



THE FUEL TO OUR VOICES

*Miami-Dade County's
Coordinated Community Plan
to End Youth Homelessness*

All About Us

This Coordinated Community Plan (CCP) was developed thanks to the many hours, passion, and dedication of the Miami-Dade community. For eight months, Miami-Dade worked together to create this CCP. We're grateful for the collective leadership's work on this ambitious plan to end youth homelessness. We would like to give our flowers to the following:

The Youth Voice Action Council (Miami-Dade's Youth Action Board):

Jahneé Smith, Reber-Mens Corriolan, Stephania Germain, Justin Velez, Meloveda Victor, Celestina Francis, Shelsia Rameau, and Celina Wesley

The Miami-Dade YHDP Planning Committee:

Aundray Adams (The Children's Trust), Courtnie Vargas-Rodriguez and Alicia Nuby (Lotus House), Deborah Dorsett (Greater Miami Service Corps), Devin Floyd (Educate Tomorrow), Deborah Dietz (Disability Independence Group), Elsa Torres (Florida International University), Fred Clermont (Miami-Dade County Public Schools' Project UP-START), Gianfranco Patuzzo (Citrus Health Network), Joan Shaw (Chapman Partnership), Katherine Martinez (Camillus House), LJ Woolston (Transpire Trainings & Consulting), Malena Legarre (Hermanos de la Calle), Monia Farias (Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Miami), Paul Lefrak (Miami-Dade Public Library System), Sharon Langer (Casa Valentina), Dr. Steve J. Rios (Educate Tomorrow), Tomas Matamoros (Citrus Family Care Network), Sandra Coronel (Carrfour Supportive Housing), and Trenise Bryant (SMASH)

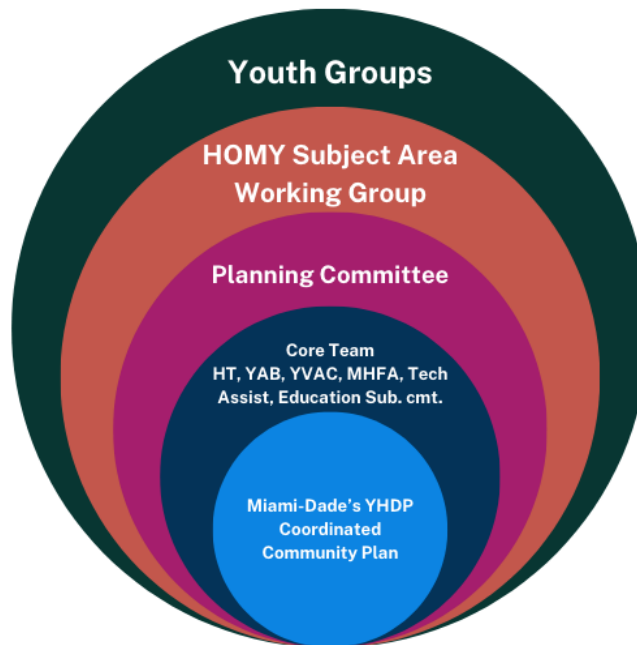
The YHDP Core and Coordination Team:

Manuel Sarria (Miami-Dade County Homeless Trust/Lead Continuum of Care agency), Anjuli Castaño, and Audrey Aradanas (Miami Homes For All/MHFA)

Our Technical Assistance Team & HUD Desk Officer:

E'laine Williamson (CSH), Monique Jackson (CSH), Megan Johnson (NCHE), JB (True Colors United), Gary Wickering (The Partnership Center), Matthew Aronson (Consultant), and Aretha Pereira (US HUD)

Our Planning Decision-Making Structure




The image above highlights how Miami-Dade planned the CCP. More about our partners and how we planned can be found in the Appendices.



The Youth Voice Action Council Statements

Celestina, 20 

With a fervent passion for architecture, I envision myself crafting the home I have always yearned for, blending functionality and aesthetic appeal seamlessly. My ambition extends beyond mere design; I aim to foster self-sufficiency through my work, collaborating with others to achieve holistic personal development in property development and investing. Alongside my architectural endeavors, I am a figurative artist, dedicated to advocating for the Caribbean demographic through visual representation.



Shelsia, 22 







My role in this plan means that I can provide the perspective of a female Haitian-American with unaccompanied youth experience in South Florida. It means having an opportunity to make a difference for people with similar demographics as me and make an impact on the availability of housing, life skills, education, and wellness resources within those communities. I want affordable housing for students in universities, wellness and life skill programs for students in k-12, and better transportation for the youth. With these goals achieved, we can make a positive change in ending youth homelessness.

Celina, 19 

I want people in my community to have affordable housing which will decrease the number of homeless youth. It's crucial to offer more than temporary shelters and initiatives like YHDP can pave the way for an impactful change. YHDP is a stepping stone in making sustainable change by ensuring that what I lived through doesn't happen to others. That's why it's important that Miami-Dade County can improve homelessness by not criminalizing people experiencing street homelessness. As youth advocates, we seek respectful and dignified treatment, free from age-based discrimination, in our efforts to prevent others from enduring what we've lived through.




Reber, 24 

I want the community coordinated plan to not only reflect the solutions of how we will help those impacted, but also hold those who have not been practicing youth collaboration accountable. My role in this plan as a youth with lived experience, is to use that perspective, as well as ensuring that other youth and young adults are informed about this plan in order to better the continuum of care. To me, the YHDP means that we young people finally have a say into the solution making process.

What I want from the community is a safe place for youth. I would appreciate support, understanding and long term solutions from the community coordinated plan. My role in this plan means an opportunity for me to be able to be a voice for the youth. It also means, that I'm able to advocate for myself and young adults who are experiencing homelessness. As someone with lived experience the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program represents a potential lifeline towards stability. With the project not just offering immediate assistance but it also provides opportunities and a pathway to a more sustainable future.



Stephania, 23



I want the CCP to make housing more affordable for homeless youth and to make the process smoother. My role in this plan means that I as a youth with lived experience who has faced the many obstacles and have overcome them can now create pathways that will help bring an end to youth homelessness.

As a youth with lived experience it means that we're finally being valued as the next generation. The future is in our hands. YHDP to me means that we get to help shape our community and create new systems that may be new to our CoC. I want Miami Dade to have more affordable housing, to have places for the youths to go for help mentally, emotionally, and in terms of education. I get to break barriers being apart of this process. We're calling for permanent change, a seat at decision making tables and for our voice to be valued. We demand to be seen as human beings who can speak for ourselves no matter our age.

Jahnee, 21

I am an avid community organizer, storyteller, cultural worker, and housing advocate. My passion for organizing stems from firsthand experiences of chronic homelessness during childhood and young adulthood. Miami, specifically the neighborhood of Allapattah, has been my home for eight years; though my roots trace back to Hillsboro, Oregon. All neighborhoods in the City of Miami (especially historically black neighborhoods) have experienced incomprehensible levels of gentrification and displacement, changing the cultural fabric of the city in recent years. YHDP gives us, as youth, a chance to reclaim our right to remain in the areas we call home and obtain permanent supportive housing through nontraditional means that cultivate a sense of belonging and solidarity, which is necessary.



