

Date: January 21, 2021

To: Juvenile Justice Advisory Group

Subject: Addressing Housing Instability as a Pathway to Incarceration for Minor Girls and Gender Expansive Youth in Maine

From: Vera Institute of Justice, Initiative to End Girls' Incarceration

Introduction

Through the Initiative to End Girls' Incarceration ("Initiative"), the Vera Institute of Justice is partnering with leaders across the country to build a national movement to end the incarceration of girlsⁱ within 10 years. In 2018, a team of Maine stakeholders, led by the Department of Corrections (DOC) and Cumberland County District Attorney's Office, applied to receive no-cost technical assistance from Vera and was one of four sites selected for support through a competitive RFP process. From 2018-2020, Vera offered technical support to Maine to end the incarceration of girls and continue to work in the state to advance priorities for girls and LGB/TGNC or "gender expansive" youth.

Maine has made considerable progress in advancing the goal of getting to zero: total annual detention admissions to girls' units have decreased by 80% (from 140 admissions in 2018 to 29 admissions in 2020) and the annual number of new commitments for girls dropped by 66% (from 9 admissions in 2018 to 3 admissions in 2020).ⁱⁱ Now, an average of only three girls are admitted to detention after arrest each month.ⁱⁱⁱ In 2020, only three girls were committed to residential placement after a delinquency finding and there were 9 months with zero committed girls.^{iv} In 2021, the State saw stretches of time with just one young person in the girls' unit. Despite this progress, there is more work to be done to fully end girls' incarceration, ensure that young people who are released receive support to meet their needs in the community, and to create a community-based continuum of care that prevents referral to the juvenile legal system in the first place. As the justice system closes its doors, alternative strategies must be deployed to meet their needs outside of confinement.

In the diagnostic assessment phase of our technical assistance in Maine, Vera staff worked with government and community stakeholders to understand girls' and LGB/TGNC youth's experiences with incarceration. We focused on areas of disparity for girls and gender expansive youth, including those of color, understanding available community resources, and identifying gaps in community responses to prevent and disrupt justice system involvement. The process included several site visits to Maine over the course of 2019 and 2020. We completed a case file review¹ of young people held in the girls' units at Long Creek. We facilitated a meeting with behavioral health providers where we discussed common challenges presenting in cases where girls had involvement with both behavioral health and Long Creek. We interviewed more than 50 stakeholders throughout the state who represented law enforcement, the courts, child welfare, behavioral health, the runaway and homeless youth services system, nonprofit community-based organizations, service providers, leaders of government agencies, and young people. Through these efforts we were able to gather insight from local experts regarding both the problems contributing to incarceration and possible strategies to get to zero.

¹ Through our casefile analysis, we reviewed and coded files for 25 girls who had been admitted to Long Creek between the years of 2014 and 2019, although the majority of files were for girls with recent admissions. The 25 girls accounted for a total of 49 admissions.

As part of our assessment, we heard repeatedly that girls and gender expansive youth are often confined in Long Creek because "there's no place else for them to go" and that housing instability was playing a significant role in pathways to incarceration. Our conversations also indicated that juvenile justice stakeholders were sometimes unfamiliar with the scope of runaway and homeless youth services available in Maine and wanted to understand the continuum better. In late 2019 and early 2020, Vera undertook a landscape analysis of the runaway and homeless service continuum available to *minors* in Maine. This memo summarizes our learning from these interviews, including how youth homelessness or housing instability is associated with youth incarceration in Maine, particularly for girls and gender expansive youth. We provide an overview of available resources for minors in Maine's runaway and homeless youth continuum and offer general recommendations for addressing identified gaps. An earlier version of this memo was shared with Maine stakeholders in early 2021. Since then, there has been some progress made to address housing solutions for minors, but housing instability is still a major factor both in pathways to incarceration and a barrier to successful community reintegration for Maine's youth. Throughout the remainder of 2021, we had several additional conversations with youth homelessness stakeholders, which are reflected in this memo's updated landscape analysis of runaway and homeless youth resources, to help inform reform efforts to address these challenges.

Please note that the information in this memo, except where otherwise noted, is based on what we learned from our conversations with providers who took the time to speak with us, and our recommendations are informed by that information and our work in other jurisdictions nationally. We did not perform a landscape analysis of child welfare or mental health services and recognize that this document should be taken in the context of those other systems. We are aware of several other groups working to address those systems, and their recommendations may align with or reinforce our own. (See, e.g., recent publications from the Maine Child Welfare Action Network which makes a strong case for transformation that is urgently needed to improve safety and well-being of children and families in Maine).

Defining Housing Instability

Throughout this memo, Vera will use the term "housing instability" to encompass a range of situations and scenarios in which young people lack access to safe, stable, and supportive housing. This expansive definition includes youth who are:

- unsafe in their homes due to conflict or violence;
- street homeless, with or without their families;
- couch surfing or staying temporarily with friends or chosen family;
- forced to move multiple times due to their family's inability to pay rent;
- living in overcrowded living conditions for economic reasons;
- running away from home or placements;
- moving frequently between multiple child welfare placements; or
- cycling between child welfare, mental health, and juvenile justice placements.

Many of the scenarios described above would not fall under strict legal definitions of homelessness or housing instability, which can limit access to certain resources, programming, and funding streams.

Overview of Initial Findings from Vera's Diagnostic Assessment in Maine

Our diagnostic assessment in Maine highlighted several of the pathways described in the table titled “Pathways to Housing Instability and Justice Involvement Nationally” on the following page as key drivers of confinement for girls and gender expansive youth. Our conversations with stakeholders, as well as Vera’s casefile review, indicate that girls are frequently ending up in the juvenile legal system due to homelessness resulting from family conflict (in some cases due to rejection of youth based on sexual orientation or gender identity) and past victimization and trauma. At least one provider stated that a common pathway between homelessness and justice involvement was youth who were involved in the “street life” getting arrested for minor misbehaviors such as getting into fights with other youth; providers also noted that for youth experiencing trafficking, this could involve illegal acts such as stealing or selling drugs for their traffickers.

The Vera team and NYU research partners² conducted a case file review of the files of girls admitted to Long Creek in 2018 and 2019. Given the small number of youth admitted to girls’ units at Long Creek, analysis of qualitative data in case reviews helps to illustrate a more robust and thorough understanding of young people’s experiences than quantitative data alone will allow. A more detailed overview of our assessment is [available here](#), but some specific findings from our casefile review of girls admitted to Long Creek between 2014 and 2019 include:³

- ✓ 100% of the girls in the case file review were identified as having mental/behavioral health needs, and 100% had traumatic experiences.
- ✓ 60% of the girls in our casefile review experienced multiple instances of sexual assault and 48% with concerning evidence suggesting or actual confirmation that they had been commercially sexually exploited.
- ✓ 96% of the girls in our casefile review experienced family poverty and theft was a common charge, which may have been related to survival needs (e.g., stealing food items, small amounts of cash, or condoms (which can be life-saving for youth, especially those experiencing CSEC)).
- ✓ 72% of youth experienced prolonged absence from school ranging in length from one week to a year, which was often directly connected to housing instability disrupting educational continuity.

