Office of Adolescent Services

Youth At-Risk of Homelessness
Connecting YOUth
Federal Pilot Project

(Burlington, Mercer & Union Counties)

Bidder's Conference

January 14, 2016

Presentation Overview

I. Overview of the Department of Children and Families (DCF)

II. Overview of the Office of Adolescent Services

III. Overview of the Youth At-Risk of Homelessness (YARH) Federal Project

Department of Children and Families (DCF)

Created in July of 2006, DCF was the First Cabinet-level Department devoted *exclusively* to serving and safeguarding children and families.

Mission

In partnership with New Jersey's communities, DCF will ensure the safety, well-being, and success of New Jersey's children and families.

Vision

To ensure a better today and even a greater tomorrow for every individual we serve.

Department of Children and Families
Office of Adolescent Services
August 2010-present

Office of Adolescent Services (OAS)	Division of Child Protection and Permanency (CP&P) Formerly DYFS	Division of Children's System of Care (CSOC) Formerly DCBHS	Division of Family and Community Partnerships (FCP) Formerly DPCP	Division on Women (DOW)

To improve the coordination of policy, practice, and programming for adolescents and young adults being served throughout DCF.

New Jersey Department of Children and Families

Office of Adolescent Services

The mission of the DCF Office of Adolescent Services (OAS) is to support adolescents in their transition to adulthood to achieve economic self- sufficiency, interdependence, and engage in healthy lifestyles.

Office of Adolescent Services

Ensuring that services provided through the Department of Children and Families are coordinated, effective, meet best practice standards, are youth driven, and adapt to the needs of families and communities,

Youth At-Risk Homelessness (YARH) Federal Project

QuickCents Federal Project

Youth Advisory Boards and Speaker's Bureau

Housing and Street Outreach Programs

Permanency and Mentoring Programs

Youth Employment and Career Technical Assistance

NJ Foster Care Scholars, Education Stability, and Academic Support

Human Trafficking Training and Resources

Life Skills and Aftercare Services

Wraparound (aka Chafee) Funding

Outreach to At Risk Youth (OTARY) Programs

Summer (Housing) Internship Program (SHIP)/(SIP)

LGBTQI Resources and Technical Assistance

Expectant and Parenting Youth Resources and Technical Assistance

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Office of Adolescent Services

Developing linkages with other service providers in order to create a more equitable and seamless service system, and

*DCF Cross System Partnerships-*Education/Health/Behavioral Health/Services for Developmentally Disabled Youth/Substance Abuse*

*LGBTQI Committee

*Department of Labor and Workforce Development/SETC

*Department of Community Affairs

*Juvenile Justice Commission/Juvenile Justice Systems Improvement (JJSI)

*Localized Committees, Boards, and Advocacy Groups:

CIACC	FAFS	CASA
ACNJ	CPAC	Aging-Out Groups
NJ-ACYF	NYPB	

*Governor's Homelessness Working Group

*Non-DCF Contracted Programs-housing programs, mentoring, after school programming, etc.

Office of Adolescent Services

Providing leadership and policy development in the field of adolescent services.

*Child Protection and Permanency Policy
Unpacking The Adolescent Policy Project

*Task Force on Helping Youth Thrive in Placement (HYTIP)

*LGBTQI Safe Space Liaison Program and Training

*Case Practice Issues and Technical Support

*Adolescent Training, Practice Forums, and Certificate Program

*Reviewing data to understand needs and trends

OAS Strategic Plan Domains
Launched December 2011

- **Housing**
- **Education and Employment**
- **Physical and Mental Health**
- **General Transition Support**
- **Youth Engagement**
- **Permanence and Familial Support**
- **Criminal Justice/Legal Services**
- **General/Cross Systems**
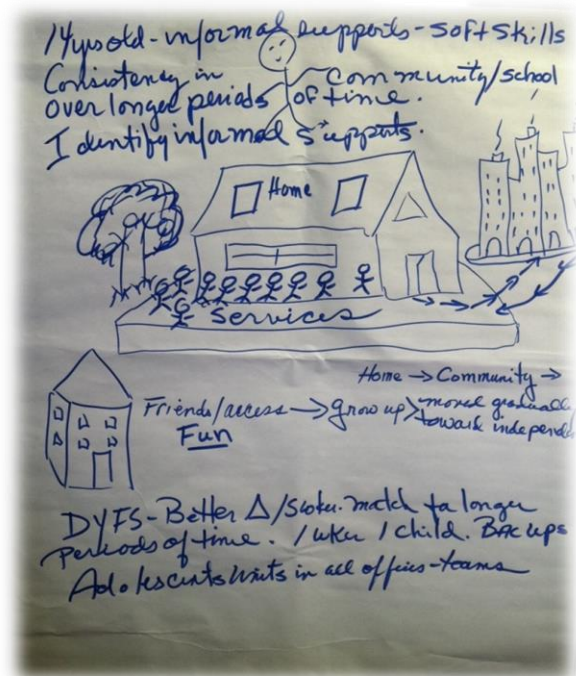
YOUTHRIVE™