Justin, 18

As a youth with lived experience, it was a concerning realization to find myself rationing every resource that I had for my survival. I want to see more effective housing solutions in place to house unsheltered youth. My role in this plan is to come up and implement resources that make it easier for youth to get housed. To me, YHDP is a light at the end of the tunnel. I want to use this chance to make sure that other youth do not go through the suffering that I've had to endure.



The images above highlight the YVAC statements of support: Celestina, Shelsia, Celina, Reber, Meloveda, Stephania, Jahneé, and Justin.

Table of Contents

All About Us	2
The Youth Voice Action Council Statements	3
Introduction	6
Governance Structure	7
Statement of Need	10
How YYA Experience the CoC in a Year	11
Our Needs Based on YHDP Goal Outcomes	13
Our Vision & Mission	16
How We're Implementing This Plan	17
Appendices	19
Appendix 1	19
Our YHDP Partners	19
HOMY Members	19
Appendix 2	21
Appendix 3	24

Introduction

In the fall of 2023, the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) selected Miami-Dade County's Continuum of Care (CoC) to participate in the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP) with an award of \$8.4 million. YHDP is a prestigious federal competition, and HUD's selection of our community is an important capstone to years of effort by a wide range of local and state partners. Miami-Dade has worked on various initiatives to address youth homelessness since 2013, with the iCount Miami, Miami-Dade's youth point-in-time count to the establishment of the Miami-Dade Youth Homelessness Initiative (YHI) in 2016.

Miami Homes For All (MHFA), a local nonprofit advocacy organization, harnessed youth power in 2017 by establishing the Youth Voice Action Council (YVAC - Miami-Dade's youth action board). Alongside the YVAC, the YHI was rebranded to HOMY: Helping Our Miami-Dade Youth (HOMY) and wrote a community plan, the Comprehensive Plan to End and Prevent Youth Homelessness.¹ Due to the Comprehensive Plan, HOMY became a community working group partnering with the Homeless Trust (HT is the lead Continuum of Care/CoC agency) to address youth homelessness. Since then, Miami-Dade has participated in the 100-Day and the Grand Challenge.²

The YVAC was ready to expand their work, HOMY, and pilot new solutions to address youth homelessness as Miami-Dade became one of the least affordable counties in the nation.³ The YVAC organized summits from 2019 to 2022, the first-ever Young People's Assembly in 2023, and implemented an event and media campaign to raise awareness regarding youth homelessness.⁴ With their leadership, this award, the YHDP re-energized Miami-Dade County to innovate new projects and integrate young leaders with lived experience of homelessness.

As a central requirement of YHDP, partners working to end YHA homelessness in Miami-Dade have spent six months creating a Coordinated Community Plan (CCP). The CCP outlines Miami-Dade's vision, goals, objectives, and actions needed to address youth homelessness and how those elements center our core values and the YVAC's leadership. More background information and key terms are in our Appendices.

NOTE: This is Miami-Dade's March 2024 CCP submission. This is only half of our full CCP. We received notice in February 2024 that HUD extended the due dates for our CCP's goals, objectives, actions, signature page, and principles. Miami-Dade will submit the full CCP in August 2024.

¹ The [YVAC](#) was established in 2017 and became Miami-Dade's youth action board in 2018. More about the YVAC can be found in our Governance Structure.

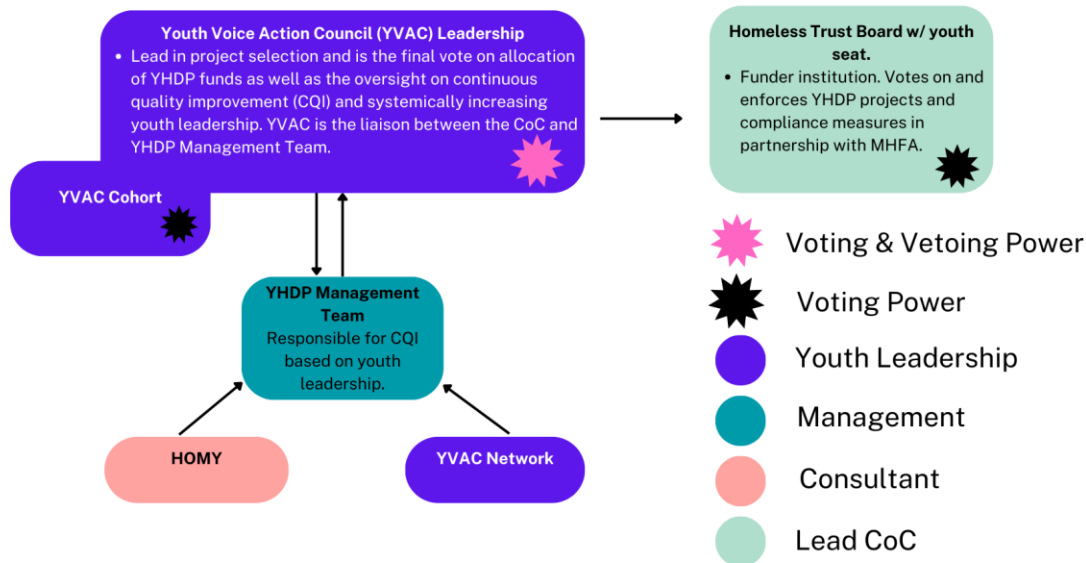
² See the Miami-Dade 100-Day Challenge Summary [here](#). The 2021 Grand Challenge was unfortunately cut short due to COVID-19 pandemic.

³ [Naomi Feinstein of the Miami New Times](#) reported that Miami remains the least affordable housing market in the United States, according to the June (2023) edition of the RealtyHop Housing Affordability Index.

⁴ The YVAC was featured in various media outlets (radio, TV news, newspapers, etc.) since 2017. Most notably, [they were featured in 2021 in the Miami Herald](#).

Governance Structure

We designed a governance structure to launch our CCP that will ensure young people play a leading role in implementing, overseeing, and improving the youth homelessness response system in Miami-Dade. That means young people with lived experience present and co-facilitate at every meeting, make and sign off on every recommendation, and hold the power to enact the decisions that will affect young people’s lives.



The following explores the key groups in our governance structure and how decisions are made for the implementation of our CCP:

The Youth Voice Action Council (YVAC) Leadership

The CoC was determined to ensure the YHDP harnessed youth leadership. To that end, the CoC subcontracted a local nonprofit organization, Miami Homes For All (MHFA), to hire youth with lived experience of homelessness, providing a living wage to develop long-term systemic changes that prevent youth homelessness entirely.⁵

The YVAC Leadership team (YVAC L) is the main driver of the YHDP Project Management team. The YVAC L are three full-time, former YVAC cohort members who were integral in writing the YHDP application in 2022. Our YVAC leaders are:

- **Reber-Mens Corriolan**, Youth Facilitator (he/him, 24): As a youth facilitator, Reber works closely with the YVAC to ensure authentic youth collaboration. Reber develops agendas for the YVAC meetings and works closely with fellow YVAC L. As the facilitator, he meets with YVAC members regularly to support them, connect them to any services

⁵ MHFA is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to ensure every Miami-Dade resident has a safe, affordable place to call home. Since 2017, MHFA has facilitated the Youth Voice Action Council and is the backbone of HOMY: Helping Our Miami-Dade Youth, a cross-sector collective addressing youth homelessness in Miami-Dade County. More about MHFA can be found [here](#).

or programs to promote their well-being, and co-develops the YVAC curriculum for the YVAC's professional and personal development.