Interviews with stakeholders and reviews of case files and other relevant documents also made clear that there is often a misalignment of system responses and youth needs. Children who may be better served in the child welfare system end up in homeless shelters or juvenile justice facilities, and youth receive mental health services that are more or less intensive than they actually need, inhibiting their healing and sometimes exacerbating the underlying issues. Often youth, including girls and gender expansive youth, are unnecessarily being sent to Long Creek while awaiting access to behavioral health services because they lack a safe or permanent placement in the community or are experiencing homelessness. These challenges are well documented in numerous studies and systems assessments in Maine.^v In 2020, the *Maine Juvenile Justice Systems Assessment* found that more than half of young people detained at Long Creek were detained in order to “provide care” when they were

² Research Partners at New York University include Dr. Shabnam Javdani and Dr. Erin Godfrey, professors at NYU Steinhardt Department of Applied Psychology.

³ Findings were based solely on the contents of casefiles. Not all files contained equally comprehensive information and researchers coded files based on information that was present in each file. Therefore, it is likely that findings in various themes within this memo are under-representative. For example, the prevalence of trauma and abuse is based on information contained in girls’ files (such as documentation of criminal investigations) but Vera did not utilize external data sources (such as child welfare investigation records) to complement the case file review.

unable to return home or were awaiting placement for needed services.^{vi} In 2021, the legislature passed LD546 which eliminates “provide care” as a permissible reason for detention in Maine, which will help to reduce detention of young people experiencing housing instability and other needs.^{vii} However, housing will continue to contribute to incarceration for many youth involved in the legal system who may experience longer lengths of stay and challenges in community reintegration as a result of housing instability. A recent report by *Place Matters* summarizing findings from the first year of implementation of the Department of Corrections’ Regional Care Teams found that housing was a need for 50 percent of youth referred, making it the most identified need.^{viii}

Pathways to Housing Instability and Justice Involvement Nationally

Experiences of housing instability, including homelessness and child welfare involvement, create multiple risk factors that simultaneously make youth vulnerable to justice involvement and exacerbate the consequences and duration of their justice involvement. National research has identified many common pathways to justice involvement that showed up in the casefiles we reviewed in Maine and in conversations with stakeholders, including young people.

- **Economic pressures from familial housing instability:** Rising income inequality and affordable housing shortages place increased economic burdens on families. Young people may search for ways to contribute to their families, including risky activities like theft to survive and contribute to income.
 - Economic instability within families impacts girls in unique ways that can further compound challenges. Girls are often asked or expected to take on caretaking responsibilities for younger siblings and older family members, as well as other domestic responsibilities.^{ix} Young parents and pregnant youth also face unique risks and economic pressures.
- **Family conflict:** Verbal and physical altercations with family members can escalate and result in law enforcement interventions in which youth are arrested and removed from the home on assault or family violence charges. In these circumstances, young people may be more likely to be arrested than adults for a variety of reasons even though they are the primary victim or are a victim.
 - For girls and gender expansive youth, the context of these incidents is often underlying abuse.
 - For LGB/TGNC youth, familial rejection of gender identity, expression, or sexuality can exacerbate or cause conflict in the home and may result in youth being kicked out of their homes entirely.
- **Conflict in institutional placements:** Physical conflicts between youth or staff and youth in congregate care settings—or running from these settings— can quickly escalate and result in providers or community members calling law enforcement, leading youth into the justice system.^x
- **Trauma:** Lacking permanent, consistent, and safe housing is traumatic in and of itself. For young people actively experiencing harm in their homes, including physical and sexual abuse, the trauma is compounded. Youth may be swept into the justice system for trauma responses, including running away from home, skipping school, fighting at home or in school, or using substances or alcohol. When these behaviors are not recognized as tied to trauma, they can

result in reliance on law enforcement and criminalization rather than triggering interventions and support.

- Experts note that the behaviors that lead to law enforcement involvement are often rooted in the girls' and gender expansive youth's trauma and experiences with violence.^{xi}
- **Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (CSEC):** Girls and LGB/TGNC youth who are in child welfare custody, are experiencing violence at home, and/or are experiencing homelessness are particularly vulnerable to commercial sexual exploitation. For some, this may become a means to survive and gain access to basic needs like housing, clothing, or food. Others may be emotionally or violently coerced by traffickers who capitalize on and offer solutions to the economic and relational instability that youth are experiencing. Although most jurisdictions, including Maine, have prohibited the criminalization of minors for prostitution, youth experiencing CSEC are still arrested for activities related to their exploitation, including shoplifting, loitering, and coerced drug or weapons trading. Often system interventions for addressing CSEC overlook economic drivers of exploitation, including housing instability, in designing interventions. Instead, systems often place a strong emphasis on treatment-based approaches offered in residential settings that may not be the best option and offer only time-limited solutions. In some instances, these settings can lead to crossover to justice confinement, as referenced above.
- Girls, gender expansive, and LGB/TGNC youth are at particular risk of sexual exploitation and may also experience labor trafficking. 94% of sex trafficking victims are women and girls, and studies have repeatedly found that homeless LGB youth are at significantly greater risk of trafficking and exploitation than their heterosexual peers.^{xii}
- **Survival offenses:** Street homeless youth may be arrested for quality-of-life offenses, like loitering or sleeping in public places. In addition to engaging in survival sex (as noted above), youth who are street homeless may also be more likely to engage in other survival offenses that put them at high risk of being arrested, including shoplifting to access clothing, hygiene items, and food.

Maine's Youth Homelessness Resource Mapping

Resource mapping indicated that Maine has a range of services available to address youth who run away from home and/or experience homelessness. Availability of services for both minors and young adults vary by location, with large areas of Maine having little or no runaway/youth homelessness services available (see map, page 9). Programming can change even within cities or counties according to funding, developing needs, and other factors. It should also be noted that federal funding is currently driving an expansion of services throughout the state; this should expand the availability of services in regions of the state that were identified as under-resourced during our scan. As part of the HUD YHDP grant discussed below, Penquis will be piloting a host home program. Additionally, Northern Lighthouse will be opening an HHS-funded Basic Center Program (short-term crisis housing) offering at least 4 beds for youth, in early 2022. The state is also changing its Coordinated Entry system for youth and young adults, which will potentially impact the way minors access services, but these changes are still in the early stages and will initially only be rolled out with a subset of providers.

A 2019 Press Herald report estimated that there were 1,400 unaccompanied homeless students in Maine, and only about 54 shelter beds available to teens statewide. The Maine State Housing Authority also estimated that there were 138 beds for youth 24 and younger. Many of the stakeholders we spoke to in Maine noted that there is no accurate “count” of youth homelessness in the state, in part because of the difficulties of identifying youth in rural areas. As a report from Preble Street explained: “In a primarily rural state such as Maine, homeless counts occur primarily in communities in which shelters exist. Many areas of the State, including some cities and towns that have identified issues with homelessness, do not participate in the counts.”^{xiii} The report also noted that when they undertook efforts to do a better count, they found 263 homeless youth in just seven counties (a mix of urban and rural), while the statewide Point in Time Count just prior found only 51 youth statewide.

