



The Intersections Between Youth Experiencing Homelessness, Youth Supports and Employment

The National Youth Employment Coalition, Inc.

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Presented to The National Youth Employment Coalition, Inc.

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About the National Youth Employment Coalition

For more than 40 years, the National Youth Employment Coalition (NYEC) has worked toward an America in which all young people are supported and prepared to become thriving members of our economy and society, regardless of their race, gender, ability, geography, or means. Annually, we reach hundreds of organizations that work with hundreds of thousands of young people across the country. These community-based organizations, state agencies, and local government organizations focus on empowering young people to transition to postsecondary education and employment. Since its inception, NYEC has strengthened hundreds of youth-serving organizations and influenced dozens of pieces of federal legislation related to disadvantaged youth. Learn more at www.nyec.org.

Acknowledgments

In developing this literature review, we utilized a comprehensive search of relevant academic databases to provide important insights into current, practice-level approaches to employment and training programs for youth experiencing homelessness. The available literature was reviewed to gain insights into the existing research and identify key themes. This literature review was supported by the Liberty Mutual Foundation. The findings and conclusions presented in this report are those of NYEC.




Executive Summary

Youth experiencing homelessness is a pressing concern in the United States, affecting an estimated 4-12% of individuals aged 13-25 (Morton et al., 2018). Vulnerable populations, such as LGBTQIA+ identified, Black and Latinx youth, are disproportionately impacted. To combat youth homelessness effectively, it is essential to adopt a comprehensive, strengths-based approach that acknowledges the multifaceted nature of this social issue.

The 2022 Federal Strategic Plan to End Homelessness recognizes the role of systemic discrimination in housing and employment policies, emphasizing the need to address root causes. Youth experiencing homelessness often face significant challenges in accessing stable employment, including limited transportation, disrupted education and work experience, lack of affordable childcare, and health and well-being supports.

Employment and training programs can play a crucial role in addressing the unique needs of youth experiencing homelessness. These programs must be tailored to the individual, considering their diverse backgrounds and circumstances. Research indicates that a uniform or homogeneous approach is ineffective (National Network for Youth, 2015).

Social networks and support systems also play a significant role in youth experiencing homelessness access to employment services (Barman-Adhikari & Rice, 2008; Huffman et. al., 2021). Strong relationships within their immediate social network positively influence their utilization of employment services. Several organizations across the country provide characteristic models of employment and training programs for youth experiencing homelessness. These governmental and nonprofit entities illustrate differences in approach based on their specific orientation to the engagement of youth experiencing homelessness. All of the example organizations prioritize housing stability, income generation, and youth empowerment in different ways, highlighting the variability present in the field. Some, such as A Place 4 Me, critically demonstrate the importance of centering youth voices in program development and decision-making processes.



The Affordable Housing Alliance of Central Ohio is also known for their ability to walk alongside young people under their Resiliency Bridge umbrella and provide them with customized and autonomous action plans based on the voice of the youth. These two examples demonstrate success in centering youth voice in both a programmatic setting and under a broader alliance of partnered organizations.

This literature review highlights the need for ongoing support services alongside employment and training programs. Isolation from supportive social networks leaves youth experiencing homelessness without access to assistance developing marketable job skills and accessing resources that enhance their employability and long-term stability.

Employment and training programs offer diverse avenues for improving the marketable skills and income generation of youth experiencing homelessness. This review includes examples of faith-based, governmental, and non-profit approaches for consideration. Tailoring these programs to individual needs, recognizing the importance of social networks, and providing ongoing support are crucial components of addressing homelessness effectively. It is imperative that stakeholders, policymakers, and service providers prioritize these strategies to empower youth on their journey toward housing stability and independence.

There is a wide range of audience who may find gold nuggets in this review, even if you are a seasoned professional. Direct service professionals may identify strategies that they can mix and match from some of the strongest initiatives in the country. Employers too, may find that in these words they may gain an understanding of the small accommodation that they can make that will result in excellent employees.



Understanding Youth Experiencing Homelessness

Youth experiencing homelessness is an urgent concern that necessitates attention and action. In the United States, the prevalence of youth experiencing homelessness in households have been estimated at approximately 4-12% among individuals aged 13-25 (Morton et al., 2018a). The development of youth and emerging adults is characterized by rapid changes, while experiences of homelessness exhibit remarkable diversity and intersectionality across different individuals. This diversity often corresponds with sociodemographic factors, such as parenting situations, LGBTQIA+ identity, and race/ethnicity, where Black and Latinx youths are more vulnerable to experiencing homelessness compared to their peers (Morton et al., 2018a).

The role of endemic racism at the macro, mezzo and micro levels within the United States homeless service system should be carefully considered and directly remediated. The 2022 Federal Strategic Plan to End Homelessness developed by the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) identifies employment as a critical component to preventing the experience of homelessness broadly. The Plan recognizes the role of systemic discrimination in housing and employment policies as well as in hiring practices, that disproportionately impact Black and indigenous people of color in the U.S.

