HELPFUL RESOURCES

Houston Department of Health and Human Services
www.houstontx.gov/health/

The Beacon
hwww.chomhouston.org/

Bread of Life Houston Homeless Services
www.breadoflifeinc.org/

Coalition for the Homeless
www.homelesshouston.org/

The Covenant House
www.covenanthousetx.org/

DePelchin Children's Center
www.depelchin.org/

Harris County Housing Resource Center
www.hrc.hctx.net/

Homeless Shelter Directory
www.homelessshelterdirectory.org/cgi-bin/id/city.cgi?city=Houston&state=TX

Houston Area Women's Center
www.hawc.org/

The Montrose Center
www.montrosecenter.org/hub/

SAMHSA – Homelessness Resource Center
http://homeless.samhsa.gov/Default.aspx

SEARCH Homeless Services
www.searchhomeless.org/

Star of Hope Mission
www.sohmission.org/

The Westfield Corporation
www.thewestfieldhouse.org/residential-treatment-center.html

U.S Department of Health and Human Services Office of Adolescent Health
www.hhs.gov/ash/oah/adolescent-health-topics/index.html

GET INVOLVED![14,15]

Youth

- If you're considering running away, talk to a trusted adult before you make any decisions.
- Seek youth friendly homeless or drop-in shelters in your area.

Parents

- Preserve family connections when safe and appropriate.
- Engage runaway youth before they become street-involved.
- Preserve family connections when youth identifies as LGBTQ.
- Discuss changes occurring in the family with youth.

School Personnel

- Eliminate barriers to enrollment, attendance, and success in school.
- Provide workshops for teachers and staff members to inform and address the unique needs of homeless students.
- Maintain a school district liaison to work with homeless students and families.

Community

- Support early intervention programs needed to prevent family conflict and abuse from leading to youth homelessness.

References and More!

Please visit http://www.houstontx.gov/health/hdhhs-profiles for a full list of references.

Other Titles in this Series:

- Teen Pregnancy & Prevention
- Youth Suicide Prevention
- Youth Mental Health
- Youth Violence Prevention
- Teen Dating Violence Prevention
- Youth Immunizations
- Youth Obesity & Prevention
- Youth Sexual Health, STIs & HIV
- Youth Substance Abuse & Prevention
- Youth Bullying & Prevention
- Overall Summary of Youth Health

For more information, please contact Adolescent Health and Injury Prevention (AHIP) via the Houston Youth Voice, Health, Safety Coalition at: 4youthvoice@houstontx.gov
Facebook: 4youthvoicehouston Twitter: @4youthvoice

This publication was supported by the cooperative agreement from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of the CDC.

Produced July 2015.

YOUTH IN HOUSTON & HARRIS COUNTY[1-3]

Population*
Houston: 601,918 (29%)
Harris County: 1,263,889 (31%)

Poverty
Children under 18 living below poverty level:
Houston: 35.3%
Harris County: 27.4%

Education
High School Graduates (ages 18-24):
Houston: 29.3%
Harris County: 30.5%

DEMOGRAPHIC SNAPSHOT OF YOUTH[¥1,4]

Below is a snapshot of the demographics for youth living in Houston and Harris County.

Gender

Houston:	Harris County:
Male: 51%	Male: 51%
Female: 49%	Female: 49%

Age

Houston:	Harris County:
Under 5 years: 28%	27%
5 to 9 years: 25%	25%
10 to 14 years: 23%	24%
15 to 19 years: 24%	24%

Race/Ethnicity
Harris County:
Hispanic: 51%
White: 23%
Black: 19%
Other: 7%

* Percentages (youth under the age of 19) are representative of the total Houston/Harris County population.
¥ As of 2010, percentages are based on total population of Houston and/or Harris County under the age of 19.

YOUTH voice.health.safety.
Houston Department of Health and Human Services
Adolescent Health and Injury Prevention (AHIP)

YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

Profile of the City of Houston & Harris County, Texas

Homeless youth are typically defined as unaccompanied youth ages 12 and older who are without family support and who are living in shelters, on the streets, in places not meant for human habitation (e.g. cars, abandoned buildings), or in others' homes for short periods under highly unstable circumstances.[5] Research shows a high prevalence of depression, suicide initiations and other mental health disorders among youth who are homeless. More needs to be known about the costs associated with youth homelessness (i.e. medical and behavioral health care and incarceration), as these costs compound over a lifetime.[6]

