LGBTQ Runaway and Homeless Youth (RHY) Goals and How TLPs Can Help Meet Them

TLPs

Youth described goals in three broad areas, and some of the ways transitional living programs (TLPs) can help them succeed.

**Education**

- GED or diploma prep
- Information about vocational, technical, or college courses
- Access to technology for online learning
- Documentation for financial aid
- Help with homework
- Reminders to stay on track
- Resources for name changes
- Training in basic software use

**Employment**

- Job training
- Interviewing and public speaking skills
- Internet access
- Transportation passes
- Money for work and interview attire
- Employment opportunities
- Resources for name changes
- Training in basic software use

**Independence and Stability**

- Goal identification and formation
- Life skills training
- Cooking, laundry, and home care
- Filling out forms and applications
- Money management
- Mental and physical health care
5 Essentials for Transitional Living Programs (TLPs) in Rural or Remote Areas

Homeless LGBTQ youth require a range of services to meet their educational, employment, and independence goals. In addition, those residing in rural areas, or working with small populations, may need to respond to unique needs.

**01** Educational programs with online programming.
This is especially important for LGBTQ youth who may have experienced bullying, harassment, or violence in traditional educational settings, or for those situated far from a college or training center.

**02** Ability to use preferred names and pronouns.
Online learning platforms must allow youth to use their preferred names in email and class rosters, so as to avoid outing the youth and subjecting them to potential bias and discrimination.

**03** Access to state-wide healthcare and legal resources.
It can be difficult to identify LGBTQ-affirming medical and mental health care providers, or legal support for name changes, so TLPs may need to reach out to resources beyond their typical networks.

**04** Active community building.
Being visible and engaged with the public can help raise awareness of local LGBTQ homeless youth needs, as well as ensure that youth are recognized as part of the community.

**05** Open-mindedness.
While a diverse staff can help youth feel safe and affirmed, TLPs with predominately White heterosexual staff can successfully create a safe, affirming culture by being open-minded, respectful, and in touch with youth.
Meeting Homeless LGBTQ Youths’ Goals: How Transitional Living Programs Can Help

“By the time I age out I want to have a stable job and have a plan for being self-sustainable, I guess, and get back into school.”

In a Youth’s Own Words

Goals in 3 Primary Spheres

Additional Supports for All Homeless LGBTQ Youth

- Goal identification and formation
- GED and high school diploma prep, vocational, technical, or college courses
- Technology access for online learning or job search
- Legal support for name changes or securing government documentation
- Interviewing and public speaking skills
- Resources for interview and work attire, transportation
- Life skills training in areas such as cooking, laundry, and money management
- Mental and physical health care

From 3/40 Blueprint: Creating the Blueprint to Reduce LGBTQ Youth Homelessness | www.340blueprintproject.com
Higher Hurdles for Homeless Transgender Youth: What TLPs Need to Understand and Support

Key Challenges:

- Finding safe housing
- Overcoming bias in hiring
- Determining bathroom use, room assignments, and other questions around gendered spaces
- Answering questions around gender or sex on job applications
- Accessing additional gender affirming, physical and mental health services
- Changing names and gender markers on government documentation
- Being able to use preferred names and identities across platforms
- Identifying with role models, mentors, and cultural guides
Current Approaches to Homeless LGBTQ Youth Service Provision

Specific, Integrated, and Neutral Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In-house LGBTQ-specific services</th>
<th>Outsourced LGBTQ-specific services</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>PREFERRED</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>A safe space where LGBTQ youth can build connections with peers. Promoting equity by actively addressing LGBTQ-specific issues around housing, education, and employment.</td>
<td>Allows providers without in-house capacity to serve the unique needs of LGBTQ youth. Supports providers whose mission is to serve all homeless youth.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>CHALLENGE</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Not all providers have the resources to serve populations separately.</td>
<td>May vary in quality due to different provider capacity.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Integrated LGBTQ content for all youth</th>
<th>Identity-neutral services</th>
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<td>Supports LGBTQ youth while educating heterosexual and cisgender youth. Can potentially bring all youth closer together.</td>
<td>May promote equality.</td>
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<td><strong>CHALLENGE</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Requires being supplemented with LGBTQ-specific services to address these youths’ unique needs.</td>
<td>Often fail to recognize the impact that different aspects of the youth’s identity may have on their experiences of homelessness. Do not address the prejudice and discrimination faced by LGBTQ youth, or the trauma endured by youth based on their sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.</td>
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Individualized and standardized service delivery

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<th>Standardized service delivery</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>STRENGTH</strong></td>
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<td>Recognizes that all youth are different and have unique needs. Sees youth as experts of their own situations and experiences.</td>
<td>Streamlines services for youth in your programs and simplifies service delivery for staff.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>WEAKNESS</strong></td>
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<td>May be difficult due to poorly funded resources</td>
<td>Fails to recognize the diversity of homeless youths’ experiences and needs. Does not address LGBTQ-specific issues relating to housing, education, and employment.</td>
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