Family Interventions:
What Do We Know about What Works to Address Youth Homelessness?
Webinar Housekeeping

- Webinar is being recorded.
- Slides will be sent out after the webcast.
- All participants are muted
- Type your **questions** into the chat box to Urban Institute Webinar Questions
Webinar Hosts

URBAN INSTITUTE

ASPE

National Alliance to End Homelessness

NN4Y
National Network for Youth
Jasmine Hayes
U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness
Project Findings

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Methods: Literature Review

- Systematic literature review
  - Search engines, “grey literature,” call for submissions
  - Considered 1,300 studies
  - Identified 87 studies, 49 interventions
- Classified interventions as evidence-based, evidence-informed, promising, emerging, or of interest
- Prevention, reunification, reconnection
## Examples of Intervention Classification Criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Evidence-based</th>
<th>Evidence-informed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Multiple RCTs, at least one with youth experiencing homelessness.</td>
<td>Multiple high-quality RCTs. Did not include youth experiencing homelessness. or Single high-quality RCT. Included youth experiencing homelessness.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promising</td>
<td>Single RCT with moderate study quality; included youth experiencing homelessness. or Single RCT of theoretical relevance, but did not primarily consist of youth experiencing.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Emerging</td>
<td>Single case design (pre-post comparison) pilot study.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Of interest</td>
<td>Of theoretical relevance; may include interventions with no outcomes evaluations.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Methods: Key Informants

- 10 organizations representing advocates, practitioners, researchers, and TA providers
  - Detail about programs and implementation
  - Focus on some key gaps in the literature
  - Views on research needs

- Small number means their perspectives are not a complete picture of the field
## Intervention Type by Evidence Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intervention Type</th>
<th>Evidence-based</th>
<th>Evidence-informed</th>
<th>Promising</th>
<th>Emerging</th>
<th>Of interest</th>
<th>Total</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prevention</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>34</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reunification</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reconnection</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>2</strong></td>
<td><strong>4</strong></td>
<td><strong>10</strong></td>
<td><strong>16</strong></td>
<td><strong>17</strong></td>
<td><strong>49</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Key Findings: Interventions

- 2 Evidence-Based Interventions (evaluated for youth experiencing homelessness)
  - Ecologically Based Family Therapy
  - Functional Family Therapy

- 4 Evidence-Informed Interventions
  - Multidimensional Family Therapy
  - Multisystemic Therapy
  - Treatment Foster Care Oregon (formerly Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care)
  - Support to Reunite, Involve, & Value Each Other (STRIVE) (included youth experiencing homelessness)
Key Findings: Core Components

- Home-Based Services
- Clinical Services and Parent Training
- Multiple Intensive Sessions
- Graduate-Level Therapists
Key Findings: Evidence Gaps

- Few rigorous evaluations of family interventions for youth experiencing homelessness
- Few interventions track housing/homelessness outcomes
- Cross-sector learning/collaboration with child welfare & juvenile justice could strengthen services
- Few interventions address the specific needs of LGBTQ youth or racial/ethnic minorities
- Closer links to schools could create additional opportunities
- More work on screening tool design/assessment
Implementation
Lessons
Thoughtfully engage parents

- Parental engagement helps facilitate youth participation
- Identify and address potential barriers up front
- “Work with – not against – parents”
- Consider separate staff or special training
Make decisions as a team

- Multiple perspectives can increase the effectiveness of case management plans
- Doesn’t require long-term service participation
- Youth and families set and commit to own goals
- “Family” defined broadly, by youth
Offer multiple locations & sessions

- Let parents choose the setting
- Youth experiencing homelessness may actually prefer family sessions occur in the family home
- Creative options identified to support multiple sessions
Provide ongoing support

- Sustain conflict resolution or other skills learned
- Duration and frequency may vary
- Takes time to build trust between youth and family
Implementation Challenges

- May be difficult to implement in RHY settings
- Hard to choose an intervention
- Evidence-based and evidence-informed interventions may be costly
- Improving family functioning may not be enough
Takeaways

- Interventions ready for evaluation
- Providers might consider
  - Offering services in the home
  - Engaging youth/family in case plan
  - Running multiple sessions
  - Providing evidence-based/informed clinical services by trained professionals when possible
  - Providing follow-up supports
- Value of cross-sector learning
Kimberly Waller
Family and Youth Services Bureau
Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA)

- The RHYA provides authority for three major grant programs:
  - Basic Center Program (BCP)
  - Transitional Living Program (TLP) including the Maternity Group Home (MGH)
  - Street Outreach Program (SOP)

- It also provides authority for demonstration programs, a national communications system, data collection, research, program monitoring, training and technical assistance and the development and dissemination of other resources to support RHY funded programs.
RHY Data Collection Efforts

- Street Outreach Program Data Collection Study
  - Purpose to better understand the service needs of street youth
  - 11 SOP grantees collected interview data from 656 youth and focus group data from 217 youth ages 14-21

- Homeless Experience
  - 74% reported kicked out or left due to family conflict
  - Average length of time homeless was 23 months
  - Average age of first experience with homelessness is 15 years

RHY Data Collection Efforts

- Where do youth go when they leave our programs?
  - Between 2000 and 2014, Basic Center Programs served 623,887 youth under 18
  - 409,461 of those youth (66%) exited the BCP program to their parent or legal guardian's home
  - And many more received reunification services before ever having to enter the shelter
Family Interventions and Reunification

- The Runaway and Homeless Youth Program has a 40-year history of working to prevent and end youth homelessness.

- This research can help RHY providers and all youth homelessness programs better respond to the growing emphasis on identifying and integrating evidence-based practice into their work.
Continue to Learn About What Works

- This is just the beginning!

- Transitional Living Program Evaluation Project

  - Study of long-term outcomes for youth who are served through the Transitional Living Program

  - Participating transitional living programs will be interviewed about organizational structure, service delivery models, and outcome goals as well as their frameworks for implementing positive youth development strategies

  - A randomized control trial design will also collect direct youth feedback by phone and online at 6, 12 and 18 months to assess long-term outcomes for housing, employment, and social and emotional wellness
Resources

- Family and Youth Services Bureau Website: http://www.acf.hhs.gov/fysb

- Runaway and Homeless Youth Training and Technical Assistance Center (RHYTTAC): http://www.rhyttac.net/ (includes additional material on evidence-based practices)

- National Runaway Safeline: http://www.1800runaway.org/

- National Clearinghouse on Families and Youth: http://ncfy.acf.hhs.gov/
Contact Information

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Amy Louttit
National Network for Youth
Q&A
Find the report at:


Includes
- full report
- 3 shorter briefs focusing on selected parts of the report of interest to policymakers, researchers, and practitioners
- a list of all the interventions with descriptions and references.

The report can also be found at:
https://aspe.hhs.gov/family-interventions-youth-experiencing-or-risk-homelessness
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Thank you!