- **Stephania Germain**, Youth Program Associate (she/her, 23): As the Youth Program Associate, Stephania oversees communications, engagement, and administrative duties for the YVAC and HOMY. This includes applying for youth grants (i.e., incentives), coordinating events, and managing the YVAC social media and marketing.
- **Jahneé Smith**, Youth Organizer (they/she/he, 21): As the Youth Organizer, Jahneé is the catalyst for creating the larger YVAC Network. This YVAC Network consists of youth and young adults who have lived experience with housing insecurity and may or may not be affiliated with service providers. This Network isn't just a group of youth that offers their perspectives but an entity of youth that ensures that community partners are held accountable for implementing best youth practices in terms of programming and services.

The YVAC L is the liaison between the YHDP Management Team and the Homeless Trust **and is the only governing body with vetoing power** due to their continuous involvement and full-time employment at MHFA throughout the YHDP process. Consensus must be voted on between all YVAC members (leadership and cohort) on projects, funding priorities, and recipients of YHDP dollars. These decisions are made with the support of HOMY and YVAC Network.

The Youth Voice Action Council Cohort

In 2019, the Miami-Dade County Homeless Trust (HT is our lead Continuum of Care/CoC agency) enacted the YVAC as the CoC youth action board. The YVAC Cohort is a 10-month youth leadership cohort program for youth with lived experience of homelessness. The YVAC comprises youth and young adults between 16 and 24.⁶ They are paid part-time consultants of MHFA (\$20 per hour - generously supported by a local philanthropic agency, The Children's Trust), and their contributions are as follows:

- The YVAC are recruited after the prior YVAC cohort graduates in October-November. MHFA posts the positions and shares them with HOMY service providers working with YYA. Former YVAC members and MHFA conduct interviews and have a selection process. All YVAC cohorts include previous and new members. YYA can participate in the YVAC for up to 3 years.
- Attend and participate in weekly events or meetings. This includes co-leading in YHDP project planning and management, crafting and implementing advocacy strategies (via events, public speaking with elected officials, meeting with various systems, etc.), and strategizing around expanding youth leadership in Miami-Dade.
- Attend and receive leadership and professional development, i.e., financial literacy, Advocacy 101, the Continuum of Care 101, etc.
- Finally, the YVAC is integral in leading HOMY and the CoC's youth initiatives. YVAC youth are supported through an onboarding process to participate in evaluating YHDP projects.
- There is one youth seat on the CoC Board (with a permanent designee who is also a YVAC member). The 1 youth board member is a YVAC alumnus supported by their permanent designee and the larger YVAC Youth Network. YVAC members have their meetings with the CoC leadership. Finally, the YVAC meets bi-annually with the CoC board to implement youth best practices and policies.⁷

The YVAC Network

The YVAC is ambitious in building a strong movement to address youth homelessness centered around youth with lived experience. Throughout YHDP and beyond, the YVAC is

⁶ The full YVAC cohort and leadership team are introduced in The Youth Voice Action Council Statements.

⁷ Currently, the YVAC hold one seat. They are seeking additional strategies to elevate an additional youth seat.

expanding the influence of youth leadership in Miami-Dade by engaging other YYA with lived experience and or systems-involved youth, supporting CoC partners in developing their YABs, and organizing youth-centered convenings for systems mapping and developing policy priorities. The YVAC Network is also integral in the continuous quality improvement of YHDP projects through their participation and leadership in frequent meetings with the YHDP Management Team.

The Miami-Dade County Homeless Trust (HT)

Founded in 1985 through a local Food & Beverage Tax dedicated to addressing homelessness, the HT is the lead Continuum of Care agency and is an administrative department of Miami-Dade County.⁸ The HT has a 27-member volunteer board of directors. Currently, there is one youth seat on their board through the Homeless and Formerly Homeless Forum (HFHF). Interested former YVAC members may become members of the HFHF to keep a permanent youth seat on the HT board. Additionally, the CoC will partner with the Providers' Forum to ensure (1) youth with lived experience are hired within the CoC, (2) a young leader with lived experience is a member of the Providers' Forum, and (3) the Providers' Forum nominates that youth to be on the HT board.⁹ Miami Homes For All, as the backbone and facilitator of the YVAC, will nominate and support youth with lived experience to be board members.

The YHDP Management Team (YHDP MT)

The YHDP MT includes the YVAC, MHFA, HT, and YHDP Recipients. YVAC, with the support of MHFA, will lead project oversight and implementation of chosen and funded YHDP projects. MHFA will host regular meetings to review performance and provide training. These meetings occur more frequently during the first six months of implementation and no later than quarterly or as seen fit by YVAC Leadership. Along with MHFA and the YVAC, YHDP Recipients will discuss project updates, impact, and quality improvement strategies. These conversations are informed and supported by broader community partners in HOMY, the YVAC Network, and systems experts to ensure YVAC feels informed and supported as needed. YVAC votes with a consensus model on what to present to the HT Board.

About HOMY

HOMY: Helping Our Miami-Dade Youth is a cross-sector collective of partners addressing youth homelessness. MHFA facilitates this working group, an arm of The Greater Miami Housing Alliance - a coalition advocating for affordable housing and ending homelessness in Miami-Dade. HOMY members are service providers, formerly homeless youth, advocates, the philanthropic community, and more. HOMY members agree to share data, implement best practices, and participate in monthly and annual meetings for continuous quality improvement of the CoC. For a full list of HOMY member agencies, please see Appendix 1. In line with our value of community integration, all YHDP dollar recipients agree to join HOMY in the efforts of streamlined data sharing and resource distribution. HOMY, as an interagency coalition, is dedicated to building and exemplifying targeted universal approaches to ending youth homelessness and practicing authentic collaboration with youth leaders and the YHDP Management team to address quality improvement of YHDP projects.

⁸ More about the Homeless Trust can be found online [here](#).

⁹ The Homeless Trust has complex by-laws which make it challenging to keep a permanent youth seat on their board as well as ensuring a second permanent youth seat.

Statement of Need



Youth and young adult homelessness is on the rise in Miami-Dade County - we saw a 113% increase in youth and young adults (YYA) experiencing homelessness from 2020 to 2023. From 2020 to 2023, the CoC served the following:

Year	Number of YYA Served
2023	921
2022	914
2021	853
2020	431

The Youth Voice Action Council (YVAC is our youth action board) shared that the CCP needs to address Prevention, Safe and Stable Housing, Education & Employment, Permanent Connections, Health & Well-being, and Coordinated Entry. The YVAC based these priorities on their own lived experiences, youth focus groups’ qualitative data, Point-In-Time count data, HMIS, and data from cross-sector systems (i.e., Miami-Dade County Public Schools, Florida International University, Miami-Dade College, etc.).

