) |
| 1:00 | Our Strategic Directions for Portland & Action Planning |
| 3:00 | Next Steps |
| 3:30 | Next Steps |

Lunch catered by Stone Soup



PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

Participants will be able to:

- ✓ Describe the state of the art continuum of services & models for homeless youth
- ✓ Identify challenges and opportunities in the development of a continuum of services
- ✓ Identify methods to support the engagement of participants in the process of collaborative building
- ✓ Define next steps to assess, plan and develop comprehensive and best practice services for homeless youth in Portland

Directions:

The entrance to the rehearsal hall at Merrill Auditorium is at the bottom of Myrtle St., next to City Hall.

Target Audience:

Portland Partnership for Homeless Youth

RSVP Wendy Horr at 761-2216 on or before October 18, 1999.