



# Rising Up – A Public Private Partnership To Reduce Youth Homelessness in San Francisco

March 2023

## Introduction

Rising Up is a public-private partnership launched in January 2019. The Rising Up partnership is led by the Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing (HSH), and Larkin Street Youth Services, which serves as the anchor non-profit institution. The other non-profit partners include 3<sup>rd</sup> Street Youth Center and Clinic, At the Crossroads, Brilliant Corners, First Place for Youth, and Five Keys Schools and Programs. The program is governed by the Rising Up Steering Committee, which includes representatives from Larkin Street, HSH, Brilliant Corners, Tipping Point Community (one of our seed funders) and a young person with lived experience.

The partners are all working together to support the ambitious City-wide goal of reducing homelessness for youth ages 18-25 by 50% by 2023, ultimately assuring that homelessness for young people is rare, brief, and one-time. Young people participating in Rising Up benefit from one of two program components. The first component is **Problem Solving**, short-term support to prevent entry into homelessness all together. Our goal is to help 450 young people avoid homelessness through Problem Solving. The other program component is **Rapid Rehousing**, a housing model that offers up to 3 years of rent subsidy with intensive case management support. Our goal is to house 400 young people through Rapid Rehousing.

Below is a report which outlines our Rising Up progress over the past year.

## Program Data

### **Programming Overview**

Rising Up starts with **Coordinated Entry (CE)** – a citywide system for all people experiencing homelessness. There are four Youth Access Points specifically where young people are screened for eligibility, offered immediate assistance, and assessed for housing. All data is tracked in the citywide ONE system.

**Problem Solving** helps young people immediately resolve their housing crisis and avoid the homelessness response system altogether. The goal of Rising Up is to provide Problem Solving services to 450 young people by 2023. The other component is **Rapid Rehousing**: where young people can receive a \$27K rent subsidy and intensive case management support for up to 3 years. The goal of Rising Up is to house 400 young people through Rapid Rehousing by July, 2023.

Note that all participants housed through Rising Up have benefited from **Supportive Services** including: intensive case management, education services, employment opportunities, financial management guidance, and linkage to physical and behavioral health resources.

### **Results to Date**

Please refer to page 5 of this report for a comprehensive overview of current Rising Up metrics and demographics.

## Challenges

- To put these results into a broader perspective, no one could have predicted a global pandemic or its impacts. Considering the reality we have faced since March 2020, we are very proud of the progress against our campaign goals, as we are nearly 87% of the way toward our goal of housing 400 youth by June 2023. One key challenge has been with the Problem Solving intervention, which has been hampered by several factors. First, Problem Solving (one-time or short-term financial assistance meant to help young people immediately resolve their housing crisis) is managed by San Francisco's network of Youth Access Points, of which there were six at the time the pandemic hit. Over the past two years, two of those Access Points closed entirely, while two others operated either mostly or entirely virtually until very recently. As a result, the overall numbers are behind where we would hope to be to achieve 450 total Problem Solving resolutions.
- Compared to one year ago, youth rent contributions are increasing across the board, which is a sign of recovery from the pandemic. However, rents have also returned to pre-pandemic costs, which makes it more difficult to identify units that young people can feasibly pay for on their own by the time they exit. As a result, young people continue to opt for housing outside of San Francisco, and now approximately 75% of all Rising Up participants are housed outside of San Francisco, mostly in Oakland and the East Bay. For our San Francisco-based case management partners, this has required a tremendous amount of adaptability as they navigate across cities and counties to ensure that Rising Up participants are connected with the resources and support they need.

## Successes/Accomplishments

- The additional support services we have added to the Rising Up model continue to serve an important function. **Smart Money Coaching** has proven to be very effective in helping participants set up checking accounts, manage their debt, and improve their credit, and some program participants have even sought out continued support from their coach after exiting the program to make sure they stay on the right track financially.
- After a year of working together to develop and revise a robust set of Rising Up policies employed by all of our partners, we launched this fall a formal **Community of Practice**, which meets monthly. Frontline staff and managers meet to discuss relevant topics and share resources. Recent topics have included Smart Money Coaching, Mental Health First Aid Training, Project Legal Link on connecting youth to legal resources, and how to connect youth with vocational schools. Upcoming topics will include supporting youth survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault and supporting young people who are undocumented.

## Next Steps and Sustainability

Rising Up has been a team effort. The Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing has fully covered housing subsidies and associated costs for Rising Up youth, and our private funders, to whom we are deeply grateful, have been exceptionally generous in covering the cost of the wrap-around support services that are so crucial to helping our young people thrive. Our public and private donors have shared equally in reaching our goal, each sector securing approximately 50% of the dollars raised and/or committed.

As we look ahead to the future of the initiative, the Rising Up Steering Committee is evaluating data to determine the right size for Rising Up once we've met our campaign goals. We know that the Rising Up model is strong and will continue to be part of San Francisco's overall strategy to end homelessness. The fact that there was a reduction of youth homelessness in San Francisco despite the global pandemic is further proof of the strength of the Rising Up model. In summary, as we evaluate the future of the Rising Up initiative, we are working with our program staff, the Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing, and youth with lived experience, to consider the following questions:

- What is the right size of ongoing Rapid Rehousing for youth in relation to other efforts and strategies that the City has launched since Rising Up?
- What will the City's ongoing investment in Rapid Rehousing be?
- What role will private philanthropy play post-campaign?