Youth experiencing homelessness is not simply the outcome of a single event but rather a multifaceted process (Piat et al., 2015). This could include any mix of elevated risk factors, such as sexual orientation- LGBTQ+, especially sensitive in the youth population. Other factors entering into a multifaceted process are aging out of foster care, justice involvement, and the difficulty securing employment without an address. As such, it is critical to address the underlying causes rather than focusing solely on isolated incidents in the youth experience (Hoy et al., 2016). The vulnerability of youth and young adults coupled with increased probability of experiencing homelessness over their lifespan necessitates urgent attention and proactive measures to support youth exiting homelessness expediently (Parpouchi et al., 2021).



The Importance of Networks and Youth Voice

There is limited knowledge regarding the factors that lead youth experiencing homelessness to utilize employment services, whether they are private, or through a public career or workforce center. Previous studies focusing on service utilization have predominantly focused on individual factors, neglecting the importance of social contexts and interactions. However, research has shown that characteristics of an individual's social network can significantly influence their decision to seek out these services. A 2008 study conducted by Barman-Adhikari and Rice examined social network characteristics of a sample of 136 youth experiencing homelessness from a drop-in agency in Los Angeles, California to better understand the impact on engagement with employment services. Findings indicate that social capital plays a more significant role than network structure and influence in explaining why these youth utilize employment services. Specifically, both bonding and bridging social capital showed variable effects on employment service utilization within this population. Bonding capital, which refers to close ties within one's immediate social network, has positively influenced the ability to 'get by'. Bridging networks, referring to connections with individuals from different social groups, have been found to support 'getting ahead' and being important for economic advancement (Anderson et al., 2019; Putnam, 2022). It is critical to expand social networks of youth and young adults as this can serve as a conduit to combating inequitable access to resources and opportunities (Fields, 2017).

The Voices of Youth Count study found the correlation between unemployment and homelessness among youth was not significant when income was considered (Morton et al, 2018b). This led researchers to suggest that mere employment alone does not necessarily result in a decrease in youth homeless experience. Rather, they hypothesize that factors such as the quality of work, income level derived from gainful employment, and potentially other forms of support like education, play more crucial roles in alleviating homelessness among young individuals (Morton et al, 2017). Importantly, this study did not differentiate between system-involved youth and their peers. As noted in the National Conference of State Legislatures Youth Homelessness Overview (2023), connection with employment and job training are critical components of youth readiness to exit the foster care and juvenile justice systems. Considering emerging hypotheses of exogenous factors such as social capital and networks of influence in linking youth with employment and supports that successfully move them out of homelessness, system-involved youth may require additional support.

Largely missing from extant literature are current, relevant youth perspectives. While youth experiencing homelessness can be difficult to locate, identify, and engage, it is critical that researchers, policy makers and communities prioritize learning from and amplifying youth perspectives. Programs and research that align youth voice with desired outcomes and implementation strategies may show improved efficacy. Additionally, it is critical that programs that conduct pilots and test new approaches, share their work widely for learning and developing improved approaches over time. Learning communities and collaborative practice networks should be leveraged to provide space and support for doing so.

The 2015 policy brief by the National Network for Youth proposed a systems-based, youth centric approach to coordinating services for youth experiencing homelessness. They capitalized on the need for socially relational, targeted employment services, suggesting that programs can have significant positive impacts on youth experiencing homelessness by providing them with the necessary skills, knowledge, and resources to secure and maintain stable employment (National Network for Youth, 2015). This type of approach could center youth voice throughout service coordination by deliberate inclusion of youth in planning, designing, and implementing programs created to mitigate youth homeless experience. Formalizing participation in a board structure allows youth to receive compensation for their time and efforts while contributing to their work history and skills. Taking a systems-based approach requires interagency collaboration that exceeds participation on committees or planning groups. These types of approaches may embed staff in a collaborative program with shared administrative oversight that includes a youth advisory board and collective funding.

It's critical for organizations to always work to identify the root causes of homelessness, continuously asking why, how and who. This critical analysis and the related response cannot happen without youth voice, growing networks and youth efficacy.

A recent NYEC Community of Practice of 12 strong evidence-based programs confirm the results of the study noted. The strategies and promising practices implemented at strong organizations throughout the country are showing success. Notable findings are:

- ♦ Any delay in the provision of resources to youth experiencing homelessness means their success is delayed.
- ♦ None of these strong programs work in a vacuum. As noted earlier, collaborations where one organization may provide transport and another hold events, brings the links closer to a community wholistically serving this population.
- ♦ Rigorous partner screenings and a level of quality hand-offs also contribute to this comprehensive community approach and can help determine success or failure.
- ♦ Data collection and shared referral platforms are a bar for communities to reach.
- ♦ Youth voice, noted above and throughout this literature review, is a best practice for many reasons but on a basic level, often the best source of where to find youth experiencing homelessness are through the ones you are giving voice to.
- ♦ Youth voice includes a trust relationship. Take the time to learn what the youth really want to do in terms of employment, rather than the first training and job that comes along, is important.



