



# Federal & State Resources for Homeless

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# Background

- There are 550-650 youth under the age of 18 who are unaccompanied and homeless on any given night in Minnesota.
- 7 out of 10 homeless youth have experienced a placement in a foster home, group home or corrections facility (71%).



# Background Continued

- Nearly half of homeless youth have been physically or sexually mistreated (46%).
- There are racial disparities in the homeless youth population-44% of homeless youth are African American compared to 11% of the general youth population and 32% are Native American compared to 2% of the general youth population.
- One in six homeless youth have a child of their own.

\*All statistics are from the 2006 Wilder Survey\*



# Homeless Youth Rights

- Youth under the age of 18 can rent their own apartments-there is no law against it but some landlords won't rent to teenagers due to lack of credit or rental history. Some require that an adult sign the lease to pay rent if the youth cannot.
- Youth have the right to go to school in the district they live in.
- If a youth is homeless then the school district (under the McKinney-Vento Act) has to coordinate transportation for the youth.



# Homeless Youth Rights-Continued

- Youth do not need parents' permission for medical care if it involves pregnancy, childbirth, sexually transmitted diseases or drug or alcohol treatment.
- Youth do not need parental consent for medical care if they are living on their own and supporting themselves.
- If it's an emergency youth do not need parental consent for medical care.
- Youth are eligible for Medical Assistance (MA) or Minnesota Care through their local county.



# Rights of Teen Parents

- Even if a teen mother lives at home the baby is hers-not her parents.
- If the parents of the baby are not married at the time the mother gets to decide the name on the birth certificate.
- Every woman with low income can get MA during her pregnancy.



# Rights of Teen Parents-Cont.

- Many school districts have programs for young parents-some have day care centers within the school itself.
- Child support is based on the ability of the father to pay and the needs of the child. If the father is too young, has no income or is in school child support probably won't be ordered.
- If parents aren't married than the mother has custody of the child unless a court decides something different.

# Teen Parents-Cont.

- Every time a girl under the age of 18 has a baby the hospital is required to notify the county within three working days after the birth.
- County social services will then contact the mother (if she doesn't already have a case manager) and help the mother determine a plan for her child and herself-for further information see the handout.

\*Minnesota Statutes, 2005 257.33\*



# Child Protection

- If a child is being abused or neglected contact your local county child protection agency.
- The CPS worker will screen to see if the case could be considered maltreatment.
- If child maltreatment is determined the case will be assigned to Family Assessment Response (formerly Alternative Response) or to a traditional CPS Investigation which may end up in the child being placed outside the home.



# CHIPS Summary

- CHIPS-child protection case filed in juvenile court.
- A child picks this option typically because they don't have a safe living arrangement, want services for parents or wants services and protection for siblings.
- These cases are private and go around the child protection system and straight to a judge.



# Rights of Youth in Out-of-Home Placement

- When a youth enters placement they must be offered services, resources and a case plan within 30 days.
- After a youth turns 16 county social services are required by law to create an Independent Living Plan.
- A child in foster care at age 16 is entitled to social services and access to financial assistance to help the child develop Independent Living Skills.



# Out-of-Home Placement-Cont.

- A youth can request to stay in foster care until age 19 if they have not completed high school or is in the child's best interest to do so.
- Recent legislation amendments also requires that a court review take place as the child prepares to leave foster care. (MN. Statutes, 260C.212, 2008)



# Court Review

- Child has been given notice about their right to continue care past the age of 18 and the right to appeal a denial of social services;
- Child has obtained a High School Diploma or GED;
- Child has completed a driver's education course or demonstrated the ability to use public transportation;



# Court Review Continued...

- Child is employed or enrolled in postsecondary education;
- Child has applied for and obtained postsecondary education financial aid;
- Child has health care coverage and providers;
- Child has applied for and obtained (if eligible) for disability income assistance;
- Child has obtained affordable housing which does not include a homeless shelter;



# Court Review Continued...

- The child has saved sufficient funds to pay for the first month's rent and damage deposit;
- The child has an alternative affordable housing plan (which does not include a homeless shelter);
- The child, if male, has registered for the Selective Service;



# Court Review Continued...

- The child has a permanent connection to a caring adult;
- The child has obtained the following documents: Social Security Card, Birth Certificate, State ID or Driver's License, Green Card or School Visa, Child's School & Medical/Dental Records, contact list for all health care providers and contact information for the child's siblings if they are also in foster care



# Rights of State Wards after they “Age Out”:

- Youth who are non-state wards can also receive benefits up to age 21 if they were in care up until age 18, are in foster care at the time of the request and they are incapable of self-sustaining employment or in need of continuing education.
- All youth in out-of-home placement are supposed to be informed of their rights and access to benefits 6 months before turning 18.



# SELF Funds

- Some counties or non-profits receive Federal Funding called SELF which provides Independent Living Skills services and other necessities for youth who are aging out of foster care.



# Tuition Programs

- ETV-Educational Training Vouchers are scholarship funds available to youth who have been in foster care. They can go to any accredited post secondary institution and are up to \$5,000 per year. For more information please see the brochure or [www.dhs.state.mn.us](http://www.dhs.state.mn.us).
- Youth who are state wards can have tuition waived if they are under the age of 21 and are going to school at a Minnesota state college or University.



# What is going on to help these youth?

- Citizen Review Panels
- National Governor's Association Initiative
- Federal Youth Vision Team
- Healthy Transition to Adulthood & Homeless Prevention Program
- Youth Moving Forward: Runaway & Homeless Youth Act
- Local County Plans to End Homelessness



# Thank you!

- Thank you for your dedication to youth in your community!
- If you have questions please contact me at [beth.holger@state.mn.us](mailto:beth.holger@state.mn.us) or 651-431-3823.