In order to formulate the housing-specific recommendations shared later in this memo, Vera considered Maine’s service availability in the context of nationally recommended service and housing offerings for runaway and homeless youth. The National Network for Youth (NN4Y) has developed a *Proposed System to End Youth and Young Adult Homelessness*, outlining the services and housing models communities should provide.^{xiv} A very generalized overview is summarized below, along with information on Maine’s continuum. This summary is focused specifically on services for unaccompanied *minors*, given Vera’s focus on girls in the juvenile justice system. (Youth who are 18 or older, who are homeless with their families, or who are victims of domestic violence may be able to access other services.)

National Recommendations (from NN4Y)	Maine Landscape
Prevention Services and Housing	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family counseling and other in-home services • Crisis housing^a (can include short-term foster care, host homes or Basic Center Program) <p style="margin-left: 20px;">^a Can also serve as an early homelessness response</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Beginnings provides free family mediation to families across the state (although this was also identified as a service that could <i>benefit from expansion</i>). • Penquis provides services to youth at imminent risk of homelessness or not living at home because of family conflict (based on school referrals) in Knox, Waldo, Penobscot, and Piscataquis counties.^a • Maine also has some Basic Center Programs and Host Homes (see below).
Early and Crisis Intervention Services and Housing	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crisis hotlines (including e-mail/messaging-based services)^b • Respite care^b • Street outreach • Drop in centers^b 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most providers have hotlines/phone numbers that youth can call to learn about services, but only some are 24/7.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reunification services (e.g., family counseling)^c • System responses (e.g., child welfare, behavioral health-provided services and housing assistance) • Short term housing/services/basic needs provision (e.g., Basic Center Programs) • Host homes <p>^b Can also serve as prevention if offered before homeless experience</p> <p>^c Can also serve as a longer-term response</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providers reported that, due to prioritizations in Maine, they are typically able to provide emergency beds to minors as needed. • New Beginnings (Lewiston), Shaw House (Bangor) and Preble Street (Portland) offer street outreach and emergency shelter. Penquis and Preble Street will also be offering navigation/diversion services to youth experiencing homelessness as part of the state’s new HUD YHDP grant (see below). • New Beginnings, Preble Street, The Landing Place, and Shaw House have drop in centers. New Beginnings and Shaw House also have emergency shelters/Basic Center Programs and provide counseling, mediation, and other services to safely reunify families. Northern Lighthouse will also open a Basic Center Program in Mars Hill in early 2022. • Youth anywhere in the state can also access family mediation through New Beginnings’ hotline, although this was also identified as a service that could <i>benefit from expansion</i>. • Homelessness providers do collaborate with child welfare to serve some youth, although they also report that many youth they serve have past child welfare involvement and can be extremely resistant to returning to that system. • Midcoast Community Alliance, The Landing Place, and Penquis also provide outreach and supportive services to youth at risk of or experiencing homelessness, and youth throughout the state also receive some support through school McKinney Vento liaisons. • New Beginnings’ shelter also temporarily serves youth awaiting community placement through DHHS or DOC. • Many areas of the state, particularly rural areas, are still underserved (see map on page 9). • Host homes are currently being considered as a possible resource for addressing youth homelessness in rural communities, and some groups (Ryan Home Project in Berwick and Housing Resources for Youth in
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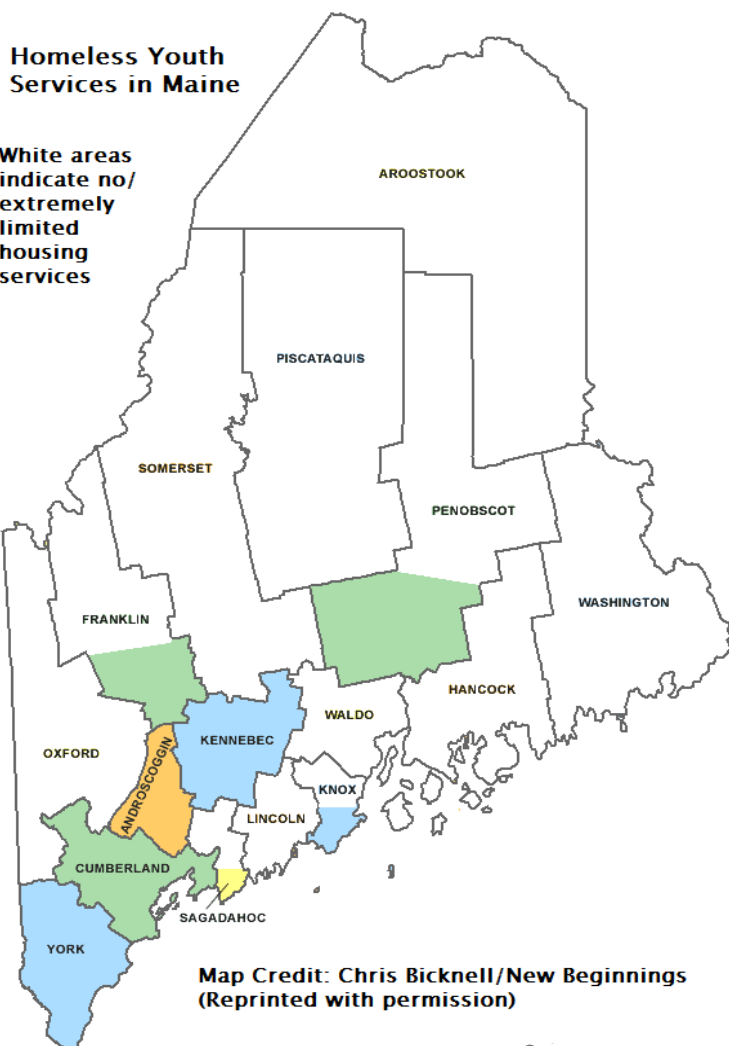
	Brunswick) are actively providing host homes. Penquis is also piloting a host home program as part of Maine's YHDP grant (see below).
<u>Long-Term Services and Housing</u>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Educational, vocational, and employment services • Life skills development • Permanent connection supports (e.g., reunification services, kinship care, legal guardianships) • Transitional housing (e.g., Transitional Living Programs) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall, providers report that they struggle significantly to find longer-term housing for minors (due to lack of spaces and/or lack of appropriateness for minors). • Many areas of the state, particularly rural areas, are still extremely underserved (see map below). • Maine does have legal mechanisms by which non-parents can obtain legal guardianships, etc. although very limited free legal assistance is available to help navigate that process. • New Beginnings (Lewiston), Shaw House (Bangor) and Preble Street (Portland) offer Transitional Living Programs for youth age 16-20 (or 21). These programs generally include case management, including education/employment support and life skills development.
<u>Other Services</u>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aftercare services (e.g., case management and post-reunification family support services) • Cross-cutting support services provided throughout the stages above (e.g., mentoring, physical and behavioral health care, legal assistance, education/school services (including early childhood and post-secondary)) 	<p>These services were not specifically part of our conversations with providers in Maine but several did share that they offer medical and/or behavioral health services, educational support and similar services (either independently or as part of case management).</p> <p>Additional services are also required to be offered as part of Family and Youth Service Bureau-funded Basic Center Programs and Transitional Living Programs offered by the Maine providers identified above.</p>
<p><i>Relevant Family and Youth Service Bureau Program Definitions:</i></p> <p>Basic Center Program: "...provide youth up to age 18 with emergency shelter, food, clothing, counseling and referrals for health care. Most basic centers can provide 21 days of shelter for up to 20 youth.... Basic centers seek to reunite young people with their families, whenever possible, or to locate appropriate alternative placements."</p> <p>Transitional Living Program: "long-term residential services to homeless youth ages 16 to 22. Services are provided for up to 540 days, or in exceptional circumstances, up to 635 days." Services include "extended residential shelter, [e.g.,] Group homes, Maternity group homes, Host family homes, Supervised apartments," as well as case planning/management and skills development to support youth's transition to independent living.</p>	