Supports for Youth Experiencing Homelessness

There are several federal, state and local initiatives established to support youth and young adults experiencing homelessness. As with any complex issue deeply impacted by systems, policies, and funding, there are gaps in current approaches to mitigate youth homelessness. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) is the primary federally funded approach to connect youth experiencing homelessness to employment. WIOA-funded programming has specific guidelines, including funding allocations based on the percentage of youth who are in versus out of school and how youth document eligibility for services (Congressional Budget Justification Employment and Training Administration, 2023). While the Department of Labor allows youth to self-attest to most eligibility criteria, these require documentation and support for a process that is not intuitive for many youth and young adults. Importantly, 75% of WIOA funding is allocated to youth who are out of school, leaving limited resources available for youth who are currently connected with the educational system (Department of Labor, 2023). This administrative focus has been criticized as prioritizing youth services when they are already disconnected from other systems designed to support their development (California Opportunity Youth Network, 2020). To support a broader population, California Opportunity Youth Network (COYN) helped see the passage of a federal waiver that would allow 50% of youth to be out of school and 50% of youth be in-school. However, of the 50% identified in-school youth, 25% must be system-involved, homeless, foster or youth on probation (California Opportunity Youth Network, 2020). This forces youth to choose between competing but equally important needs: accessing direct employment and training or connecting with urgent need-based income and nutritional supports.

To effectively combat homelessness among young people, it is imperative for social programs to extend their support proactively and to consider the heterogeneity of youth experiences in programming itself. It should be recognized that homelessness among young people requires more comprehensive approaches instead of quick fixes or one-size-fits-all solutions. Youth experiencing homelessness face societal barriers and undergo specific challenges throughout the journey yet come with many assets and examples of resilience. Service providers should acknowledge and address system level barriers while developing strength-based programming towards positive outcomes. Such initiatives have significant clinical implications as they contribute to program development and effective service provision specifically tailored toward meeting the basic needs of shelter, food security, and healthcare accessibility for youth experiencing homelessness.

Moreover, it is crucial for programs designed for youth experiencing homelessness to address the specific behaviors and life circumstances that result from homelessness (Forstadt et al., 2020). Of critical importance, youth resilience and creative problem-solving skills are developed as part of their navigation within the experience of homelessness itself. Service providers can build rapport and support ongoing engagement with youth by acknowledging and leveraging these strengths.

Huffman and colleagues (2021) found young adults experiencing homelessness face significant challenges in accessing traditional employment. Structural, institutional, and social factors create a web of barriers that hinder the ability of homeless young adults to obtain stable employment. These obstacles encompass various challenges such as domestic constraints, bureaucratic hurdles, limited social support networks, and health-related issues. However difficult these circumstances may be, homeless young adults exhibit resilience by employing different strategies to navigate their lives and pursue work opportunities. These included utilizing effective communication techniques deliberately, leveraging resources provided by nonprofit organizations, redefining purpose, or goals in order to find meaning in their actions, maintaining motivation despite setbacks encountered along the way, and exploring entrepreneurial prospects (Huffman et al., 2021). Examples of these strategies include learning the names of staff and management at a potential employer, exuding confidence early and often, using addresses of supportive nonprofits on job applications instead of shelters, using nonprofit resources in a “stitched together” way to meet their needs, cognitively connecting their current work to where they desire to be professionally (e.g. a job at a pet store leading to veterinary training), and comparing themselves to peers in a healthy way to remain motivated (Huffman et al., 2021). Employment and training programs must leverage the creative, determined approaches youth develop during their experience of homelessness to their employment. Therefore, it is essential for employment and training programs to take a strengths-based approach that recognizes the resilience and problem-solving skills gained by youth experiencing homelessness.



Understanding Employment and Training Programs for Youth Experiencing Homelessness

A 2020 study identified that while there are multiple overlapping components to understanding the realities of youth experiencing homelessness, employment is a key factor in addressing their needs and long-term outcomes (Axe et al. 2020). This longitudinal study examined one program initiative to comprehend its short- and long-term effects, future needs for sustainability and expansion, as well as alignment with local and regional demands. Qualitative data was gathered by conducting a series of focus groups. Data revealed five overarching themes: participants' background circumstances; strategies employed to foster accountability; factors contributing to success; obstacles encountered along the way; and suggestions offered by participants for enhancing program effectiveness. These themes emphasize that ensuring stable employment and preparation is an essential element within a comprehensive framework aimed at assisting young individuals in developing resilience while countering homelessness and its associated challenges (Axe et al. 2020).

Several studies have examined the effectiveness of employment and job training programs for youth experiencing homelessness. Lenz-Rashid (2006) found that 60% of youth who completed an employment training program offered in a homeless shelter were able to obtain employment within three months, regardless of sociodemographic and former-foster care disparities within the study groups. Another study examined the impact of a strengths-based intervention on youth experiencing homelessness's employment outcomes, highlighting the critical role of resilience and relationship for this population (Krabbenborg et al., 2017). Engaging youth in employment and training programs that are attentive to their unique needs while highlighting their resilience shows promise.