PROTECTIVE & PROMOTIVE FACTORS FOR HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT AND WELL-BEING

INCREASE PROTECTIVE & PROMOTIVE FACTORS

- Personal resilience
- Social connections
- Knowledge of youth development
- Concrete supports in time of need
- Social, emotional, behavioral, intellectual and moral competence in youth

REDUCE RISK FACTORS

- Psychological stressors
- Inadequate or negative relationships with family members, adults outside youth's family and peers
- Insufficient or inadequate opportunities for positive growth and development
- Unsafe, unstable, inequitable environments

DYNAMIC OUTCOMES
HEALTHY DEVELOPMENT & WELL-BEING FOR YOUTH

- Hopeful, optimistic, compassionate, curious, resilient identity
- Supportive family and social networks
- Ability to form and sustain caring, committed relationships
- Success in school and workplace
- Service to community or society

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Center for the Study of Social Policy

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YARH Background

- **On 9/29/13, the Administration for Children, Youth, and Families awarded two-year planning grants to 16 grantees across the country.**

- **In 8/29/15, six implementation grantees were awarded a three year implementation cooperative agreement.**

Phase II 2015-2018 Cooperative Agreement

- ACF's anticipated substantial involvement
  - CB's review and approval of planning stages of the activities before implementation
  - CB and recipient's joint collaboration in the performance of key programmatic activities
  - Close monitoring by CB of the requirements
  - Close monitoring by CB during performance

Youth At-Risk of Homelessness (YARH) Federal Project

Implement a model intervention that will achieve four outcomes:
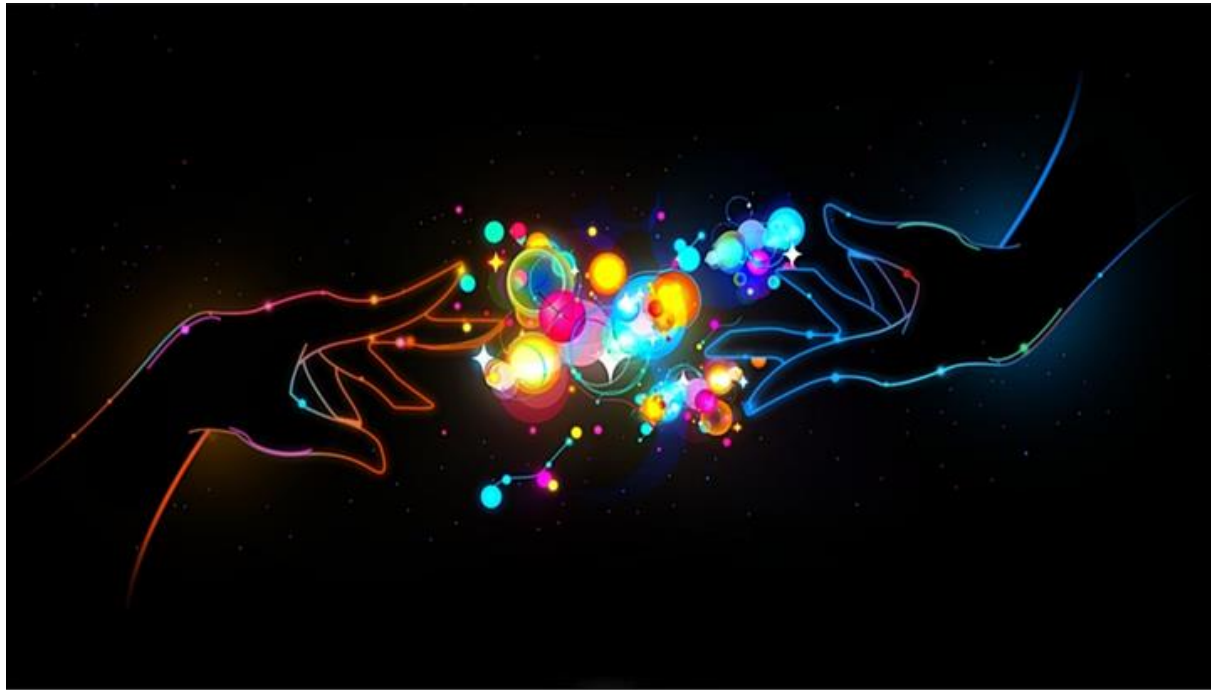
Stable Housing

