West End Residences HDFC, Inc.

True Colors Supportive Housing Programs

West End's

TRUE COLORS RESIDENCE
and
TRUE COLORS BRONX

Permanent supportive housing for formerly homeless LGBT young adults in New York City.

- **40%** of NYC homeless youth identify as LGBT
  - Greater chance of assault/harassment
  - More prone to mental illness and substance abuse
- Family rejection is the #1 reason for LGBT youth homelessness

The Residences

- 30 studio apartments
- Indoor & outdoor community space
- Library/Resource Center
- Computer Lab
- Laundry facilities
- Storage space

Photo Credit: T.Ligamari

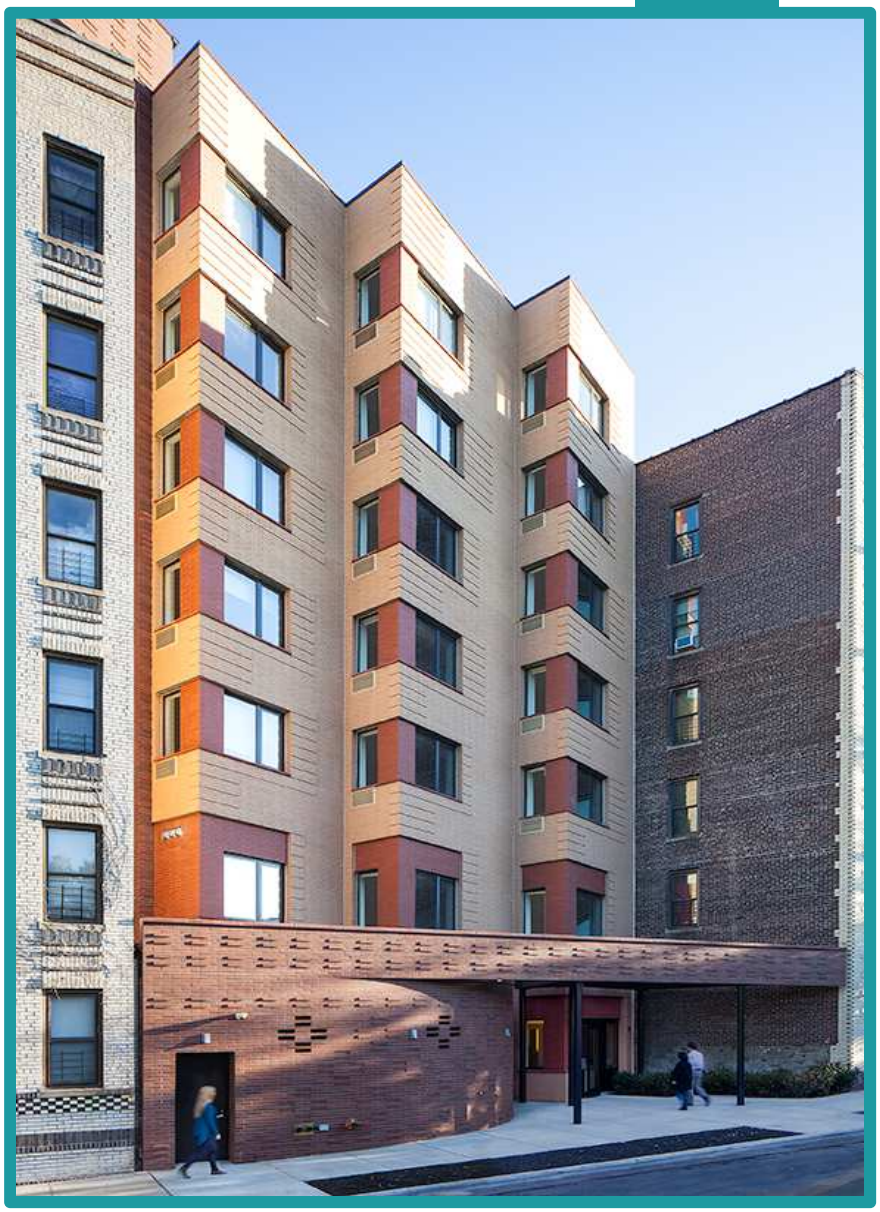


Photo credit: Peter Kubilus

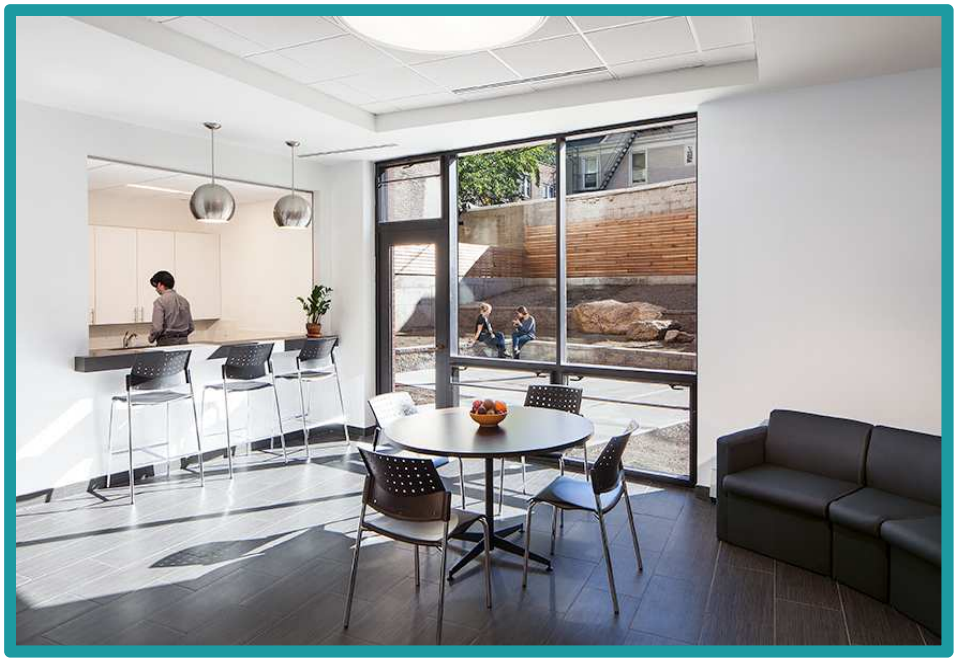


Photo Credits: Peter Kubilus

Financing: $11 Million Per Project

TRUE COLORS RESIDENCE

- CSH Acquisition Loan ($1.9 million);
- NYC Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) Supportive Housing Loan Program ($3.8 million);
- Federal Tax Credit Assistance Program (TCAP) ($2.8 million);
- Low Income Housing Tax Credit Equity ($3.4 million);
- FHLB AHP ($465,000);
- Manhattan Borough President ($500,000)
- NYSERDA ($75,000)

TRUE COLORS BRONX

- CSH Acquisition Loan ($976,000);
- NYC Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD) Supportive Housing Loan Program ($3.8 million);
- Low Income Housing Tax Credit Equity ($6.5 million);
- Bronx Borough President ($250,000);
- Bronx City Councilmember ($500,000);
- NYSERDA ($37,200)

Annual Operating and Services Funding

TRUE COLORS RESIDENCE

- Project based Section 8 for all units ($387,720);
- Social Services Contract with NYC Dept. of Health and Mental Hygiene ($265,870)

TRUE COLORS BRONX

- Project based Section 8 for all units ($416,160);
- Social Services Contract with NYC Dept. of Health and Mental Hygiene ($257,136)

Staff Structure

- 3 full-time social service employees
  - Program Director
  - Licensed Clinical Social Worker
  - Life Skills Manager
- Additional staff
  - 24/7 Security Staff
  - Live-In Building Superintendent