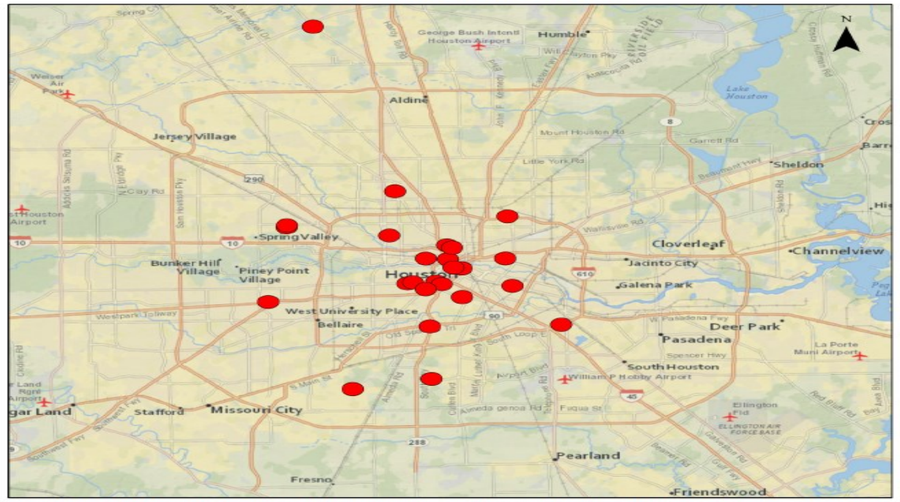
Youth Homelessness in Harris County[7]

The data below are from *Youth Count 2.0*, a community-based research study focusing on homeless youth ages 13-24 in Harris County. Of the 436 completed surveys, the study identified the following:[7]

- **24%** have children
- **6%** are pregnant
- **68%** were previously homeless
- **75%** are minority youth
- **25%** identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or queer (LGBTQ)
- **50%** completed high school
- **28%** are still in school
- **22%** currently work
- **23%** attempted suicide
- **41%** have been physically abused

Youth homelessness is largely a reflection of family breakdown, and youth often flee homes due to abuse, neglect, severe conflict and crisis.[5]

Houston Homeless Shelters*



*This map denotes the locations of day shelters, emergency shelters, permanent housing, permanent supporting housing, shelter plus care housing, and transitional housing. For a complete list of Houston Homeless shelters visit: http://www.homelesshouston.org

Homelessness in Houston/Harris County[8]

- From the 2014 Houston/Harris County Point in Time Count (snapshot collected on January 31, 2014).
  - For those youth under age 18 who are not accompanied by an adult:
    - ⇒ Unsheltered = 52
    - ⇒ Sheltered = 19
  - There was a total of 81, which is an increase from the total in 2013.
- **Many homeless youth are between the ages of 18-21.**
- Furthermore, 10,933 children were registered as homeless in Harris County school districts for the 2011-2012 school year which includes families that were doubled up and at risk for homelessness. This includes different families living together who were all at risk for homelessness.
- Covenant House Texas, the largest Harris County youth emergency shelter, served over 5,300 children and youth ages 10-21 in 2011, the majority were ages 18-21.

Number of homeless young adults

Category	Estimated Number of Young Adults	Percent
Transitional	122,000	81%
Episodic	13,000	9%
Chronic	15,000	10%
Total	150,000	100%

"You can spend the money on new housing for poor people and the homeless, or you can spend it on a football stadium or a golf course." — Jello Biafra

WHAT WORKS?

The programs listed below are a compilation of initiatives, campaigns, and programs that are research informed, apply best practices and have the potential to be implemented in various settings. Below are some examples of these types of programs for homelessness.

Program	What Is It?	Website
HOMEBUILDERS: Intensive Family Preservation Services*	Homebuilders is a short-term, intensive, family-based program implemented by child welfare systems. It is designed to reunite families when an out-of-home placement or runaway situation is imminent.	http://www.nrepp.samhsa.gov/ViewIntervention.aspx?id=277
National Campaign for Youth Shelter	The National Campaign for Youth Shelter is a collaborative effort to build a grassroots movement demanding a national commitment to house all the homeless youth in the country.	http://nationalhomeless.org/campaigns/national-campaign-youth-shelter/
CORE (Case Management, Outreach, Referral, and Education)	The CORE program targets families with children (ages 0-19 years) in transition. The purpose is to improve the stability and well-being for children and families by providing a wide range of wrap-around services to improve conditions that place children and families living in transition at-risk for health, social, psychological, and safety concerns.	http://www.cebc4cw.org/program/case-management-outreach-referral-and-education/

*Denotes evidence based program as listed by SAMHSA—National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices.

Recommendations:[9, 10]

- Expand shelter services for youth/young adults.
  - — Broaden age restriction to include youth younger than 18 and older than 21.
  - — Develop more youth-/young adult-specific services.
- Connect youth with tangible support for educational and vocational training.
- Utilize public systems such as schools, child welfare, and juvenile justice as a point of early intervention and prevention.

Related Policies and Policy Implications:

- In 2009, about $4.175 billion nationwide was spent on homelessness assistance, mostly coming from HUD ($3.391 billion; 81% of total spending), but less than 1% ($195 million) out of $4.175 billion was targeted to unaccompanied homeless youth.[11]
- **Runaway and Homeless Youth Act** requires runaway and homeless youth center to:[12]
  - — Provide services to persons in a minority category related to sexual orientation or gender identity or expression.
  - — Serve youth in a manner that is culturally competent.
- **Education for Homeless Children and Youth Act** provides the right to:[13]
  - — Immediate enrollment even when records are not present.
  - — Remain in the school of origin, if in the student's best interest.
  - — Receive transportation to the school of origin.