Despite its effectiveness, youth experiencing homelessness often have limited access to stable employment and job training programs. Barriers can include a lack of education and job skills, limited work experience, and stigma associated with homelessness increasing social distance from peers and social support (Bakken, 2023; Slesnick et al., 2018).

Furthermore, youth experiencing homelessness frequently face additional adverse traumatic experiences that contribute to mental health conditions such as depression, anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder (Liu, et al., 2021; Iwundu et al., 2020). There have also been studies of adults experiencing homelessness and any correlations to their housing and adverse experiences as youth. A retrospective study of adults experiencing homelessness found that roughly 30% of the sample reported experiencing homelessness as a youth (Iwundu et al., 2020). This study further found statistically significant increased odds of youth homelessness experience associated with a range of mental illness indicators (Iwundu et al., 2020). The prevalence of mental health conditions among youth with housing instability and homelessness has been found to statistically exceed that of their peers with housing stability, with higher housing instability associated with worsened mental health outcomes (Gewirtz O'Brien et al., 2020). Moreover, homelessness can be the result of traumatic experiences such as physical or sexual abuse, which can further exacerbate mental health issues and hinder employment prospects (MacDonald, 2013). Experiencing homelessness in childhood is itself a traumatic experience due to exposure and victimization during the homeless episode (Liu et al., 2021). To address the employment and job training needs of youth experiencing homelessness, it is crucial to implement effective programs and strategies.



It is important to recall the need to resist a homogeneous approach to employment and training programs for youth experiencing homelessness. This is particularly true considering within-group differences. Studies of housing differences within the population found that youth living on the streets sought employment services less frequently compared to those in temporary housing arrangements, such as shelters (Barman-Adhikari & Rice, 2014). However, despite the availability of employment services and training programs for youth experiencing homelessness, studies show that they are less likely to be employed and even less likely to utilize these services compared to their housed counterparts. These findings suggest there is a need for more targeted and accessible employment and job training programs tailored to the unique needs and challenges faced by youth experiencing homelessness. The literature emphasizes the importance of providing youth experiencing homelessness with opportunities to expand potential entrepreneurial and survival skills with additional marketable job skills valued by employers.



Examples from Around the Country

Employment and training programs can be organized by the size and scope of programming. For the purposes of conciseness, example organizations will be presented by national organizations and local programs. It is important to note that employment and job training programs are frequently embedded in much larger initiatives related to the stability of youth experiencing homelessness. For this reason, funding sources and goals of programming vary dramatically. Some workforce programs seek only to find youth jobs, reflecting the incorrect belief that employment alone, leads to housing stability. Other programs view employment as desirable but secondary or concurrently prioritized with health care support and crisis stabilization. We have highlighted a few organizations from around the country that prioritize housing stability and employment advancement. Their programming exemplifies the diversity of approaches taken and may be viewed as evidence of efficacy across organizational and governmental structures.

Affordable Housing Alliance of Central Ohio. Their Resiliency Bridge initiative, coordinates but does not operate programs for those experiencing homelessness within the city. The program provides data analysis, technical assistance and education with links to housing and employment.

A Place 4 Me (Cleveland, Ohio) began in 2014 as a collective impact initiative by community-based organizations dedicated to ending youth homelessness experiences. Funded as one of many national sites, the initiative quickly became an exemplar of youth-led advocacy. The initiative led to the opening of a transitional living space for youth and young adults aged 14-26, with specific focus on youth with child welfare involvement. A Place 4 Me has a robust, well-organized, and model youth action board, where trained advocates are present and compensated for their expertise across multiple projects related to youth experiencing homelessness. The initiative has led with their focus on “nothing about me without me”, which centers youth voice and experience at every level of decision making and programming. A central tenet of their work is income generation and the ability for youth and young adults to be valued for their time and experiences. Through direct training for the youth action board and related activities, as well as support for implementation of programming designed and led by youth themselves, A Place 4 Me is a model for other communities in how to keep youth centered in work related to their experiences.

Breaktime (Boston, Massachusetts) is a nonprofit focused on supporting transitional employment for youth experiencing homelessness. Breaktime is a young organization, founded in 2018, that has aimed to disrupt the experience of young adult homelessness through employment and state-level policy change. The organization managed a café and catering businesses prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. During and following the pandemic, they pivoted to the current transitional employment model that partners with local nonprofits and small businesses to provide training and employment to youth experiencing homelessness. The organization continues to operate with social entrepreneurship, creating jobs that allow youth to engage directly with their community serving meals to others experiencing food insecurity. This unique blend of employment and income generation coupled with focus on connecting youth with the immediate world around them demonstrates an understanding of the developmental tasks critical to youth and young adult development.

