

St. Louis County

Local Homeless Prevention Aid (LHPA)

03/21/2024



Big picture: Working to reach housing stability with and for young people...

Multiple components in the works:

- LHPA
- Direct Cash Transfer pilot project
- Case consultation (Coordinated Entry)
- Shelter and Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) expansions
- Partnership with YouthPrise to increase capacity to build and strengthen youth leadership (i.e.; SLC Youth Action Board) to guide and evaluate a plan including determining:
 - *What does housing stability look like?*
 - *What would it look like to have permanent connections for youth?*
 - *What would it look like to achieve education/employment goals for youth?*
 - *What would it look like to achieve wellbeing for youth?*
 - *Any other Core Outcomes?*
 - *How do we know when we have ended youth homelessness?*



Our LHPA approach:

- Broad outreach across SLC – education and information (Jan 2022)
 - Youth shelters and safe spaces
 - Youth service providers
 - School liaisons and counselors for families in transition (FiT)
 - Shared information re the bill and our intended process (simple RFP with as little barriers as possible)
- Listened to needs, solutions and experiences that align with eligible uses (broad)



What we heard specific to LHPA:

- Support open RFP process to distribute funds
- Ensuring equity in this process is of utmost importance
- Keep RFP as simple as possible (providers/agencies juggle so many grant applications)
- Create sustainable positions that fill gaps
- Full utilization of existing resources first, so use this funding as last resort

A few things we heard when asked re needs:

What are the needs you are seeing in SLC specific to school aged youth and families facing homelessness and housing instability?

- Transportation
- Safe housing options
- Childcare
- Lack of affordable housing
- Rent/income ratio too high
- Not enough shelter
- Case management – need full time positions (not successful if only .5 FTE)
- Affordable housing options for families
- Education on self-care, life skills and financial training (budgeting)

What needs do you see with youth (up to age 24) experiencing transition/facing homelessness?

- Help navigating systems
- Chemical and mental health
- Affordable housing that is clean and nice
- LGBTQIA2S+ safe shelter and housing
- Disability services
- Safe shelter
- Job coaching and connection
- Budgeting support
- Parenting education
- Culturally specific services
- Self-care, life skills and access to education options

What is working that we can build upon?

A sample of responses included:

- Family Homeless Prevention & Assistance Program (FHPAP)
- Educational and employment program (Life House)
- Self referral program (LSS)
- Student and family advocates within schools and FiT liaisons
- AEOA's Youth Foyer (PSH for young people 18 – 24 including family units)
- Offering culturally specific opportunities within supportive services



Based on what we learned, SLC committed to *(specific to LHPA)*:

- Have an open RFP process, **knowing that the needs will look different across our county** (e.g., some communities may need more liaisons in schools, others may need more direct rental assistance for youth and families)
- **Emphasizing collaboration v. competition for funds** – this has been our messaging throughout – stronger together to maximize resources
- Support legislation for **direct allocation to Tribes**



In short:

- Acknowledgement of the hard and good work being done on the ground
- Reduce barriers and red tape to increase access all around
 - Get funds directly to providers so they can best serve young people and families in front of them (including ability to directly allocate rental assistance)



LHPA current utilization/outcomes:

Four agencies applied for funding in our first cycle (not able to fully fund, requests far exceeded amount allocated):

HDC

Provide supportive services and outreach to young people ages 18 - 24 who are unhoused to obtain and then maintain housing.

***Currently doing outreach and connecting with young people and families to access housing – will also be supporting 13+ young people in PSH (Brewery Creek) with lease up this summer. Brewery Creek has 6 PWD and 26 HPH units – all specific for young people who are unhoused or unstably housed.**

Life House

Providing supportive services and outreach to young people ages 18 - 24 who are unhoused to obtain and then maintain housing.

***Currently doing outreach and connecting with young people and families to access housing – will also be supporting 13+ young people in PSH (Brewery Creek) with lease up this summer. Brewery Creek has 6 PWD and 26 HPH units – all specific for young people who are unhoused or unstably housed.**

Divine Konnections

Providing supportive services and housing to young BIPOC families including rental assistance and tenancy sustaining/eviction prevention services.

Lutheran Social Services

Providing supportive services to young people in shelter and transitional housing to obtain housing stability.



The four agencies exemplify the needs across our county for young people and families:

- Staffing to provide supportive services including outreach, navigation, connection and tenancy sustaining services as well as shelter expansion and transitional housing
- Unique to Divine Konnections:
 - Tenancy sustaining services include life skills curriculum development that is culturally specific and builds from RentWise and Circles of Security
 - Culturally specific services and supports
 - Direct assistance for double deposits and rent up to 24 months for young BIPOC moms (knowing the discrimination BIPOC and young people face with independent landlords – the double deposit serves as an incentive)



Current SLC LHPA Status/Update:

- Currently in RFP community review process (for funding cycle starting July 1, 2024)
- Developed selection policy to protect renewals
- Need continues for these flexible and accessible funds



Thank you!!

For more information: <https://www.stlouiscountymn.gov/HHP>