By providing family mediation, short and long-term housing, counseling, and other services to address trauma and behavioral health needs, these programs can prevent or ameliorate the issues that lead youth to justice involvement, such as family conflict and economic pressures. However, as the chart above indicates, Maine’s runaway and homeless youth services continuum for minors is primarily focused in major cities, and on the areas of crisis response/short-term housing rather than long-term support (note that national research indicates that youth homelessness is *equally prevalent* in rural and urban communities,^{xv} despite being less visible outside major cities). For example, providers reported that they are generally able to find emergency/shelter beds for minors who need them, but that additional transitional housing that could serve minors is needed. Several of the programs based in Maine’s largest cities also address some of the gender and equity issues discussed above, and in some cases provide services beyond their local service area. For example, New Beginnings has a statewide training program for schools and other agencies on sexual health risk reduction and HIV prevention. Preble Street provides anti-trafficking services in Cumberland County and Bangor and has capacity to provide training and support to providers throughout the state.

Although all the services offered by these youth homelessness providers undoubtedly help thousands of Maine youth each year, there are still many areas of Maine that have little to no services, and there are numerous missed opportunities to prevent homelessness or ensure that youth do not experience re-occurrences of homelessness through expanded services. (See map, noting that it does not reflect several soon-to-be opened or implemented programs, including a youth shelter in Mars Hill and some additional services that will be offered as part of a 2-year federal YHDP grant discussed below.)

Voucher Programs

Maine currently participates in two HUD programs that provide vouchers to former foster youth, a population who may be disproportionately likely to experience homelessness and justice involvement. MaineHousing has approximately 100 Housing Choice Vouchers available through HUD's Family Unification Program (FUP). These vouchers can be used for families whose housing barriers place their children at risk for foster care placement or prevent



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reunification. They may also be used for up to 36 months by young adults aged 18-24 who were in foster care at age 16 and are facing homelessness. Several Maine housing authorities also distribute Housing Choice Vouchers through HUD's Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) program. Former foster youth are eligible for these vouchers based on similar requirements to the FUP program (the FYI program also requires recipients to have child welfare involvement at the age of sixteen). Neither the FYI or FUP programs include any funding for services, but some housing authorities work with DHHS and other partners to pair them with case management and other services. Although these programs are both extremely beneficial for youth who access them, they do not address the lack of options for minors in Maine. The FYI program is only available to individuals 18 or older. FUP vouchers could potentially be used for minors experiencing homelessness if they are involved with the child welfare system and a Housing Choice Voucher would allow them to be successfully reunited with a parent. FUP vouchers cannot be used for juvenile justice youth for whom housing is a barrier to diversion/release if there is no child welfare involvement.

Recent YHDP Grant

Maine recently received a \$3.35 million two-year HUD Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP) grant. This initiative will create a Coordinated Community Response to youth homelessness and "will identify the strengths, gaps and challenges to the existing youth homelessness response system and recommend strategies to improve the system and outcomes for youth experiencing homelessness up to age 24."^{xvi} Maine's YHDP project, now called H.O.M.E. (Hope for ME) includes a focus on addressing the housing needs of minors, increasing prevention services and system coordination, as well as potential solutions for homelessness in rural communities, including host homes. Although Maine's YHDP initiative is still fairly new, the application process led to helpful information gathering and mapping of current youth homelessness services.

The YHDP initiative will fund (1) a host home pilot for youth in crisis, (2) mobile outreach programming, (3) transitional and rapid rehousing (for 18-24 year olds), and (4) supportive services that would be paired with housing vouchers (also for 18-24 year olds). An RFP for these services was released in February 2021; grantees have been selected and are listed in the chart below. The RFP discussed the fact that certain populations are more likely to be impacted by homelessness and directed applicants to consider the needs of specified groups in their proposed work.^{xvii} It also addressed the need to serve youth in the many rural areas where gaps currently exist, saying that youth and young adults (YYA) "experiencing homelessness in rural communities are often still enrolled in school, connected with family, and want to stay where they are. Projects must ensure YYA have the option to stay connected with their families (when safe to do so), communities, and local support systems all across the State."^{xviii} The YHDP work also generated recommendations for how related systems (e.g., corrections, education) can improve their practices and policies to help prevent youth homelessness that are included in *H.O.M.E. Maine's Coordinated Community Plan to Prevent and End Youth and Young Adult Homelessness ("H.O.M.E. Plan")*. The plan also identifies other areas for systemic improvements, such as changing data collection methods to better identify *all* youth experiencing homelessness and providing training for providers serving homeless youth on family reunification processes. Importantly, the initiative's work is supported by a Youth Action Board comprised of individuals with relevant lived experience who provide feedback on the YHDP goals and plans and generate ideas for how to best meet the needs of young people experiencing homelessness throughout Maine. The table below summarizes the new services to be provided during the

demonstration period and indicates which ones serve minors ages 12-17 and which serve young adults ages 18-24.

Project Category	Serves Minors?	Organization	Counties Served
<u>Navigation and Diversion</u> – Geographically nimble teams providing assistance to youth and young adults experiencing homelessness, helping them connect with key resources for basic needs and resolving homelessness.	Y <i>Serves minors and young adults</i>	Preble Street Shaw House & ACAP	York, Cumberland, Oxford, Androscoggin, Sagadahoc, Lincoln, Knox, Waldo, Somerset, Franklin, Kennebec, Penobscot, Piscataquis, Washington, Hancock, and Aroostook
<u>Supportive Services Paired with Housing Choice Vouchers</u> – Services provided to young adults to help them through the housing search process and provide support once housed.	N <i>Serves young adults only</i>	Volunteers of America NNE	York, Sagadahoc, Lincoln, Kennebec, and Knox
<u>Transitional Housing to Rapid Re-Housing</u> – A joint component program offering young adults opportunities: a service-intensive project for help with life skills or a supportive service to move to independent living.	N <i>Serves young adults only</i>	Preble Street Shaw House & ACAP	Cumberland, York, Oxford, Sagadahoc Penobscot, Piscataquis, Washington, Hancock, and Aroostook
<u>Host Home</u> – A pilot program designed to leverage safe spaces in community members’ homes for youth and young adults when they have nowhere else to stay.	Yes <i>Serves minors and young adults</i>	Penquis	Piscataquis

This table was adapted from a summary table provided by Joe Locke on behalf of Maine's Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program.

