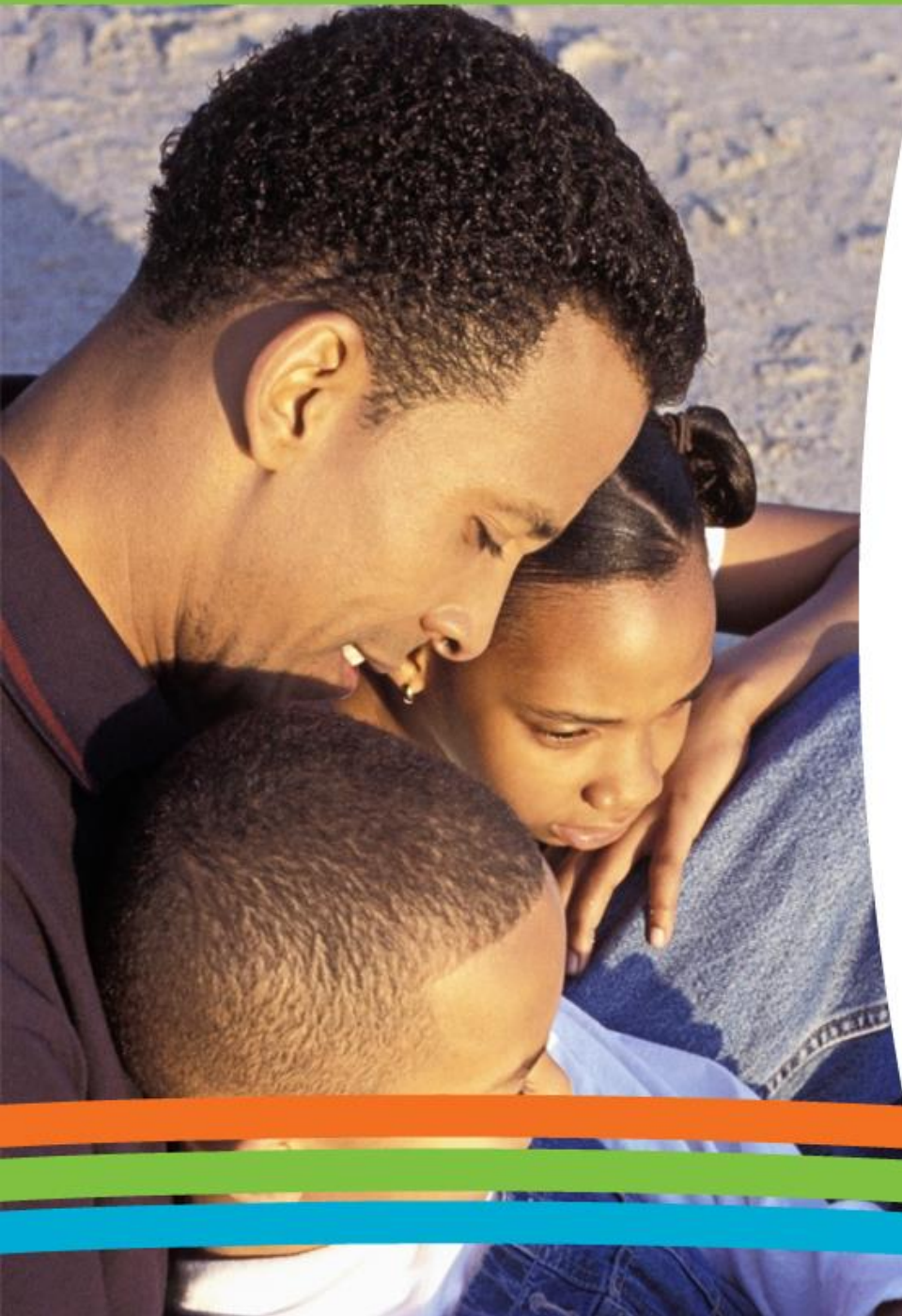




*Surviving the  
Streets: Challenges  
and Opportunities  
Addressing Youth  
Homelessness*

*Norweeta G. Milburn, Ph.D.*



# *Affiliations & Support*

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Semel Institute for Neuroscience and Human Behavior  
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Presentation at the *Los Angeles County Commission on HIV Planning Meeting*, Los Angeles, CA, April 14, 2016.

