

Services to Homeless Youth in Portland

*Report of the Joint Homeless Youth
Assessment Committee of the
Citizens Crime Commission
and Association for Portland Progress*

Revised
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Homeless Youth Assessment Committee

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Note on Second Printing: The Committee received feedback from several knowledgeable sources about Portland's homeless teen population, including some service providers who furnished additional information or sought to clarify or augment information provided earlier. Where appropriate, those comments have been incorporated into this second printing. All additions to or changes from the original January 7 printing are underlined for easier reference

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INTRODUCTION

In the summer of 1997, the Citizens Crime Commission (CCC) and the Association for Portland Progress (APP) formed a joint committee to address problems related to homeless youth.¹ The Committee, co-chaired by Fred Stickel and Les Aucoin, focused on downtown Portland because the heaviest concentration of homeless youth are in downtown. We recognize that poverty, homelessness, and juvenile delinquency exist throughout the Portland metropolitan area. However, at this time we have restricted our attention to homeless youth. The numbers of homeless youth on our streets have increased in recent years, and with it the presence of drug activity and citizen intimidation. This raises concerns about community livability and about the adequacy of support the community is providing for homeless/displaced and at-risk youth.²

In addressing these concerns, the Committee adopted a basic set of values it believes should guide any approach for dealing with homeless youth. They include the following:

- Helping our youth grow to maturity, particularly those who are homeless, is a community-wide responsibility and should be a high priority for the greater Portland community.
- The “street” lifestyle is harmful to the physical and emotional health of our youth, and increases their risk of becoming part of the adult homeless population and/or the criminal justice system.
- A necessary goal/objective of any plan or program for helping homeless youth is to help them transition to a more stable, secure and nurturing environment. Reunification of a homeless youth with a family member should always be explored.
- The existence of young homeless teens is unhealthy for the community in that it breeds illicit activity and crime, intimidates law-abiding citizens, and is destructive to community livability.
- The active enforcement of so-called entry level or “livability” crimes is an essential aspect of helping at-risk and homeless youth transition to a healthier and safer environment. To be effective, the process for enforcement must include both compassionate administration and meaningful sanctions.

¹ The Citizens Crime Commission is made up of business leaders and other citizens who involve themselves in public policy discussions within the region. The Association for Portland Progress is a private, non-profit membership organization that is dedicated to the beneficial growth and development of the central business district of Portland.

² The Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act defines a homeless person to include individuals who may be living on the streets, in a shelter, in any other unstable living condition or in a public or private place not designed for the accommodation of human beings. Some provider organizations in Portland limit services to homeless or displaced youth under 18. Others serve “youth” up to age 20. Several organizations in the U.S. serve youth up to age 24.

- The service delivery system for homeless youth should be accountable to the community and have clear goals and objectives, professional standards, and measurable outcomes. Information on the population and the effectiveness of each program should be published on a regular basis and made available to the community. Public funds should only be allocated to providers furthering the public policies set out by the government leadership.

* Note: See Appendix B, Notes on Nunn/Tienson meetings with homeless youth.

Committee members met with service providers, groups of homeless youth, representatives of appropriate agencies from both the City and the County, *Project LUCK*, the Portland Public School District, law enforcement, and with other individuals and groups dealing with various aspects of the homeless youth situation. A specific list of these groups is contained in the body of this report, as well as a discussion of the process followed by the Committee.

Based upon information gained through this process, the Committee has identified a number of concerns, which should be addressed. These are listed below under the heading “Findings of Fact”. Based upon these findings, the Committee has developed a set of proposed recommendations which, if implemented, would address these concerns. Our recommendations follow the “Findings of Fact”.

VISION

Homeless youth issues need an integrated system of services with the following attributes:

- An authoritative single entity where all public funding and decisions are consolidated.
- A consistent program philosophy for homeless youth services. This philosophy should be set by the City and County, in consultation with homeless youth³, and used to establish systemic planning and funding priorities.
- Clear systemic and project-based objectives grounded in the program philosophy and used to formulate an overall plan of action for homeless youth in downtown Portland.
- An action plan with a set timeline for implementation.
- An integrated set of outcome-based standards to measure system and program success and tied directly to program funding.
- Those responsible for developing and implementing the plan should be held directly accountable to Portland’s political and community leadership.

³ See Appendix B, Notes on Nunn/Tienson meetings with homeless youth.

- A full continuum of housing, education, health and employment services that meet the needs of homeless youth, and which are consistent with the philosophy and objectives set out in the homeless youth plan.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

We have found the existing system of services for homeless/displaced youth in downtown Portland to be inadequate in scope and quantity, plagued by competing philosophical approaches, woefully under-funded, poorly coordinated, and undermined by a lack of government leadership. In short, the current delivery system lacks the attributes we believe are necessary for an effective, meaningful homeless youth system.

This Committee believes that:

- the responsibility for addressing these issues must be vested with one governmental entity;
- any systemic plan of action must be developed as a public/private/non-profit partnership; be grounded in one philosophical approach - as outlined in our values statement; and have clear objectives that are to be met and measured through a set of outcome-based parameters;
- an adequate database on homeless youth must be developed and maintained;
- outcome-based statistics on the entire population should be kept and published regularly; and
- all new resources should be focused first on youth who are working towards exiting street life - which includes being reunified with their families.

The Committee has concluded because time is of the essence, several interim measures should be implemented as soon as possible. These measures include:

1. Form a Public/Private Steering Committee; establish an Office of the Coordinator of Homeless Youth Programs; and hire an Interim Coordinator;
2. Plan and develop a new transitional housing facility with a broad range of services to be opened by January 1, 1999; and
3. Complete a thorough performance audit of the current provider network to assess its capacity and its consistency with the values, findings and recommendations set out in this report.

GOAL

It is our sincere hope and belief that, if followed, the recommendations set out in this report will improve the current system of services for homeless, displaced youth in downtown Portland.

THE COMMITTEE AND ITS PROCESS

The Citizens Crime Commission/Association for Portland Progress Homeless Youth Assessment Committee (“the Committee”) is made up of members of the Association for Portland Progress and the Citizens Crime Commission. The Committee has a number of subcommittees including an Emergency Shelter Subcommittee⁴. Some committee members have been involved with homeless youth issues for many years. In addition, some members and entities with which they are affiliated have consistently made significant financial contributions to organizations that assist homeless youth.

To date, Committee members have interviewed and prepared reports on four organizations that provide the majority of services to homeless, displaced youth in downtown Portland and one provider that serves youth in Washington and Clackamas Counties.⁵ The Committee focused its inquiry on the four primary providers of services to homeless youth in downtown (*Salvation Army Greenhouse, Janus Youth Programs, Inc., New Avenues for Youth, and Outside In*), appropriate government agencies and *Project LUCK*, an advocacy organization that attempts to coordinate services under a contract with Multnomah County. Each entity was asked to complete the same questionnaire (attached as Appendix C) and provide the Committee with comprehensive written information about their organization and about their perspective on homeless youth issues.

In addition, representatives from the Multnomah County Department of Community and Family Services, Portland Bureau of Housing and Community Development, Multnomah County Auditor’s Office, Portland Public School District, *Project LUCK* (Link Up the Community for Kids), United Way, Oregon State Services to Children and Families, The Portland Police Bureau, Multnomah County District Attorney’s Office, Portland Patrol, Inc. (the security contractor for Downtown Clean & Safe), the Downtown Community Association, A Minor Miracle (a private program for troubled youth) and the Department of Adult Corrections and Juvenile Justice were interviewed by the Committee during informal question and answer sessions. In preparation for and as follow-up to those sessions, committee staff conducted informal interviews and gathered additional information.

Although implementation of many of our recommendations will have a city-wide impact, our intent was, and continues to be, to focus on issues related to downtown because that is the primary place homeless youth eventually migrate to and where they interact with community services.

⁴ Members of the Emergency Shelter Subcommittee met with members of the Portland City Council, the Mayor, and the County Chair and successfully advocated for additional beds to be added to the current winter shelter for homeless youth.

⁵ *Boys and Girls Aid Society* focuses on providing foster care and runaway services to youth in Clackamas and Washington Counties. As such, information from and about this agency will not be included in the body of this report. Although this agency does not serve homeless youth downtown, it is an important part of the tri-county service network and endorses an outcome-based approach.

FINDINGS OF FACT⁶

Prior to discovering facts and developing findings, we interviewed representatives from key agencies and organizations, reviewed written information about existing and proposed services, and read relevant academic research. We believe the existing system to have serious shortcomings and have set forth these findings and the recommendations in an effort to address them.

Note: Additional, supporting information is included in Appendix A.

1. The significant population of homeless youth in downtown Portland has been growing in recent years. However, existing data concerning the population is inadequate because there is no common database and government officials do not require providers to keep information on the *success* of their programs.