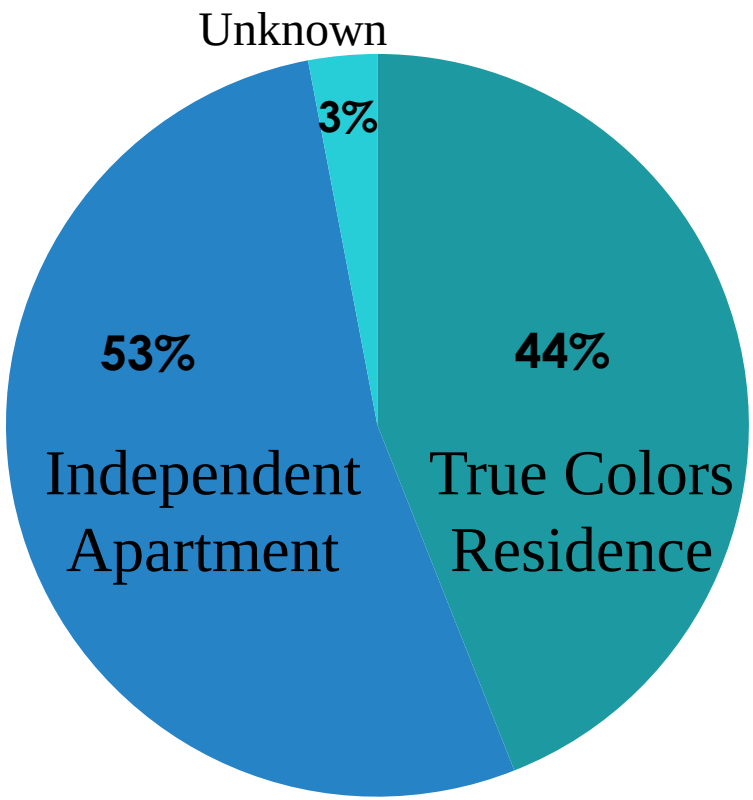
On-Site Service Delivery

- Trauma informed care
  - Designed to avoid re-traumatization as a result of past discrimination and/or abuse
- Harm reduction approach
- Identity affirmation and self-esteem workshops and activities
- Career Counseling, Job Readiness, and Placement
- True Colors Resident Advisory Council

Permanent Connection

- Lasting connections formed with staff and fellow tenants
- TCR and TCBx partnerships with other organizations help residents have a meaningful connection to others within LGBT community