Covenant House (U.S., Canada, Central America) is a large, international, privately funded nonprofit organization. It offers immediate, 24/7 intervention to young individuals experiencing homelessness or those who have survived trafficking. While Covenant House works to respond to youth crises, many of its programs are designed to offer long-term stabilization and support as the needs of youth develop within their programming. In 2022, seven Covenant House sites conducted an employment and training pilot targeting the information technology sector. The pilot was focused primarily on providing youth with “meaningful employment with a living wage and a career ladder”. Partnership with private information technology companies allowed for testing of employment programs that provide “growth potential, are automation resilient, pay a living wage and don’t require a college degree”. This type of employment and training approach highlights thoughtful attention to the needs of youth experiencing homelessness by considering the immediate and long-term needs of the population.

United Way Global (international) is a U.S.-based organization that leverages partnerships with public and private entities to fund social service programming driven by locally identified needs. In 2017, Canadian-located United Way Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox and Addington developed a youth employment task force to identify specific needs and strategies to support youth experiencing homelessness seeking employment. Primary strategies included mentoring, connection with employers, early intervention, and pre-employment skill-building. In addition to the comprehensive anti-poverty community plan, progress against specific goals identified their impact on youth experiencing homelessness. For example, understanding the credit and banking systems was supported by volunteer-led workshops at local nonprofits engaged with youth experiencing homelessness. Volunteers from banking and financial counseling companies developed and ran the workshops.



WorkSource Atlanta: STEP-Forward Youth Services (Atlanta, Georgia) is embedded within the workforce system for the city of Atlanta. The STEP-Forward program provides employment specific services to youth aged 14-21 who are in school and those aged 16-24 who are out of school. Eligibility is determined by income and demonstrated barriers to completing school or gaining employment independently. Programming is funded through Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) dollars.

Government-run programs like STEP-Forward can be challenging for youth to navigate as they often find bureaucratic requirements overwhelming, hours of services provided inaccessible, and may express fear of government involvement in personal affairs. These types of programs would benefit from targeted outreach to address and remediate youth concerns. Having youth advisory boards and flexible approaches to eligibility and/or documentation can be useful first steps.

YouthCare (Seattle, Washington) YouthCare works to end youth homelessness and to ensure that young people are valued for who they are and empowered to achieve their potential. In the past several years they have invested significant funds in a data system with dedicated entry staff and a commitment to work together with the community to impact youth homelessness and employment. YouthCare believes that ongoing program evaluation is central to providing high quality services and meeting desired impact. Data driven and data informed practice at all levels of the organization to inform growth, refine services and monitor program success.

As youth move into adulthood, they may become eligible for programs specific to homeless adults. The needs of young adults differ greatly from those of older adults and many of these programs do not account for differences in developmental needs and diversity of experience specific to youth. Many of these programs use social enterprise innovation and supported employment models for those experiencing mental illness. Examples of these programs can be found in the attached appendix of resources for reference.



Conclusion: Important Next Steps

Improving employment and training outcomes for youth experiencing homelessness requires dynamic solutions. Programs should offer flexible eligibility criteria and streamlined, accessible services. Targeted outreach efforts can help overcome bureaucratic hurdles and youth concerns about government involvement in their lives.

Centering the voices of youth and young adults is critically important in designing, implementing, and evaluating programming designed for them, which requires youth to be present in these discussions and planning processes. Having youth authentically engaged compels those with power to acknowledge and actively share decision-making responsibilities. This can be accomplished through the establishment of youth advisory/action boards, where individuals are compensated for their time and given voting authority.

Findings from this literature review underscore the importance of understanding the complexity of experience and diversity within the population of youth experiencing homelessness. It is crucial to recognize that youth homelessness is often a result of larger systemic issues, such as discrimination against Black, indigenous and Latinx youth. While some experiences, such as age-related discrimination, may be shared among the population, youth with marginalized identities will invariably face challenges their peers may not. The literature underscores that youth homelessness is not a singular event but rather a multifaceted process influenced by various sociodemographic factors. This complexity demands comprehensive and tailored approaches that address these challenges directly. Programs designed to assist these individuals must recognize the heterogeneity of their experiences and backgrounds, avoiding one-size-fits-all solutions. Examples include recognizing the impact of racism on differential interviewing experiences for Black, indigenous and Latinx youth and developing programming that supports youth in navigating traumatic interactions in the workplace.

While employment is a critical component of improving long-term outcomes for youth experiencing homelessness, extant research shows this relationship is nuanced. The social networks of youth impact how, when, and why youth connect with employment services based on the quality of relationships within the network. The influence of social networks on youth experiencing homelessness's access to employment services cannot be underestimated. Strong relationships within their immediate and extended social circles positively affect their engagement with employment programs. This means it isn't enough for youth to have a friend of a friend who can help them gain employment, they must have a close relationship that facilitates the connection and encourages youth to engage. This underscores the importance of peer support and mentorship programs as valuable components of youth-focused initiatives.