# *Overview*

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Prevalence of youth homelessness

Prevalence of HIV among homeless youth

Interventions for homeless youth

# *Prevalence of Homeless Youth in Los Angeles County*

## **HUD 2013 Point in Time Estimates**

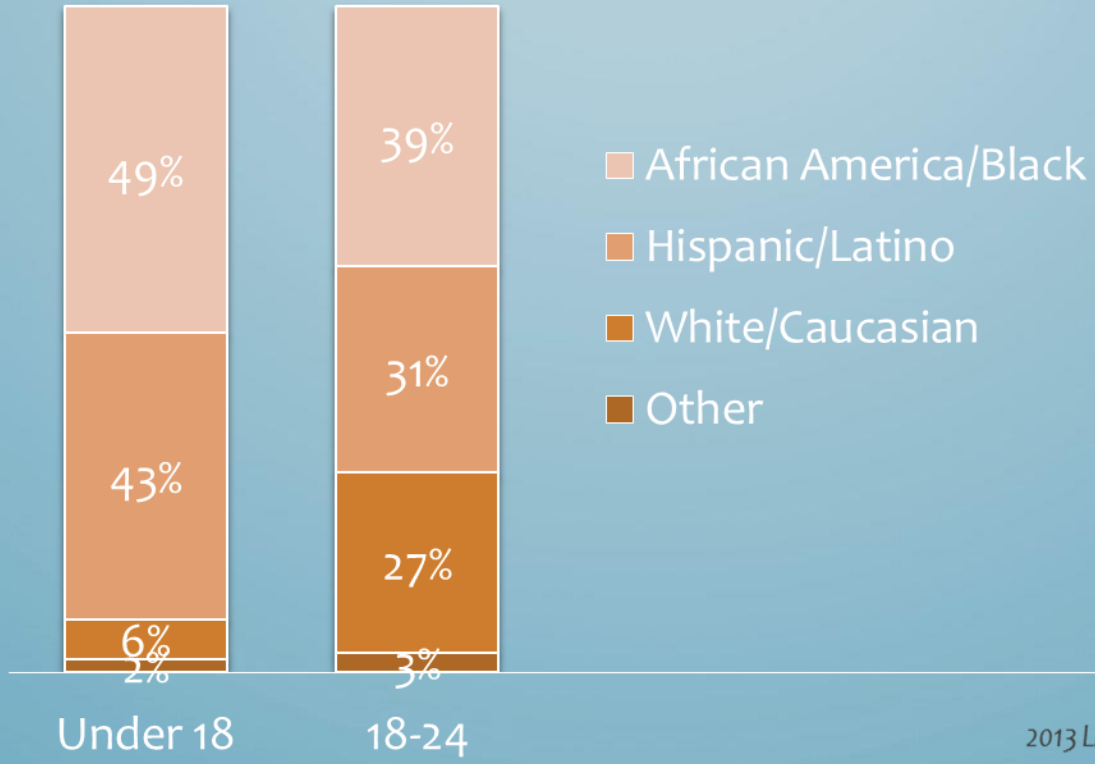
> 58,000 people homeless on a given night

