



Themes and Recommendations

- Overview of Summit Themes
 - Youth need more than a bed
 - Do long-term relationship building
 - More transparency and accountability
 - Assessment and evaluation of program and services
 - Build visibility for the issue of LGBTQ youth homelessness
 - Repurpose existing community assets
 - Youth must have a real voice
 - Hold ourselves accountable for taking care of our youth
 - Everything Intersects

POLICY

- Training, Evaluation, and Transparency
 - LGBTQ training, evaluation, and transparency for all facilities and programs dedicated to providing services for homeless youth.
- Budget – Youth homelessness funding redlined into government budgets.
- Increase Access
 - Raise the income threshold for support services, including food stamps
 - Eliminate drug convictions as a dis-qualifier for HUD housing
 - Allow service providers to serve undocumented minors
 - Remove adult guardian signature requirements to access services as a minor.
 - Expand the number of partial emancipation shelters
- Affordable Housing
 - Have a higher threshold for affordable housing. Developers use credits to build more housing for youth (not shelters). Tie this money to the renovation of foreclosed housing, closed schools, etc. Dedicate this funding stream to achieve benchmarks established in Plan 2.0.
 - Have banks release foreclosed properties for community efforts to address housing instability.
 - Have a system that provides a government guarantee to leases. (like Freddie Mac and Fannie Mae do for mortgages)
- Minimum Wage
 - Increase the minimum wage to \$15/hour.
 - Youth minimum wage should be the same as the adult minimum wage.
 - Restaurant workers should make minimum wage, not below.
- Transportation – Reduced CTA and RTA Fares
- Definitions
 - Make definition of “youth” consistent across agencies
 - Expand definition to 25 or 26
 - Definition of homeless does not take into account vulnerabilities
 - Let people define who their families are.



- Transgender/Gender Non-Conforming
 - Look for and implement best practices in the area of name changes and gender markers
 - Name change process should have nothing to do with criminal status
 - Increase Education and Communication of Available Resources
 - Increase education and communication around accessing emergency housing funds.
- Decriminalize
 - Decriminalization of drugs
 - Additional substance abuse treatment funding
 - Decriminalize sex work
- Follow-up on Work Already Done
 - Monitor the effect of the new youth vulnerability index
 - Make sure DCFS complies with court requirements from ACLU's lawsuit.
- Aging Out
 - Need policies developed and improved to help youth transitioning out of care including DCFS care and transitional housing programs
- Health Care
 - Universal Health Care
 - Lower the age of consent for primary care.
 - Improve access to mental health care
- College and Financial Aid
 - Use college dormitory spaces to house homeless youth.
 - Make financial aid available for summer months to avoid summer-based homelessness for students.
 - Change federal housing law so full-time students can access subsidized housing programs.
 - Remove the impact of receiving food stamps on financial aid eligibility.
 - Change College Cost Reduction Act of 2007 (federal) to allow other service providers to certify applicants as homeless.
 - Need facilitators within youth systems to navigate FAFSA and other college processes including loans and scholarships.

LEGAL

- Police
 - Hire LGBTQ police officers, especially transgender officers
 - Provide consistent, on-going training at all levels of the police department
 - Add a dedicated full-time city police LGBTQ liaison
 - Get advocates to assist with cases at each station and that go with youth to the police
 - Documentation for crimes and police Actions
- LGBTQ Training Throughout the Justice System including Judges and Probation Officers



- Need donated legal services for: Expungement, Name changes, Emancipation, Suing harassers, Citizenship, Navigating anti-discrimination and hate crimes laws, Cleaning up credit, Fighting eviction, Enforcement of employment protections, Intervention on health care issues, Help disentangle 18+ so they can get their own benefits
- Expand Transformative Justice – Build on existing models in schools
- Additional Judicial Items
 - Review Juvenile v Adult Sentencing
 - Institute peer juries
 - Create Youth Justice Council for appeals
 - Educate youth on their legal rights

