

FOSTERING CONNECTIONS:

THE HOUSING LANDSCAPE FOR FOSTER CARE ALUMNI AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Young adults, notably those exiting the foster care system, face acute housing challenges amidst a growing crisis of access to safe, affordable housing in Kentucky. This brief aims to highlight their needs, drawing from current research and data and to advocate for improved housing access and stability.

Existing Housing Options

- **Existing Housing Options:** While public housing and Section 8 vouchers form the support backbone, supply fails to meet demand. Specialized young adult housing programs and transitional living offer targeted help but are limited in scope.
- **Existing Supports for Young Adults and Foster Care Alumni:** Navigation services, maintenance support, and transition programs exist but are often under-resourced or inaccessible.

Identified Problems

- **Growing Homelessness:** The expanding Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program waitlist signals a critical need for expedited housing support for vulnerable youth, including foster care alumni.
- **Significant Delays:** Young adults encounter substantial delays and bureaucratic obstacles in securing housing, even with vouchers.
- **Instability for Families:** Housing insecurity severely disrupts young adults with families, impacting their children's welfare and perpetuating poverty cycles.
- **Economic and Workforce Impact:** The disengagement of homeless young adults from work and education exacerbates poverty rates, underscoring the broader economic stakes.

Gaps and Needs

- **Insufficient Housing Choice Voucher Availability:** A critical shortage of affordable housing options leaves many young adults in uncertain living conditions.
- **Shortage of Housing Navigators:** A lack of navigators complicates access to housing resources, leading to missed opportunities.



Recommendations

- **Expand Affordable Housing:** Advocate for targeted state and federal investment to increase the affordable housing stock for young adults.
- **Develop Young-Adult-Specific Shelters:** Identify funding to establish shelters and transitional housing tailored to young adult needs, including emergency hotel stays.
- **Improve Access to Housing Vouchers:** Increase the number of Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) vouchers available statewide and support federal initiatives to streamline access to housing vouchers for all young adults.
- **Increase Landlord Participation:** Enhance participation through education on program benefits, incentives such as tax credits, support services with dedicated liaisons and marketing campaigns showcasing successful landlord testimonials.
- **Expedite Housing Processes:** Improve support systems for finding suitable housing and encourage landlord participation in Section 8, supplemented by streamlined inspection, approval, and recertification processes.

Conclusion



Addressing the housing needs of young adults, especially those from foster care backgrounds, requires a concerted effort to expand housing availability, simplify access to support programs, and remove bureaucratic barriers. Implementing these recommendations will pave the way for stable, accessible housing solutions essential for vulnerable young adults' well-being and economic stability.



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