DEMOGRAPHICS

- A significant population of runaway and homeless youth live on the streets of downtown Portland. A majority of this population is under the age of 18.
- In 1986, approximately 500 homeless youth lived on the streets of downtown Portland.
- Accurate statistics on the population of homeless youth in downtown Portland are not available and are not kept by any governmental entity. The current population is most frequently estimated to range from 1000-1500 youth.
- Because of the lack of statistically valid data, the make-up of Portland's homeless youth population can not be adequately assessed. It is believed to consist of : 1) members of homeless families; 2) runaway adolescents who leave home to escape physical and sexual abuse; 3) throwaways, adolescents who were pushed out of their homes by parents or guardians; 4) system kids who escaped from intolerable foster care settings; and 5) street kids.⁷ Some of the older youth, so-called "road warriors", have been living on the streets for years while other youth, "weekend warriors", are from Portland and suburban locations and may frequent the homeless youth environment for only a few days at a time.
- The population of homeless youth downtown is growing, or at least becoming more visible.
- Over 80% of the population is Caucasian, with more males than females (approximately 55% vs. 45%). Over 80% are from the Portland Metropolitan Area and more than 30% are 16 years old or younger. Of those who are under 18 years of age, approximately 40% are male and 60% are female. Of those over 18, approximately 60% are male and 40% are female.

⁶ This section includes factual information reported to the Committee by providers, government officials and facts determined to be true by the Committee.

⁷ "Street kids" are youth who grew up on the streets and do not fit into one of the other categories.

- There is a growing number of illegal immigrants among the homeless youth population.
- Although many homeless youth in downtown are from Portland, the downtown area is a magnet for homeless youth who come from surrounding counties, areas throughout the state, and areas outside of Oregon. This occurs in part because of the anonymity of living in a downtown urban environment, the existence of that environment, the availability (albeit limited) of services in downtown Portland, and because most of Oregon's public transportation systems are routed through downtown.
- There is no common database for information on homeless youth. In addition, no entity is responsible for collecting accurate data on the population. As a result, existing systemic data is suspect and anecdotal, making it problematic to evaluate the adequacy of the current service system, quantify needs, or develop comprehensive plans for addressing issues related to homeless youth.
- The lack of valid demographic data makes it difficult to intelligently direct funding, and is itself an indicator of a weak service system.
- Neither providers nor government officials know the mortality rate for the population nor other outcome-based information, such as what becomes of street youth after accessing services or as they grow older.
- Two authoritative sources who testified to the Committee indicated as many as one-third of Portland's homeless youth die by their early twenties, one-third become homeless adults or enter the criminal justice system, and only one-third exit street life. Although the Committee believes the mortality rate to be overstated, no data exists to refute these outcome measures.⁸

2. Responsibility for homeless youth programs is split between the City and County. As a result, there is poor leadership, ineffective decision-making and no overall plan or program for addressing homeless youth issues.

SINGLE ENTITY FOR FUNDING, PLANNING AND DECISION-MAKING²

- After over a decade of bifurcated responsibility, the City has recently taken charge of coordinating services for homeless adults. Although responsibility for the youth system currently lies with the County, funding and programmatic decision-making has historically been shared by both entities.
- On at least two occasions, once in 1992, and once in 1996, an assessment of the needs of the homeless youth population was completed by *Project LUCK*, an umbrella

⁸ According to Outside In, of the approximately 1,000 homeless youth under age 21 seen annually, less than 5 per year die by age 21.

⁹ Please see Appendix A for provider responses to the Committee's questions regarding system coordination and for a glowing example of why a single governing entity is needed.

organization that coordinates and advocates for the service provider network. Few of the issues raised by these assessments have been adequately addressed to date.

- There is no single governmental focal point for making decisions concerning homeless youth programs or for the allocation of available funds. Both Multnomah County and the City of Portland provide funding, yet they do not have a coordinated, consistent philosophy or plan for addressing homeless youth issues. As a result, *Project LUCK* and the provider network who receive and are dependent on, public funding, play a very strong role in making decisions relating to planning, program design and funding priorities.
- There is no overall plan in place that defines the issues, sets priorities, and outlines a timeline for funding and implementation of programs to address the issues.
- *Project LUCK* attempts to coordinate services through a collaborative process. However, it has neither the authority nor responsibility to set policy or monitor performance.
- Agencies within the existing provider network have been working on this issue for over 10 years. Many of their leaders feel frustrated by a perceived lack of support from the political establishment and the community at large. We believe, however, they have not successfully communicated their effectiveness to the public.
- As noted above, the current system provides fragmented services that are loosely coordinated by *Project LUCK*. Our community has “out-sourced” the responsibility for oversight of programs that serve our homeless youth. This has created a system functioning largely by political agreements and “collaboration” of providers who receive public funds.

3. Neither service providers nor the government staff who are responsible for homeless youth programs are being held accountable to government leadership or the community.

ACCOUNTABILITY

- Although the existence of homeless youth on our streets clearly affects the individual children, Portland’s families, neighborhoods, and businesses, it has never been addressed as a community-wide issue.
- There is no systemic mechanism to measure how well a particular publicly funded program is doing with regard to the results of “case management” or other services. However, some individual agencies do maintain this information.
- The one existing youth shelter serving downtown youth does not keep statistical information on what happens to youth after they leave the shelter. The shelter is currently run by *Janus’ Willamette Bridge* programs.

- The *Salvation Army Greenhouse* is beginning to keep a limited amount of outcome-based statistics. During the first year of their Transition Specialist program, 71 youth were assisted with case management-type services. Of these, 53 were “placed” in some type of housing situation.
- Willamette Bridge/Janus Youth Programs keeps statistics for their Bridge House and Changes programs which include group home, apartment and case managed youth. During fiscal 1996-97, 64% of 72 clients served had a successful outcome and 36% had an unsuccessful outcome. In addition, 43% of clients served had a positive education outcome while 51% had a positive employment outcome. In fiscal 1997-98 (through 2/17/98), 83% of 46 clients served had positive outcomes, 8% had unsuccessful outcomes, 63% had positive education outcomes and 68% had positive employment outcomes.¹⁰
- *New Avenues for Youth* has been open since August of this year. Of the 61 case management cases that have been ‘closed’ since that time: 28 youth were reunified with their families, 3 entered a drug treatment program, 2 entered an institution, 4 entered a group home, 5 entered foster care placements, 7 began living independently, 2 entered transitional living situations, 4 had other positive exits and 6 broke contact. In total, 84% of closed cases exited street life. During January 1998, their case management staff reported that 78% of youth who had exited street life during the prior 30 days remained stable.
- *Outside In* also keeps outcome-based statistics. The following information was taken from their 1996-97 annual report: Of the 164 youth involved in case management, 13% entered their transitional housing program, 9% returned home, 7% obtained employment/independent living, 6% were living with friends, 2% entered Job Corps, 1% died, 4% were in jail, 10% were still in case management at the end of the year and 42% returned to the streets. Of the 42 youth in their transitional housing program 33 were terminated. Of the 33 youth terminated, 21% were employed/began living independently, 15% returned home/to relatives, 15% are living with friends, 10% entered other transitional housing, and 37% returned to the streets. Of the 25 youth hired in their Employment Education Program, 68% (17) completed the program, 4 quit, 1 obtained a GED, 1 returned to school, 7 moved away and 1 moved into another program.
- Public agencies, such as the Portland Public Schools and the Portland Police Bureau, do not have a defined role in the “system” of services for homeless youth.

¹⁰ “Successful Outcomes” indicate youth who have established stable housing as of program completion and last follow-up. “Unsuccessful Outcomes” indicate youth who have returned to the streets or have been incarcerated. “Positive Education Outcomes” indicate youth who are pursuing or have completed their GED or High School diploma as of program completion and last follow-up. Also included are youth pursuing higher education. “Positive Employment Outcomes” indicate youth who have established a stable and legal income as of program completion and last follow-up. Youth enrolled in Job Corps are not included.

- As noted above, current services are coordinated through *Project LUCK*. Although provider contracts with the County include goals that are supposed to be met, there is little evidence careful evaluations of these publicly funded contracts have ever been done. As such, County policy appears to favor a “relief-based” vs. an “outcome-based” approach.