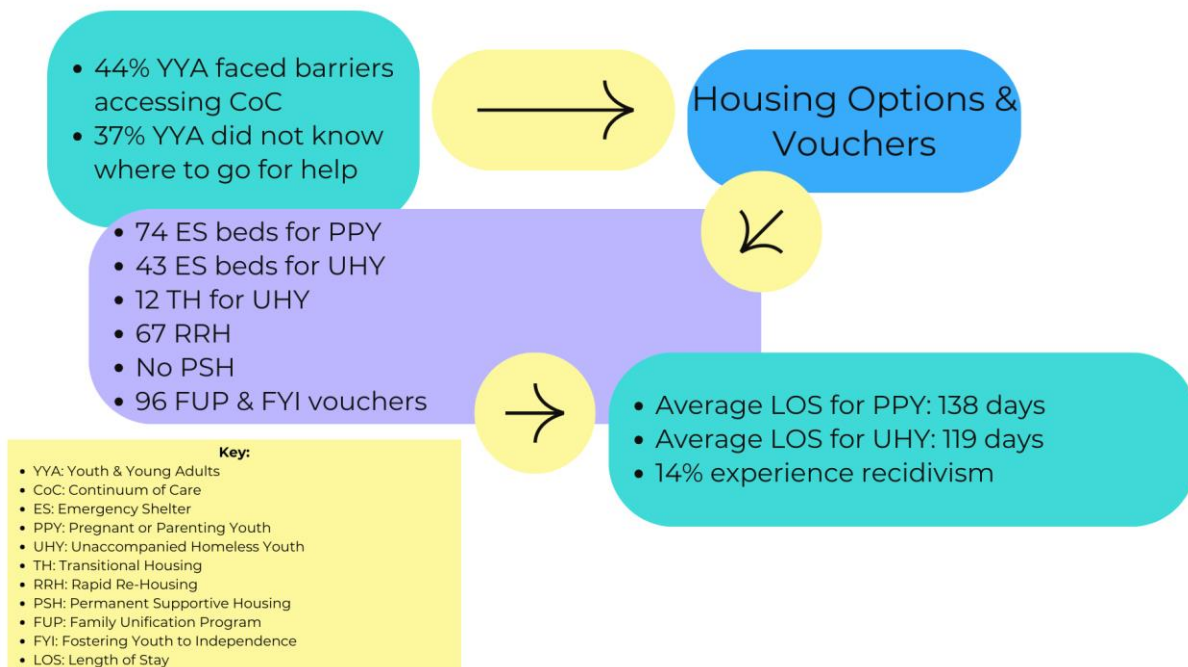
We currently need more data from our Juvenile Justice and Healthcare systems. Additionally, our Public Child Welfare data does not have comprehensive information available regarding youth exiting their system and experiencing homelessness. Additionally, we lack robust data

on youth with disabilities, queer, and transgender youth. The Homeless Trust is pursuing shared agreements for inclusive data collection and review to ensure we have the most up-to-date, accurate, and robust data.



The above chart summarizes data highlights that will inform this CCP. Data was shared from the CoC.

How YYA Experience the CoC in a Year



The above image is from PIT count data and the HMIS systems performance map (2023).

In one year (2022-2023), the Continuum of Care saw the following regarding youth and young adults experiencing homelessness:

- **There were 921 unaccompanied homeless youth (UHY) and pregnant or parenting youth (PPY).** These are YYA without a parent or legal guardian and are under the age of 24.¹⁰ These are youth who are homeless, are at imminent risk of homelessness, or are fleeing domestic violence.
 - **435 unaccompanied homeless youth** were served from 2022 to 2023 within the CoC.
 - **486 pregnant or parenting youth (PPY) experienced homelessness.** Miami-Dade is home to the largest women's and children's shelter in the country, Lotus House.¹¹ Although they can shelter over 500 residents a night, there are not enough resources or infrastructure to create pathways to permanent housing for all PPY experiencing homelessness. PPY need more supportive services coupled with permanent housing to prevent recidivism into homelessness.
 - **663 (72%) identified as Black or African-American.** Black or African-American homeless youth are overrepresented in our CoC. There is a huge disparity of Black YYA experiencing homelessness – in our last census, 17% of Miami-Dade County identified as Black or African-American.
 - **469 young females experienced homelessness, and 73 youth fled domestic violence.** Homelessness experienced by women is undercounted and must be prioritized due to their disproportionate experiences of gender-based violence. This is further impacted by women's pay inequity.¹² In 2019, the Miami-Dade State Attorney's Office served 8,194 victims of domestic violence – 5,918 of them were women.¹³
 - **33 unsheltered youth.** These were unaccompanied homeless youth counted at the January 2023 Point-In-Time count. Using Stella P between October 2022 and September 2023, 74% of UHY (or 276 youth) served were unsheltered at the time of intake.
 - **36 youth identified as LGBTQIA+.** We know that this is an undercount as HMIS has gaps in LGBTQIA+ youth. In the 2022 youth point-in-time count, 72 LGBTQIA+ youth were counted. We estimate up to 40% of YYA experiencing homelessness may identify as LGBTQIA+ based on national data. Unfortunately, South Florida is facing an increase in LGBTQIA+ discrimination, including anti-LGBT+ policies enacted at the state level that specifically target LGBTQIA+ youth and families.¹⁴

¹⁰ The Department of Housing and Urban Development has [four categories](#) to define homelessness. Miami-Dade's Continuum of Care, the Miami-Dade County Homeless Trust serves youth under categories 1, 2, and 4. Additionally, we do serve youth that who are couch surfing due to fleeing domestic violence or are at imminent risk of homelessness.

¹¹ [Lotus House](#) is the largest women's shelter in the country having the capabilities to shelter over 1,500 women and children each year.

¹² See the [National Alliance to End Homelessness' Recognizing Women Experiencing Homelessness: A Women's History Month Spotlight on Downtown Women's Center](#) (2022).

¹³ The [Miami-Dade State Attorney's Office](#) maintains general statistics of domestic violence.

¹⁴ Lori Rosa with The Washington Post reported [Florida anti-LGBTQ laws prompt families who feel unsafe to flee](#) in 2023.

- To understand risk, we looked at PCWA (the Department of Children and Families or DCF, which Citrus Family Care Network locally runs) and carceral system data. According to the DCF, 125 YYA exiting foster care last year had no permanent placement. Additionally, the Miami-Dade County Juvenile Services Department reported 2,446 youth arrests last year, 42% between 13-15 years of age and 51% between ages 16-17, and 1,446 youth detentions.
 - **We estimate that over 70,000 youth and young adults are at risk of experiencing housing instability.** Miami Homes For All and the Shimberg Center for Housing Studies at the University of Florida conducted the 2023 Affordable Housing Needs Assessment. In this study, there were over 52,000 cost-burdened renter households with children and over 18,000 cost-burdened owner households with children.¹⁵

Our Needs Based on YHDP Goal Outcomes

The following are highlights from our CCP outcomes: Prevention, Safe and Stable Housing, Education and Employment, Permanent Connections, Health & Well-being, and Coordinated Entry. In our August 2024 submission, we will share goals, objectives, and actions. These outcomes were prioritized based on USICH principles, YVAC experiences, and youth-focused group data.