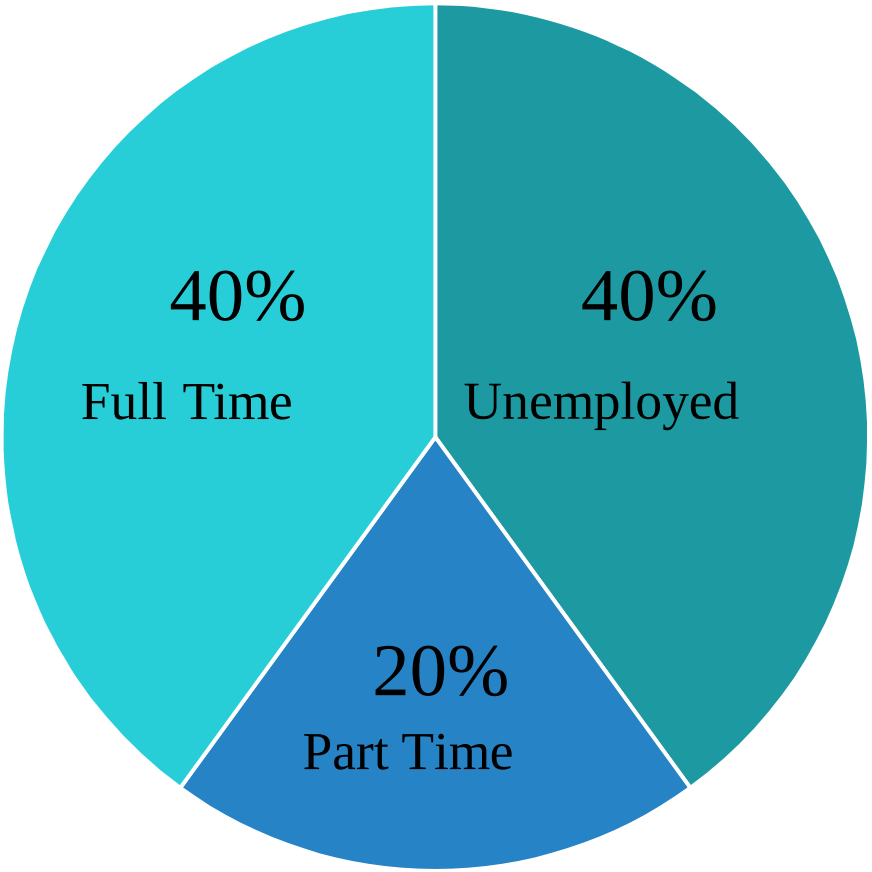
Original Tenants: Housing Status



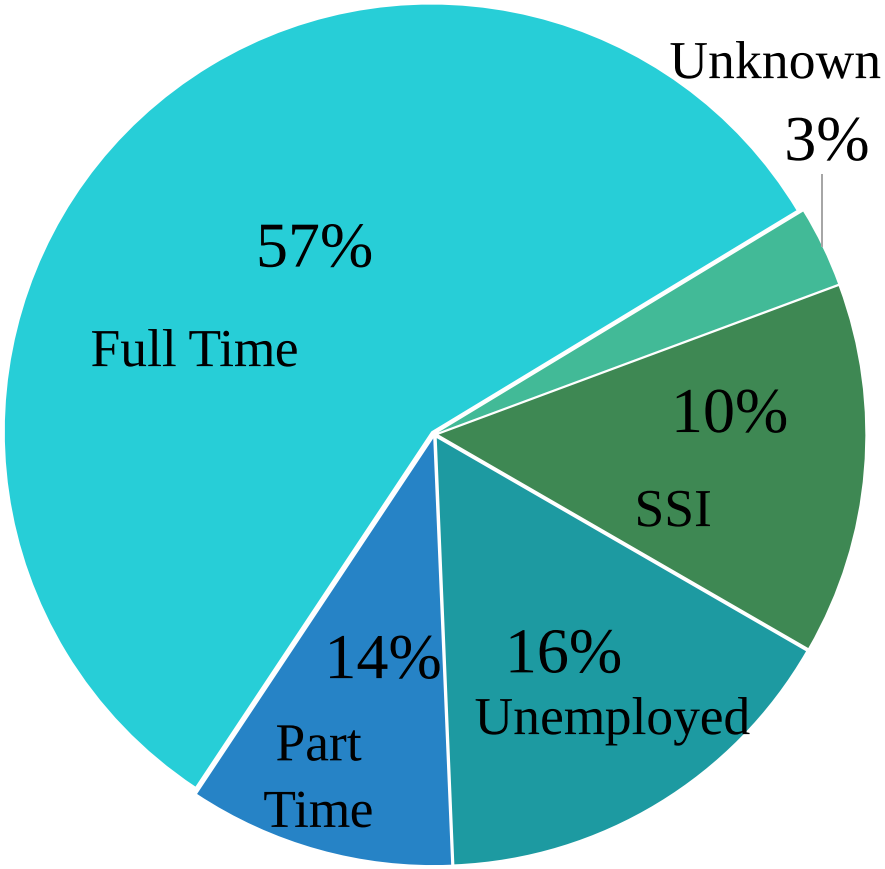
**2 previous residents now share an apartment*

Original Tenants: Employment

Upon Intake (2011)