YOUTH IN SYSTEMS

- DCFS
 - Foster parenting
 - Recruit LGBTQ Foster Parents
 - Culturally competent foster parent recruiters
 - Ongoing support and monitoring after initial foster parent Pride training.
 - Create an LGBTQ Youth Advisory Council that's empowered.
 - Provide youth in care with access to queer and trans youth spaces and services.
 - LGBT liaison within the department
 - Provide position more structure and resources
 - Give more transparency and monitoring of liaisons' work
 - Work with current and former people in care and adult allies
 - DCFS Hotline – Start providing accountability & transparency
 - Give public full transparency on the federal grant DCFS got re: LGBTQ.
 - Switch to a continuum of phasing out people out of care rather than an abrupt drop off of care. See St. Louis model.
- CCBYS (Comprehensive Crisis Based Youth Services)
 - Independent evaluation of their work to develop better strategies for success.
 - Grant the public transparency into their work.
 - Develop an understanding within CCBYS that re-unification is not always the best policy for LGBTQ young people.
- Guardian Ad Litem (GAL)
 - Guardian ad litem need LGBTQ training on an ongoing basis.
 - Expedite process for getting documents to GAL.
- Schools
 - All schools should have a restorative justice model. See existing programs in Chicago.
 - De-escalation of police in schools.
- Criminal Justice System
 - Evaluate and monitor Cook County Jail's policy on transgender prisoners.
 - Illinois prisons need to reform policies towards transgender workers and detainees.



- Adopt alternative models for non-violent juvenile crimes.
- Detangle DCFS and the juvenile justice system and make it more transparent.
- Public Benefits
 - Fix SSI policy for transition to emancipation
 - If youth want their own benefits, allow disentanglement from their parents.

HEALTH

- County Care – Remove barriers to enrollment and Get youth enrolled
- Access
 - Provide summer-time access to health care including counselors
 - Identify or create child care options when someone has to go to the ER
- Transgender Health
 - Cover the complete array of transgender medical needs in state coverage.
 - LGBTQ health care institutions need to have ALL staff be culturally competent and increase privacy and confidentiality.
 - Support for health care facilities to provide medically appropriate subsidized hormones and supportive supplies.
 - Howard Brown Health Center
 - Add peer-based syringe exchange.
 - Streamline informed consent process for hormones for people 18 and up.
 - Add mobile and pop-up clinics for transgender health needs.
- Education
 - Communicate what health programs are available to homeless youth.
 - Train medical staff. Make sure they are trauma-informed.
 - On college campuses we need more culturally competent medical care, including psychiatric.
 - Train nurses in K-12 schools to be culturally competent care givers.
 - Provide culturally competent and better resourced health education in CPS.
- Hospitals
 - Use HRC evaluation of hospitals as a starting place for monitoring and deeper evaluation.
 - Cultural competency training for all hospital staff. Build it into hospital accreditation.
 - Promote the field guide of the LGBT Council of the Joint Commission of Accreditation of Healthcare Certification
 - Work with Adler School of Psychology to publicize their database.
 - Cross-reference with JCAHC list.
- Healthy Food
 - Campaign around de-shaming Link cards.
 - Heartland Alliance merged with Vital Bridges. Expand Vital Bridges to homeless youth.
 - Dispense healthy food to youth at existing institutions on a daily basis.



- Build infrastructure of regional welcoming churches that share the “burden” of feeding LGBTQ homeless youth.
- Create job training programs for agriculture in old warehouses through indoor organic farms. This creates jobs and food.
- Physical Fitness
 - Create Body Positive Recreational Spaces
 - access to food, laundry, showers, bathrooms, storage, etc. outside of social services to avoid stigma
 - Provide sports, dance, self-defense, and other programming
 - Create pop-up spaces within Chicago Park District facilities and gyms in school buildings.
- Medical Coverage
 - Expand
 - Medicaid expansion to cover full dental and vision needs.
 - Expand definition of youth for dental and vision care coverage.
 - Work on prevention
 - Emergency fund to cover dental and vision co-pays and other non-covered expenses.
 - Activate multiple clinics to provide dental and vision care throughout the year.
 - Create LGBT community glasses frame donation program.
- HIV & STI Testing and Treatment
 - Everything needs to be walk-in.
 - Expand the number of LGBTI and HIV/AIDS and STI clinics throughout the city. That would include testing and treatment in the same facility.
 - Sliding scale for STI testing and treatment at Howard Brown. (focus on prevention)
 - Adherence to drug regimen depends on housing and a safe place to store drugs, so investigate how to integrate these services.
 - Collect statistics on transgender individuals in this area
 - Provide non-judgmental, culturally competent, strengths-based questions and treatment of sex workers.
- Mental Health
 - Youth are asking for mental health care.
 - Access to “life coaches” and adults who care about youth. These need to be long term relationships.
 - Pay attention to spiritual health.
 - Impact of sleep deprivation on all aspects of health.
 - Expand access to psychiatry and counseling for LGBTQ homeless youth.
 - Bring harm reduction substance abuse programs to Chicago. Provide programs that meet youth where they are and have flexibility.
 - Support to pay for medications that are not covered by County Care.