4. There is no guiding philosophy for delivering services to homeless youth.

SYSTEMIC PHILOSOPHY

- Key service providers subscribe to different philosophical approaches towards working with street youth.¹¹ Some provide services with no strings attached, while others focus their services on helping youth exit street life. Some are “relief- based”, while others are “outcome-based”. As a result, reaching consensus on critical issues such as coordination of case management services is difficult. The lack of a cohesive, systemic philosophy enables youth to “program shop” or “game the system” as they approach important choice points in their case management program. Thus, youth who may be moving towards exiting street life with one agency are allowed to procrastinate and re-use precious systemic resources at another agency with a different philosophical approach.¹²
- Competing programmatic philosophies impede the provision of services, hamper program effectiveness and limit accountability.
- A service philosophy that goes beyond compassion and understanding, and towards enabling youth to stay involved with street life, is harmful to youth and the community as a whole. Public funds should not be used to endorse, encourage or condone street culture.
- Necessary “relief” services should be augmented by services which focus on helping youth to exit street life and which measure their success through a set of outcome-based parameters.
- According to sources interviewed by the Committee, downtown Portland has such an active and visible homeless youth population because it tolerates behavior that is not tolerated by communities and public officials in the suburbs and smaller cities of Oregon.

5. Outcome-based standards do not exist for assessing programs or service provider performance. As a result, there are inadequate tools to assess the adequacy or effectiveness of the services being delivered to homeless youth.

¹¹ Please see Appendix A for a summary of each providers philosophical approach.

¹² Please see Appendix A for an example of this dilemma.

STANDARDIZATION OF SERVICES

- Although a number of agencies provide “case management” and “outreach” services under public contracts, these services are defined and performed differently by different providers.
- The current system lacks an effective process for assuring that publicly funded services are meeting measurable standards. This is in part because there are no clear systemic standards or objectives, in part because performance is not measured against outcome-based criteria¹³, and in part because the system lacks focus for decision-making and accountability. As noted above, it also lacks adequate demographic and other data necessary to objectively monitor and/or manage programs.
- The County officials do not track outcome statistics, i.e. what happens to kids while they are in the system, mortality rates, HIV rates, etc. They do, however, require providers to report the “service units” they provide and some demographic information, i.e. beds occupied, meals served, outreach contacts, etc. This also suggests acceptance of a “relief” vs. an “outcome-based” philosophy.
- There is no evidence that trained City or County social workers are involved with oversight, policy setting, program audits, outcome monitoring or reporting.

6. Public funding for programs serving homeless youth has never been made a high priority by local government leaders, nor have they aggressively sought federal or private funds.

FUNDING PRIORITIES AND NEW RESOURCES¹⁴

- In recent years, neither the City of Portland nor Multnomah County has placed a high priority on funding programs that serve homeless youth.
- Only a small fraction of the public funding spent on services for homeless or displaced youth in Multnomah County is spent on programs serving or accessible to youth in downtown Portland. For example, *Janus Youth Programs, Inc.*, which provides services to a wide range of clientele from families to homeless youth, focuses the majority of its resources outside downtown and throughout Multnomah, Washington and Clark counties.
- County contracts for programs that serve homeless youth are awarded and administered through the Department of Community and Family Services. These contracts represent a small percentage of that departments’ overall responsibilities.

¹³ Some agencies utilize outcome-based criteria.

¹⁴ The Committee chose to identify funding for all services available to homeless youth living in downtown - even where those services are located in other parts of Portland and may be targeted for youth who are not “homeless”.

- The *Salvation Army Greenhouse* (\$500,000/yr. budget) and *New Avenues for Youth* (\$500,000/yr. budget) are the only two providers working exclusively with homeless youth in downtown Portland. Both of these providers are funded primarily with private dollars. *Outside In*, which works with downtown youth, also works with adults, and is funded largely with public money.
- *Janus Youth Programs, Inc.* (\$760,000/yr. budget) and *Outside In* (\$600,000/yr. budget) are the primary publicly funded providers used by the City, County and State to care for homeless and at-risk youth in downtown Portland. This includes programs located outside downtown, but accessible to homeless youth living downtown.
- Approximately \$2,300,000 is spent annually on services to downtown youth. \$1.3 million of this is from public sources (*Janus* and *Outside In*), while the rest is private (*Salvation Army Greenhouse* and *New Avenues for Youth*).
- Approximately \$250,000 in City funds are included in the \$1,300,000 of public funding noted above. This funding comes from the City's annual Community Development Block grant administered by the Bureau of Housing and Community Development.
- The *United Way* donates approximately \$20 million/yr. to 100 agencies in four area counties. In 1997, \$95,000 in *United Way* funds went to programs serving homeless youth in downtown - *Janus* (\$11,790), the YWCA¹⁵ and *Outside In* (\$18,000) received funds.
- In August 1997, the City of Portland and Multnomah County submitted a proposal to HUD for twelve (12) separate homeless-related projects totaling \$3,471,521. Three projects to benefit homeless youth were included as part of this *McKinney Homeless Assistance Act* (42 U.S.C. 1311 et seq.) application. These proposals, which were ranked by the City and County as numbers 9, 10 and 11 (out of 12 projects) ask for a total of \$642,226 - with \$137,401 for mental health assessment services (*Network Behavior Healthcare*), \$217,875 for alcohol & drug treatment (*DePaul Treatment Centers, Inc.*), and \$286,950 for housing and advocacy for teen parents who are homeless (*Boys & Girls Aid Society*). None of these projects will focus solely on downtown homeless youth.
- It is unclear how funding for programs in the system is coordinated, prioritized, or tied to performance.
- Although the McKinney process is set up as a national competition, our City and County applied only for the amount HUD told them that they were "entitled to" apply for. Other cities, such as San Francisco, have historically ignored HUD's parameters and received far more than their suggested "fair share."

¹⁵ The YWCA runs several programs for children of homeless families and youth being served by various provider organizations.

- More resources would be available to the community if more aggressive, comprehensive attempts were made to access federal, state, and private funds.
- A systemic reorganization of services for homeless youth in downtown should result in a significant increase in private funding for programs that serve this population.

7. The Committee estimates it may take a significant amount of time to reorganize the current system. However, it is clear time is of the essence when addressing homeless youth issues. Efforts must be made to allocate new public and private resources during this fiscal year.

INTERIM MEASURES

Most [youth] perceived shelter as only one of several options for the night, and nearly half had not received case management services in the last six months. In general, youth are not moving off the streets and into more stable situations.
Multnomah County: Report on Shelter and Related Services for Homeless Youth in Downtown Portland, June 8, 1994.

- Currently, only thirty (30) emergency shelter beds for homeless youth are available in downtown Portland. An additional fifteen (15) cots are set up during the winter months in the basement of a church. Notwithstanding the lack of adequate data, it is clear these thirty (30) beds are wholly inadequate to provide shelter for our at least 1000 homeless youth. In addition, questions have arisen within the provider community regarding the most effective use of the 30 beds.
- As noted earlier, of the many social service organizations that purport to serve Portland's youth (over 200 entries are listed in "Surviving the Streets"), only four (4) provide comprehensive services to youth who frequent downtown.
- Transitional housing programs provide a supportive living environment for youth who are working towards independence. Currently, twenty-four (24) beds are available for homeless youth and an additional seven (7) beds are available for "parenting youth". There are long waiting lists for these beds. Without additional capacity, youth who are working towards exiting street life will be without the most important component of their transition - a safe, supportive place to live.
- *Project LUCK* has consistently advocated for the development of additional transitional housing as a top priority.
- Several individuals and companies are currently interested in making significant financial contributions towards the development of a new transitional housing facility.

8. The current program for delivering educational services to homeless youth lacks focus and needs to be more proactive.

PORTLAND PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT EFFORTS

- The McKinney Homeless Assistance Act, as amended by 42 U.S.C. 11431-11435, requires the Board of Education to ensure that each child of a homeless individual **and each homeless youth** has access to a free, appropriate public education. The rights of homeless children and youth include the right to go to school, to choose either to stay in the school they were in before they lost their housing or to go to the school nearest their shelter or temporary home.
- Currently, the Portland Public Schools Division of Alternative Education Services provides funding for only one alternative school in downtown Portland. The program, located at the *Salvation Army Greenhouse*, is funded for an average daily membership of 25 - 30 students. We believe the School District's effort does not focus on outcomes and is too dependent upon contract agencies. Although the district provides educational services to children and youth who are members of homeless families - reflecting a commitment to meeting the educational needs of Portland's homeless - these programs are inadequate to address the current need.
- Public and private education can and should play a more significant role in meeting the immediate needs of homeless children and adolescents.

9. Effective sanctions for petty crimes committed by youth are virtually non-existent. As a result, at-risk youth are not discouraged from engaging in illicit activities that are dangerous to themselves and the community. Moreover, the community unintentionally communicates a message that such activity is tolerable.

