

HARRIS COUNTY LGBTQ HOMELESS PREVENTION INITIATIVE

Schools Committee

Partners in the Initiative

Federal Partners:

**Departments of: Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
Health and Human Services (HHSD)
Education (USDE)
Justice (USJD)**

US Interagency Council on Homeless (USICH)

True Colors, a national non-profit leader on LGBTQ youth homelessness

State Partners:

Texas Homeless Education Office

**University of Texas School of Public Health, and School of Nursing
One Voice Texas**

National Association of Social Workers Texas

Baylor College of Medicine, Teen Health Clinic

County Partners:

Harris County CPS

Harris County Juvenile Probation Department

Harris County Department of Mental Health

Coalition for the Homeless of Houston/Harris County

Local Partners:

Continuum of Care (COC)

Service Providers

Runaway Homeless Youth (RHY) providers

Local Education Agencies (LEA)

Law Enforcement

Juvenile Justice

Communities in Schools

What is the initiative about?

Initiative Goals, Objectives, and Timeline

Our community is participating in the *Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning (LGBTQ) Youth Homelessness Prevention Initiative*, led by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). As a participating community Harris County will have the opportunity to provide national leadership for developing a comprehensive approach for preventing homelessness among LGBTQ youth.

This initiative consists of developing and implementing a plan for LGBTQ youth homelessness prevention and intervention in two communities: Hamilton County, Ohio, and Harris County, Texas.

The Montrose Center is Harris County's local lead for this initiative.

The national initiative's goals are to learn more about

- (1) preventing homelessness for LGBTQ youth and
- (2) intervening early to prevent chronic homelessness among LGBTQ youth.

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The initiative's objectives are to:

Facilitate greater local collaboration between stakeholders working with youth. Our community will receive supports to develop and implement a community strategy to prevent homelessness among LGBTQ youth who are at-risk or who are experiencing episodic (i.e., non-chronic) homelessness.

Inform national strategies for preventing homelessness among LGBTQ youth. Our community will participate in a federally-sponsored cross-site evaluation of the initiative to identify promising practices and process challenges and inform future federal program guidance and policy

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The steps for our local initiative include the following:

Strategic Planning: Beginning March 2014, lasting 4-6 months. This includes a local kickoff meeting on April 15, facilitated discussions, and TA resources; expected to produce a plan for the local initiative.

Implementation: Begins September 1, 2014. Continued TA resources. Recommended milestones include first youth participant engagement in initiative activities and project monitoring and feedback.

Initiative Reports: Communities will provide short reports in October 2014 and 2015 summarizing activities and progress. The HUD TA team will be available to assist with these reports.

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Planning and Implementation Guidance

Our community-wide strategies will be anchored around our HUD Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) program and our community will integrate the strategies into our HUD consolidated plan. As part of the initiative, our community will address the following:

Determine our target population. Come to a consensus on how our community defines youth, homelessness, at risk of homelessness, and LGBTQ.

Include appropriate partners. In addition to drop-in centers, schools, and youth-specific providers, the local initiative will include other services or settings (e.g., malls, parks) where these youth congregate.

Incorporate the youth framework. We will apply the *Unaccompanied Youth Intervention Model* described in the [*Framework to End Youth Homelessness*](#).

What is the initiative about?

Technical Assistance and Evaluation

Technical assistance (TA) will be available from various federal agencies including HUD; the U.S. Departments of Health and Human Services, Education, Justice, and the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH). Also, the True Colors Fund, a national organization dedicated to ending LGBTQ youth homelessness, is a non-federal partner and part of the HUD TA team. Federally funded TA will support our community with resources such as webinars, materials, conference calls, on-site TA, and consultation. TA will be tailored to meet our community's needs. Also, the TA team will carry out a process evaluation to capture lessons learned and implications for future efforts. The evaluation will identify strategies that can be adapted to prevent homelessness among LGBTQ youth in other communities. The TA team will share findings with our community to ensure that lessons learned are useful to and support our initiative.