Second Chance Act Reentry Grant

Maine also has an OJJDP Second Chance Act Youth Offender Reentry Grant and girls and Black and Indigenous Youth of Color are considered a priority target population for that work. The Advisory Committee for the grant has been developing inclusive supportive housing strategies aligned with many of the challenges raised in this memo. Second Chance funding will be used to fund direct services to youth through Youth Advocate Programs and the University of Southern Maine's Opportunity Scholars initiative, which focuses on bridging to post-secondary education, employment, and youth leadership opportunities.

Recommendations and Considerations for Maine

Our landscape analysis, summarized throughout this memo, shows that Maine has a number of the runaway and homeless youth resources it needs within its current continuum of care. However, profound gaps exist within rural parts of the State and for minors who are in need of long-term or transitional housing solutions rather than short-term solutions. There are also opportunities for Maine to leverage resources that are currently available more systematically to help avoid unnecessary incarceration at Long Creek. Below we offer a set of solutions we recommend Maine to consider, which largely align with and/or could support the recommendations put forth in H.O.M.E Plan, as well as a previous report commissioned by the Maine State Housing Authority, on behalf of the Maine Continuum of Care, as well as relevant national guidance.^{xix} We look forward to engaging with Maine's community and government leaders to fully develop, refine and prioritize this list in order to implement solutions that best serve youth involved with the legal system, including those incarcerated in the girls' units at Long Creek, STEPS, or other facilities.

Expand Services for Runaway and Homeless Youth to Strengthen Services and Address Gaps

Despite Maine having a significant array of community services, as highlighted above in the Maine Landscape chart, an expansion of services is necessary to better serve youth, including those who are ultimately incarcerated on the girls' side of the juvenile justice system. There are also opportunities for Maine to expand the ability of family members, fictive kin, or other supports to provide young people with housing options that do not initiate or require system involvement.

- **Support runaway and homeless youth service providers in maintaining and expanding programming**, including offering relevant services beyond the counties currently served. This should include a focus on long-term housing options appropriate for minors, particularly those at risk of justice involvement. Given the time often required for new residential programming to be developed, Maine should consider directing funds to programs that already exist or are in progress (e.g., the Preble Street Healing Center, New Beginnings' mediation services) to support their capacity to serve minors with (or at risk of) justice involvement.
- **Expand access to family mediation.** Although family mediation is provided in Maine (see Maine Landscape section) stakeholders have identified a need for expansion of this service to help youth safely return to their families. To address issues before they get to the point of a youth being homeless there also needs to be better publicity for these services, so the community knows they exist.
- **Provide better access to guardianship petitions**, making it easier for youth's natural supports to take limited or long-term custody when appropriate. Additional efforts are also needed to ensure that those who could benefit from the guardianship petition process know that this is an option (particularly in cases where youth are in institutional settings due to lack of clear alternatives), and receive assistance navigating the process. Directing funding towards legal service providers could expand their capacity to 1) represent a greater number of youth and/or guardians in court; 2) provide guidance and support to youth and families navigating the process without a lawyer; 3) providing training and support for other attorneys (e.g. juvenile defenders or volunteer lawyers) or court professionals on guardianship; and 4) conduct education and outreach efforts to raise awareness of guardianship as an option among youth, families, and service providers. Maine may also want to consider providing guardianship subsidies to individuals who take guardianship of youth

outside of the child welfare system, in cases where limited resources are the primary barrier to a young person being able to live permanently with their natural supports.

- **Expand respite care availability** and provide flexibility around what respite services are offered and who can provide respite to help families and caregivers better support youth and prevent system involvement and homelessness. Currently, regulations restrict who can offer respite care to youth, ultimately limiting available suitable natural supports.
- **Expand the use of Host Homes, which can be particularly effective in addressing housing/placement needs in rural communities.** Although models and specifics vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, the basic concept of a host home is that community members open their homes to youth experiencing (or at risk of) homelessness in a way that is more informal than a child welfare or juvenile justice placement. Host homes are youth-driven, can be long- or short-term, can serve minors or young adults, and can involve strangers or people with pre-existing relationships (e.g., natural supports or fictive kin). Our conversations with homelessness providers indicate that host homes are not currently being widely used in Maine, but that they are "part of the conversation" about expanding the care continuum for youth at risk of or experiencing homelessness, including as part of the state's YHDP work (which will fund a host home pilot program through Penquis in Piscataquis County), and that at least two communities are currently running host home programs (Ryan Home Project in Berwick and Housing Resources for Youth in Brunswick). Other providers seeking to develop host homes are looking into solutions including potentially a statewide risk pool to address the insurance requirement associated with this resource.
- **Expand and improve services for specialized populations including trafficked and LGB/TGNC Youth.** All services and staff should employ youth-centered, gender-responsive, culturally-responsive best practices. Runaway and homeless youth-serving providers in Maine, like providers across the country, serve a significant proportion of youth who are trafficked and LGB/TGNC, as well as youth who are racial and ethnic minorities, including refugee and other immigrant youth. Adults working with youth should have a basic understanding of trafficking, how trafficking can lead girls into the juvenile justice system, and an understanding of available resources. In addition, training on basic adolescent development is helpful so that staff do not stigmatize trafficking survivors or assume that behaviors that are typical for adolescents are due to trauma or stem from trafficking. Special attention should be paid to the accessibility of training. Often, staff working night shifts are the least experienced, lowest paid, and are unable to attend voluntary trainings, even though there may be greater need for knowledge and skills in the evenings, when more residents may be present, and/or struggling. Also, as the service continuum is expanded, stakeholders should also be aware that youth, particularly LGB/TGNC youth may not be comfortable accessing religiously affiliated services, so although many faith communities in Maine are an important part of addressing youth needs, non-religious programming and options must also be available. RHY providers who do not currently focus on trafficking, along with DOC and other relevant agencies, should ensure consistent participation from a designated staff member in meetings that address trafficking and child abuse (e.g., Child Advocacy Center meetings) and should take affirmative and ongoing steps to increase regular communication and collaboration with trafficking providers (recognizing that in some areas of Maine, trafficking services are provided by domestic violence organizations).