Permanent Connections

Education/Employment

Social-Emotional Well-Being

Connecting YOUth

Needs Assessment Data Sources

- **Systems Mapping (June 2014, 85 attendees)**

- **Charrette   (October 2014, 116 attendees)**

- **Surveys**
    - Youth aging out events (227 completing survey)
    - Providers and staff (179 completing survey)

- **Focus groups**
    - Youth (65)
    - Housing HUB providers (9)

- **DCF MSA Measure 55 Report**
- **QR Face Sheets (de-identified)**

- **Rutgers Needs Assessment 2013 Report** (draft)
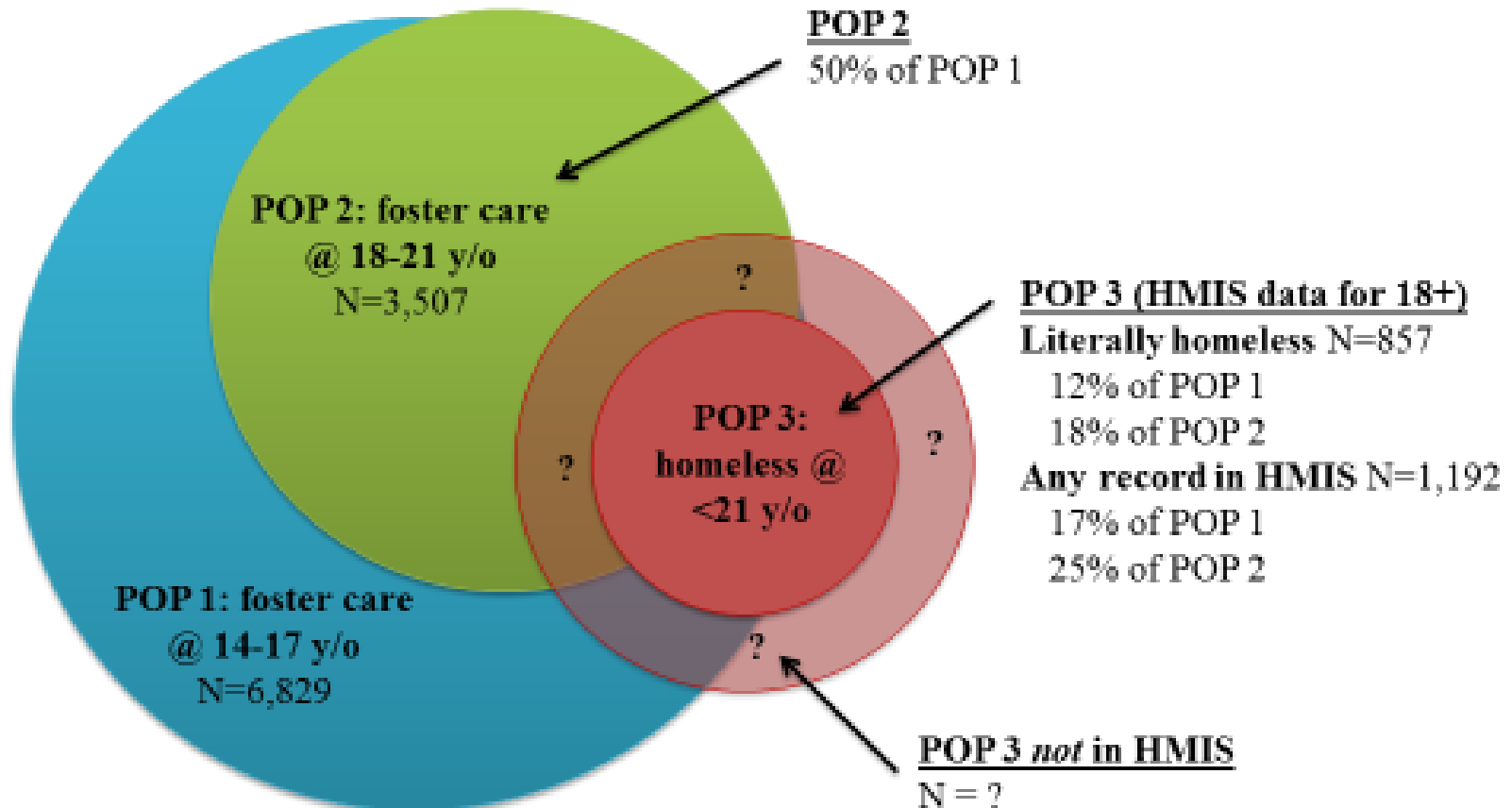- **Policy, Practice, and Resource Review**

