



# Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

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**Department of Human Services  
Child Welfare Report to the Legislature  
Oregon Revised Statute 417.799  
September 14, 2015**

The Department of Human Services is submitting this report to the Legislature as a new requirement of House Bill 2232 enacted in the 2015 Regular Legislative Session and now part of Oregon Laws 2015. This report includes the status of the system of services and support for runaway and homeless youth developed by the department and information on the committee appointed to advise and provide expertise to the department.

## **Brief History**

The Runaway and Homeless Youth Program (“RHY Program”) began operating under the Oregon Commission on Children and Families (OCCF) in 2005. The Commission started “pilot projects” around the state to demonstrate various strategies in order to impact this population of young people under the age of 18. In 2011, with the legislative elimination of the OCCF, the RHY Program was reassigned to DHS. In 2012, responsibility for the RHY Program was integrated into DHS Office of Child Welfare Programs. At this time OCCF had been operating 9 different Pilot Projects ranging from Overnight Shelter, to street outreach and a school outreach program. During 2012-2013 the department reviewed the pilot projects through this transition and informed the contractors that the department would discontinue these existing pilot contracts in June 2014. After 7 years it was time to conclude pilot projects.

The 2013 legislature allocated additional funding (\$750,000) to DHS to assist in the expansion of the RHY Program and separately also passed additional legislation extending the service age limit from 18 to 21 years of age. Notably, the added age provided significant changes in current modeling of service delivery to runaway and homeless youth populations. Through consultation with a variety of individuals, programs, service providers and research, the Department chose to allocate these additional funds to expand the service array available in Oregon. Job Development and Mentorship grants were added into the Runaway and Homeless services continuum and the Department began providing Technical Assistance to service providers around Oregon, regardless if the department held a contract with the program. The

services provided under these grants supported over 575 youth and young adults during the 18 months. Additionally, a number of programs and service providers participated in a series of Technical Assistance and Training opportunities. The Technical Assistance model significantly expanded the RHY outreach across Oregon by providing opportunities for front line and director level staff to learn, share ideas, and network. In addition, DHS has compiled an email listserv from training participants to advertise future trainings, job opportunities, etc.

The Department of Human Services reallocated the original funding from the OCCF pilot projects toward Shelter Services for youth and young adults. These funds were distributed through a competitive contracting process within six different geographical regions. While this strategy was not overly popular, it allowed the Department to spread the funding across the state rather than keep it within the I-5 corridor. In the initial 12 months of these Shelter Services the programs report serving approximately 800 youth and young adults.

### **Technical Assistance and System Development**

Throughout the 2013-2015 biennium, the DHS RHY Program provided a number of technical assistance opportunities to both grantees and non-grantees. These opportunities centered on training and conference sponsorship, especially for front line staff. The topics covered include mental health, trauma informed care, LGBTQ, and youth engagement. Travel reimbursement for some of the events also provided programs in more rural areas the opportunity to receive trainings they would not otherwise receive.

In November 2014, DHS partnered with Multnomah County to host a Convening of Oregon Homeless Youth Programs. The event brought together director level staff throughout the state to discuss system related issues. The event allowed participants to meet one another, share ideas and to begin (or continue) discussions of building a statewide system. Some of the participants expressed their willingness to be a part of the DHS Homeless Youth Advisory Committee, while others were reluctant because of various time commitments.

Over the last year, DHS participated in the West Coast Convening, which is a series of day and a half sessions involving government and program staff from Oregon, Washington, and California who meet to discuss common issues around serving homeless youth. Oregon developed a team of five individuals to represent the state. The team included two private RHY providers, a representative of county government and two DHS program staff. In the spring of 2015, the West Coast Convening came to Oregon in an event hosted by Multnomah County. By hosting the convening, Multnomah County was able to highlight the Homeless and Runaway Continuum which is a very unique model and a crucial component of Oregon's work toward an integrated state system.

DHS is also very excited about the work we have been doing with Oregon's 211 info line to develop a mobile app for youth who may be homeless or in need of basic services. The app will include resource lists and GPS enabled maps for shelter, medical care, and food. Over the last few months, 211 info has met with a number of programs serving homeless youth and conducted focus groups to ensure the app is truly youth driven. The initial groups and meetings included the feedback of 72 youth and 211 info has met with more since then. The Oregon app is anticipated to be released and launched in October 2015. Research indicates that runaway and homeless youth remain connected to technology on a regular basis and will have easy access to an app.