While employment is crucial, the literature suggests that merely securing a job may not lead to a direct decrease in youth experiencing homelessness. The quality of work, income levels, and additional support, such as education, are also important factors. This insight indicates that programs should aim not only to find jobs for youth but also to ensure meaningful employment with a livable wage and a career ladder. Employment and training should be focused on supporting youth while affording them access to career options that are market-insulated. Examples include information technology, allied medical professions, some construction trades, and banking. These fields typically offer entry positions that do not require a college degree but afford advancement over time. They also tend to pay higher wages than service-sector positions (for average wages by sector, see the Bureau of Labor Statistics).

Youth experiencing homelessness exhibit resilience and problem-solving skills developed through their lived experiences. Recognizing and leveraging these strengths can be a powerful tool for service providers in building rapport and supporting ongoing engagement with youth. Examples include leveraging multiple nonprofits support to meet a variety of needs over time (e.g., one nonprofit gives out three bus tickets at a time while another hosts regular events where youth can get job interview clothing for free). Simply including youth in conversations allows them to be seen and an opportunity to share these strategies, which demonstrate resilience and help policymakers better understand their needs. The collaboration of community partners around the singular goal of connecting the dots between youth homelessness and employment can be built here. Resource coordination can build into collective gap identification and together seeking strategies to bridge the gaps. These strategies can lend themselves to the identification of measures to capture the data necessary for increased funding or the implementation of community wide strategies.

Employment and training programs offer promise in addressing youth homelessness experiences by improving job readiness, income generation, and overall financial stability. However, effective solutions require recognizing the diversity of youth experiencing homelessness, addressing systemic racism, and tailoring programs to specific individual needs like access to workplace-appropriate attire, interviewing skills, and conflict management. Due to the relational nature of youth, employers and employment programs should be prepared to meet these needs directly or in close partnership with another organization. The experiences of youth experiencing homelessness are diverse, and solutions must be equally diverse, strengths-based, and inclusive. By combining targeted employment and support services, we can empower youth on their path to stability and growth.

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Appendix 1. Resource Listing

Resource	Authors	URL
A Place 4 Me (Cleveland, Ohio)	A Place 4 Me (Cleveland, Ohio)	https://www.ywcaofcleveland.org/end-homelessness/a-place-4-me/
In search of employment: Tackling youth homelessness and unemployment	Axe, J., Childs, E. & Manion, K. (2020)	https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0190740919308369
Social Networks as the Context for Understanding Employment Services Utilization among Youth experiencing homelessness	Barman-Adhikari, A. and Rice, E.	https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4069330/
Breaktime (Boston)	Breaktime (Boston)	https://www.breaktime.org/impact
Bureau of Labor Statistics	Bureau of Labor Statistics	https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_nat.html
Housing Options for Individuals Experiencing Chronic Homelessness: Subsidized and Non-Subsidized Housing Outcomes among Pathways to Independence Participants	Brown, Molly; Mihelcova, Martina; Collins, Kelly; Cummings, Camilla; Ponce, Allison	https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/01488376.2019.1612822
Evaluation of a Comprehensive SAMHSA Service Program for Individuals Experiencing Chronic Homelessness	Brown, Molly; Rowe, Michael; Cunningham, Alison; Ponce, Allison N.	http://link.springer.com/10.1007/s11414-018-9589-8
Coordinating Employment and Housing Services: A Strategy to Impact Family Homelessness	BuildingChanges.org	https://buildingchanges.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/2016_CoordinatingEmploymentandHousingServices.pdf
Impact of housing and work supports on outcomes for chronically homeless adults with mental illness: LA's HOPE	Burt, M. R.	Psychiatric Services, 63(3), 210–215. Retrieved from: https://dx.doi.org/10.1176/appi.ps.201100100
Covenant House	Covenant House	https://www.covenanthouse.org/homeless-youth-programs/job-training
'I'm proud of how far I've come. I'm just ready to work': mental health recovery narratives within the context of Australia's Disability Employment Services	Devine, Alexandra; Vaughan, Cathy; Kavanagh, Anne; Dickinson, Helen; Byars, Sean; Dimov, Stefanie; Gye, Bill; Brophy, Lisa	https://bmcpublichealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12889-020-8452-z