**4,863 homeless youth, ages 13 to 24 years**

**22%** of public high school students (Rice et al., 2013)

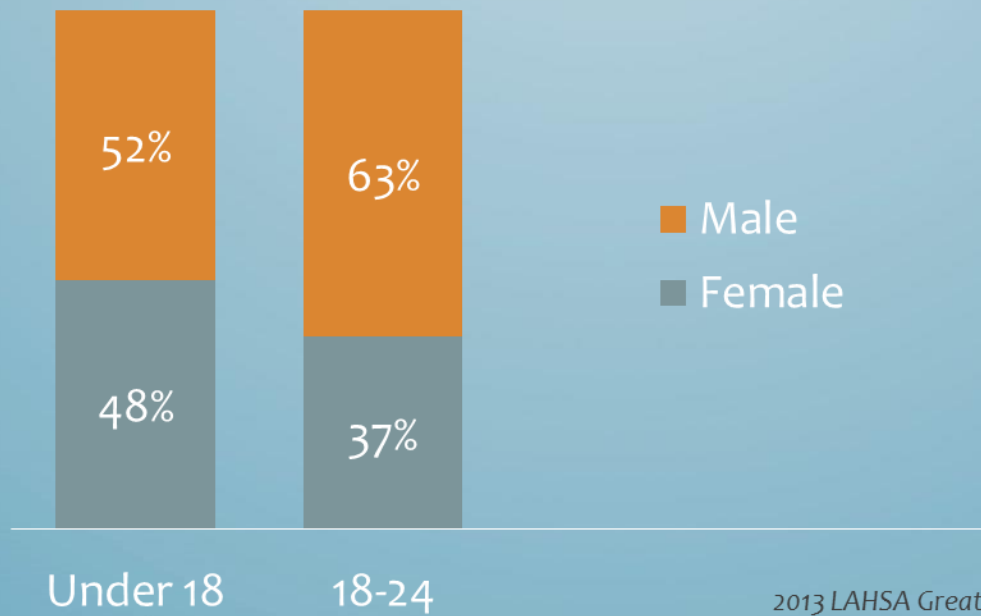


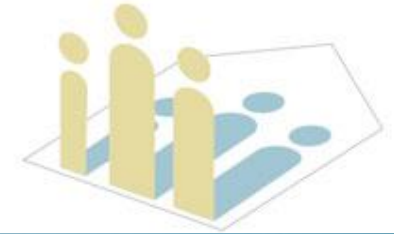
## Race/Ethnicity By Age





## Gender and Age





## SNAPSHOT OF HEALTH, HOMELESSNESS AND DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

- **38% Substance Abuse**
- **25% Mental illness**
- **8% Have a physical disability**
- **11% Are chronically homeless**
- **13% are survivors of domestic violence**
- **13% LGBT**





**SOME OF THE CIRCUMSTANCES THAT CONTRIBUTE  
TO YOUTH HOMELESSNESS**

- ❖ **Family Problems**
- ❖ **Emancipation from the foster care and other public systems of care**
- ❖ **Economic problems**
- ❖ **Family homelessness**





## HOMELESS YOUTH PREVALENCE RATES PER SPA

	LA CoC Overall	SPA 1 Antelope Valley	SPA 2 San Fernando Valley	SPA 3 San Gabriel Valley	<b>SPA 4</b> <b>Metro</b>	SPA 5 West LA	<b>SPA 6</b> <b>South LA</b>	SPA 7 East LA	SPA 8 South Bay
Children Under 18 in Families	3,925	331	578	284	<b>862</b>	362	<b>839</b>	386	283
Unaccompanied Youth Under 18	498	37	56	41	<b>142</b>	9	<b>159</b>	21	33
Transition Age Youth 18-24	5,643	791	407	264	<b>2,061</b>	617	<b>917</b>	393	193
Total Number of Homeless Youth	10,066	1,159	1,041	548	<b>3,065</b>	988	<b>1,915</b>	800	509