POLICE AND JUVENILE JUSTICE EFFORTS

- In recent years, enforcement of laws regarding truancy, aggressive begging, minor drug use, curfew violations, teen prostitution and other "petty crimes" has not been a high priority for the Portland Police Bureau.
- There is no 24-hour site to which a police officer or citizen can bring a youth who is found to be intoxicated or "strung out" on drugs.
- Only one police officer is currently assigned to work with runaway youth. Six officers work on domestic violence issues and more than twenty work on gang-related issues.
- Approximately 30% of youth in the juvenile justice system end up in the adult system.
- The juvenile justice system does not have a facility to house youth arrested for committing "status offenses" (offenses that would not be a crime if committed by an adult) or other "petty crimes".

- There are too few meaningful sanctions for youth who violate so-called entry-level or livability crimes. These include graffiti, prostitution, vandalism, panhandling, minor property violations, and drug use.
- Additional law enforcement and juvenile justice resources are needed to work with runaways and to enforce entry-level and livability crimes.
- The lack of adequate resources and sanctions for the commission of livability crimes has bred a sense of community tolerance for such crimes that must be reversed to effectively address homeless youth issues.
- We have received testimony indicating a high percentage (over 50%) of the homeless youth population engage in petty crime.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

1. DEMOGRAPHICS

The County should collect and maintain adequate demographic information on the homeless youth population, especially those who access services. All providers should provide this information to one entity (a public entity or contract agency) on an ongoing basis. The information should be used to evaluate services, set policies and funding priorities, and to improve the coordination of individualized services.¹⁶ Client confidentiality should be protected without sacrificing the quality of services, or the accuracy and availability of information.

2. SINGLE ENTITY FOR FUNDING, PLANNING AND DECISION-MAKING

All public funding, planning and decision-making authority should reside in one governmental or quasi-governmental entity. The new entity should be an independent branch of the County's Department of Community and Children's Services that is responsible directly to the County Chair. Any necessary city, county, state and/or federal legislation should be drafted as soon as possible.

The new entity should:

1. Develop a plan of action based on a clearly articulated philosophy, with a timeline for implementation, and delineating clear objectives for addressing homeless youth issues.
2. Allocate all public funds, regardless of source, that are earmarked for services for homeless youth.
3. Monitor the performance of service providers by utilizing a system of outcome-based criteria. (see below)

¹⁶ For example, the following information would be helpful in implementing this recommendation: % of the population with substance abuse issues; % of the population that is involved with prostitution (% males & females); % of minority youth; % of multicultural youth; % of sexual minority youth; % of youth with a history of abuse; % of youth who are runaways; % of youth from Portland, Oregon, Multnomah County, other places; % of youth living on the street for more than 3 months, 6 months, 1 year etc. ; % of the population with a criminal history; % of the population that are in some sort of case management; % of the population that would access housing if beds were available; % of the population that use existing services - with client evaluations of those services; % of the population that consider themselves to be prepared for employment; % of the population that would like to enroll in an alternative high school; which of the existing services are most valued by male youth (under 18, over 18), female youth (under 18, over 18); # of homeless youth who die on the streets each year; what affect confidentiality laws would have on the gathering and sharing of information; whether the population has grown over time; has it grown faster than the growth rate of Portland; does the population grow during certain times of the year ?

4. Keep and publish demographic and other outcome-based statistics on the overall population to measure system performance and as an aid to policy-making and funding decisions.
 5. Encourage or require providers to hire clinically trained, professional social workers.
- Note: See the Summary of Findings and Recommendations above for more details.

3. ACCOUNTABILITY

The system must establish a clear line of accountability to the public, as well as to political and community leaders. This should include an integrated set of outcome-based reporting criteria used to measure system and program success and tied directly to continued public funding. Efforts should also be made to increase community awareness about the barriers faced by homeless youth and to inform members of the community about how they can help.

The set of outcome-based reporting criteria should include, but not be limited to:

- The types of crises program staff worked on with youth to resolve during each month - including how these crises were addressed or resolved and the next steps (if any) the staff member encouraged the youth to follow.
- The number and type of counseling sessions attended by youth and others during each month - including the number of youth attending, major issues discussed and next steps recommended by counselors.
- The number, type, and reason for all referrals made to another agency. This should include referrals for shelter, transitional housing, medical issues, child abuse reporting, mental health assessments, employment training, education, and gender or identity issues.
- A description of the scope and frequency of follow-up measures taken by staff to assess the success of each referral.
- The number and results of educational and employability assessments - including the next steps recommended by staff members.
- Six month, 1 year and 2 year follow-ups should be performed on and reported for each client. This will help to assess the long -term effectiveness of each program.
- Statistics should be reported on “exits” from street life and be broken down by how youth exited. i.e. family reunification, employment, transitional or independent housing.

4. SYSTEMIC PHILOSOPHY

The new government entity must develop a clear and concise systemic philosophy that sets a framework for all publicly funded programs and be officially adopted by the City and County’s governing bodies. The philosophy should embody the values set out in this report. Provider organizations should be required to adopt the systemic philosophy as a condition of receiving public funds.

5. STANDARDIZATION OF SERVICES

The new government entity must develop a set of professional standards for provision of case management, outreach and other services to homeless youth, along with a system to ensure standards are met on an ongoing basis.

6. FUNDING PRIORITIES AND NEW RESOURCES

A subcommittee of the proposed Steering Committee should prioritize and detail how funding resources should be allocated, outline the magnitude of resources needed to seriously impact the issues, and develop strategies for acquiring the additional resources necessary to implement the recommendations set out in this report.

Focus new resources first on services for youth who are working towards exiting street life - either via reunification with their families or through participation in a structured or independent living situation.

Set up all efforts to fund new programs as public-private partnerships.

The estimated need for **new** funding includes, but is not limited to:

1. Transitional Housing Facility with 25-40 beds and a full array of services.
 - \$3 million in capital with \$1 million for a site and \$2 million for construction or renovation
 - \$1 - 1.5 million annually for services
2. Improvement of current case management, shelter, employment and outreach services.
 - \$2 million annually from public sources, **and**
 - \$2 million annually from private sources
3. Staffing and expenses for the new governmental entity, the Steering Committee and other private efforts.
 - \$150,000 annually from public sources
 - \$150,000 annually from private sources

NOTE - These are rough estimates.

7. INTERIM MEASURES

A focused set of immediate steps must be taken as soon as possible to begin addressing the most critical shortcomings of the current system. These steps should include:

1. Form a Public/Private Steering Committee and establish the Office of the Coordinator of Homeless Youth Programs. The purpose of the Steering Committee should be to change the current system. The Steering Committee should be appointed jointly by the Mayor and the County Chair. The Steering Committee should include 2 representatives of County government, 2 representatives of City government, the Director of the Department of Juvenile Justice and Adult Corrections, 2 representatives of the Association for Portland Progress, 2 representatives of the

Citizens Crime Commission, and one representative from the homeless youth service provider network.

2. The Steering Committee should remain in place until the tasks set out here and in point 3, below, are completed. The first task of the Committee should be to work with the County to hire an Interim Coordinator (and 3 additional staff). An annual budget of \$300,000 should be adequate for 4 staff persons, benefits, and other expenses. The Interim Coordinator would report directly to the Committee, be funded equally with private and public funds, and be assigned to work out of the Mayor's Office, the Bureau of Housing and Community Development or the Office of the County Chair. When the tasks set out below are completed, the Committee will reconstitute itself as an advisory body and the Office of the Coordinator will become part of the appropriate City or County entity. The Coordinator will then serve at the pleasure of the Mayor, the Commissioner responsible for BHCD, or the County Chair.
3. The Steering Committee and the Interim Coordinator should be charged with the responsibility for developing a new 25-40 bed transitional housing facility to be opened before January 1, 1999; engaging the County Auditor to perform a thorough performance audit of current services - including a critical examination of public funding priorities for homeless youth in downtown as compared to elsewhere in the region; working with each City Bureau and County Department to earmark funds from their 1998 budget for services for homeless youth; and developing a long term plan for implementing the recommendations set out in this report.

Suggestions for the Office of the Coordinator of Homeless Youth Programs

The role of the Coordinator should be to develop, fund, and implement housing, service-related and employment programs aimed at decreasing the homeless youth population in Portland. The Coordinator would foster inter-agency communication and the creation of a "seamless" service delivery system, act as the City's regional representative on homeless youth issues and as a liaison to providers, neighborhood groups, businesses and public entities. Initially, the Coordinator should focus solely on downtown.

In addition to the Coordinator, the Office should be staffed by a Funding/Grants Manager, a Program/Contract Monitor and an Administrative Assistant.

8. PORTLAND PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT EFFORTS

The Portland Public School District should seek more federal and state funding for programs to serve homeless youth.

At least one additional alternative school site for homeless youth should be established in downtown Portland during the next fiscal year.

