

The Rediscovery at JRI Story

YouthHarbors Program

Danielle Ferrier, MBA, LICSW
Executive Director of Rediscovery

helping homeless youth find housing, finish high school, get jobs and live productive lives

Mission

Rediscovery offers a continuum of services to Massachusetts youth who are aging out of foster care or unaccompanied, homeless high school students to ensure their successful transition into adulthood.

Founded: 2001
Full-time Staff: 25
Annual Budget: \$1,700,000



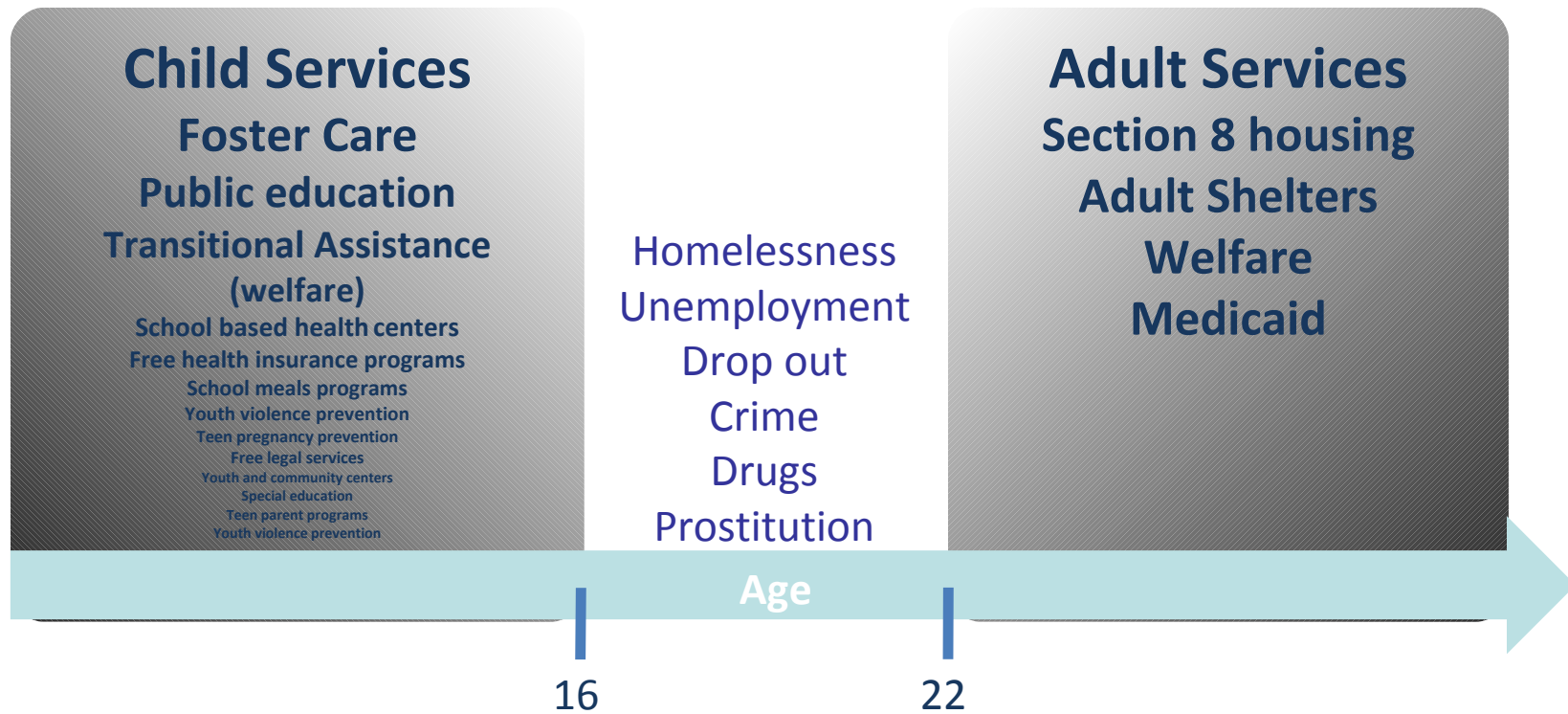
Who We Serve

- YouthHarbors serves homeless, unaccompanied high school students.
- Currently, YouthHarbors sites are located in Malden and Everett High Schools.
- Two new sites are scheduled to open this fall in Somerville and Boston Day and Evening Academy.

Rediscovery's Goals

- To prevent homelessness
- To increase graduation rates
- To increase access to secondary education
- To increase employment
- To increase successful transition to adulthood
- To prevent incarceration
- To prevent increased risk factors such as:
 - Sexual exploitation
 - Substance abuse
 - Death

The Youth Chasm



The most underserved segment of the population

Consequences of Youth Homelessness

	Homeless Youth	Housed Youth
Drop out of high school	75%	<1%
Members of a gang	23%	6%
Had alcohol in the past 30 days	68%	43%
Used marijuana in the past month	52%	26%
Ever used heroin	18%	1%
Felt sad or hopeless for 2 or more weeks	50%	23%
Made a suicide attempt that resulted in injury	17%	2%
Had sexual contact against their will	38%	10%
Ever been or gotten someone pregnant	25%	5%

