



**Youth Without Homes Can't Wait:
Please Support \$8 Million in the FY'21 Budget to Provide More Housing and Services to
Unaccompanied Youth and Young Adults Experiencing Homelessness (Line Item 4000-0007)**



We are seeking \$8 million in the FY'21 budget to address the housing and support service needs of unaccompanied youth and young adults, ages 24 and younger, who are experiencing homelessness.

Requests:

- **\$8 million for housing and wraparound services for unaccompanied youth under the Executive Office of Health and Human Services (EOHHS) line item, 4000-0007.** (This is \$3 million above the Governor's FY'21 request and the FY'20 funding level of \$5 million.)
- **This investment would provide expanded funding for the unaccompanied youth homelessness law, An Act promoting housing and support services for unaccompanied homeless youths, to ensure that the law truly is meaningful for youth without homes** (See Chapter 6A, Sections 16W and 16X of the Massachusetts General Laws).
- The additional 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.

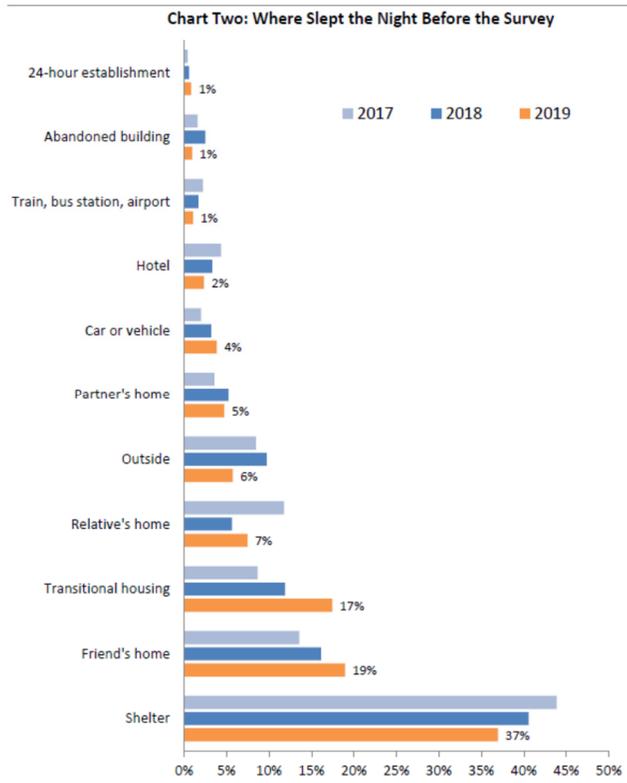
Why Now?

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. 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.

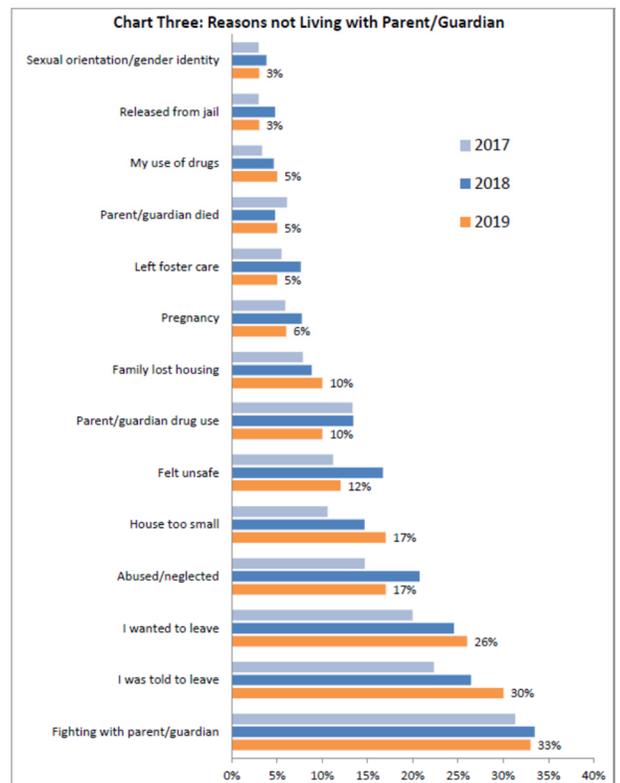
In April and May 2019, under the leadership of the Massachusetts Commission on Unaccompanied Homeless Youth and in partnership with youth and youth providers, the state conducted its sixth annual statewide youth homelessness survey. 1,957 of the young people who participated in the survey were under the age of 25, and of those young people, 1,151 (or nearly 60%) said that they had experienced homelessness at some point in their life. 529 of those young people (27%) indicated that they currently were experiencing homelessness out on their own, with 12.3% of the young people meeting the Commission's definition of homelessness staying outside, in an abandoned building, in a car, or in another location not meant for human habitation. An additional 121 young people (6.2%) currently were experiencing homelessness along with their parent or guardian. 501 young people (25.6%) currently had housing, but had experienced homelessness in the past, and 18 youth (0.9%) said that they had housing that day, but were unsure if they would lose it in the next two weeks. A disproportionate number of the young people who were unaccompanied and experiencing homelessness identified as Black/African American, Latinx, and/or multiracial (65%), and a disproportionate number identified as LGBTQ (26% identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, or questioning, and 6% identified as transgender, gender queer, two-spirit, or agender). The results are helping to shed more light on the extent of youth homelessness and the needs of young people here in the Commonwealth. See the reverse side for more data from the survey. The full Massachusetts Youth Count 2019 report is available at www.mahomeless.org/advocacy/unaccompanied-youth-homelessness.

We know that the time to act is now. The \$5 million included in the FY'20 budget, and the \$7 million total included in the FY'16-FY'19 budgets have helped to lay the foundation for addressing youth homelessness in the Commonwealth. Increased funding of \$8 million in FY'21 would provide much-needed resources to further build up a systematic, effective response to unaccompanied youth and young adult homelessness across Massachusetts.

Where Young People Slept the Night Before the Survey



Reasons Young People Were Not Living with Parent/Guardian



Organizational endorsers (as of February 24, 2020):

Boston Youth Action Board
Bridge Over Troubled Waters
Citizens' Housing and Planning Association
Community Action Pioneer Valley
Domus Incorporated
Fall River Community Development Agency
Father Bill's & MainSpring, Inc.
Horizons for Homeless Children

LUK, Inc.
Lynn Housing Authority & Neighborhood Development
Massachusetts Appleseed Center for Law and Justice
Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless
Massachusetts Law Reform Institute
Poor People's United Fund
School on Wheels of MA
Somerville Homeless Coalition

Youth without homes can't wait! Please actively support a \$8 million investment in housing and services for unaccompanied youth in FY'21 via line item 4000-0007!

For more information, please contact Kelly Turley at kelly@mahomeless.org or 781-595-7570 x17.

Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless

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