The following suggestions, taken from several academic studies, should be reviewed to determine which would be appropriate for our District:

- Establish an interagency collaboration team to provide for the immediate and long-term needs of homeless children and adolescents;

- Establish a liaison for homeless students at each school in the district;
- Develop close working relationships with area shelters where homeless students and parents are living;
- Provide homeless students with "mentors" who help them solve problems related to being successful in school;
- Individualize instruction so learning problems of homeless students are addressed early in the school year;
- Provide homeless students with needed learning materials for doing school work and homework;
- Develop close relationships with parents through contacts at local shelters, meeting parents at shelters, and providing parents with transportation to school;
- Establish a "family service referral system" within the school that is linked to the community's available social and educational services;
- Educate teachers and staff in each school about the unique needs of homeless students and families;
- Place computers and other learning materials in local shelters;
- Share planning and discussion among state leaders, school administrators, teachers, and community leaders directly involved in serving homeless students and their families;
- Institute across-grade-level teacher participation that nurtures sharing of common and unique concerns related to homeless students, parents, and families;
- Involve school administrators by having them participate in planning tutoring, mentoring, and liaison projects; and
- Seek the participation of the state coordinator of educational and support services for homeless students and families.

9. POLICE AND JUVENILE JUSTICE EFFORTS

- The Portland Police Bureau and the Department of Adult Corrections and Juvenile Justice should work with county officials and community providers to develop and fund a plan to direct status youth offenders to a central intake site. Staff at the site would then screen and assess the youth to determine whether the youth should be taken home, sent to a shelter or referred for other services. Staff at the site should be vested with the responsibility for transporting youth home where appropriate. This is not an endorsement of a 24-hour drop-in center.
- The Department and Bureau should keep and publish data on youth who are picked up on status offenses.
- Additional police officers should be assigned to work with runaway youth.
- The Department and Bureau should develop and implement a set of meaningful consequences for the commission of "petty crimes" by youth and reward police officers for enforcing those consequences.

- Efforts to “crack down” on adults who prey on homeless youth should be increased dramatically.

COMMITTEE FOLLOW-UP

A proposed plan of action for follow-up and tracking of Committee recommendations will be developed by the Committee after the County’s and Portland’s political and community leadership have had a chance to review and comment on the recommendations set out in this report. Future Committee involvement may include the following:

- Coordination of business community efforts to raise funds to help implement the recommendations set out in this report; and
- Participation with Steering Committee efforts.

APPENDIX A

This appendix includes additional information gathered by the Committee that supports the findings and recommendations. Where appropriate, the information is separated by topic headings that are reflected in the text of the report.

* The Committee received letters from several providers and others commenting on the report. Where appropriate, those comments have been incorporated into this second printing. Additions to and changes from the dated January 7, 1998 printing are underlined.

Demographics

Historical Perspective - "On February 25, 1987 a year-long study by the Emergency Basic Needs Committee (EBNC) Ad Hoc Advisory Committee on Shelter, Clean-up and Clothing found that **9,258 individually named people received one or more nights of shelter services from August 1, 1985 through June 30, 1986. Of this number, 4,750 individuals ... were in homeless families. About 2,400 were individual men, 960 were individual women, 500 were youth (under 21 years of age), 378 were in homeless couples without children, and 200 were elderly.**" p. 55, *Breaking the Cycle of Homelessness: The Portland Model*, Published by the Office of the Mayor, Revised 9/88.

"Displaced youth are difficult to count and difficult to define; the dimensions of the problem are not easily measured." p. 7, *1992 Service Plan for Displaced Youth in Multnomah County*.

"The average age of runaways has dropped from 16 to 15 in the last decade. Of the 120,000 kids who called the National Runaway Switchboard last year, 41% cited "family dynamics" as the reason for running away. Abuse - physical, sexual or substance - plays a part in a great number of these cases. 75% of all runaways on the street with no help will become involved with prostitution or commercial pornography within two weeks of leaving home. Approximately 40% report being assaulted; 20% being robbed; and 15% being sexually assaulted." Source: The National Runaway Switchboard as reported in *Mean Streets*, Parents Magazine, September 1997, pp121-122.

A 1992 report estimated the number of displaced youth in Multnomah County at 1500-2000. Janet Miller, Coordinator of Project LUCK estimates the current population to be 3,000.

Committee question to providers and Project LUCK:

Is there good demographic information on Portland's homeless youth population (if not, any suggestions on how to gather data?)

Responses:

Boys and Girls Aid: In general demographic information for at-risk youth is deficient due to poor design and technology. It is made more difficult by the high mobility of the homeless youth. Our suggestion would be to have the involvement of non-social service businesses to bring their expertise to the problem.

Greenhouse: Unknown. Information from City/County may reflect duplication. Street Light Youth Shelter appears to have a fairly comprehensive system.

Janus/Willamette Bridge: There is good information. Data gathering could be more uniform. Service providers keep statistical information on the youth they serve. This information is sufficient to provide a picture of the size and make-up of homeless youth who are receiving services. Through Janus' street outreach program, which is on the streets of downtown Portland every night of the year, staff are able to literally develop an up-to-the-minute picture of youth. Combined with regional and national statistics, estimates can be made that include youth not currently involved in services. While this does not provide an exact demographic, it is sufficient to provide a portrait of youth needing services. And, while different service providers collect different demographic information as we are generally providing different services to the same population of youth, this further aids in completing the picture rather than confusing it.

New Avenues for Youth: No. Most material ... is out-of-date, irregularly published, or not statistically valid. [M]ost Portland care providers keep some type of demographic information on the clients they serve; therefore the problem may not be one of gathering information, but rather of its accessibility for use and analysis. To date no mechanism exists for compiling and analyzing data from all the area providers. Program statistics may be inaccurate due to duplication of service by organizations.

Outside In: There is substantial and useful demographic information compiled on an agency-by-agency basis. However, there is no entity compiling data from all agencies to obtain a comprehensive picture.

Project LUCK: *Project LUCK* does not keep data on youth served. This is done by providers to meet certain funding requirements for city, county, state and federal funding. It would be very beneficial to the system and to the youth served if there were a central point of intake for certain data collected on the youth served. With a central data system, *Project LUCK* would determine which information would be useful for advocacy efforts, to obtain funding from private sources, marketing and public relations. A simple form would be developed to collect this data, agreements would be reached on how often youth would be interviewed while receiving services and after completing the program, data would be fed to the central point of intake, entered and analyzed on a quarterly or semi-annual basis. Providers would have to continue providing data to funders to meet contract requirements. That is why this system would have to be simple and the goals for collecting it clear and useful.

Street Light Youth Shelter - Special Report by Willamette Bridge/Janus Youth Programs - dated February 20, 1998¹⁷

- Information is for two years - Fiscal 96/97, and Fiscal 97/98 through 2/17/98
- Each year breaks information down by non-case managed crisis reservations, and case managed continual use reservations
- Information is broken down by primary referral agencies, and 'other'. 'Other' includes:

Adult Corrections	Neighborhood Health Clinic, Inc.	Portland Youth Builders
Caremark Access	New Hope Church	Providence Hospital
Clark County Mental Health	NightWatch	Services for Children and Families
Covenant House	Oak Bridge	Self-Referrals
El Programa Espana	Oregon Council for Hispanic Advancement	Teen Insights
Emanuel Legacy	OHSU	The Casey Family Program
Good Samaritan Hospital	Oregon Youth Authority	The Nine Line
JDH/Juvenile Court	Pathways	Transition Projects
Jean's Place	PDX Transitional Service Center	Tualatin Valley Mental Health
Mental Health Services West	Portland Impact	WICS
Metro Crisis Service	Portland Police	Willamette Falls Hospital

- All columns (except the final column) represent reservations, not unduplicated guests
- **MALE/FEMALE** represents break down by sex
- **<=15** represents reservations for youth 15 years old or younger
- **16 - 17** represents reservations for youth 16 or 17 years old
- **18+** represents reservations for youth 18 years old or greater
- The next six columns represent ethnicity by reservation, as follows:

1 = Caucasian	4 = Asian
2 = African-American	5 = Hispanic
3 = Native American	6 = Other

- **LOS - Res** represents the average length of stay for a single reservation
- **LOS - Guest** represents the average length of stay for an unduplicated guest (this may represent more than one reservation)

¹⁷ This information was prepared as a response to specific requests by Committee staff. It was not included in the January 7, 1998 report.