1. **Prevention.** In recent PIT count data and youth services, 44% of YYA said they faced barriers trying to access the CoC, and 37% of YYA did not know where to go for help. YYA have expressed a need for more prevention measures that foster youth independence, such as providing opportunities for mentorship and life skills coaching at earlier ages when identified as at-risk. Our YYA have also called for creating more Youth Action Boards that ensure youth leadership and the centering of youth's needs.
2. **Safe & Stable Housing.** According to the [2023 Affordable Housing Needs Assessment](#), half of Miami-Dade County is cost-burdened (paying more than 30% of their incomes towards housing). 90% of Miami-Dade renters making below \$50,000 are cost-burdened. Miami-Dade has a gap of 90,181 affordable and available units for renter households with incomes below 80% of the area median income (AMI). This gap will grow to nearly 116,000 units by 2030 unless affordable units are added. From 2017 to 2022, median wages in Miami-Dade County increased by 29%. During the same period, median apartment rents increased by 39%, and the median single-family home price increased by 63%. Eviction filings now exceed pre-pandemic levels.

The Continuum of Care served 921 YYA and minor youth in a year.¹⁶ There are not enough permanent housing options to prevent recidivism. The average length of stay for YYA is about 120 days, with a 14% chance of recidivism. Miami-Dade is committed to equitable outcomes, especially given the following:

¹⁵ [This data](#) was based on US Census data and local area median income levels. A cost-burdened household is one that pays over 30% of their income towards rent. This statistic considers households making 50% of the area median income. The median income in Miami-Dade is \$74,700.

¹⁶ See the general statement of need above (pages 7-8) - the Miami-Dade CoC served 921 YYA experiencing homelessness from 2022 to 2023.

- 51% of our YYA experiencing homelessness are pregnant or parenting,
 - 62% are Black, and 30% are Hispanic or Latine¹⁷;
 - 6% are Transgender or non-binary, agender, or identify as having more than one gender, and
 - 16% are youth with disabilities.
3. **Education & Employment.** The following are data highlights related to education and employment, this data was collected in partnership with the National Center for Homeless Education, our technical assistance:
- *Early childcare and education.* There were 78,395 children aged 0-5 below 150% of the federal poverty level (within the Miami-Dade/Monroe Early Learning Coalition) and 24,297 children were enrolled in the school readiness program in 2022-23.¹⁸
 - *Secondary Education.* Our local McKinney-Vento liaison, Miami-Dade County Public Schools' Project UP-START (M-DCPS Project UP-START), identified 8,219 students experiencing housing homelessness under the [McKinney-Vento Act definition of homelessness](#) in the 2021-2022 school year. 265 of the 8,466 total M-DCPS Project UP-START students identified as experiencing homelessness were unaccompanied homeless youth.¹⁹ Based on the many youth identified through Project Up-Start, fewer students accessing the Homeless Tuition Waiver indicates a need for more outreach and facilitation in accessing the tuition waiver.
 - *Post-secondary Education.* In the 2022-2023 school year, 68 students attending Florida International University and 128 students attending Miami Dade College used the Florida Homeless Tuition Waiver.²⁰
 - *Employment.* Florida's minimum wage is \$12 an hour. The minimum wage is adjusted annually based on a set formula. The Florida minimum wage will increase by \$1.00 every September 30th until \$15.00 on September 30, 2026. The estimated living wage for Miami-Dade is double that at \$24.26. The Affordable Housing Framework and Needs Assessment note an increase in the number of jobs, but wages do not match the needs or costs of living expressed by Miami-Dade youth.²¹ The largest percentage of employees work in transportation, trade, and utilities, with an average income of \$57,000 annually. According to the Affordable Housing Framework, affordable rent for a worker in this industry is \$676, a rent price almost non-existent in Miami-Dade's current housing market.

¹⁷ From the [Cambio Center at the University of Missouri](#): Latine is a gender-neutral or non-binary alternative to Latino and Latina. This term originated from LGBTQIA+, gender non-binary, and feminist communities in Spanish-speaking countries. Latine replaces the "a" and "o" with the gender-neutral Spanish letter "e". The letter "e" can be found in non-gendered Spanish nouns like "estudiante" (student).

¹⁸ The [Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade and Monroe](#) is a nonprofit serving both Miami-Dade and Monroe counties and runs their head start programs.

¹⁹ Miami-Dade County's Project UP-START is the largest McKinney-Vento program in the State of Florida and has recently identified over 11,000 students to participate in the program. The U.S. Department of Education and the Florida Department of Education mandate that all school districts identify children and youth in houseless situations using the [McKinney-Vento Act definition of homelessness](#) and are provided resources for immediate school enrollment, regular school attendance, and academic success in school. This includes referrals to wraparound services in the community, such as housing, medical care, and basic needs.

²⁰ Florida has a State Tuition Waiver for foster care and homeless students to access public postsecondary schools for free.

²¹ Rebecca San Juan from The Miami Herald reported, [Housing in Miami keeps rising and wages can't keep up. Now, more people feel the squeeze](#) in 2023.

4. **Permanent Connections.** There is insufficient funding or resources for government agencies and service providers to provide trauma-informed, wrap-around support services through relationships that are transformational and not transactional.²² YYA have expressed the need for services that are relationship-based and in a timeframe that is dictated by the youth. Miami-Dade recognizes the need for deeper collaboration between mentorship programs across YYA serving institutions. YYA also identified needing more spaces where they can build community and begin to form relationships through mentorship, peer support, and or kinship that foster youth independence and build resources essential for sustainably exiting the homelessness system of care.

“Youth and young adults have expressed being retraumatized by multiple crises. Youth, young adults, and caseworkers have voiced that insufficient funding and lack of resources are the root causes of YYA being disconnected from programs and services. Those services in our community have been crucial to helping youth like me stabilize.” - Reber, 24, YVAC L

5. **Health & Well-being.** Within the CoC, 143 youth and young adults experiencing homelessness have co-occurring diagnoses, including mental health, substance use, HIV/AIDS, and other communicable diseases, and 16% of YYA have disabilities. Miami-Dade’s behavioral health managing entity (Thriving Mind) reported serving only 8 homeless youth in their child mental health and child substance use programs. In our YHDP Health and Well-being focus group meetings, YYA shared that they are unaware of quality, affordable health, and well-being services, while service providers stated that it is increasingly difficult to service YYA with no insurance. Ultimately, Miami-Dade is seeking additional health and well-being data from local health providers to understand the current supply of youth services, current barriers or gaps, and number of YYA experiencing homelessness served.

“School social workers often suggested that I would benefit from therapy due to experiencing recurring homelessness since the age of 8, but there wasn't much help available in finding a therapist. I convinced myself that I could handle things independently and that engaging in therapy would only ‘reopen wounds that didn't need to be reopened.’ Throughout middle school and high school, I went without therapy. It wasn't until my second year in college that I decided to seek therapy and address my past.