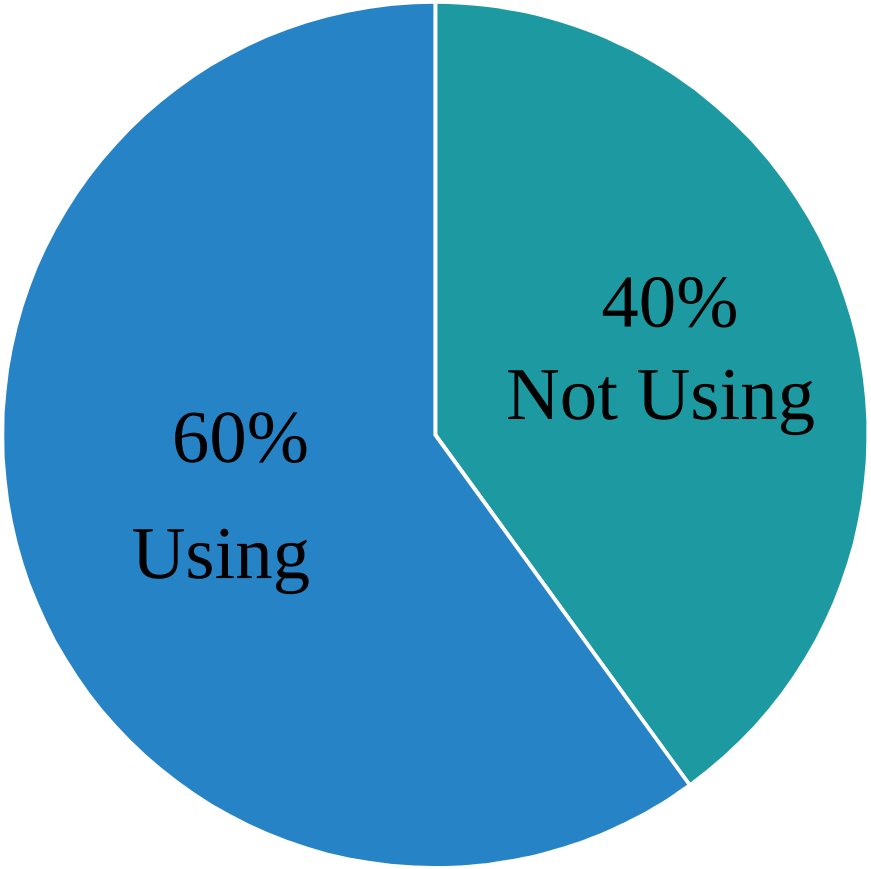


Current

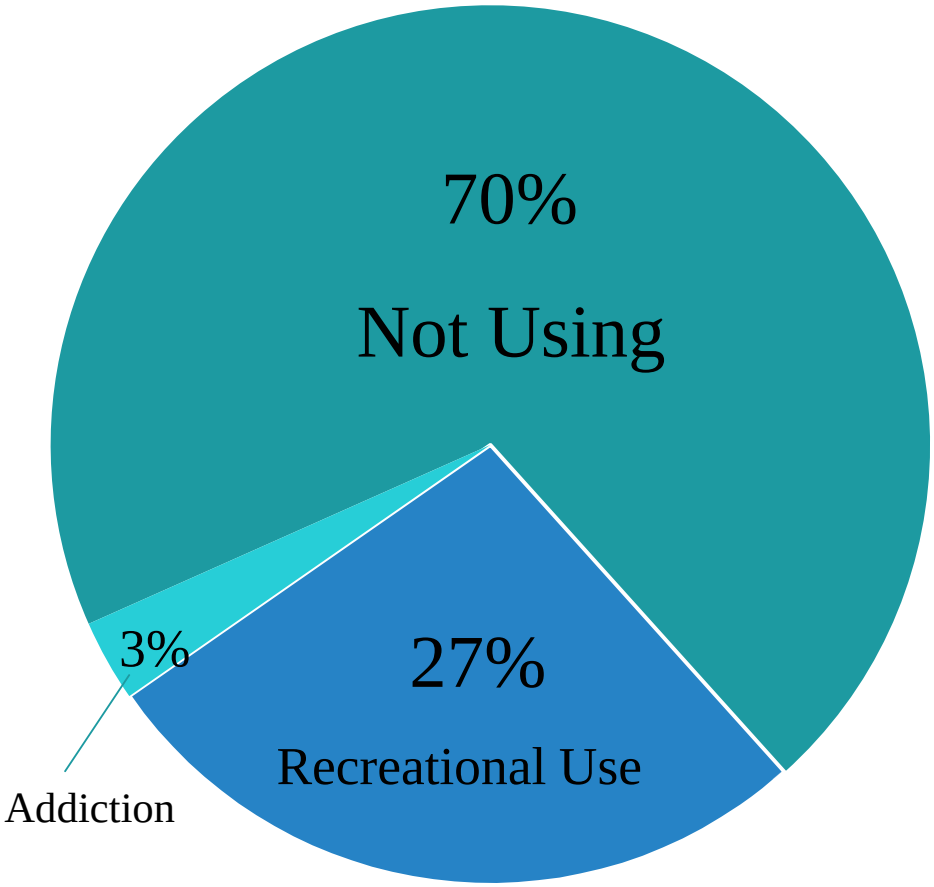


Original Tenants: Substance Use

Upon Intake (2011)



Current



Expanding the Model

- Searching for property for third True Colors site
- West End's goal – True Colors in every borough of NYC

Stay Connected to West End Residences!

www.westendres.org

www.facebook.com/WestEndResNYC

www.twitter.com/WestEndResNYC

Host Home Programs

AVENUES
FOR HOMELESS YOUTH

July 27, 2016

Zayed Ahmed
PhD, LPCC, LICSW
Program Director

Homeless Youth in Minnesota

More than 4,000 youth and young adults experience homelessness on any night in Minnesota.

This is not just an urban problem; youth are homeless in urban, suburban and rural communities.