Resource	Authors	URL
A Randomized Clinical Trial of Supported Employment for Inner-city Patients with Severe Mental Disorders	Drake, Robert E.; McHugo, Gregory J.; Bebout, Richard R.; Becker, Deborah R.; Harris, Maxine; Bond, Gary R.; Quimby, Ernest	http://archpsyc.jamanetwork.com/article.aspx?doi=10.1001/archpsyc.56.7.627
Streetohome Foundation (Metro Vancouver)	Erin S. Fletcher, B.A., B. Mgt. & Laura E. Muller, B.	https://dspace.library.uvic.ca/bitstream/handle/1828/7027/Fletcher_Erin_and_Muller_Laura_MPA_2015.pdf?sequence=1
Implementing a Social Enterprise Intervention with Homeless, Street-Living Youths in Los Angeles	Ferguson, K. M.	https://academic.oup.com/sw/article-lookup/doi/10.1093/sw/52.2.103
Nonvocational Outcomes from a Randomized Controlled Trial of Two Employment Interventions for Youth experiencing homelessness	Ferguson, Kristin M.	http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/1049731517709076
Using the Social Enterprise Intervention (SEI) and Individual Placement and Support (IPS) Models to Improve Employment and Clinical Outcomes of Youth experiencing homelessness with Mental Illness	Ferguson, Kristin M.	http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/15332985.2013.764960
Employment Outcomes from a Randomized Controlled Trial of Two Employment Interventions with Youth experiencing homelessness	Ferguson, Kristin M.	https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/30220962/
Conceptualizing Outcomes with Street-living Young Adults: Grounded Theory Approach to Evaluating the Social Enterprise Intervention	Ferguson, Kristin M.; Islam, Nadia	http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/1473325008089631
Feasibility Study of the Social Enterprise Intervention with Youth experiencing homelessness	Ferguson, Kristin M.; Xie, Bin	http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/1049731507303535
Adapting the Individual Placement and Support Model with Homeless Young Adults	Ferguson, Kristin M.; Xie, Bin; Glynn, Shirley	http://link.springer.com/10.1007/s10566-011-9163-5
Forty Years of Research on Predictors of Homelessness	Giano, Zachary; Williams, Amanda; Hankey, Carli; Merrill, Renae; Lisnic, Rodica; Herring, Angel	http://link.springer.com/10.1007/s10597-019-00530-5
Employment Among Baltimore's Homeless Population: Hit Hard by a Struggling Economy	Healthcare for the Homeless, Inc.	https://www.hchmd.org/sites/default/files/wysiwyg/HCH%20Employment%20Report_final.pdf

Resource	Authors	URL
Baltimore City Healthcare for the Homeless Study	Healthcare for the Homeless, Inc.	https://www.hchmd.org/sites/default/files/wysiwyg/HCH%20Employment%20Report_final.pdf
Creating Economic Opportunity for Homeless Jobseekers	Heartland Alliance	https://nationalinitiatives.issuelab.org/resources/27451/27451.pdf
Homelessness and Employment	Homelessness Policy Research Institute at USC Price	https://socialinnovation.usc.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Homelessness-and-Employment.pdf
Climbing the ‘scaffolded city’: tactics used by homeless young adults to navigate employment barriers	Huffman, T.P., Leier, C., Generous, M.A., Hinrichs, M.M., & Brenneman, L.	https://nca.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/00909882.2020.1839119#.Y0dhiOhKhPZ
Employment Barriers in Homeless Young Adults and Youth	Katie Bakken	https://journals.library.ualberta.ca/cjfy/index.php/cjfy/article/view/29929/21833
Employment experiences of homeless young adults: Are they different for youth with a history of foster care?	Lenz-Rashid, Sonja	https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0190740905000940
Employment and Income Supports for Homeless People	Long, David; Rio, John; Rosen, Jeremy	https://aspe.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/migrated_legacy_files/139106/report.pdf
Outcomes of Supported Housing for Homeless Veterans with Psychiatric and Substance Abuse Problems	Mares, Alvin S.; Kaspro, Wesley J.; Rosenheck, Robert A.	http://link.springer.com/10.1023/B:MHSR.0000044746.47589.06
Secure jobs, secure homes, secure families: Process evaluation of the Massachusetts Secure Job Pilot	Meschede, T., Chaganti, S., & Revis, A.	https://heller.brandeis.edu/iere/pdfs/housing/secure-jobs-final-report.pdf
Missed opportunities: Youth homelessness in America	Morton, M.H., Dworsky, A., & Samuels, G.M. (2017)	https://voicesofyouthcount.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/ChapinHall_VoYC_NationalReport_Final.pdf
Project Employ: Engineering hope and breaking down barriers to homelessness	Munoz, Jaime Phillip; Reichenbach, Diana; Hansen, Anne Marie Witchger	https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/16179773/
Employment and Homelessness	National Coalition for the Homeless	https://nationalhomeless.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/Employment-Fact-Sheet.pdf
Youth Homelessness Overview	National Conference of State Legislatures	https://www.ncsl.org/human-services/youth-homelessness-overview#systems

