



Supportive Housing for Transition Age Youth in Cuyahoga County

Capitalizing on the success of the Housing First initiative to end chronic homelessness in our community through permanent supportive housing, A Place 4 Me, REACH Youth Action Board, Sisters of Charity Foundation of Cleveland, Enterprise Community Partners, CHN Housing Partners, EDEN, Inc., and FrontLine Service are collaborating to develop new supportive housing for Transition Age Youth (TAY) in Cuyahoga County.

OUR GOAL: We aim to help young adults move out of homelessness by developing 50 apartments within a new supportive housing community created with their help and guidance.

Supportive housing offers safe, stable and non-time limited housing along with services designed to support young adults in reaching their goals. Services may include physical and mental health care, employment and education supports, conflict and family mediation, and other services to help residents maintain stable housing and move successfully into the future.

OUR PHILOSOPHY: The TAY supportive housing development recognizes that young adults aspire to have a safe place to call home, a necessary foundation for meeting their needs and achieving their dreams. Though they face system failures, an insufficient safety net, and racism, young adults are the experts in what they need to be successful. Young people have shared insight to inform the need for, creation, and design of the development, and will continue to serve as collaborators throughout the building and service design processes.

As a service-rich housing resource, the TAY supportive housing development will provide space for recovery from the trauma of homelessness and the events that may have led to it. Providing a range of skill development opportunities, the TAY supportive housing development is a stepping-stone for the next phase of life that meets young people where they are and provides them with the support and relationships to succeed. Residents will coordinate with property management and service providers to set and achieve their individual goals related to housing stability, education and/or employment, and well-being. Inherent in this partnership is an appreciation that set-backs are both part of the human experience and developmentally appropriate for this unique time in life.

Recognizing that youth of color disproportionately experience homelessness, the TAY supportive housing development will prioritize racial equity in its day-to-day operations, development of policies and procedures, and outcomes. Efforts will be made to ensure that building staff is representative of the resident population, including continued attempts to hire people with lived experience of homelessness. Conflict will be managed using current best practices such as restorative justice.



OUR CORE VALUES:

- 1) **Youth leadership** – We value young people as experts in their own lives. We will collaborate with residents to create an environment of respect that elevates youth voice as key decisions are being made affecting the building.
- 2) **Racial and LGBTQ equity** – We believe in and support inclusion and equity regardless of race, ethnicity, gender identity, and sexual orientation.
- 3) **Hospitality** – We seek to meet the most basic and immediate needs of young people first – including the need for respite from the trauma of homelessness.
- 4) **Highly-relational** – We prioritize the development of positive relationships with staff and among residents; mistakes and set-backs are expected and seen as opportunities for growth and further relationship building.
- 5) **Flexibility** – We offer services that are voluntary, tailored to each individual resident, and easily accessible.

POPULATION: We will serve young adults experiencing homelessness ages 18 to 24. We will partner with Coordinated Intake to identify young people experiencing homelessness who have been prioritized for housing based on length of time experiencing homelessness, disability status, and other challenges. We will also develop and employ outreach strategies to reach young people experiencing many barriers to engagement.

HMIS data show that roughly 1 in 4 young adults who sought homeless services in 2019 was parenting and forty-four percent had a disability.¹ As many as 62% of young people who enter homeless shelters having had previous interaction with the child welfare system according to research by Case Western Reserve University.

Young adults experiencing homelessness are disproportionately African American (approximately 73%) and LGBTQ. Sexual orientation is commonly underreported, though national estimates suggest 40% of youth experiencing homelessness have LGBTQ identities. In response to these disparities, we have identified racial and LGBTQ equity as core values.

THE NEED FOR YOUTH-CENTERED SUPPORTIVE HOUSING:

In Cuyahoga County, the number of young adults experiencing homelessness and in need of housing far surpasses the resources available to them. In 2019, there were approximately 190 people experiencing homelessness aged 18-24 on the young adult by-name list each month, with approximately 1/6 of those newly identified as experiencing homelessness each month. Roughly 570 young adults sought out homeless services that same year through Coordinated Intake.² And yet, only 57 non-time-limited supportive housing slots and approximately 75 short-term rental subsidies are provided to young adults experiencing homelessness in Cuyahoga County.²

Though technically eligible, young adults often choose not to access traditional adult services or do not receive services based on prioritization of resources for those with the longest lengths of time experiencing homelessness (generally, older adults).

OUR PARTNERS INCLUDE:

- **A Place 4 Me** – Coalition convener of youth experiencing homelessness and housing instability
- **REACH Board** – Youth Action Board of A Place 4 Me, comprised of young adults with lived experience of homelessness, housing instability, and/or child welfare
- **Sisters of Charity Foundation of Cleveland** – Catalytic funder
- **Enterprise Community Partners** – Convener
- **CHN Housing Partners** – Co-owner and lead developer
- **EDEN** – Co-owner and property manager
- **FrontLine Service** – Service provider

¹ 2019 HMIS data are accurate as of 8/12/20 reporting date. By-name list data are reported monthly and are considered accurate as of the date of posting to the A Way Home America site. ² RRH figure based on 74 young adults served in 2020 as of November. Non-time-limited figure includes Independence Place (23), Opportunity House (11), and SHP scattered site subsidies (23; formerly PHYA).