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Administrative Data Sources

- **NJ SPIRIT   2008-2014**
  - Youth demographics, case history, assessments, etc.

- **CSOC (Children's System of Care) 2008-2014**
  - Behavioral health services and assessments

- **CHU (Child Health Unit) 2010-2014**
  - Ever on psychotropic medication(s)

- **HMIS (Homeless Management Information System) 2008-2014**
  - Any HMIS record / Ever literally homeless

- *NOTE*: We had limited or no data on education, LGBTQI youth, pregnant/parenting youth, JJC involved youth, many protective factors, etc.

New Jersey Department of Children and Families

Data Snapshot: *Youth in overall sample who had reached age 18 and were not in a DCF-supported placement in 2014.*

POP 2
50% of POP 1

POP 2: foster care
@ 18-21 y/o
N=3,507

POP 1: foster care
@ 14-17 y/o
N=6,829

POP 3:
homeless @
<21 y/o

POP 3 (HMIS data for 18+)
Literally homeless N=857
    12% of POP 1
    18% of POP 2
Any record in HMIS N=1,192
    17% of POP 1
    25% of POP 2

POP 3 *not* in HMIS
N = ?

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Which subgroups experience <u>higher</u> rate of homelessness than others?

Demographics

- **Female**
- **Non-Hispanic Black**
- **18-21 (entered)**
- 1st entry < age 14

Mental/behavioral health

- Legal/police-involved referral
- Youth disability: behavior problems, drug abuse
- **Psychotropic medication**
- Ever in residential treatment
- **Complex Behavioral Health**
- Placements ended due to: risk to other children in RH, step-up

Family relationship

- **Removal reason: Parent absence**

Placement stability

- **Multiple placements (5+)**
- 2+ times run away
- Placements ended due to: provider's request, provider problems
- Variable, **unstable patterns**

Permanency

- Failed discharge to reunification, to relatives
- >= 5 years in care
- **Discharge to majority/IL**
- Case goal not permanency
- Adoption disruption

Which subgroups experience <u>lower</u> rate of homelessness than others?

Demographics

- **Male**
- **Non-Hispanic White, Hispanic**
- ***Not* in POP 2**

Family relationship

- **Ever placed with relative**
- Never in group care
- Discharge to relative or reunification
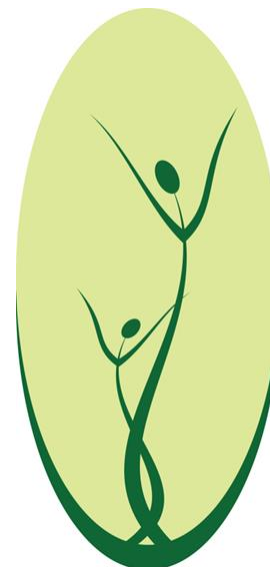- CP&P assessment: Family relationships as strength

Placement stability

- **< 3 placements**
- No run-away

- **Early stability pattern**

Permanency

- Discharge to adoption
- < 2 years in care
- Case goal is consistently permanency

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Other Important Qualitative Data Findings

1. "Mental health" and "unresolved trauma" were two of the top four barriers for youth.

