

Progress Report: *Housing Stability for Youth in Courts (H-SYNC)*

H-SYNC: A Tiered Prevention and Intervention Model for Cross-System Referral

The H-SYNC program is meant primarily as a prevention tool. Our goal is to reach youth and their families *before* a youth becomes homeless and refer them to needed family-based prevention services. H-SYNC is also meant to maximize existing community resources by using a tiered triage system, wherein youth who are most in need are offered a greater menu of services.

Using the Courts as a Pivotal Identification Point

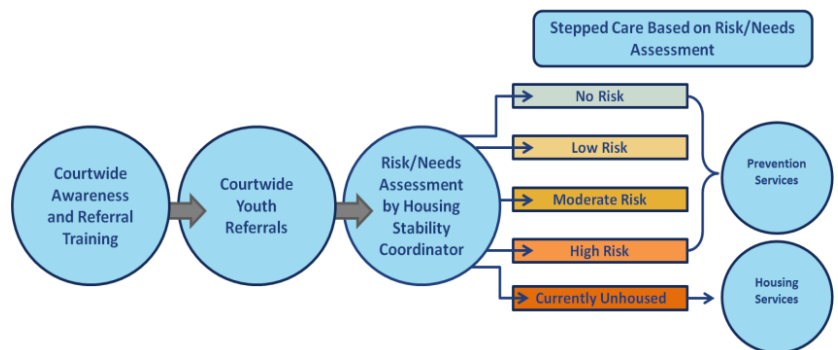
Research shows that more than 75% of homeless youth will have contact with the police, that more than 50% will be arrested, and that 40% of youth screened for court services had a history of housing instability. Thus, the H-SYNC prevention model aims to take advantage of this pivotal connection point, using routine data flags that already exist in court processes, and to identify and automatically refer youth and their families to services tailored to their particular needs. Automatic referrals based on data flags ensure that youth who are at risk of homelessness, but who may not show obvious externalizing signs, don't fall through the cracks.

H-SYNC Development: A Codevelopment Community Process

The development of H-SYNC was funded by the Raikes and Block-Leavitt Foundations. The model was codeveloped with multidisciplinary workgroups in Snohomish and Kitsap Counties and was designed to be scalable and generalizable to other sites. Workgroups included representatives from the courts, state social service agencies, the school system, youth and families and community organizations working with homeless youth and their families.

H-SYNC Model Components

- 1) Regular, court-wide **awareness and referral trainings** including education on risk factors and identifiers for youth homelessness
- 2) A court-wide **identification and referral system** wherein all court employees are expected to use routine data flags to identify and refer youth
- 3) A dedicated **housing stability coordinator** to receive referrals, conduct housing stability assessments with youth, connect youth with relevant community providers based on assessments, and follow up on referrals
- 4) A **stepped care model of prevention services** to provide the right dose of intervention based on youth/family need
- 5) **Coordinated housing services** for youth experiencing homelessness.



Risk Levels and Associated Services

Need levels identified by the youth navigator via the triage tool are broken down into no need, low need, moderate need, high need, and currently unhoused. See below for associated services for each need level.

No Risk	Low Risk	Moderate Risk	High Risk	Currently Unhoused
*Close case	*Telehealth support services *Phone consultations *Parent coaching	*Selective preventative programs (e.g. Strengthening Families, Guiding Good Choices)	*In home interventions, (e.g. Family Functional Therapy, Multidisciplinary Wraparound Teams)	*McKinney Vento services *Foster care services *Coordinated care through local shelter agencies *Civil legal services

Current Status

H-SYNC is currently being implemented county-wide in King, Snohomish, Kitsap, and Okanogan Counties with the University of Washington providing ongoing QA/TA implementation support as well as conducting preliminary analyses on the acceptability and feasibility of the program and short term outcomes.