

Youth Data Workgroup New Questions for Universal Intake

Background:

Based on the Youth Strategy, the youth sector identified a need to have an in-depth look at our data to determine how youth navigate the homeless system in an effort to help review interventions offered to youth. Partnering with Chapin Hall the youth data workgroup comprised of youth homeless providers, HMIS representatives, and youth of lived experience took up this work and realized that HMIS lacked important information or did not have consistent information to perform any analysis. For example, while we have extensive information about youth who enter housing programs, we know very little about the large portions of youth who only access emergency shelter.

Over the past year the Youth Data Work Group has been working to identify and resolve data gap in our system. The Work Group has identified additional questions to be added to the universal intake use across the CoC. This workgroup group reviewed the USICH Framework to End Youth Homelessness guidelines, current provider's intake forms and processes, and existing HMIS forms and standards.

The youth data workgroup identified an additional 8 questions to be added to the intake assessment. To minimize the burden on providers, we hope to coordinate this change with the anticipated data standard changes that will take place in September and collaborate with HMIS on the training aspect.

Rational

- We identified questions that were in line with the core outcome areas in the Federal Framework for Ending Youth Homelessness: stable housing, permanent connections, education and employment, and social-emotional well-being.
 - The group is still in conversation about how best to measure and track social-emotional well-being and so will not be adding questions on this topic yet.
- We also identified questions about pregnancy and parenthood in light of the high rate of pregnancy and parenthood among youth experiencing homelessness. The proposed question are designed to gather parenting information for both men and women, because we know from the Voices of Youth Count (VoYC) that male youth in Cook County were more likely to report having custody of their children than male youth elsewhere in the country.
- Wherever possible, we sought to use questions that are already asked of a subset of youth (i.e., highest level of school completed) to create data consistency, align with funder requirement, and reduce duplicate questions.
- We also only added new questions when needed (i.e., there are no new questions for stable housing as the intake already includes relevant questions)

Proposed Questions

The following 8 questions address four key data gaps we identified: Education, employment, permanent connections, and pregnancy/parenting

- Education:
 1. Which of the following best describes your current education status right now?
 - Not currently enrolled in any school, educational, or training program
 - Currently enrolled in school/training but not attending regularly (when school is in session)
 - Currently enrolled in school/training and attending regularly (when school is in session)
 2. What is the last grade completed?
 - Less than 8th grade
 - 8th
 - 9th
 - 10th
 - 11th
 - 12th
 - High school diploma only
 - GED only
 - Some vocational training or trade school, but no credential or certificate
 - Credential or certificate from vocational training or trade school
 - Some college credit, but no degree
 - Associate's or two-year degree
 - Bachelor's or four-year degree or more
- Employment:
 3. What is your current employment status?
 - Employed
 - Employed but looking for other work
 - Paid employment training
 - Unpaid employment training
 - Seasonal/temporary
 - Not employed but looking for work
 - Able to work but not employed or looking for work
 - Unable to work
 4. If employed, how many hours do you work in a typical week
 - 30 hours or more
 - 20 to 29 hours
 - 10 to 19 hours
 - Less than 10 hours
- Permanent connections:
 5. There are people I can depend on to help me if I really need it?
 - Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree

- Pregnancy/parenthood:
 6. Are you currently pregnant or have a pregnant partner?
 - Yes/No
 7. Are you a parent?
 - Yes/No
 8. Does your child/do (any of) your children live with you?
 - Yes, full time
 - Yes, some of the time
 - No

Next Steps

Reps from the youth data workgroup will be reviewing these questions with a focus group of youth with lived experience as well as presenting to various CoC workgroups and service providers in the upcoming weeks.