For more information about youth and homelessness in Minnesota:
Wilder Research Site

AVENUES
FOR HOMELESS YOUTH

Avenues for Homeless Youth

Shelter and Housing for 300+ homeless youth per year in Twin Cities, Minnesota

- Site-based shelter & transitional living programs -- Brooklyn Avenues and Minneapolis Avenues
- Community-based host home programs -- GLBT Host Home Program, Minneapolis & Suburban Host Home Programs and ConneQT Host Home Program
- Scattered site, rapid re-housing program -- Avenues for Young Families

AVENUES
FOR HOMELESS YOUTH

GLBT Host Home Program

- Created in 1997 by GLBT community members in partnership with youth advocates/organizations
- Nationally-recognized model

Suburban Host Home Program

- Created by community volunteers and youth-serving agencies in 2011
- Youth from Hennepin County suburbs

Minneapolis Host Home Program

- Launched in 2012
- Youth from Minneapolis

AVENUES FOR HOMELESS YOUTH

CONNEQT

HOST HOME PROGRAM

AVENUES FOR HOMELESS YOUTH

ConneQT Host Home Program

- Launched in 2016
- New program for youth who identify as queer and trans
- Part of ConneQT Collaborative
- Shelter-like stays of 1 week to 3 months in host homes

AVENUES FOR HOMELESS YOUTH

Why Host Homes

- Safe shelter and transition-like housing
- Rooted in community, non-institutional
- Cost-effective (50% cost / youth vs. congregate)
- The Intangibles/Icing on the Cake:
  - Long-term/life-long relationships can be established
  - Changes lives – youth AND hosts
  - By extension, changes the community

AVENUES
FOR HOMELESS YOUTH

Basic Operation

Outside "the system"

- Community volunteers provide short-term, supportive shelter and food
- Intensive recruitment, screening, training of hosts
- Program manager supports hosts – regular contact, monthly house meetings, support groups
- Youth referred by partners – homeless youth agencies, school and county social workers, community advocates
- Youth receive ongoing case management

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FOR HOMELESS YOUTH

Key Features

Community Advisory / Action Council

- Reflects the community, includes youth voice
- Not just social service providers
- Key to host recruitment and program promotion
- Helps Program Manager maintain integrity and intent of the program – challenge and support

AVENUES
FOR HOMELESS YOUTH

Key Features

Host Application and Screening

- Application form
- Background checks
- 2 - 3 interviews
- Reference letters

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FOR HOMELESS YOUTH

Key Features

Host Training (16 hours)

- Videos to provide context to homelessness
- Training on positive youth development, trauma and resiliency, gender/transgender 101, anti-racism/white privilege
- Focus on host applicants: self-reflection exercises, power and privilege awareness
- Panels of past hosts and youth

Note: We are testing one-on-one, cumulative host training for ConneQT Host Home Program

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Key Features

Careful Youth Referrals

- GLBT HHP - Case manager has worked with youth at least one month prior to referral
- ConneQT HHP – Utilizing TAY-VI-SPDAT to assess
- Youth are voluntary participants…they are never "placed"

Youth-driven Matching Process

- Youth review host files and decide who they would like to meet

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FOR HOMELESS YOUTH

Key Features

Ongoing host training & support - program manager

- Calls and meetings, as needed
- Monthly support groups (all programs together)
- Monthly meeting in the home
- 2-3 trainings per year
- Social events

Ongoing youth support - case manager

- Meet youth where they're at, emotionally and physically
- Intensive and flexible

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Lessons Learned

Not easy! Leap of faith for <u>ALL</u> participants.

- Manage expectations. Guarantee there will be conflicts and really difficult times.
- Hosts can't expect youth to be "grateful." This cannot be about "saving" a young person…it will fail.
- Hosts will always wish they knew more about the youth.
- Help hosts set clear boundaries. Recognize their issues and triggers. Do self-work.
- Consistently talk about assumptions, power and privilege, especially with white, middle-class hosts.

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Lessons Learned

- Must be created and owned by the community. Can't be another social service program.
- Bias against government funding – do not want program to become rules-based and institutional.
- Intensive, consistent case management support for the youth is crucial. Preference is internal case management; referring partners often lack capacity and prefer to do a hand-off of the youth.
- Must always be principles-based and youth-centered.
- Must always question our role and commitment to social justice and social change.

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