<b>Department of Human Services – Grantee's in Oregon for Homeless and Runaway Services</b>		
<b>Program Name</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Service Type</b>
Casa de Belen	Roseburg	Mentorship
Hearts with a Mission	Medford	Shelter Services
Community in Action	Ontario	Shelter Services
J Bar J Youth Services	Bend	Job Development
J Bar J Youth Services	Bend	Shelter Services
Jackson Street Youth Shelter	Corvallis	Mentorship
Looking Glass	Eugene	Shelter Services
Mid-Willamette Valley Community Action Agency	Salem	Job Development
Mid-Willamette Valley Community Action Agency	Salem	Shelter Services
Yamhill Community Action Partnership	Newberg	Job Development
Native American Youth and Family Services	Portland	Mentorship
New Avenues for Youth	Portland	Combination
Outside In	Portland	Job Development
HomePlate Youth Services	Hillsboro/Beaverton	Job Development
Boys and Girls Aid (sub-grant to Janus Youth Programs)	Hillsboro (Janus Youth Programs in Multnomah and Clackamas)	Shelter Services

## **DHS Homeless Youth Advisory Committee**

House Bill 2232 directed DHS to “appoint an advisory committee to advise the Department with respect to policies and procedures to coordinate statewide planning for delivery of services to runaway and homeless youth and their families.” The Department had already started this level of work to pull together a cross system advisory group, which has met on a quarterly basis since May. The Advisory committee has been involved in providing input to DHS regarding the 2015 allocation of new funds to the Department.

The advisory members have discussed a number of issues around runaway and homeless youth at the first two meeting. These topics have included gaps in geographic funding and DHS Child Welfare coordination with RHY programs. The advisory committee members had the opportunity to make recommendations around new DHS procedure being drafted concerning missing and runaway children.

Finally, many of the advisory committee members have expressed the desire to learn more and to map current funding streams. The Runaway and Homeless Youth Coordinator has met with individuals in between meetings to continue this work.

The current membership of the Homeless Youth Advisory Committee.

Representative	System Representation
Janet Arenz	Oregon Alliance for Children's Programs
Dona Bolt	Department of Education – Homeless Youth
Jamie Broadbent	DHS – Supervisor: Commercially Sexually Exploited Children
Caitlin Campbell	Multnomah County – Homeless Youth Continuum
Jennifer Denning	Community Colleges and Workforce Development
Kevin George	DHS – Program Manager Child Well Being
Adrea Korthase	DHS - RHY Program Coordinator
Kevin Lamson	Hearts with a Mission
Jean Lasater	Oregon Health Authority - Mental Health
Vicki Massey	Housing and Community Services
Jamie McKay	Oregon Youth Authority
Emily McLain	Basic Rights Oregon
Lisa Mentasana	Beaverton School District - McKinney-Vento Liaison
Karen Nibler	League of Women Voters
Claire Seguin	Oregon Housing and Community Services
Anya Sekino	Youth Development Division ODE
Kate Stokes	Yamhill Community Action Agency
Vera Stoulil	Boys and Girls Aid - Oregon Alliance for Children's Programs
Ashley Thirstrup	Native American Youth and Family Services
Daryl Turner	Portland Police Association
Jo Zimmer	Rural Oregon Continuum of Care

## Next Steps

The Department, Homeless Youth Advisory Committee and other advocates were very excited and appreciative of the 2015 Legislature, which allocated an additional \$1.6 million to the Department in HB 5026. These funds were legislatively directed toward providing services such as; street outreach, day drop-in, and overnight shelters for unaccompanied minors. After further clarification, the Department understands the intent is centered on providing an array of services for youth under the age of 18-years-old.

The Department has begun discussions around distributing the newly allocated funds to both enhance currently funded RHY programs and to ensure it is distributed to serve youth under the age of 18. This process will result in two new Request for Proposals (RFP's) for both shelter

grants and street outreach/day drop-in centers. The Department anticipates distributing \$1.4 million for shelter grants, \$200,000 into street outreach/day drop-in centers, and the remaining funds into capacity building for those areas of Oregon who need support in serving youth who may be homeless or may have run away.

Additional information may be provided upon request;

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