- **Look at successful programs in Maine that closed down due to funding issues, or promising programs that didn't get funded.** Re-examining these programs, which were already targeted to the Maine context, could be more useful than trying to import and adapt approaches from other states in some cases. Several interviewees mentioned programs that used to be available for girls, and that they thought were very helpful in meeting needs that are currently unaddressed but shut down due to shifts in funding or state leadership priorities. For example, one was a residential program (ADAM House^{xx}), designed based on youth input, which was effective at being responsive to girls with a history of running and building relationships so that they didn't continue to run.
- **Provide support to aid housing choice voucher programs and expand housing availability throughout Maine.** As discussed above, several housing authorities in Maine participate in HUD voucher programs that can help stabilize youth ages 18 and older who have prior child welfare involvement. Having more case management provided by every housing authority to identify and help youth fill out applications, as well as connect them to additional services, can aid in strengthening the programs' impact. Since minors are largely excluded from this resource, support should also be given to family members who are able to keep youth out of Long Creek by providing stable housing. FUP vouchers could be used for those who meet the requirements regarding current child welfare involvement and other funding would need to be secured for those who are not child-welfare involved, to avoid unnecessary additional system entanglement. Efforts to expand availability of affordable housing units would also make it easier for those who receive vouchers to obtain housing. For example, Maine could use federal resources such as American Rescue Plan funding to expand affordable housing stock, or to support programs that could help young adults on the path to stable housing, such as transitional housing. Finally, a program for justice-involved young adults who do not have previous child welfare involvement, similar to the FUP and/or FYI programs discussed above, could help to address the housing needs of young adults in Maine. Note that the solutions described in this recommendation would primarily help young adults experiencing housing instability. Maine has been making significant efforts on behalf of this population, which Vera strongly supports, but these efforts must be in addition to (not instead of) expanding the continuum of available resources for minors.

Improve Crisis Response in the Community and Across Systems Serving Children and Families

Throughout Vera's engagement in Maine, stakeholders (including community providers, court stakeholders, Department of Corrections staff and young people themselves) identified family conflict, including related to the gender-based issues described above, as a main driver of girls' incarceration and homelessness, which is an established driver of girls' incarceration nationally.^{xxi} In addition, responses to conflict in institutional settings, such as hospitals or residential behavioral health programs, can lead directly to girls and gender expansive youth being detained at Long Creek.^{xxii} Often, staff in residential centers, parents, guardians, or other family members feel they have no other options during a crisis other than to contact the police. Restorative responses to conflict could help limit contact with the legal system and interrupt housing instability.

- **Crisis response model protocol for residential treatment centers and other institutional care settings.** Utilizing crisis response in these settings could reduce this pathway and should be encouraged. For example, a crisis response protocol in these settings

can trigger intervention by staff specially trained in de-escalation, restorative practices, and best practice conflict resolution techniques. Law enforcement should also develop a protocol for triaging and responding to calls to determine whether an alternative response can be used first. Some residential providers in Maine have worked to address these issues and reduce reliance on law enforcement. The state should consider a convening of residential providers to share best practices to bolster response to crisis in institutional care.

- **Expand alternative responses to family conflict.** For example, community-based organizations could provide an initial and immediate response with trained mediators or circle keepers who could provide de-escalation, crisis response, and conflict management support in the case of conflict or crisis. Foster families and kinship homes should be able to access this resource as well. Some families may request additional supports following crisis-intervention, such as brief (non-secure) respite care, and these services should be available to families without requiring formal system involvement. Warm handoffs and referrals should be made following crisis-interventions that allow families to choose how and when to engage in more long-term counseling and support options. Failure to engage in voluntary services should never result in punitive responses from the child welfare or justice systems. Community-based providers and systems working with youth should also consider using validated assessment tools to learn more about the family's situation and identify appropriate services.^{xxiii} In cases where justice involvement cannot be avoided, diversion programs that are restorative and family-focused should be available at numerous stages, as immediate crises pass, and as systems learn more about the family context.

“Crisis response” services for minors and their families are listed as a priority through several initiatives in Maine, (though each defines crisis differently), including the plan outlined in the recent H.O.M.E Plan and the Family First Prevention Services State Plan.^{xxiv} Additionally, the Maine legislature has been taking steps to prevent the criminalization of homelessness and individuals experiencing mental health crisis, and to look at how to provide crisis response. [LD1306](#) would explore pathways to include crisis response services in emergency services dispatched through 911. [LD1478](#) directs the Attorney General to create a Homelessness Crisis protocol that would allow law enforcement to connect individuals experiencing homelessness to services including transitional housing. These are important steps, and Vera urges the relevant decisionmakers to ensure that they are implemented to address the unique needs of minors and are both gender and culturally responsive. We also encourage utilizing peer-based and restorative models, described above, in addition to clinical models.

Prevent Incarceration and Delayed Release due to Housing Instability

National best practice is clear that young people should *never* be incarcerated because they lack stable housing or solely to receive services.^{xxv} Recent reforms to the authorizing code will help to bring Maine in line with this standard. However, even when housing instability is not the justification for a young person's incarceration, housing stability can play an exacerbating role that deepens their involvement with the system, including by making it hard to comply with conditions of probation, unnecessarily delaying a young person's release to the community from Long Creek, or compromising successful community reintegration. Maine should take up additional reform in order to mitigate these consequences.

- **Develop a protocol for reviewing and finding solutions for youth who are at risk of incarceration or prolonged length of stay due to lack of housing options.** Although recent

reform through LD546 ensures young people cannot be detained at Long Creek to “provide care,” youth involved in the legal system who lack stable housing can face disadvantages, including unnecessarily prolonged commitment because they cannot go home and lack a housing resource. Protocols will need to be put in place to assist DOC staff in identifying cases where housing instability, including safety concerns or concerns regarding running away from placement, is the primary barrier to release. The protocol should activate a multi-disciplinary, multi-agency team to identify an emergency or short-term placement for the young person, aimed at supporting the young person, and their family, in identifying an appropriate housing option. One solution will not be appropriate for all young people, and the protocol will need to outline a menu of options for consideration. Given the noted relationships between trafficking, housing instability, and juvenile justice involvement, DOC and DHHS should also develop an identification and multi-disciplinary response protocol for both labor trafficking and CSEC and ensure that the protocol is coordinated with a housing instability response.

The new [Regional Care Teams](#) (RCTs) currently being convened by DOC already provide a multi-disciplinary avenue for implementing this recommendation, and the RCTs are currently addressing housing as an area of high need. If this recommendation were to be carried out by the RCTs, the following additional steps should be taken: 1) RCTs should develop the ability to meet immediately when a rapid response is needed; 2) RCTs should expand/deepen community involvement and community leadership in each team; 3) Each RCT should include any youth homelessness provider that serves that region, as well as other youth homelessness stakeholders (e.g., school McKinney Vento liaisons); and 4) Each RCT should include members who are knowledgeable about the signs of sex and labor trafficking, and the services available to address trafficking in the region. The wraparound services currently being offered by Opportunity Alliance and Wings could also be used/expanded as part of this response, given their roles with the Regional Care Teams.