**STREET LIGHT
YOUTH SHELTER**

FISCAL 1996 - 1997

CRISIS

	Male	Female	<=15	16 - 17	18+	1	2	3	4	5	6	LOS - Res	LOS - Guest
Changes	5	1	0	0	6	3	3	0	0	0	0	6	10.5
Greenhouse	18	30	8	22	18	40	4	1	3	0	0	1	1.41
Harry's Mother	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Harry's Mother Crisis Service	348	152	55	104	341	386	57	15	8	15	19	1.08	2.02
Outside-In	264	128	18	56	318	331	22	10	5	21	3	1.05	2
Roots and Branches	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Yellow Brick Road	970	474	142	303	999	1235	96	5	24	68	16	1	3.25
Other	118	36	8	24	122	122	14	6	4	4	4	1.04	1.65

CONTINUAL USE

	Male	Female	<=15	16 - 17	18+	1	2	3	4	5	6	LOS - Res	LOS - Guest
Changes	106	35	2	12	127	107	29	0	3	2	0	9.17	24.4
Greenhouse	31	34	9	19	37	49	15	0	0	1	0	6.57	10.17
Harry's Mother	67	42	34	65	10	93	9	0	0	6	1	5.11	9.95
Harry's Mother Crisis Service	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Outside-In	439	233	0	83	589	550	39	18	5	51	9	7.95	29.04
Roots and Branches	72	27	25	60	14	96	0	0	0	3	0	8.65	61.14
Yellow Brick Road	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	37	14	1	14	36	33	12	0	0	5	1	5.67	9.03

**FISCAL 1997 - 1998 -
Through 2/17/98**

CRISIS

	Male	Female	<=15	16 - 17	18+	1	2	3	4	5	6	LOS - Res	LOS - Guest
Changes	1	0	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Greenhouse	3	3	1	2	3	6	0	0	0	0	0	1.17	1.17
Harry's Mother	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Harry's Mother Crisis Service	238	116	26	99	229	319	22	5	1	6	1	1	1.89
New Avenues for Youth	7	4	1	4	6	8	2	0	1	0	0	1	1.1
Outside-In	92	20	2	20	90	87	4	3	1	14	3	1.06	1.65
Roots and Branches	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Yellow Brick Road	714	310	58	220	746	915	59	7	8	31	4	1	3.63
Other	79	38	7	24	86	95	15	0	0	5	2	1.03	1.43

CONTINUAL USE

	Male	Female	<=15	16 - 17	18+	1	2	3	4	5	6	LOS - Res	LOS - Guest
Changes	58	19	0	8	69	54	23	0	0	0	0	10.14	37.19
Greenhouse	27	13	5	8	27	36	2	1	0	0	1	8.73	16.62
Harry's Mother	51	16	12	49	6	57	8	1	1	0	0	7.25	13.14
Harry's Mother Crisis Service	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
New Avenues for Youth	67	64	19	81	31	104	6	12	0	5	4	5.22	13.15
Outside-In	242	88	0	43	287	281	16	7	3	20	3	10.74	30.83
Roots and Branches	13	8	7	8	6	18	0	0	0	3	0	7.67	23
Yellow Brick Road	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	48	19	24	19	24	43	10	0	1	10	3	6.1	8.52

ADDITIONAL STATISTICS FROM VARIOUS SOURCES.

National Study of homeless youth - 1992 (*Homeless Teenagers Formerly in Foster Care: Their Stories*, Robert Conte, July 1992)

81% come from abusive families

57% have been in foster care

83% come from families where the parents abuse drugs and/or alcohol

74% have drug or alcohol problems

93% are in need of mental health services

79% manifest serious depression

68% have contemplated suicide

31% have attempted suicide

85% have poor interpersonal/relationship skills

92% have not graduated from high school

88% lack employment skills

90% do not have access to regular health care

50% are in need of medical attention for a specific condition or disease

12% have tested positive for HIV (it is estimated that if all homeless teens were tested at least 30% would prove to test positive)

* The HIV statistics cited above are from a 1992 study. According to Janus Youth Programs, "Blind test studies in high-risk areas such as New York estimate the figure for homeless teens testing positive for HIV to be 5%-10% with 15% being the absolute highest figure Janus has seen. In a three year study conducted by the Oregon Research Institute with the assistance of Janus' Yellow Brick Road program, HIV positive results among Portland's homeless youth were in the neighborhood of 1%."

Greenhouse

The population is estimated to be 60% male; 40% female; 90% Caucasian. There is an increase of minority youth, especially young bi-racial females. Approximately 25 - 30% of newly screened youth are 13-15 years of age. Over 240 individual youths were served by the Greenhouse Alternative School during the 1996-97 school year. 99 youth were enrolled at the close of the 1996-97 school year. 10 GED's have been completed in the first 3 months of the 1997-98 school year. The average daily attendance is over 25 students, with 156 individual youth served from September - December 1997.

During the first year of their Transition Specialist program, 71 youth were assisted with case management-type services. Of these, 51 were age 15 and under and 53 were "placed" in some type of housing situation. Greenhouse hopes to continue and increase this program during 1998.

Janus/Willamette Bridge

The core street population is between 500-1000. The total within the metro area is 3,000 - 3,500. For ages 16-18 served by *Willamette Bridge Programs*: 70 - 80 % are local, 85% are Caucasian and 66% are male. According to program data, the average age of *Street Light* clients in FY 95/96 was 18.

Janus's outreach program, *Yellow Brick Road* made over 22,200 contacts with street youth during the 95/96 fiscal year. Outreach volunteers worked almost 5,000 hours during that same time period.

New Avenues for Youth

For the period from 8/4/97 - 1/31/98, the drop-in center worked with 362 unduplicated youths. Case management conducted 101 comprehensive assessments, 614 counseling sessions, 19 family sessions, and filed 59 suspected child abuse reports. One hundred and thirty (130) youth were referred to the Street Light shelter. Twenty-two (22) youth were referred to the Street Light Annex.

Outside In

The total street youth population is estimated at 1,500 - 2,000 youth. 1,065 unduplicated homeless youth were served by Outside In during fiscal 1995-96. 57% of the total population are male, 43% are female. 37% of those under 18 are male and 58% are female. 63% of those over 18 are male and 42% are female. Seventy-nine percent (79%) are Caucasian, 6% are Hispanic, 8% are African American and 7% are Native American. 85-90% of youth served are from the greater Metropolitan area. (per 1995-96 Annual Report)

During the 1996-97 fiscal year, Outside In served 1,065 youth in their drop-in center, case managed 164 youth, housed 42 youth in their transitional housing program and had 25 youth in their employment program. They provided weekend services to over 400 youth, helped 30 youth with rental assistance, and assisted over 96 youth with medical housing.

Single entity for funding, planning and decision-making.

As noted in the body of the report, current public contracts for the provision of services to homeless youth in downtown Portland are let through the County. However, funding priorities and policy decision-making are conducted piecemeal by both entities - sometimes with differing or competing objectives. For example: Funding for the emergency shelter and the winter shelter is split between the City and County. Recent efforts by members of this committee to advocate for additional shelter beds and other changes to the system necessitated numerous one-on-one meetings with City Council members and the County Chair. After over 3 months of effort, the two entities finally decided to split the \$18,000 cost.

The County currently relies on the provider community to "govern themselves" and work together on coordination and planning via *Project LUCK* - a publicly funded consortium of non-profit service providers, funders, youth, advocates, representatives of the faith community, the downtown neighborhood association, police department, health department, Oregon Research Institute, and the Association for Portland Progress. Although County staff attend *Project LUCK* meetings, they do not appear to take a leadership role.

Staff of the Bureau of Housing and Community Development, headed by Commissioner Gretchen Kafoury, work informally with providers and attend *Project LUCK* meetings. Perhaps because of their recognized leadership with the single adult homeless population, BHCD staff appear to provide more leadership with youth providers than any other governmental entity.

United Way Comment: There needs to be better coordination of services.

Committee question to providers and *Project LUCK*:

How does the community coordinate services?

Responses:

Boys and Girls Aid: Efforts are coordinated through county, city, and provider networks.

Greenhouse: Downtown service providers are members of Project LUCK, part of the Youth Services Consortium, and meet monthly. Service coordination meetings are held twice monthly for information sharing regarding youth accessing multiple agencies.

Janus/Willamette Bridge: Project LUCK serves to coordinate services in the areas of information sharing, addressing duplication of service issues and system-wide advocacy. Janus provides coordination around shelter and case management issues through Community Advisory Board meetings (shelter) and Service Coordination Meetings (case management).

New Avenues for Youth: The community does not coordinate services well. Coordination is done on an ad-hoc basis via contacts between administrators and program directors.

Outside In: Coordination is extensive, through Project LUCK, the city and county and through inter-agency relations. However, since the various groups have different goals, budgets and reporting criteria, coordination and comparison of data is problematic.

Systemic Philosophy

As noted in the findings, providers with different philosophical approaches often have difficulty coordinating services. For example, recently a client at one provider had agreed to enter into residential substance abuse treatment and begin the arduous recovery process. As the date for entry approached, the youth got cold feet and sought refuge at the “no-strings attached” drop-in center of another provider. When asked by the first provider to encourage the youth to continue working towards recovery, the second provider refused - stating that they do not put any strings on their services.