JOB TRAINING AND EDUCATION

- Transgender/Gender Non-Conforming
 - Expand know your rights training.
 - Do an education and marketing campaign on building awareness and education regarding hiring transgender people.
 - Work with Pride at Work to bring awareness to their awareness building project.
 - Explore existing policies to see where there can be improvements. (city, county, state laws)
 - Ask LGBTQ social enterprises to provide transitional employment for youth.
 - Create internships funded through HRC 100 in six-week tracts.
- Job Readiness
 - Expand job readiness/entrepreneurial training with opportunities for job placement. (See Inspirational Corporation)
 - Put job training and job placement programs in place with long term metrics reporting.
 - Identify and/or create childcare resources.
- Education
 - Expand GED programs in the LGBTQ community (BYC model)
 - Focus on development of individual plans
 - Include support services for FAFSA and college application completion.
 - Match this to groups that provide scholarships (Point Foundation, etc.)
 - Provide community support for an alternative education program launching this fall.
- Get Entrepreneurial
 - Create entrepreneurial venture capitalism fund for LGBT business owners.
- Address Barriers
 - Permanent Address
 - Phone Number
 - Work with banks to
 - provide alternatives to currency exchanges, debit card payments, etc.
 - provide financial literacy training

HOUSING

- Themes
 - Long-term relationships lead to long-term housing stability
 - Housing outcomes are most successful when an intersecting and collaborative system of supports is accessible and high-quality
 - Options & New Models
 - Improved data, meaningful program evaluation, and system transparency
 - Shelter Safety & Training
- Diversity of Models Available Across Chicago
 - Current housing options: Shelter for Youth-Low Threshold, Low-Demand, Adult Shelters, Interim Housing Model, Transitional Living Program, Permanent



Housing with Short-Term Supports, Scattered Site Apartments, Age Appropriate Stable Housing, Safe Haven Programs

- Expanding current models
 - Host Home Program
 - Increasing scattered site apartments
 - Youth housing programs with flexible lengths of stay and meaningful supports—especially for LGBTQ youth with disabilities, survivors of trauma, and pregnant and/or parenting young people
- The need for additional models to further diversity options
 - Ideas include:
 - Individuals or families subsidize apartments for young people for a period of time
 - Small, intentional housing collectives with supports
 - 24-hour drop-in center
 - Increasing affordable housing units and allocating % to young people
 - College dorms (City College housing)
- The need for additional models to further diversity options
 - Emergency LGBTQ foster parent network
 - Expand access to the City’s program to offer properties for \$1 for collective living options
 - Allocate units of housing for young people with low income trust funds
 - Expand sanctuary housing/networks for undocumented, LGBTQ youth
- Recommendations
 - Housing options must be geographically diverse and connected to resources and robust supportive services located within the community
 - NOTE: housing options must be located separately but in reasonable proximity to wraparound services and programs to ensure long-term connections when/if housing realities change
- Housing Model Recommendations
 - Policy: Increase housing program accessibility by expanding definitions of households to include chosen family members, partners, significant others, and siblings
 - Increase beds available for a young person’s self-identified family (partner, children, siblings, etc.)
 - Partial Emancipation
- Central Referral System & Vulnerability Index
 - Waiting List Transparency
 - System-wide education and information about CRS and its design, including connection to vulnerability index
 - Idea: Accelerate youth who are aging out
- Shelters
 - More data
 - Expand hours



- Trainings
- Showers
- Safety
- Real Time Bed Availability
- 311 Transport
- Housing Programs need...
 - Access to affordable, reduced-cost transit
 - Art and creative outlets
 - Access to beauty supplies, self-care supplies, and quality clothing and basic needs
 - Support to effectively prevent, interrupt, and transform violence; implement restorative practices and accountability structures

PREVENTION

- Funders - Invest Long-Term. Please stop moving onto the next best thing.
- Outreach and Education to do Early Family Intervention
 - Have therapists and crisis workers work with family to do supports before being kicked out.
 - Replicate Family Acceptance Project (Greenchimneys.org model) from NY state
 - Find at risk youth through schools, churches, social services (i.e. CCBYS), general awareness
 - Provide LGBTQ education

ACTION STEPS

- Boost Chicago Coalition of the Homeless and Chicago Youth Homelessness Task Force
- Disseminate reports and information
- Share list of Opt-in Summit registrants for networking
- Strengthen existing organizations
- Following-up on these recommendations
- Activism to bring media attention to the issue