- **Pilot peer parent coaches who can work with the parent or guardian with the goal of understanding and responding to parents and guardians’ concerns.** There is robust evidence for the success of peer coaching models for parents in the public health sector, and some jurisdictions have invested in similar models within the justice context, pairing parents of system-involved youth with dedicated “peer coaches” who have lived experience navigating the justice system as well as robust training on justice system processes, de-escalation, and support strategies.^{xxvi} Stakeholders should consider locating this support outside of the justice continuum so as to not undercut the level of community engagement/support.
- **Maine should act on the recommendations provided in the Department of Education’s report on programs for homeless and displaced students.** The recommendations put forth are particularly important in the many parts of Maine that have insufficient services for homeless youth and where district homelessness liaisons are stretched too thin to provide the needed support. In one study, there were 2,449 children and youth in Maine public schools who were homeless, making schools a key player in identifying and supporting homeless youth. Schools have the potential to prevent or respond to some of the consequences associated with homelessness that girls and gender expansive youth experience and should be supported to take action.^{xxvii}

Effectively Respond to Runaway Behavior

According to our case file review and interviews with stakeholders, running away and CSEC concerns together were two of the biggest factors in decisions to confine girls. Confining girls to “protect” them is a misuse of the justice system. There is no singular response that can prevent runaway behavior, but punitive responses can exacerbate problems without addressing the underlying needs or trauma driving the behavior or the desire for self-determination and connection to friends and community that runaway may represent. There are, however, effective models of providing care that can reduce runaway behavior, increase the likelihood that girls return to care, and support girls in being safe while they run.

- **Failure to Appear (FTA) and runaway warrants should not allow for detention.** Any warrants issued as a result of failure to appear or running away, even following the destruction of an electronic monitoring or GPS device, should not require detention and should be cleared once the young person has been found. If the young person is unable or refusing to return home, an immediate multi-disciplinary response could be initiated.
- **Case managers, providers, and resource caregivers should safety plan with young people around running away.** This allows girls and gender expansive youth to think through how they can be safest if and when they decide to run. Providing this level of support also makes it more likely that girls will stay in touch with trusted adults when they runaway. A part of this safety planning can include identifying a network of safe places where they can stay briefly. This could include friends or family as well as approved respite or host homes. If youth run to one of the locations they have identified, runaway reports would not need to be filed, and youth could remain there for a short period of time. If necessary, systems should work to be as flexible as possible in approving caregivers and homes identified by the child.^{xxviii} When young people run, the general practice should always be to welcome them back rather than to exercise a punitive response or force a placement change.

The above recommendations provide a starting point for consideration of how to bolster Maine’s continuum of runaway and homeless youth services as part of an overall effort to build a continuum of care that can help to better serve young people, prevent arrest and incarceration, and help to disrupt cycles of institutionalization. As stated earlier, this resource does not provide information regarding Maine’s behavioral health or child welfare service array as it is intended to ensure that all reform stakeholders have an overview of the assets and gaps in Maine’s runaway and homeless youth services that can be considered alongside resources available and reforms needed in other systems. As a next step in designing Maine’s continuum of care and determining needs, state agencies, community providers, advocates, and community members should consider these resources and recommendations as one piece of how Maine’s overall continuum can be improved and further developed with special attention to housing resources for minors, particularly girls and gender expansive youth, and those who are involved with the legal system.

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ⁱ In each instance in this report the word “girl” is used to be fully inclusive of girls of transgender experience. Additionally, our initiative is focused on the needs of all youth in female facilities. We recognize that some youth on the girls’ side of the justice system identify as gender nonconforming or as boys of trans experience and we include a focus on their needs and experiences within our broader approach, although doing so is often challenging due to lack of data and awareness around the experiences of these youth in public systems.

ⁱⁱ Maine Department of Corrections Juvenile Services, Division Overview: 2020 Snapshot, <https://perma.cc/B6EC-6PZB>.

ⁱⁱⁱ By 2020, the detention for girls was an average of 2.7 admissions every month and a total of 29 detention admissions throughout the year. In the first two months of 2021, there were a total of seven admissions to girls’ detention units. Maine Department of Corrections Juvenile Services, Division Overview: 2020 Snapshot, <https://perma.cc/B6EC-6PZB>.

^{iv} Maine Department of Corrections Juvenile Services, Division Overview: 2020 Snapshot, <https://perma.cc/B6EC-6PZB>.

^v E.g., “[Children’s Behavioral Health Services Assessment Final Report](#)” and letter from the Office of Child and Family Services to the Joint Standing Committee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety, “Availability of Treatment Beds for Youth,” September 22, 2021.

^{vi} The Maine Juvenile Justice Systems Assessment highlighted that more than half (53 percent) of young people in short-term detention at Long Creek were detained in order to “provide care.” In 47 percent of cases, youth were held in detention for three days or less, suggesting they were not a significant public safety risk. The assessment found that 72.7 percent of detention stays lasting longer than 30 days were for youth awaiting placement or community-based programming. Vera’s analysis of the same data showed that only four girls remained in detention longer than 30 days, and the reason for this prolonged stay was to provide care. Center for Children’s Law and Policy and Reform Lab at Drexel University, “Maine Juvenile Justice Systems Assessment,” February 2020, <https://irp-cdn.multiscreensite.com/de726780/files/uploaded/Maine%20Juvenile%20Justice%20System%20Assessment%20FINAL%20REPORT%202-25-20.pdf>.

^{vii} Previously, detention was permitted “to provide physical care of a juvenile who cannot return home because there is no parent or other suitable person willing and able to supervise and care for the juvenile adequately.” Maine Center for Juvenile Law and Policy, Maine Prosecutors Association, and Maine Juvenile Justice Advisory Group. “2021 Changes to the Juvenile Code.” January 2021. https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/14Ie4yJf7uJrraIqdblmd05SCa-3cSgn78OFk8g2SFg8/edit#slide=id.gfac1368d5b_0_123.

^{viii} Sanchez, Mara, et al. “Regional Care Teams First Year Review: Cross Systems Collaboration to Improve Positive Youth Outcomes.” December 2021. https://placemattersmaine.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/RCT_Report_WEB1.pdf

^{ix} E.g., “Listening to Latinas: Barriers to High School Graduation.” National Women’s Law Center, 2009. <https://perma.cc/H2KR-82M3>, which states, “research suggests that many Latinas—more than their male peers—are expected to act as caretakers for younger siblings or elderly relatives;” and Miller, Beth M. “Critical Hours: Afterschool Programs and Educational Success.” Quincy, MA: Nellie Mae Education Foundation, 2003. <https://perma.cc/FG7M-BECN>.

^x Disability Rights Maine (DRM). “Assessing the Use of Law Enforcement by Youth Residential Service Providers.” Augusta, ME: DRM, August 2017. <https://drme.org/assets/uncategorized/Law-Enforcement-08.08.17.pdf>.

^{xi} Ibid.

