

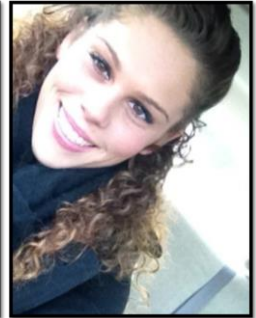
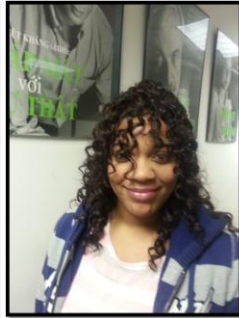
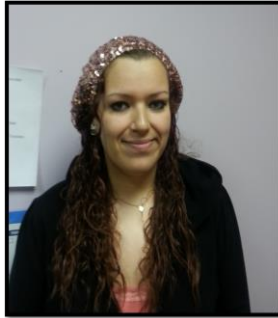


MASSACHUSETTS COALITION FOR THE HOMELESS

Committed to ensuring that everyone has a place to call home

## Youth Without Homes Can't Wait:

Provide \$4 Million in the FY'16 Budget to Implement the Unaccompanied Youth Homelessness Law



Building upon the momentum from the January 2015 signing of the unaccompanied youth homelessness bill into law (Chapter 450 of the Acts of 2014), we are seeking \$4 million to address the housing and support service needs of unaccompanied youth and young adults who are experiencing homelessness.

### Requests:

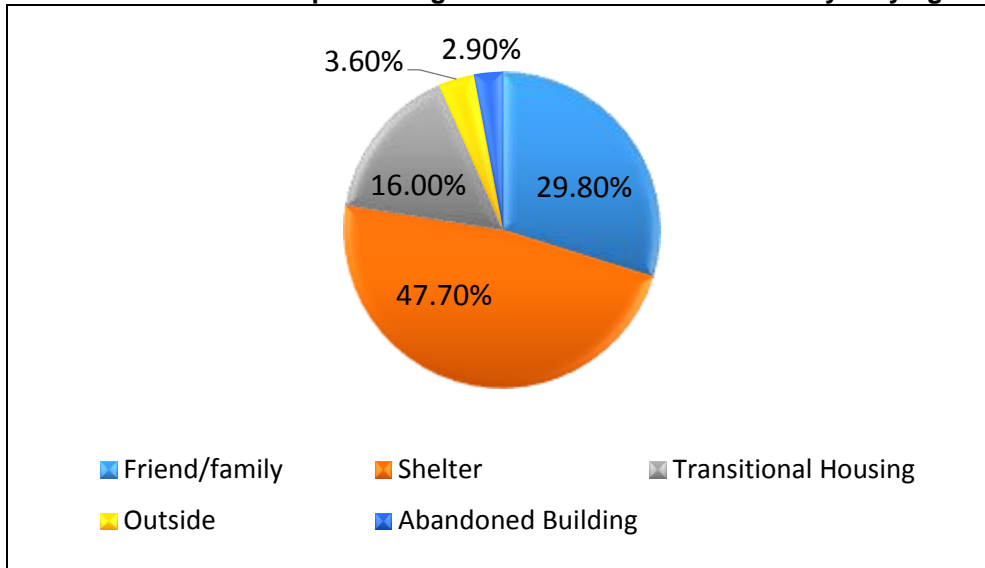
- **Housing:** \$2.5 million for housing for unaccompanied youth under the Department of Housing and Community Development (new line item, 7004-xxxx)
- **Supportive Services:** \$1.5 million for wraparound services for unaccompanied youth under the Executive Office of Health and Human Services (current EOHHS Administrative line item, 4000-0300 or a new line item, 4000-xxxx), with the complete line item numbers to be assigned by the Legislature.
- **These investments would provide funding for the unaccompanied youth homelessness law, An Act promoting housing and support services for unaccompanied homeless youths, to ensure that the new law truly is meaningful for youth without homes.**
- The new housing and service resources would be **targeted to youth and young adults age 24 and younger who are experiencing homelessness out on their own**, outside the custody or care of a parent/guardian.

**Why Now?** There is a desperate need for increased housing, shelter, and service options for youth and young adults age 24 or younger who are living outside the custody and care of their parents or guardians. Based on a 2013 study with high school students, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education estimates that 4,085 high school students are experiencing homelessness out on their own. Thousands more unaccompanied youth and young adults who are experiencing homelessness are not reflected in these numbers because they already have dropped out of school or have finished school.