2. Importance of connections to family and siblings as support system was frequently raised.

3. Youth voice in case planning and goal setting.

4. Concerns regarding placement stability.

5. Housing options for high need youth.

6. Focusing on education early and often.
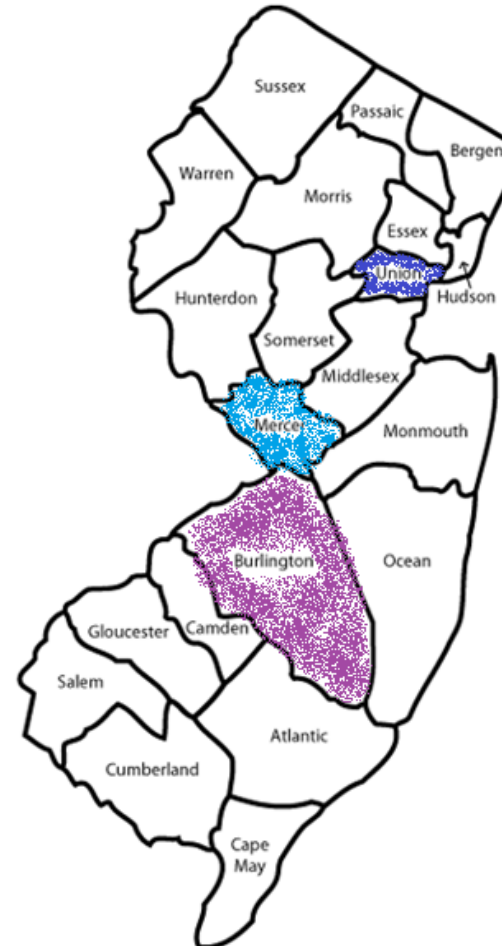
Selected Pilot Local Offices

- **Burlington**
  - East
  - West
- **Mercer**
  - North
  - South
- **Union**
  - Central
  - East
  - West

Connecting YOUth Theory of Change

- In sum, the Connecting YOUth intervention *allows us to* better and more quickly understand risk and protective factors *so that* youth are matched and linked with coordinated, effective services and supports that address their specific and unique underlying needs *so that* permanency can be achieved earlier, educational and career goals can be realistically attained, critical skills can be developed and strengthened, homelessness will be prevented, and youth will be able to transition to a successful, happy, and fulfilling adulthood.

Connecting YOUth Intervention Framework
Foundation and Considerations

1. Youth driven
2. Youth Thrive framework lens
3. Permanency at the forefront, *always.*
4. Trauma informed
5. Cultural humility/racial equity
6. Local communities know their youth best
7. Housing First
8. Focus on needs not behaviors

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Component 1-*Connect to Family (1A) and Connect to Well-Being (1B)*

1A-Radical Permanency- intensive permanency efforts with

youth 14-17, relationship building in the family based placement,

and permanency teams.

1B-Group Based Life Skills-youth 14-21, ongoing, flexible,

incentives, online registration networking, and special events.

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Component 2-*Connect to Achievement (2A) and Connect to Mentors (2B)*

2A-Educational Champions-targeted for youth 14-17, creating educational passports, retrieving educational data, and assisting with educational planning and advocacy.

2B-Near Peer and Professional Mentors-targeted for youth 14-21, 2 year commitment, promoting relationships with post-secondary institutions, recruitment through community, mentoring relationship focused on academic and career goal setting.

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Component 3-*Connect to Home-Supportive Housing*

1. Housing Screens/Targeting and Assessment tool

2. Housing voucher oversight (20 vouchers per pilot county)/Tiered Housing Model, youth 18-21

3. Statewide Youth Housing Learning Collaborative

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County Based Implementation Committees

- Creating a local network of community stakeholders that will help support, track, and monitor the implementation of the pilot intervention components.

- Developing a community of practice who share similar ideals and philosophies regarding quality work with adolescents and youth.

- Leveraging community resources to best support child welfare involved youth in their successful transition to adulthood and preventing/addressing youth homelessness.

- Recruiting and identifying mentors for Component 2b of the YARH intervention.

- Using best-practices and lessons learned from this pilot project intervention to apply more broadly to practices with youth in that community.

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Connecting YOUth Phase II
Implementation Plan and Awarded Agency Requirements

1. **Partner with CP&P Pilot Offices and Community**

2. **Develop County Based Implementation Committees**

3. **Develop programming** (Components 1-3)

4. **Screen and refer youth to intervention**

5. **Evaluate intervention** (surveys, interviews, focus groups)

6. **Refine intervention**

7. **Apply for Phase III Funding-Rigorous Evaluation**

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