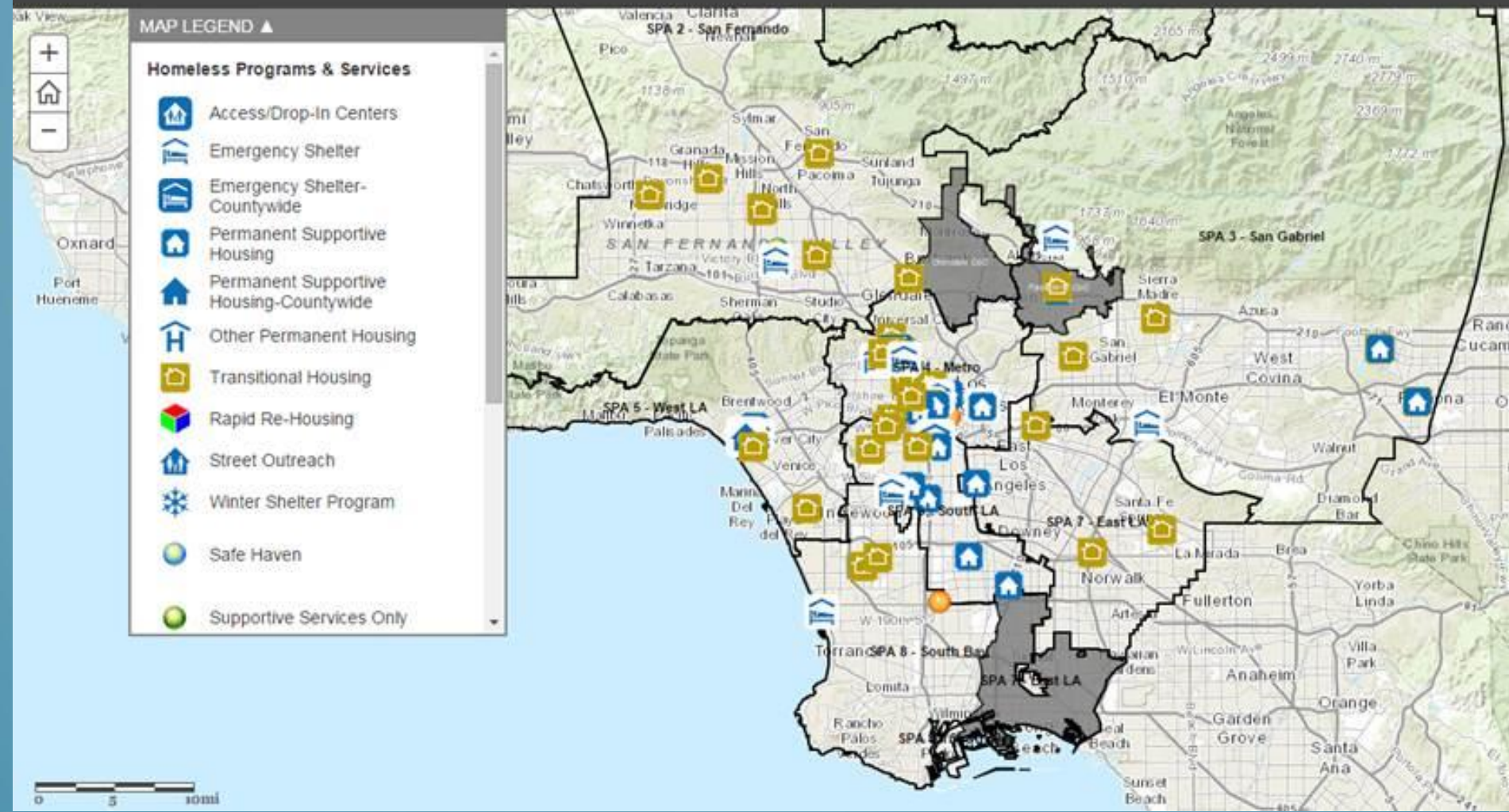
# Los Angeles HOMELESS SERVICES AUTHORITY

Working Together to End Homelessness in Los Angeles



## Los Angeles Continuum of Care

Homeless Program & Services for Youth





## Los Angeles County Housing Inventory

### Housing Inventory Snapshot

Shelter Beds	189
Transitional Housing	820
Supportive Housing	198
<b>Total Beds</b>	<b>1,207</b>

### Total Number of Homeless Youth

	LA CoC Overall
Youth Under 18 in Families	3,850
Unaccompanied Youth Under 18	817
<b>Total Youth Under 18</b>	<b>4,667</b>
Transition Age Youth 18-24	5,373
<b>Total Youth 24 and Under</b>	<b>10,404</b>

# *Prevalence of HIV among Homeless Youth*

Rates vary due to differences in the designs of studies that collect prevalence data.

Biological testing vs self-report

5.3% (Biological testing) (Noell et al., 2001)

11.5% (Biological testing) (Pfeifer et al., 1997)

.3% (Biological samples) (Noell et al. 2001)

2.3% (Self report) (Allen et al., 1994)

2.9% (Rapid biological testing) (Logan et al., 2013)

# *HIV Testing among Homeless Youth in Los Angeles County*

85% Lifetime

47% Last 90 days

(Ober et al., 2012)

# *Homeless Youth and HIV Testing*

## **LEAST LIKELY**

13 to 24 years (all youth)

Sleeping “rough” or on the streets

## **MORE LIKELY**

Inject drugs

STI history

Amphetamines

Sexually active > 5 years

Female

Pregnancy history

Sexual minority

Older

Racial/ethnic minority

# *Substance Use and HIV Risk among Homeless Youth*

Past 30 days

68% alcohol

66% marijuana

39% hard drugs (e.g., cocaine, methamphetamine, heroin, etc.)