I deeply admire my therapist, who understands and validates my queer and gender-fluid identity, as well as how it intersects with other aspects of my identity, such as being Latine and my class positionality. She approaches her work from a trauma-informed perspective and recognizes how being an unaccompanied youth has influenced my experiences.” - Jahneé, 21, YVAC L

6. **Coordinated Entry.** 44% of YYA said they faced barriers trying to access the homeless response system, and 37% of YYA did not know where to go for help. Many of our YYA have expressed that they are disconnected from programs and services due to a culture amongst service providers that is based on transactional encounters rather than relationship building. This is perpetuated through intake processes and de-

²² In 2023, MHFA conducted youth focus groups at four different crisis housing programs. All 13 youth interviewed shared this experience.

centralized referral systems that retraumatize YYA seeking services. Our non-CoC youth access points (YAPs that are not CoC housing providers and/or do not receive CoC funding) have limited capacity to meet current needs - effectively using HMIS and fully participating in the youth coordinated entry system, as we do not have enough data regarding non-housing related outcomes. Additionally, our YYA are requesting youth access points receive training and support regarding adultism, racism, LGBTQIA+ identities, and trauma-informed care to remove barriers, avoid re-traumatizing youth, increase case manager capacities, authentically collaborate with youth to implement youth choice, and implement a strong, centralized coordinated entry (CE) system.

Our Vision & Mission

The Vision

Harness power among youth and young adults to create a network of partners who provide housing, emergency services, and all other supportive services while targeting the systemic causes of youth homelessness to ensure it is rare, brief, and non-recurring.

We will end youth and family housing instability, homelessness, and socioeconomic inequality through deep, authentic cross-systems collaboration that includes open, consistent data-sharing and a targeted universalism approach, centering Black, Indigenous, and POC youth, queer and gender-expansive youth, justice-impacted youth, and youth with disabilities within Miami-Dade County.

The Mission

Through the leadership of young people with lived experience, we are committed to:

- implementing best practices to provide housing and supportive services for youth experiencing homelessness in Miami-Dade County.
- building a system of care that provides quick, comprehensive solutions and develops long-term systemic changes that prevent youth homelessness entirely.

More about our values and principles are in Appendix 2.



Above is a photo of our YVAC enjoying a day at the park and taking a break from writing the CCP.

How We're Implementing This Plan

This is the Miami-Dade process to implement the CCP:

1. The YVAC selected project types. These **ANNUAL** YHDP Funded projects will include:²³

#	Project Type	Funding Amount	Description	Estimated to serve ²⁴
1	Rapid Re-Housing (RRH): Time-Limited Rental Assistance	\$2,000,000	Providers will offer young adults experiencing homelessness (between ages 18-24) up to 3 years of rental assistance and support services based on YA's expressed need, as well as aftercare services after the rental assistance ends. Services include housing navigation and move-in assistance, mental health and wellness support, financial education, ongoing assessment to support stable housing, and aftercare support for up to 24 months after rental assistance ends. ²⁵ Estimated Number of Units: 41	55 YYA
2	Joint component Transitional Housing/Rapid Re-housing (TH-RRH)	\$1,200,000	Prioritizing pregnant and parenting young adults, providers offer immediate access to low-barrier crisis housing in a transitional capacity and/or individualized and client-driven permanent housing solutions are identified. Joint TH/RRH can serve expanded category 2 and 4 definitions for YYA. Estimated Number of Units(TH): 7 Estimated Number of Units(RRH): 16	34 YYA
3	Support Services Only (SSO): Housing Structure Support (Peer housing navigation)	\$400,000	Provide relationship-based supportive services necessary to assist YYA to obtain and maintain housing, education, and permanent connections. This includes peer and housing navigation, diversion, family reunification support, and follow-ups with YYA as needed. ²⁶ These supports offered to assist YYA at	295 YYA

²³ These projects were selected through various Planning Committee and YVAC meetings with technical assistance from CSH. More about these projects can be found in Appendix 3.

²⁴ Additional points will be awarded to applications prioritizing special populations: LGBTQIA+ and gender non-conforming youth, minor youth, systems-involved youth (justice and foster care), victims of sex trafficking and exploitation, and youth with co-occurring diagnosis (i.e., mental health, substance abuse, HIV, and other communicable diseases).

²⁵ See US HUD's FY 21 YHDP [Appendix A: Project Selection Process](#).

²⁶ See US HUD's [2024 YHDP HMIS Manual](#).

#	Project Type	Funding Amount	Description	Estimated to serve ²⁴
	services)		risk of or experiencing homelessness will help them navigate complex systems and provide direct support to youth in crisis as they engage with the coordinated entry system. ²⁷ Estimated Case Load: 72	
4	Coordinated Entry	\$400,000	Youth Access Points can apply to expand or build capacity for coordinated entry to provide assessment, prioritization, and referrals. This includes supporting a universal intake and streamlining the YYA coordinated entry system (i.e., the youth by-name list). Estimated Case Load: 60	886 YYA

2. The CoC will develop a solicitation for YHDP recipients in partnership with the YVAC. Miami-Dade County will appoint a Selection Committee. The Selection Committee comprises individuals who have received ethics training and must undergo vetting. YVAC leadership has been trained in Miami-Dade-approved ethics and will participate in the selection process.
3. Once grantees are selected through the Selection Committee, the YVAC will do a final vote. The YVAC will present its decisions to the CoC board for final approval and funding disbursement.
4. Upon disbursing funds, the YHDP Project Team will implement the governance structure (please see pages 9-12) and meet weekly to monitor, track, and support project implementation.
5. The YHDP Project Team will secure additional match funding to implement the additional projects outlined that the YHDP does not fund.

NOTE: In February 2024, we received notice that HUD updated their YHDP CCP due dates by extending the due date for various CCP elements. In our August 2024 full submission, we will include the following:

- How we will implement continuous quality improvement
- Our Co-Conspirators (signature page)
- Goals, outcomes, and actions
- Our principles

²⁷ See US HUD’s [Emerging Practices in Supportive Service Only Projects](#).

Appendices

Appendix 1

Our YHDP Partners

Miami-Dade ensured cross-sector partners were involved in this Coordinated Community Plan as per [Appendix B](#). Our partners represent the Youth Action Board, Public Child Welfare Agencies, CoC and ESG Program Recipients, Local and State Government, Runaway and Homeless Youth Program Providers, Health, Mental Health, and Substance Abuse Agencies, Juvenile and Adult Corrections and Probation, HIV/AIDS serving organizations, Affordable Housing Providers, Early Childhood Development and Child Care Providers, Local and State Educational Agencies, Institutions of Higher Education, Non-Profit Youth Organizations, Privately Funded Homeless Organizations, Local Advocacy, Research, and Philanthropic Organizations, and Organizations that serve culturally specific communities. *The following are Miami-Dade partners that (1) signed up to join the YHDP Planning Committee or working groups and (2) attended at least five meetings:*

