

**TO: Joint Committee On Ways and Means  
Subcommittee On Capital Construction**

**FROM: Oregon Alliance**

**RE: \$1.5M Bonding Request for Facilities for  
Unaccompanied Houseless Youth**

**February 14, 2020**



## **Why does The Oregon Alliance support this Bonding Request? The need is great!**

- ◆ During the 2018-2019 school year there were 3,700 unaccompanied houseless youth in Oregon.
- ◆ 50% of chronically houseless adults were also houseless youth, unable to break the cycle of homelessness.
  - ◆ 40 to 60% were physically abused at home,
  - ◆ 20 to 40% were sexually abused at home,
  - ◆ 33% were formerly in foster care,
  - ◆ up to 40% are LGBTQIA+, 51% were youth of color

## **Why do these youth leave home?**

There are many reasons why a young person can become homeless. Increased demographic risk factors for becoming homeless include being Hispanic or Black; parenting and unmarried; or LGBTQ, with LGBTQ youth having more than twice the risk of being homeless than their cisgender or heterosexual peers.

In a March 2019 report, the Congressional Research Service identified family conflict, a youth's sexual orientation, sexual activity, school problems, pregnancy and substance use as primary risk factors for youth homelessness. Also, females are more likely than males to run away, and among white, black and Hispanic youth, black youth have the highest rates of running away with approximately half of youth running away before the age of 14.

Runaway and homeless youth are vulnerable to multiple threats, including not having their basic food and shelter needs met, untreated mental health disorders, substance use, sexually transmitted diseases and HIV infection, sexual exploitation (including survival sex to meet basic needs), physical victimization and suicide.

## **Unaccompanied Houseless Youth programs provide:**

**Outreach \* Drop in and Shelter programs \* Transitional Living \*  
\*Relationship Skills Building \* Self Care Skills \* Avenues to Stable and  
Safe Housing \* Education Advancement \* Establishment of Trusting  
Relationships with Adults\***

## Temporary shelters and short-term housing are a vital piece of the Unaccompanied Homeless Youth (UHY) system!

- ◆ They serve as a transition from the streets to longer-term housing, stability and hope.
- ◆ There is a critical lack of short-term, transitional facilities adequate to meet the needs of unaccompanied youth.
- ◆ Temporary youth shelters run on extremely tight budgets, squeezing every dollar they have into services.
  - ◆ Temporary shelters have a tremendous deferred maintenance problem.
  - ◆ Precious funding is used for youth services. Repairs or updating facilities is postponed.
  - ◆ Building/asset deterioration resulting in future higher costs, asset failure, and in some cases, health and safety implications.
- ◆ \$1.5 Million in shelter improvements will have an enormous return on investment!

### Examples:

**Jackson Street Youth Services, Corvallis/Lincoln County:** Add capacity and a much-needed shelter renovation.

**Janus Youth Programs, Portland/Multnomah County:** Foundation repair, new paint and replace old carpeting.

**Looking Glass, Eugene/Lane County:** Replace roof and HVAC on the RHY Outreach and Homeless Transitional Living Facility.

**Maslow Project, Medford/Jackson County:** A new freezer would assist with storing food from the Food Bank to distribute to approximately 1,500 youth each year.

**Mid-Willamette Valley Community Action Agency - Home Youth Services, Salem/Marion County:** Repair stairs, replace two ovens, replace two showers.

*The Oregon Alliance is a dedicated champion and established voice in advocating for the safety, health, and well-being of children, families, and communities across Oregon. Annually, Oregon Alliance members serve approximately to 6,000 unaccompanied houseless youth.*

Oregon Alliance Safe Kids, Strong Families, Healthy Communities

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