Resource	Authors	URL
Policy Brief: What Works to End Youth Homelessness	National Network for Youth (2015)	https://nn4youth.org/wp-content/uploads/Policy-Brief_2015_What-Works.pdf
Employment and Income of People Who Experience Mental Illness and Homelessness in a Large Canadian Sample	Poremski, Daniel; Distasio, Jino; Hwang, Stephen W; Latimer, Eric	http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/070674371506000902
A Randomised Controlled Trial of Evidence Based Supported Employment for People Who have Recently been Homeless and have a Mental Illness	Poremski, Daniel; Rabouin, Daniel; Latimer, Eric	http://link.springer.com/10.1007/s10488-015-0713-2
Building trust with people receiving supported employment and housing first services.	Poremski, Daniel; Whitley, Rob; Latimer, Eric	http://doi.apa.org/getdoi.cfm?doi=10.1037/prj0000137
Breaking Barriers: A Rapid Rehousing and Employment Pilot Program for Adults on Probation in Los Angeles County: Evaluation Report	RAND Corporation	https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RR4316.html
Ending chronic homelessness through employment and housing: A program and policy handbook for successfully linking supportive housing and employment services for chronically homeless adults	Rio, J., Ware, L., Tucker, P., & Martinez, J.	http://www.csh.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/Report_CHETA_Program_Policy_Handbook.pdf
Implementation of Supported Employment for Homeless Veterans with Psychiatric or Addiction Disorders: Two-Year Outcomes	Rosenheck, Robert A; Mares, Alvin S	https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/17325104/
Smart Practices for At-Risk, Homeless, and Formerly Youth experiencing homelessness Employment Programs in Metro Vancouver	School of Public Administration University of Victoria	https://dspace.library.uvic.ca/bitstream/handle/1828/7027/Fletcher_Erin_and_Muller_Laura_MPA_2015.pdf?sequence=1
Employment and Other Income Sources among Youth experiencing homelessness	Slesnick, N.; Zhange, J. and Yilmazer, T.	https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6231983/
IPS Supported Employment for People Experiencing Homelessness	Swanson, Sarah; Langfitt-Reese, Sandy	https://soarworks.samhsa.gov/article/individual-placement-and-support-ips-supported-employment-for-people-experiencing
Employment experiences of formerly homeless adults with serious mental illness in Housing First versus treatment first supportive housing programs.	Tiderington, Emmy; Henwood, Benjamin F.; Padgett, Deborah K.; Tran Smith, Bikki	http://doi.apa.org/getdoi.cfm?doi=10.1037/prj0000391

Resource	Authors	URL
ADVOCAP	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development	https://files.hudexchange.info/public/resources/documents/Employment-Strategies-in-Rapid-Re-Housing-Programs-ADVOCAP.pdf
Amherst H. Wilder Foundation	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development	https://files.hudexchange.info/public/resources/documents/Employment-Strategies-in-Rapid-Re-Housing-Programs-Wilder-Foundation.pdf
An Introduction to Employment Strategies in Rapid Re-Housing Programs	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development	https://files.hudexchange.info/public/resources/documents/An-Introduction-to-Employment-Strategies-in-Rapid-Re-Housing-Programs.pdf
Central Nebraska Community Action Partnership	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development	https://files.hudexchange.info/public/resources/documents/Employment-Strategies-in-Rapid-Re-Housing-Programs-Central-Nebraska-Community-Action-Partnership-Inc.pdf
Vocational Case Management in RRH: An emerging best practice	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development	https://files.hudexchange.info/public/resources/documents/Employment-Strategies-in-Rapid-Re-Housing-Programs-Vocation-Case-Management-in-RRH-An-Emerging-Best-Practice.pdf
The Way Home Houston	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development	https://www.homelesshouston.org/income
Income Now (Houston)	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development	https://files.hudexchange.info/public/resources/documents/Housing-and-Employment-Works-Coordinated-Entry-Employment-and-Income-Supports.pdf
Workforce Development Council (WDC) of Seattle-King County	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development	https://files.hudexchange.info/public/resources/documents/Housing-and-Employment-Works-Coordinated-Entry-Employment-and-Income-Supports.pdf
ADVOCAP (Wisconsin)	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development	https://files.hudexchange.info/public/resources/documents/Employment-Strategies-in-Rapid-Re-Housing-Programs-ADVOCAP.pdf

Resource	Authors	URL
Central Nebraska Community Action Partnership	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development	https://files.hudexchange.info/public/resources/documents/Employment-Strategies-in-Rapid-Re-Housing-Programs-Central-Nebraska-Community-Action-Partnership-Inc.pdf
Wilder Foundation (St. Paul, Minnesota)	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development	https://files.hudexchange.info/public/resources/documents/Employment-Strategies-in-Rapid-Re-Housing-Programs-Wilder-Foundation.pdf
Halifax Urban Ministries (Florida)	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development	https://files.hudexchange.info/public/resources/documents/Employment-Strategies-in-Rapid-Re-Housing-Programs-Halifax-Urban-Ministries.pdf
All In: The Federal Strategic Plan to End Homelessness	U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness	https://www.usich.gov/All_In.pdf
UW Kingston, Frontenac, Lennox and Addington (Canada) 2017 Update Youth Employment Strategy	United Way Global	https://www.unitedwaykfla.ca/youth-employment-strategy/
WorkSource Atlanta: STEP-Forward Youth Services	WorkSource Atlanta: STEP-Forward Youth Services	https://www.atlantaga.gov/government/departments/worksource-atlanta