Philosophical Approaches/Mission Statements (as stated by each organization.)

Boys and Girls Aid: The purpose of The Boys and Girls Aid Society of Oregon is to help children to grow by strengthening the capacity of the individual child and family and

helping change the societal conditions of poverty, racism and sexism which affects children's growth. Service Philosophy - We utilize a child welfare approach focused on changing conditions and increasing individual and community capacity.

Greenhouse: The Greenhouse's service philosophy is to meet basic survival needs in a safe nurturing way that reestablishes trust, self-worth and hope. And to provide programs that offer homeless youth a way off the street.

Janus/Willamette Bridge: Janus/Willamette Bridge Programs are designed and funded to work with older homeless youth (16 and older) who are moving into independence as opposed to returning home.

The programs are designed around a blending of the following tenets: 1.) People control themselves, and are responsible for their choices and actions. 2.) Young people are inherently intelligent, capable human beings. 3.) You don't prepare people for responsibility and independence by taking control of their lives, and making their choices and decisions for them.

Janus' mission statement which applies agency-wide states, "Janus Youth Programs is a leader in creating innovative, community-based services which enhance the quality of life for children, youth and families. We work in partnership with others to create a safe and healthy community."

New Avenues for Youth: To create a safe and structured environment in which youth learn responsibility, self worth, and independence. To provide a continuum of care addressing the varied needs of youth at risk. To empower youth to leave street life and assume productive and fulfilling roles in society. To achieve high rates of success and increase accountability by documenting the results of our efforts to rehabilitate youth. To give leadership to other area providers by sharing our findings and working cooperatively to address the needs of Portland's youth at risk.

Outside In/Youth Program: We address the changing needs of homeless youth and other low-income and marginalized people as they work toward self-sufficiency and improved health by providing them innovative social, medical and mental health services and material resources.

Outside In provides emergency services to help minimize the damage occurring to youth while they are on the streets and transitional services to help them exit street life. All services, emergency and transitional, are provided within a treatment framework - keeping in mind the overreaching goal of helping youth exit street life.

United Way: To provide funds that will help people transition out of poverty and homelessness - not for short-term aid.

Project LUCK: We envision a community that embraces, advocates for and protects equally the welfare of all its members. We believe that young people are especially vulnerable and it is the community's responsibility to teach all children and youth that they have a voice to help protect themselves and their rights.

Funding priorities and new resources

The information set out below gives an overview of how the majority of the public dollars in the system are currently being spent.

Janus Youth Programs, Inc.*

Harry's Mother	\$411,000	Temporary shelter for runaway youth; family intervention services; case management.
Harry's Mother Crisis Line	\$80,000	24 -hour crisis line for youth
Street Light Shelter	\$202,063	Emergency shelter for 30 homeless youth
Winter Emergency Shelter	\$36,877	Emergency shelter for homeless youth (Nov. - March)
Transitional housing for girls	<u>\$65,000</u>	Transitional living (apartments) and case management for homeless young women
Agency Total	\$794,940	

***Note: Although only Street Light and the winter shelter are located in downtown, the other services are available to downtown street youth.**

Outside In

Drop-In Day Shelter	\$130,530	Drop-in, safe day-time emergency shelter for homeless youth (6 days/wk; 7 days/wk., Nov. - March)
Short-term Case Management	\$142,085	Case management for youth at the Drop-in shelter and Street Light Shelter
Transitional Housing Program	\$140,877	Transitional living (apartments) and case management for homeless youth
HIV Services	\$60,400	Outreach, HIV peer education, and support groups for HIV+ youth
Emergency Assistance	<u>\$32,514</u>	Food, medical assistance, ID's, bus tickets, etc.

Agency Total **\$506,406**

Boys and Girls Aid*

East County Shelter	\$180,000	Temporary shelter for runaway youth
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Safeplace \$60,060 Temporary shelter for pregnant and parenting
young women

Agency Total \$240,060

***Note: These services rarely serve downtown youth.**

Total Public Funding \$1,541,406

Total Public Funding For Services Downtown \$1,301,346

* Note: The total funding for services downtown includes funding for services that are located outside downtown, but are accessible to downtown youth. This total only includes programs funded through the County Department of Community and Family Services and the City's Bureau of Housing and Community Development. Additional funding may come from other governmental entities, such as the Health Department. Source: Letter dated 6/17/97 from Robert Donough, Manager of the Contracts and Evaluation Division for the Multnomah County Department of Community and Family Services to Ray Mathis c/o Citizens Crime Commission.

Private Funding

New Avenues for Youth \$500,000/yr.

Salvation Army Greenhouse \$500,000/yr.

Note: Both of these organizations focus exclusively on services for downtown youth.

Funding Devoted To Services For Downtown Youth

*Janus/Willamette Bridge \$760,000**

Outside In \$600,000

New Avenues for Youth \$500,000

Salvation Army Greenhouse \$500,000

Total \$2,360,000

* This total includes funding for services that are located outside downtown, but are accessible to downtown youth.

Proposed Additional Public (Federal) Funding

Pursuant to the federal McKinney Act (and regulations promulgated pursuant to the Act), the Department of Housing and Urban Development publishes an annual Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for a nationally competitive set of (3 year) grant funds for services to persons who meet the HUD definition of homeless. Each year HUD also publishes what they believe to be each city or county's "share" of the total amount of federal dollars allocated for homeless programs. Please note, however, that the McKinney application process has historically been a competitive process under which cities and counties can receive a lot more funding than their allotted "share".

According to local officials, HUD indicated Portland and Multnomah county's share to be \$3.5 million for 1998. In August 1997, the City of Portland and Multnomah County submitted a proposal to HUD for twelve (12) separate projects totaling \$3,471,521. Pursuant to regulations set out in the NOFA, the projects were ranked by City and County officials in priority order - with the understanding that HUD officials will take this ranking into account when determining which projects will be awarded funding. Three projects to benefit homeless youth were proposed as part of the City & County's 1997 application for HUD McKinney Funds. These proposals, which were ranked as #'s 9, 10 and 11 (out of a total of 12 projects) ask for a total of \$642,226 - with \$137,401 for mental health assessment services (*Network Behavior Healthcare*), \$217,875 for alcohol & drug treatment (*DePaul Treatment Centers, Inc.*), and \$286,950 for housing and advocacy for teen parents who are homeless (*Boys & Girls Aid Society*). If awarded, these funds would become available for "draw-down" from HUD in early 1998. As with other McKinney grants, a percentage (approx. 5%) of the awarded funds may be utilized by the monitoring entity (City or County) to cover administrative costs.

United Way

The *United Way* donates approximately \$20 mil /yr. to 100 agencies in 4 counties. In 1997, \$95,000 in *United Way* funds went to programs that serve homeless youth in downtown - *Janus*, the YWCA and *Outside In* received funds.

Specific findings and recommendations for individual governmental entities.

Portland Public Schools

The following articles may provide some guidelines for planning and project development for working with homeless children and youth:

1. Source: *The Clearing House*, May-June 1996 v69 n5 p.293(4).
Title: Teacher strategies for supporting homeless students and families.
Author: Kevin J. Swick

Abstract: Teachers from Richland School District 1 in Columbia, SC, participated in several projects aimed at enhancing their understanding of homeless students and families. Through such projects, they were able to identify key problems of homeless people and utilize various resources to help alleviate them.

2. Source: *Childhood Education*, Spring 1997 v73 n3 p.133(3).
Title: Prognosis for homeless children and adolescents.
Author: Karol A. Reganick

Abstract: Recent survey shows that the current homeless population consists of single adults, families, battered women and runaway adolescents whose common characteristic is their lack of a fixed, adequate and permanent residence. The problem's societal and personal impacts are felt more acutely

by children and adolescents. In satisfying the immediate needs of homeless children and adolescents, educators must first try to understand that homelessness is a continuous process. A comprehensive approach to providing assistance to homeless children and adolescents is discussed.

Memorandum

To: Homeless Youth Assessment Committee Members

From: Kandis Brewer Nunn and Thane Tienson

Subject: Notes from teen meetings

Date: November 26, 1997

We met with two groups of teens arranged by Outside In and Greenhouse staff. The following is a composite of the reflections of the teens in both groups:

Street environment & hierarchy

- Teens quickly acclimate to the street and its people, viewing this as their home, their family. They recognize this is a distorted perspective but in the absence of either, this environment plays a functioning role.
- Young kids (9-10 year olds) do not often make it on the streets. They are intimidated by some of the older teens (principally those older than 18 who have been on the streets quite a while and who believe they have earned the right to determine who stays and who goes); many return quickly to their former environments.
- Older teens also target or use newer street youth (nubies - those on the streets for less than a year), assigning chores (legal and illegal) and occasionally physically or verbally abusing them.
- Teens indicate that if you give respect to others you get respect so they think the hierarchy is a good thing. It provides what little structure there is to the street. Altercations occur if teens view others as hitting on their friends (sexually or abusively) and are treated on a case by case basis. "We take care of ourselves. It's best to not get in anybody else's business."