- Affirming YOUth Foundation
- Camillus House
- Carrfour Supportive Housing
- Casa Valentina
- Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Miami
- Chapman Partnership
- Citrus Family Care Network
- Citrus Health Network
- Disability Independence Group
- Early Learning Coalition of Miami-Dade/Monroe
- Educate Tomorrow
- Essential Haus, Inc.
- Feeding South Florida
- Florida International University's Fostering Panther Pride
- Florida Network of Youth and Family Services
- Genesis Hopeful Haven
- Greater Miami Service Corps
- Haynes Harbour Group, Inc.
- Hermanos de la Calle
- Homeless & Formerly Homeless Forum
- Kristi House - Project GOLD
- Miami Bridge Youth & Family Services | Lutheran Services of Florida
- Miami-Dade College
- Miami-Dade County Homeless Trust
- Miami-Dade County Juvenile Services Department
- Miami-Dade County Public Library System
- Miami-Dade County Public Schools' Project UP-START (Miami-Dade's McKinney-Vento Office/Local and State Educational Agencies)
- Overtown Youth Center
- Pridelines
- Saints House/Propelling Into Triumph
- Struggle for Miami's Affordable and Sustainable Housing (SMASH)
- Women with Broken Heals
- Sundari Foundation, Inc. dba Lotus House
- The Alliance for LGBTQ Youth
- The Children's Trust
- Thriving Mind
- Transpire Trainings & Consulting
- Youth Voice Action Council

HOMY Members

The following are members of HOMY: Helping Our Miami-Dade Youth, a working group of service providers, young leaders with lived experience of homelessness, philanthropy, developers, and more:

- 305 Psychotherapy Group
- Acceleration Academy
- Adults Mankind Organization, Inc. (AMO)
- Affirming Youth Foundation

- AHS Residential
- AIDS Healthcare Foundation
- AIO Property
- American Heart Association
- Aqua Foundation
- Atlantic Pacific Communities
- Avenue 3 Miami
- Bank United
- Branches
- Better Way
- Camillus House
- CareerSource South Florida
- Carrfour Supportive Housing
- Casa Valentina
- Catholic Charities
- Center for Family and Child Enrichment, Inc.
- Center for Independent Living of South Florida
- Chapman Partnership
- Children's Bereavement Center
- Children's Harbor True North
- Citrus Family Care Network
- Citrus Health Network
- Concerned African Women
- Counsel & Connect, Inc.
- Cuban American National Council
- Disability Independence Group, Inc.
- Educate Tomorrow
- Federation of Families
- First Star University of Miami Academy
- Florida International University's Fostering Panther Pride
- Florida Department of Health
- Florida Foster Care Review
- Generation USA
- Genesis Hopeful Haven
- Greater Miami Service Corps
- Health Council of South Florida-----
- Homeless Helpline
- Homeless Trust
- Hope 4 Tomorrow
- Jackson Memorial Hospital / University of Miami Miller School of Medicine
- Kristi House
- Lotus House
- Miami Bridge Youth + Family Services | Lutheran Services of Florida
- Miami Dade County's Community Action & Human Services Department
- Miami Dade County Juvenile Services Department
- Miami Homes For All
- Miami Workers Center
- Miami-Dade College
- Miami-Dade County Homeless Trust
- Miami-Dade County Public Schools Project UP-START
- OIC South Florida
- One More Child
- Overtown Youth Center
- Pridelines
- Public Defender
- Regis House
- Salvation Army
- Sant La Haitian Neighborhood Center
- Struggle for Miami's Affordable & Sustainable Housing (SMASH)
- South Florida Youth Foundation
- Sundari Foundation, Inc. dba Lotus House
- Teach For America
- The Children's Trust
- Thriving Mind
- Touching Miami with Love
- Transpire Trainings & Consulting
- UM Children & Youth Law Clinic
- UM ESPA
- United Way Miami
- University of Miami Children and Youth Law Clinic
- University of Miami Pediatric Mobile Clinic
- Urgent Inc
- YearUp
- Youth Co-Op
- Urban Health Partnership

The image below shows Miami-Dade's CCP writing process.

Writing Order of Operations



Miami-Dade wrote the CCP with a consensus model as shown in the image below.



Appendix 2

OUR VALUES

The following are our values. Our young leaders and our partners in the planning committee developed these values. Guided by USICH Four Outcomes (Stable Housing, Education & Employment, Permanent Connections, and Wellbeing) and HUD best practices:

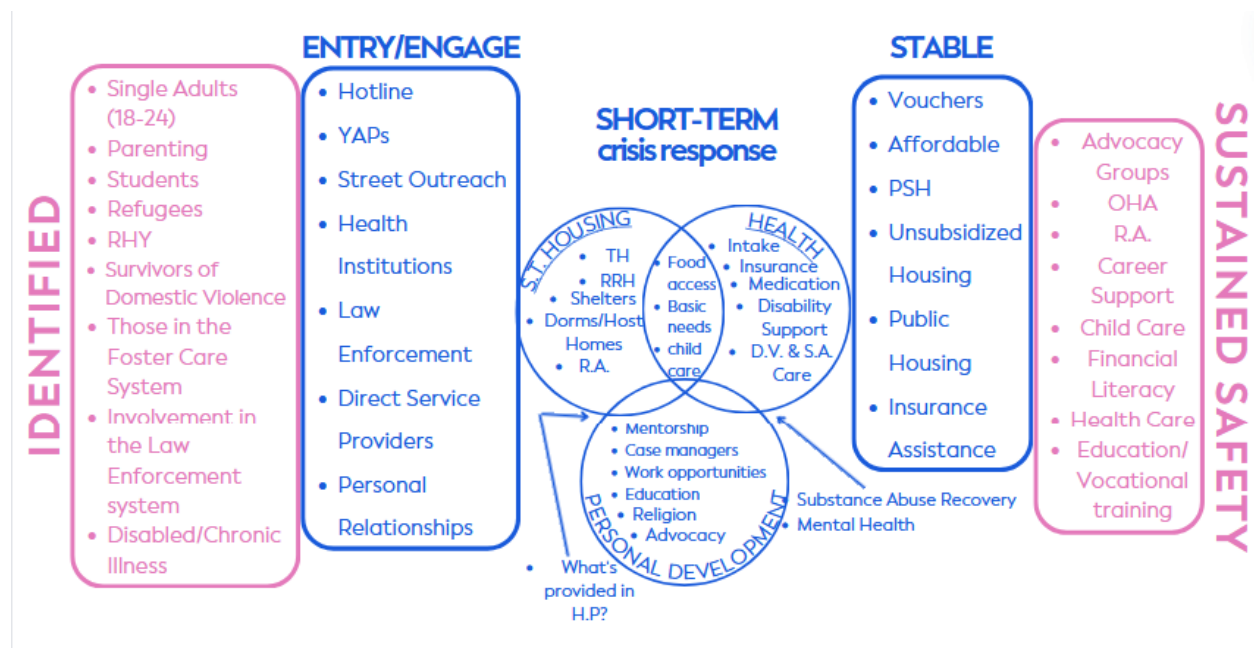
- **Building Trust.** We want to build trust. Trust is essential in an effective working relationship. Once positive rapport is established, genuine collaboration can begin.
- **Meaningful Engagement.** Tokenism is where providers have showy engagement simply to create the impression of inclusion and diversity. This is an issue that gets in the way of effective collaboration.
- **Autonomy.** Youth and Young Adults should have freedom and agency to be leaders of their own lives. Autonomy should be promoted as they make decisions about the issues that impact their lives
- **Transparency and Honesty.** Committing to authentic collaboration with young people requires radical transparency and honesty beyond budgets. The young people you collaborate with should understand the relationships between all stakeholders and partners, have clear details about their compensation, and be privy to any changes in the timeline or deadlines.
- **Community Involvement.** Historically, conversations around youth homelessness have been confined to service providers and the youth who experience housing insecurity or require services. There is a significant gap in community involvement needed to address such issues and mitigate some of the negative rhetoric surrounding people who have experienced homelessness. Community-based, grassroots, and faith-based organizations should also be involved in addressing youth homelessness, as it is an issue that affects the entire community, not just service providers and youth.
- **Democratic Authentic Youth-Led Collaboration & Trusting Youth.** Miami-Dade believes in consensus building between young leaders, service providers, advocates, and the Continuum of Care (CoC). All HOMY, CCP, and YHDP decisions will be made through the consensus model (see Appendix 1). We implement the consensus model by fully collaborating and trusting youth - we ensure they have the tools needed to lead and be informed.
- **Creating Authentic Safe Spaces that are Transparent and hold each other Accountable.** We are committed to serving the needs of YYA and ensuring that organizations we are in coalition with are actively employing youth-best practices, provide services through an anti-oppressive lens and are trained and informed on how to be an ally to LGBTQIA+ YYA who access services and housing. Youth deserve to be in safe spaces and for organizations that yield power to hold providers accountable when they are causing harm to the youth they serve.
- **Inclusivity, Anti-Oppression & Equity.** We want to see all YYA thrive. We will do this through centering equity - this means we inclusive and are rooted in anti-oppression tactics to ensure equitable access and solutions.
- **Institutional Reforms.** We aim to make changes to the structures, policies, procedure, and practices of organizations and institutions that have made it challenging for YYA to be safely housed. Through reforms, we address ways to improve effectiveness of systems and programs to be more streamlined and coordinated. We promote accountability and transparency through policy revisions and the need for modifications in procedures practiced by some of our partners.
- **Non-Judgmental Approach.** We always assume all YYA leaders and partners have best intentions and interests. Miami-Dade is instilling a culture of active listening, being genuine, and centering empathy.
- **Following the Principles of Positive Youth Development, Trauma-Informed Care, Harm Reduction, Health-Centered Approaches, and Restorative Justice.** We aim to address individual and community well-being through trauma-informed care by recognizing how trauma impacts YYA in their daily lives. By creating environments and uplifting practices that are sensitive, supportive, and responsive to the needs of trauma survivors. We believe in restorative justice to address the harm done to YYA and promote the restorative actions for their well-being. Through community services, mediation, restorative conferencing and community reparations, we believe that all

