

## **YOUTH HOUSING MODELS FOR COMMUNITY RE-ENTRY**

### **FACT SHEET**

#### **Stable Housing to Ensure Successful Re-entry:**

One of the most important factors to ensure successful re-entry into a community from the juvenile justice system is stable housing. For youth who are released from juvenile corrections facilities, reentry is often difficult because they lack the familial support systems and opportunities for work and housing. Proper discharge planning, which includes the active participation of youth may help to identify those youth who are at higher risk of returning to violent, abusive, or neglectful families. When a healthy nurturing family reunification is not likely, juvenile justice systems should encourage searches for youth housing options. Without stable housing and services specifically designed to encourage positive youth development, youth who are incarcerated for their crimes can experience sporadic or fall into a continuous cycle of homelessness, without stable housing many youth will return to the streets after their release only to become involved in the same lifestyle that caused their original arrest.

#### **Effective Housing Models:**

Various youth specific housing models include services that enforce positive youth development. Services delivered within youth housing models that encourage young people to develop skills and secure resources needed to maintain employment, housing, and become self-sufficient for a successful transition into adulthood. Housing combined with services show significant promise in addressing recidivism and homelessness for youth re-entering the community because they provide the stability and support adolescents need during the period of transition.

As an adolescent recently released from the juvenile justice system, most youth are unprepared to take on adult responsibilities, including securing housing, earning a livable income, attaining an education and planning for their future. As a participant in a youth housing program, youth have access to services that are particularly crucial to their total well-being. The array of services can include assisting a young person in finding and securing future housing, learning how to apply for and get a job, going back or completing school, caring for a young child, balancing a budget, or cooking a meal. Additional services include physical and mental health services, counseling, case management, and personal development.

Youth housing models that infuse positive youth development services vary in design, scope, and operation. Based on the needs and preferences of youth, youth housing and service models can take any number of forms including host homes, shared homes, supervised apartments, or scattered-site, independent apartments with or without roommates.

Juvenile justice system involved youth and other vulnerable young people require programs tailored to meet the demands of transition from adolescence to adulthood. Youth housing models combined with positive youth development services are beneficial for youth with negative, limited or no familial supports because these programs embrace a young person during the trials and errors of early adulthood and prepare them for successful independent living. Efforts to prevent recidivism and address youth homelessness must acknowledge the nexus between housing and services in order to support the successful re-entry of youth from the juvenile justice system.

Prepared by the



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