Who's on the street?

- Approximately 300 homeless teens as a core group with a 50/50 composition: male and female. All told, they estimate the numbers to be approximately 2,000-2,500. (Several indicated they got this number from service providers.)
- Drug usage: The majority use drugs principally to "get away from reality" initially, and then become hooked. It gives them a sense of "well-being." They pay for these drugs by panhandling, stealing and returning merchandise. Others hold full-time jobs (however lowly paid). Occasionally, they support their habits through prostitution

but the teens do not believe it is as pervasive as perceived by adults. Those who do engage in prostitution are viewed as “lower on the totem pole”.

- Many have mental or emotional problems, much of which is either initiated by or accentuated by drug usage.
- Approximately half of the girls on the street are mothers, many of whom keep their children with them. Other girls have either legally handed over their children for adoption (to their families or others) or their children are in some form of foster care.
- Many teens have animals because they provide unconditional love and response. “They are always there for you.”
- Some teens are only “day” homeless. They actually can and do return to their families in the evening. They simply are no longer in school; some are banned from attending public school because of past occurrences or present behavior.
- Suburban teens: Some were more familiar than others with the term “weekend warriors”. They view these teens as having the money to come downtown, “do their business” (i.e. purchase drugs) and then return to their homes. Weekend warriors may not imply overnighting on the streets or even hanging around for indefinite periods of time. They simply are teens of similar ages, perhaps similar dress, on the streets during a given time period. Some, but not all, mix with the “regulars.”
- *The vast majority of teens on the streets are “travelers”, in the teens’ estimation.* These urban nomads are on a West Coast “circuit” cycling between Seattle, San Francisco and Portland, principally. When they tire of one area, or have used up the services, they move only eventually to return. People tend to stay on the West Coast because of weather conditions (less harsh than elsewhere) and other cities do not provide as much help as these three do. (“Let the system help me.”). They will continue to do this until they can not do it anymore. Turning 21 is a big disincentive because people are no longer accepted at certain shelters and the adult shelters are not viewed as very pleasant.
- Kids may not die, per se, they simply disappear. They rarely tell others that they are leaving which may account for the sense of a lot of kids dying. And then at a later date, it becomes known that they died. Or, kids can also mysteriously reappear. Additionally, several indicated they had heard of several friends in the past few weeks who had died.

What do they do with their time? Their responses:

- Most wake up with no plan in mind for the day.
- Some hold full time jobs.
- Some “hang out” and talk with friends, either on the streets or at service agencies where they are fed or receive medical attention.
- Do drugs to pass the time and avoid reality.
- A typical day may be a teen waking at 9 a.m. in a shelter (have to get out at that time), wanders over to another service provider and sleeps until noon; has lunch, catches up with friends, then wanders the street until its time for dinner at Greenhouse. Sometime thereafter (depending on shelter closing time) they return to the shelter and start the process all over again.
- It’s the teens’ impression that quite a few take advantage of Greenhouse’s school to get their GEDs. At the prom last year, 20 students graduated. However, they are only trained for the lowest skilled positions which perpetuates their poverty.

Who provides services and how is it viewed?

- Some are preferable to others, particularly ones that provide moral support, essential services, and are a “cool” place to hang out. Principal agencies noted as fitting that description and providing essential services: Greenhouse, Outside In, and to a lesser extent Harry’s Mother.
- Some agencies do not allow personal, physical interaction with others of the opposite sex (hugging, handholding etc.), can’t “cuss” and often have “issues” with what teens want to talk about.
- Services they perceive being provided: medical, place to be inside out of the cold, food, occasionally bus tickets home.
- Teens may have multiple caseworkers, some of whom interact and others which don’t. You are allowed access to resources as long as you are “exhibiting” progress which can mean going to school, seeking counseling or being in a treatment program, or actively pursuing skill training for employment.

How do they view their future?

- Many when asked said they are either in or planning to return to school to earn their GED or to enroll in a community college. Career options the teens interviewed indicated they would like to consider: alternative music composition; administrative assistant in a CPA firm; starting your own business; working with the disadvantaged using sign interpretation; computer/Internet services for a nonprofit. However, how much of this is wistful thinking and how many will actually pursue these goals is questionable, and will be influenced by individual motivation and access to services that will help them achieve them.
- “The streets are our home. This is our family. There are only three ways off the streets: get out of it. go to jail. die.”
- They view this as their family and, for the moment, do not see or necessarily desire an alternative. They are looking for that sense of belonging among people they like and care about what they think of them.
- “We are not street trash, you know. People do what you expect them to do. So if you expect me to shoplift, or to scream, do drugs or whatever, I might as well do it since you already think that’s what I’ll do anyway.”

What do they need?

- Principal need: more shelters of varying types. Currently, only one shelter is available that houses 30 teens. There is an overflow shelter but it has no showers; food is provided occasionally. Maximum length of stay allowed: 6 months. Shelter staff provides moral support. Teens indicated they view shelters as a place for those who want to get their lives together. However, some teens resent the restrictions or requirements i.e. no drugs allowed, must make beds, etc. Those who don’t want to comply avoid them because of the restrictive environment. Foster group homes: not unusual to have teens run away from these homes as well.
- Additional transitional housing (studio apartment, the rent of which is paid for six months) is needed. During this time, two-thirds of what teens earn goes into the bank as a nest egg for housing after the 6-month period concludes. They like this plan because it helps them achieve some sense of independence. There are additional programs that assist with underwriting a portion of the rent that they access as individuals we are told.
- For those who do not access shelters, they either sleep under bridges or have permission from property owners to sleep in doorways. However, they are “harassed” even though they have permission. Some have full time jobs and being awakened in the middle of the night makes it difficult to get through the day. There

are no places to shower except if they take advantage of friends with apartments. Those who do not sleep on the streets drift from friend to friend, crashing in apartments.

- Medical care: Oregon Health Plan. Colds constantly circulating, as are lice and scabies. The latter two are typically contracted at the shelters and teens avoid the shelters for that purpose. Others have stomach problems (perhaps associated with stress and anxiety.)
- Freedom from what they view as harassment by security patrols. “We get busted for the stupidest stuff. An adult could be doing the very same thing (jaywalking, for example) and they would pick on us for how we look and for our age. It’s not fairly enforced.”
- Better integration of services and centralized repository of knowledge about what services are available. Right now they patch-quilt it together independently and have to learn the ropes from their friends.
- Teen Comments:
 - If there is funding for political trips abroad, there must be funding for shelter at home.
 - Have written letters to public officials and received no answers. They view this lack of response as indicating adults do not care and that there will be no effort made for additional shelters.

APPENDIX C

**HOMELESS YOUTH ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE
QUESTIONNAIRE**

Name of Provider: _____

Telephone: _____

Contact Person: _____

Fax: _____

1. Do you publish an annual report and can we have a copy?

2. What is your annual budget? Copy available?

3. Source of funds (public/private including United Way):

4. Numbers of employees:

5. Services provided:

6. Mission statement:

Questionnaire Page 2

7. What kind of statistics do you keep on the populations you serve?

a) Total population:

b) Demographics of population (age/race/sex):

c) Services provided:

d) How is this data share with other providers?

e) Is there good demographic information on Portland's homeless youth population? (If not, any suggestions on how to gather data?)

8. How does the community coordinate services?

Questionnaire Page 3

b) Suggestions on how to improve coordination:

9. How do you interact/interface with other publicly funded institutions that are responsible for serving young people, specifically:

a) Portland Public Schools:

b) Department of Juvenile Justice:

c) Dept. of Community and Family Services:

d) Youth service centers:

e) Health Department:

f) Mental health service providers:

Questionnaire Page 4

h) Portland Police Bureau:

e) Others?

10. How do you measure your organization's effectiveness?

11. What is your organization's service philosophy?

12. Are there gaps in the service delivery system for displaced youth?

a) Suggestions for filling the gaps?

13. Does the present system of services:

a) Provide for "need" assessment in population served? Are services provided to youth who not "need" such services?

Questionnaire Page 5

b) Encourage “gaming” of the system by participants?

c) Attract a transient population to Portland; or are majority of clients served of local origin?

d) Require effort or accountability from population served or effort to help themselves?

14. What suggestions do you have for improving the service delivery system for displaced youth?

15. Any suggestions for this committee or any questions about the committee’s work?