YYA should have access to basic needs necessary for survival that they have been deprived of. Through a health-centered approach, we address the root causes of health disparities in our community. We uplift health equity through holistic practices addressing health issues caused by factors due to homelessness. We believe in harm reduction by implementing practices to reduce consequences associated with risky behaviors.

- **Transparency between all partners in authentic data sharing and honest collaboration.** We believe that young adults (YYA) should not have to relive their traumas or retell their stories as not all service providers utilize HMIS or desire to. As a community, we recognize this as an issue and are committed to changing how data sharing occurs. Our goal is to establish a centralized referral process by leveraging the data sharing platform Unite Us. We hope that integrating Unite Us with HMIS will provide our community with clearer and more authentic data on the YYA we serve. This integration will allow us to better account for demographics such as LGBTQIA+ identities, which are often underreported across communities nationwide.

We're committed to following the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness' principles to address youth homelessness. Our system and CCP outcomes, goals, and action plan center these principles:

- Equity
- Positive Youth Development
- Trauma Informed Care
- Family Engagement
- Housing First
- Unsheltered Homelessness
- Youth Choice
- Individualized and client-driven support
- Social and Community Integration
- Coordinated entry
- Educational Partnerships



Above is our proposed System Map. This was developed by the YVAC and HOMY in 2023.

Appendix 3

The following charts outline additional details regarding our YHDP projects:²⁸

1. Rapid Re-housing: Time-Limited Rental Assistance	
Project Type	Rapid Rehousing (RRH)- medium-term assistance (up to 24 months)
Summary of Project and Supportive Services Description	Providers will offer unaccompanied homeless youth between ages 18-24, 3 months to 2 years of rental assistance and support services for YYA experiencing homelessness, as well as aftercare services after the rental assistance ends. Services include housing navigation and move-in assistance, mental health and wellness support, financial education, ongoing assessment to support stable housing, and aftercare support for up to 6 months after rental assistance ends.
Special YHDP Activities	Time-Limited Rental Assistance, Extended Rental Assistance (to 24 months), Shared Housing, Congregate Living
Target population and number served:	This project is 46 unaccompanied homeless youth (UHY) between ages 18-24 with a prioritization of LGBTQI+ and BIPOC identifying youth.
Target number of housing units	41
Staffing	12
Projected Cost	\$2,000,000

2. Joint component Transitional Housing/Rapid Re-housing	
Project Type	Site-based or Scattered-Site Transitional Housing paired with scattered-site rapid rehousing
Summary of Project and Supportive Services Description	Prioritizing pregnant and parenting youth, providers offer immediate access to low-barrier crisis housing in a transitional capacity, while individualized and client-

²⁸ This CCP's Special YHDP Activities were informed by the [FY21 YHDP Appendix A Final](#).

	driven permanent housing solutions are identified. Joint TH/RRH can serve expanded category 2 and 4 definitions for youth.
Special YHDP Activities	Congregate Living, Shared Housing, Crisis Residential Transitional Housing
Target population and number served:	By prioritizing pregnant and parenting youth(PPY) we expect to serve 40 PPY and 26 UHY.
Target number of housing units	23
Staffing	7
Projected Cost	\$1,200,000

3. Supportive Services Only (SSO): Housing Structure Support (Peer housing navigation services)

Project Type	Housing Structure Support (Peer housing navigation services)
Summary of Project and Supportive Services Description	Provide supportive services necessary to assist youth to obtain and maintain housing, education, and permanent connections. This includes peer and housing navigation, diversion, and family reunification support.
Special YHDP Activities	Trauma-informed Care Model. (6) Hiring youth who are receiving services, including housing, from the recipient organization. (9) YHDP recipients may provide payments of up to \$500 per month for families that provide housing under a host home and kinship care model in order to offset the increased costs associated with having youth housed in the unit.
Target population and number served:	295
Staffing	6
Projected Cost	\$400,000

4. Supportive Services Only (SSO): Coordinated Entry

Project Type	Coordinated Entry
Summary of Project and Supportive Services Description	Three Youth Access Points can apply to hire 2 staff each to expand or build capacity for coordinated entry to provide assessment, prioritization, and referrals. This includes supporting a universal intake and streamlining the youth coordinated entry system (i.e., the youth by-name list).
Special YHDP Activities	Housing First, Positive Youth Development Model
Target population and number served:	886
Staffing	6
Projected Cost	\$400,000