(Wenzel et al., 2010)

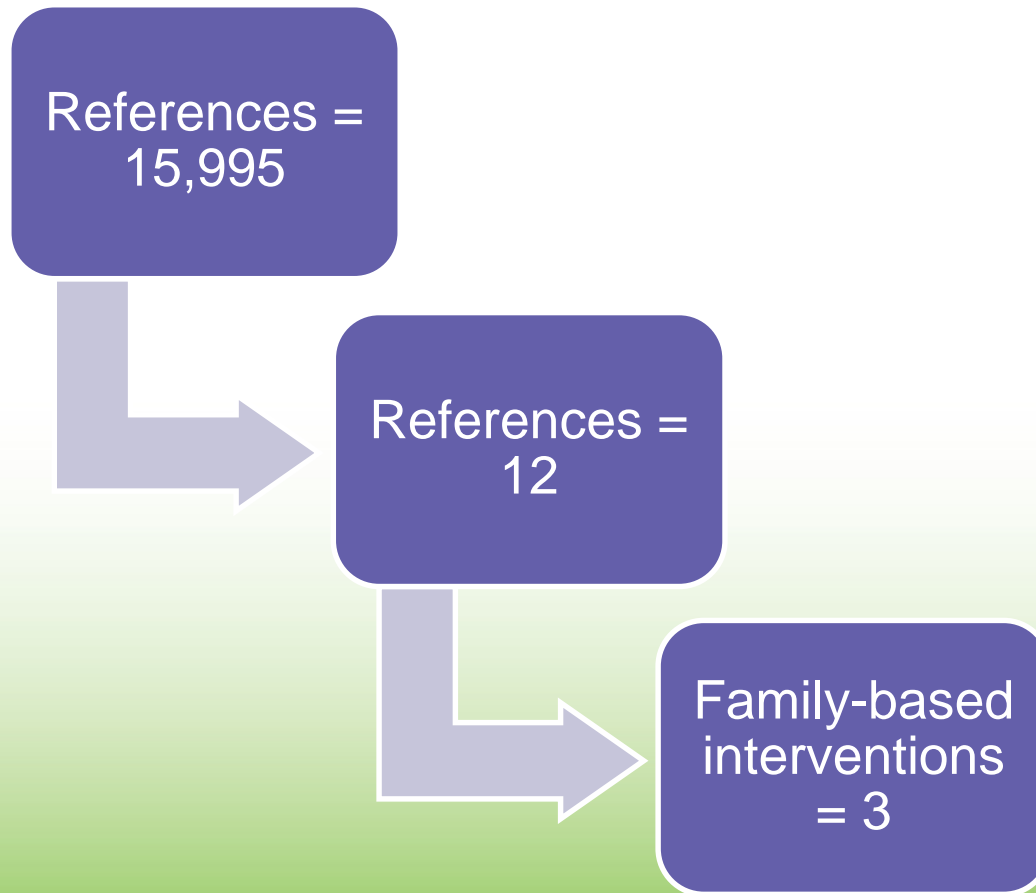
**“It might be said that family conflict causes youth homelessness”**

(Mallett et al., 2009)



# *Research on Interventions for Homeless Youth (Coren et al., 2013)*

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# *Family-Based Interventions for Homeless Youth*

<b>Study</b>	<b>Intervention</b>	<b>Population*</b>	<b>Measured Outcomes</b>
Slesnick et al. (2005, 2009)	Ecologically-based family therapy (EBFT)  15 – 16 sessions (50 minutes)	Alcohol abusing and substance abusing runaways, ages 12 – 17 years	Reduced substance use, Improved psychological and family functioning
Slesnick et al. (2009)	Functional family therapy (FFT)  16 sessions (50 minutes)	Alcohol abusing runaways, ages 12 – 17 years	Reduced substance use Improved psychological and family functioning
Milburn et al. (2012)	Behavioral family intervention (STRIVE)  5 sessions (60 – 90 minutes)	Newly homeless youth, ages 12 – 17 years	Safer sexual activity Reduced substance use Reduced delinquent behaviors

“Whilst addressing that the adverse impact of street life for young people is important for achieving good outcomes for this population, **there is a significant need for research to focus on these family contexts and early prevention strategies that aim to re-engage young people with their families**, as identified by Milburn 2012 and in Slesnick 2005: “**Because research suggests that family disturbance is highly correlated to the act of running away** (Finkelhor 1990, Kufeldt 1992) family therapy is identified as the most important first treatment to evaluate with this population” (p 3) (Coren et al., 2013).

# Resources

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Coren, E. et al. (2013). Interventions for promoting reintegration and reducing harmful behaviour and lifestyles in street-connected children and young people: A systematic review. *Campbell Systematic Reviews* 2013:6. DOI:10.4073/csr.2013.6.

Naranbhai, V. et al. (2011). Interventions to modify sexual risk behaviours for preventing HIV in homeless youth. *Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews* 2011, Issue 1, Art. No.: CD007501. DOI: 10.1002/14651858. CD007501.pub2.

Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs [Literature Review: Effective interventions for working with young people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness].



*Thank You*