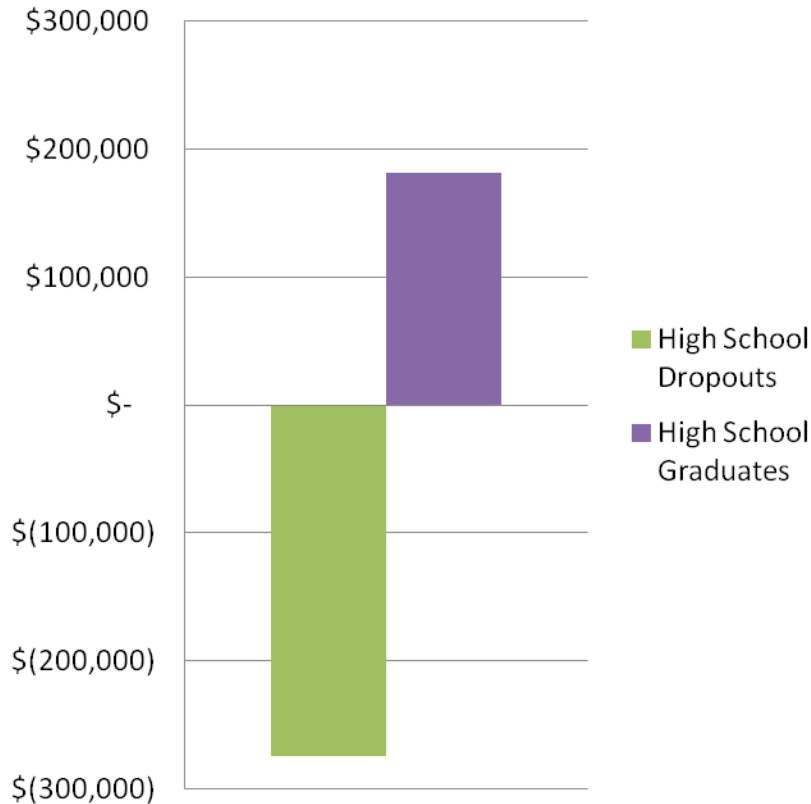
Source

A Snapshot of Homelessness in Massachusetts Public High Schools, MA Department of Education, July 2007

Homelessness in Massachusetts Public Schools, MA Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, July 2007

Cost of a High School Dropout

Net Fiscal Impact of High School Graduation, Massachusetts 2002-2004



- 6 times more likely to be incarcerated
- 3 times more likely to be unemployed
- Lifetime cost to Massachusetts is \$455,000

Source

Andrew Sum, et al. From Center for Labor Market Studies Northeastern University, Boston, Massachusetts. *The Consequences of Dropping Out of High School*, October 2009

This Population is Hard to Serve

- Invisible
- Distrust of adults
- Fear of relocation
- Fear of adult services and shelters
- Unique developmental stage



How Best to Help Homeless Youth?

- Outreach
- Intense and Integrated Support

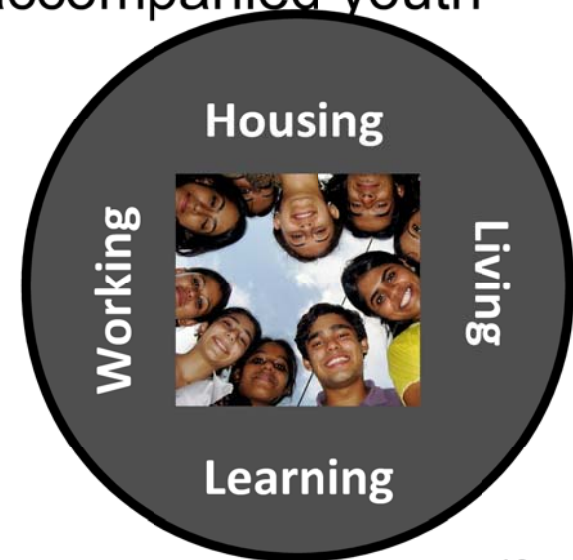
“Evidence for improvement in academic and behavioral outcomes is strongest for programs that provide more intense resources to youth.”

– *Current-Generation Youth Programs*, RAND Corporation



YouthHarbors “wraparound” services help homeless youth successfully transition to adulthood

- Services are “wrapped” around each client to assure individual fit
- Services include housing, learning, living and working
- Services apply to accompanied & unaccompanied youth
- As a result,
 - Fewer students drop out of high school
 - High school graduates are more likely to acquire and retain employment than non-graduates
 - Rediscovery alumni are less likely to require state aid



YouthHarbors

Why this is so important

- Homelessness is a major factor for dropping out of
- high school
- 75% of homeless youth drop out of school
- Primary focus of Youth Harbors is on 'invisible' homeless, unaccompanied high school students
- About 6,000 students fit this category in Massachusetts



How it Works

- Housing is found within the same community as the high school
- Housing services are available to female and male students
- Funding for housing is available when needed
- Housing is coordinated by a team of resources, including
 - The YouthHarbors outreach worker at the high school
 - Landlords, roommates and potential host families in the community
 - School and DESE administrators
 - Clothing and food resources

Justin entered the YouthHarbors program.

Rediscovery's YouthHarbors program provided Justin with a **partial rent subsidy** and helped him rent a **room with a host family** only a short walk from his high school. There he was able to have his own **safe and private space** to sleep and study. Justin worked with his YouthHarbors counselor on a **personal safety plan** so that he would feel more confident about returning to live in his home community. He was able to cut back his work hours and **focus on getting back on track** in school.

Justin's **attendance improved** dramatically and he began to catch up on missed assignments. He even began to **build relationships** with his host family, experiencing **a family life he had never known**. Justin took the MCAS exam and passed. He has since graduated with his class.



He plans to pursue culinary arts and business studies. **His dream is to own his own restaurant.**

YouthHarbors Report Card

At the end of the 3 years, YouthHarbors outcomes:

- 92% of youth are housed**
- 97% graduated or remain on track to graduate**

Every program graduate not requiring aid saves the state an estimated \$455,000 over his/her lifetime.

Questions?