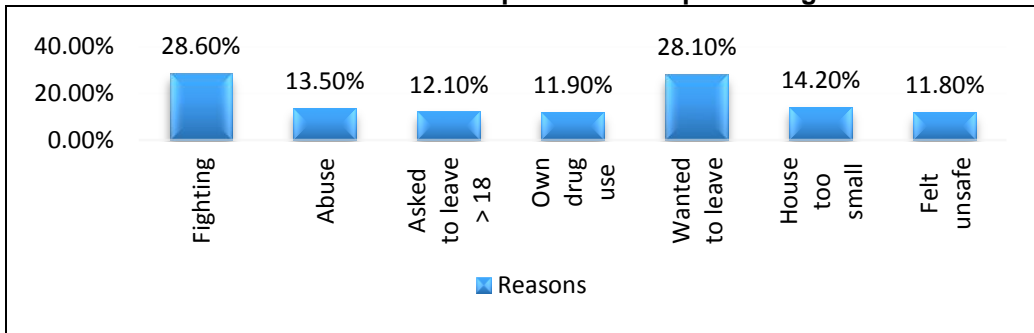
We know all too well that youth homelessness takes its toll on both the youth and our society at large. People who experience homelessness as adolescents often face bleak outcomes. While many youth are resilient and are able to overcome the ravages of homelessness, homelessness often leads to poor health outcomes including increased risk of death, exposure to violence, susceptibility to exploitation and high risk behaviors, and poor academic performance with increased risk of dropping out of school.

In 2014, under the leadership of the Massachusetts Special Commission on Unaccompanied Homeless Youth and in partnership with youth and youth providers, the state conducted a first-in-the-nation statewide youth homelessness survey through the Continua of Care networks. 2,392 of the young people who participated in the survey indicated that they were under the age of 25, and 33.2% (795 people) indicated that they currently were experiencing homelessness. An additional 7.5% (179 people) were determined to be at high risk of homelessness, based on their survey answers. The results are helping to shed more light on the extent of youth homelessness and the needs of young people here in the Commonwealth. The full report is available online at <http://tinyurl.com/ma-youth-report>, with some of the data below. The second annual survey is underway now.

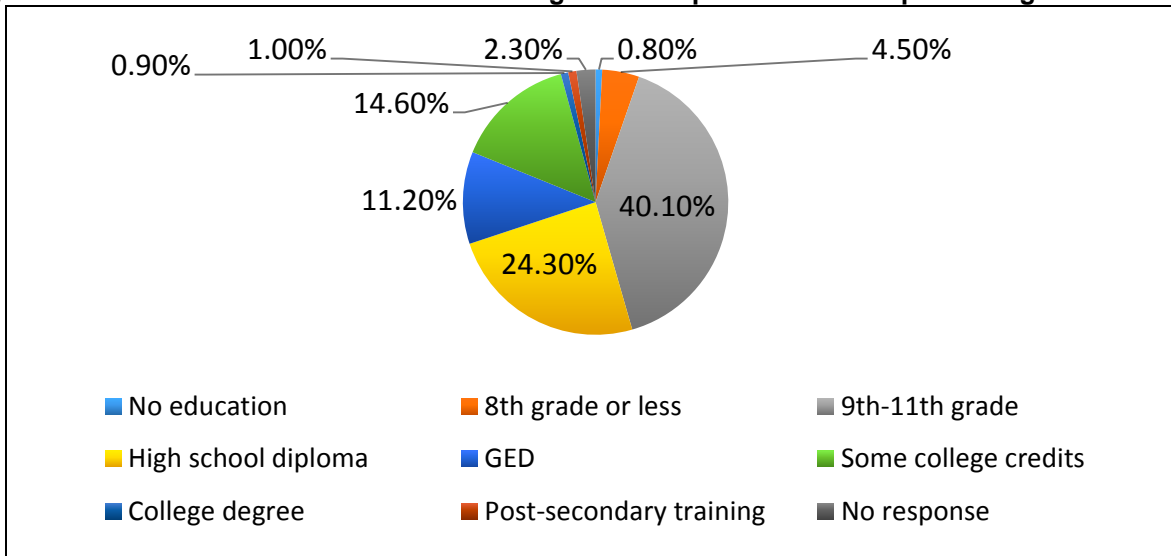
**Where the Youth Experiencing Homelessness Were Currently Staying**



**Main Reasons Youth Were Unaccompanied and Experiencing Homelessness**



**Highest Level of Educational Attainment among Unaccompanied Youth Experiencing Homelessness**



We know that the time to act is now. **The \$4 million requested for FY'16 will provide much-needed resources to begin to build up a systematic, effective response to unaccompanied youth homelessness in Massachusetts.**

**Youth without homes can't wait!**

For more information, please contact Kelly Turley, Director of Legislative Advocacy, at 781-595-7570 x17 or [kelly@mahomeless.org](mailto:kelly@mahomeless.org).  
**Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless**  
 15 Bubier Street, Lynn, MA 01901  
 Phone: 781-595-7570 Fax: 781-595-7574  
[www.mahomeless.org](http://www.mahomeless.org)