^{xii} Banks, Duran, and Tracey Kyckelhahn, “Characteristics of Suspected Human Trafficking Incident.” U.S. Department of Justice Office of Justice Programs: Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2008-2010. Washington, DC: OJJDP, 2011. <https://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/cshti0810.pdf>; and Polaris Project, “Sex Trafficking and LGBTQ Youth.” Washington, DC: Polaris Project. <https://polarisproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/LGBTQ-Sex-Trafficking.pdf>; and Wright, Eric R. and Ana LaBoy. “Atlanta Youth Count 2018 Community Report: The Prevalence of Sex and Labor Trafficking Among Homeless Youth in Metro Atlanta.” Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, 2019. found that 44% of LGBT youth experiencing trafficking while homeless compared to 35% of their straight peers and 70% of transgender youth experienced trafficking while homeless.

^{xiii} Bradley, Jon and Thomas Chalmers McLaughlin. “Conducting an Accurate Count of Rural Homeless Youth: Implications for Policy and Practice and Lessons Learned.” Portland, Maine: Preble Street, 2015. <http://www.mainehomelessplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Rural-Homeless-Youth-Count-Report-2015-12-FINAL.pdf>.

^{xiv} National Network for Youth. “Proposed System to End Youth and Young Adult Homelessness.” <https://www.nn4youth.org/wp-content/uploads/Proposed-System-Final-4-12-16.pdf>.

^{xv} Chapin Hall. Voices of Youth Count. <https://voicesofyouthcount.org/>.

^{xvi} Maine Housing. “Maine Receives Funding to Prevent Youth Homelessness.” Published September 9, 2019. <https://www.mainehousing.org/news/news-detail/2019/09/09/maine-receives-funding-to-prevent-youth-homelessness>.

^{xvii} The RFP listed the following as marginalized populations: “young people who have experienced trauma; young people impacted by poverty; young people in rural communities; young people of color; Lesbian, Gay, Bi-Sexual, Transgender and Queer (LGBTQ+) young people; young people impacted by human trafficking and exploitation; youth under 18 (“Minors”); young people from tribal communities; young people with disabilities; young people impacted by violence; young people experiencing substance use disorders; unaccompanied students enrolled in public schools; transition age youth served by group, congregate, and residential programs; refugee, asylee, and immigrant young people; and young people served by State Agencies responsible for Foster Care, Juvenile Justice, Adult Corrections, and Behavioral Health.” MaineHousing. “Request for Proposals: Maine Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program.” 2021. https://www.mainehousing.org/docs/default-source/rfps/rfp-maine-youth-homelessness-demonstration-program.pdf?sfvrsn=f2528a15_0.

^{xviii} Ibid.

^{xix} Human Services Research Institute. “Maine State Housing Authority Homeless Initiative Gaps and Needs Analysis: Youth Addendum Report.” November 2019. https://www.mainehousing.org/docs/default-source/policy-research/research-reports/homeless-intiative_gaps-and-needs-analysis_youth-addendum_draft.pdf?sfvrsn=d9888d15_0 and Coalition for Juvenile Justice. “Addressing the Intersection of Juvenile Justice and Youth Homelessness: Principles for Change.” <http://juvjustice.org/sites/default/files/resource-files/CJJ%20Executive%20Summary.pdf>.

^{xx} Garland, Nancy. “Adam House A Refuge for Teenagers.” *Bangor Daily News*, December 18, 1999. <https://archive.bdnblogs.com/1999/12/18/adam-house-a-valued-refuge-for-teen-agers/>.

^{xxi} Sherman, Francine T. “Unintended Consequences: Addressing the Impact of Domestic Violence Mandatory and Pro-Arrest Policies and Practices on Girls and Young Women.” National Girls Initiative, 2016. <https://nationalcrittenton.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Unintended-Consequences-NGI.pdf>.

xxii Disability Rights Maine (DRM). “Addressing the Use of Law Enforcement by Youth Residential Service Providers.” Augusta, ME: DRM, August 2017. <https://drme.org/assets/uncategorized/Law-Enforcement-08.08.17.pdf>

xxiii Ibid

xxiv Maine Housing, et al. “H.O.M.E. Maine’s Coordinated Community Plan to Prevent and End Youth and Young Adult Homelessness.” September 2021. https://www.mainehousing.org/docs/default-source/policy-research/research-reports/2021-yhdp-coordinated-community-plan.pdf?sfvrsn=759c8815_4.

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<https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/sites/maine.gov.dhhs/files/inline-files/Maine%20Prevention%20Services%20State%20Plan%20September%202021.pdf>.

xxv Coalition for Juvenile Justice: SOS Project. “National Standards for the Care of Youth Charged with Status Offenses.” Washington, DC: CJJ, 2014. <http://juvjustice.org/sites/default/files/resource-files/National%20Standards%202015%20WEB.pdf>; and National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty. “Housing Not Handcuffs: Ending the Criminalization of Homelessness in U.S. Cities.” Washington, DC: National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty, 2018. <https://nlchp.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Housing-Not-Handcuffs.pdf>.

xxvi Community Connections for Youth. “Parent Peer Support Program.” <https://cc-fy.org/project/parent-peer-support-program/>; Vera Institute of Justice. “Identifying, Engaging, and Empowering Families: A Charge for Juvenile Justice Agencies.” February 2016. <https://www.vera.org/downloads/publications/family-engagement-for-juvenile-justice-agencies.pdf>; Weissman, Marsha, Vidhya Ananthakrishnan, and Vincent Schiraldi. “Moving Beyond Youth Prisons: Lessons from New York City’s Implementation of Close to Home.” New York: Columbia University Justice Lab, 2019.

<https://justicelab.columbia.edu/sites/default/files/content/Moving%20Beyond%20Youth%20Prisons%20-%202020.pdf>; Coalition for Juvenile Justice: SOS Project. “Principles for Change; Coalition for Juvenile Justice. National Standards for the Care of Youth Charged with Status Offenses.” Washington, DC: CJJ, 2014.

<http://juvjustice.org/sites/default/files/resource-files/National%20Standards%202015%20WEB.pdf>; and National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty. “Housing Not Handcuffs: Ending the Criminalization of Homelessness in U.S. Cities.” Washington, DC: National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty, 2018. <https://nlchp.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Housing-Not-Handcuffs.pdf>.

xxvii Maine Department of Education. “Status of Programs for Homeless and Displaced Students.” January 28, 2020. <https://legislature.maine.gov/doc/3877>.

xxviii E.g., Coalition for Juvenile Justice: SOS Project. “National Standards for the Care of Youth Charged with Status Offenses.” <https://www.juvjustice.org/our-work/safety-opportunity-and-success-project/national-standards-care-youth-charged-status>. advises that “[i]f all non-residential options have been exhausted and the court is considering out-of-home placement, the judge should assess whether respite care or simply approving certain locations (e.g., the home of a relative or friend agreed to by the youth and his or her parents) as respite care options would provide the family and child resolution to the issues they face. Allowing the youth and family to take needed breaks without designating the youth as running away or violating court orders may supplant the need for a longer out-of-home placement arrangement.”