

## **Youth Needs Survey 2008 Summary**

The River Valleys Continuum of Care (CoC) and the Family Homeless Prevention and Assistance Programs (FHPAP) in Regions 9 and 10 of Southeast Minnesota conducted a Youth Services Provider Survey and a Youth Needs Survey in Spring, 2008 for the purposes of determining the services available to youth ages 10-21 and the services that they use and the needs that both the youth and the providers have for these services.

The data committee of the CoC and additional individuals representing providers of youth services developed the surveys. The committee sent the youth provider surveys first with a request for them to participate in implementing the youth survey. When they returned their survey, they requested the number of youth surveys that they would distribute. The providers then gave the surveys to the youth in their programs and the youth returned them to the data committee anonymously in a self-addressed stamped envelope. The committee sent 372 provider letters and surveys out. It received back 52 provider surveys. Of those 52 providers, 29 requested youth surveys. The committee sent 392 youth surveys to providers to distribute. The committee received back 103 youth surveys.

Youth returning surveys represented 12 counties with an additional ten (10) giving no answer and one (1) indicating "homeless." Youth were from ages 10-21. They were asked to respond to what services they use and what services they need. One Hundred (100) were in some type of education or job training program. Ten (10) were using Transitional Housing services and nine (9) were using shelter and three (3) were in foster care. Six (6) were using domestic violence services. Sixty-eight (68) indicated that they used health services including mental health, chemical dependency, medical, dental, and sexual health services. Ninety-two (92) indicated that they use some type of financial assistance services including WIC, Free/reduced school meals, county cash assistance programs, food support, and Social Security. Sixty-four (64) indicated that they use some type of activity programs including mentors, youth outreach, after school activities, and church functions. Thirty-two (32) use transportation services and/or driver's training. Thirty-eight (38) use some other type of service including probation, child care, and assistance obtaining documents.

Youth expressed needing the following services: 40 education/job training, 22 health/mental health, 28 financial assistance services, nine (9) housing services, 39 activity programs, 25 transportation services, and nine (9) other. There were also other services that were not on the survey that were listed as needs. Those include but are not limited to: child support, college financial aid, legal services, utility assistance, housing, assistance in becoming a citizen, home furnishings, baby supplies, activities, transportation, computer access, a Big Sister, school help. They were also asked "What

stops you from getting the services you need?" The largest responses were: lack of transportation, cost/no money, and don't know what's available. They were also given space to make comments about services. Please see the survey results for comments made.

Additionally, youth were asked specifically about their housing situation and if they have been homeless before and if they are concerned about having a place to call home? According to the survey results, five (5) youth are living in a place not meant for human habitation and 15 are living either permanently or temporarily with relatives/friends. Four (4) youth expressed concern about having a place to call home. Twelve (12) expressed that they have been homeless before – several for multiple and/or extended periods of time.

Please see the attached Youth Needs Survey 2008 for further details of the results and youth comments. It is clear that there are homeless and at risk for homeless youth in the River Valleys CoC and that there are youth in need of other types of services. The River Valleys CoC makes this survey and the provider survey available to Youth Services Providers on the River Valleys CoC website at [www.threeriverscap.org](http://www.threeriverscap.org). Providers are free to download the survey results for use in planning and development

Thank you to all those who participated!