## **A Youth Story**

*An important part of the Rising Up initiative is the Rising Up Behavioral Health supports that are delivered by 3<sup>rd</sup> Street Youth Center and Clinic. This behavioral health program serves the youth who are engaged in the Rising Up initiative, and it was established thanks to the generosity of Dignity Health and the Hellman Foundation. The youth story below is about one of the young people engaged in this program.*

Jimmy (pseudonym) came into treatment with unresolved complicated grief, PTSD symptoms, and an inability to articulate his feelings. Jimmy had endured what felt like insurmountable loss - from losing dear friends to gun violence, losing his father to mass incarceration, to feeling that he had lost his own self in the form of feeling distant from his identity and values. As a therapist, one of the most human tools we have is to actually see the client in the form of our reflections - not simply regurgitating the words back - but reflecting the values and depth of the person that we are lucky to be face-to-face with. Jimmy would often say, "I am not sure how to say what I am feeling," and yet over time, he began articulating the weight of the depression, anxiety, and hypervigilance he was experiencing. As each session continued, Jimmy's ability to articulate his feelings increased, his ability to allow his familial and cultural values to be his driving force became innate. Jimmy has gotten to know all the wonderful resources that he has - both internal and external. Growth, especially in therapy, is not just measured by the absence of symptoms, but by how well someone adapts in the presence of symptoms. Jimmy is in the process of holding space for these reminders. In his most recent session, Jimmy reported that he wishes to always be in therapy, not just for himself, but also for his family and his community.

## **In Closing**

To date, Rising Up has helped 596 young people find a path out of homelessness through problem solving or rapid re-housing. These are young people who were couch-surfing, sleeping on the streets or in their cars, or relying on emergency shelter and who now have stable homes. For most of the youth in the program, it is the first time they have qualified for a program that both houses them and provides them with a respite so that they can begin to heal. Clients are surrounded by a community, a team of nonprofit organizations partnered with the City, all sharing a common goal of reducing youth homelessness in San Francisco by 50%. This team works together in support of the young people to provide them with life skills, job development, financial coaching, behavioral health support, and housing coordination. With the support from this team many of the young people will be able to move forward and achieve independence.

Most importantly, this would not have been possible without the support of our generous funders. The City has been a collaborative and engaged partner, fully funding the rental subsidies required for Rapid Rehousing. Our private funders have been exceptionally generous in supporting the wrap-around services that have helped our young people not only survive, but also to thrive. We are very grateful for this.



# Rising Up/Current Results: Metrics Exits, and Demographics

## RISING UP METRICS

### PROGRESS TO DATE

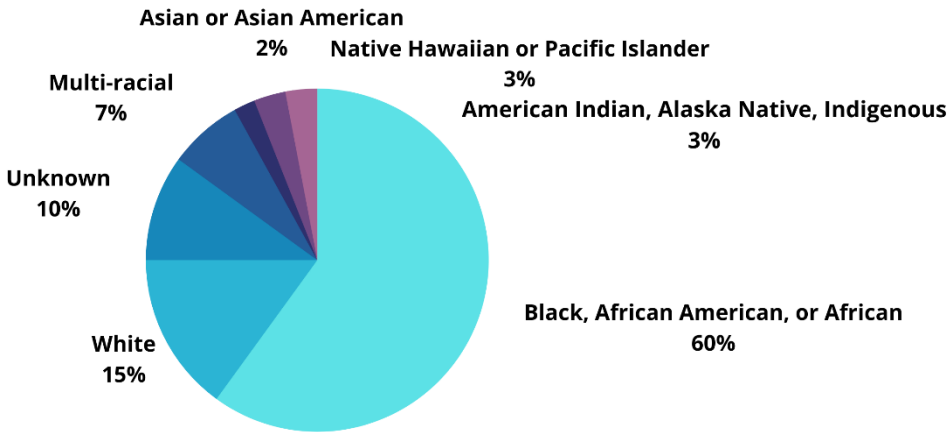
- TOTAL YOUTH HOUSED: 369
- # OF YOUTH WAITING TO BE HOUSED: 31
- PROBLEM SOLVING RESOLUTIONS: 227
- # OF YOUTH EMPLOYED: 165
- YOUTH WITH GED, DIPLOMA, AND/OR ATTENDING SCHOOL: 307

## RISING UP EXITS

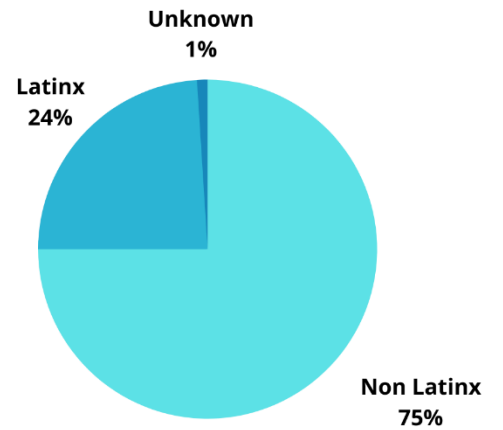
### YOUTH EXITING RISING UP

- EXIT WITH NO ONGOING SUBSIDY: 33%
- LIVING WITH FAMILY OR FRIENDS: 20%
- DATA UNKNOWN: 16%
- EXIT WITH ONGOING SUBSIDY: 14%
- DECEASED, INCARCERATED, EXIT TO HOMELESSNESS, OTHER: 12%
- EXITED TO SHELTER (HOTEL/MOTEL): 5%

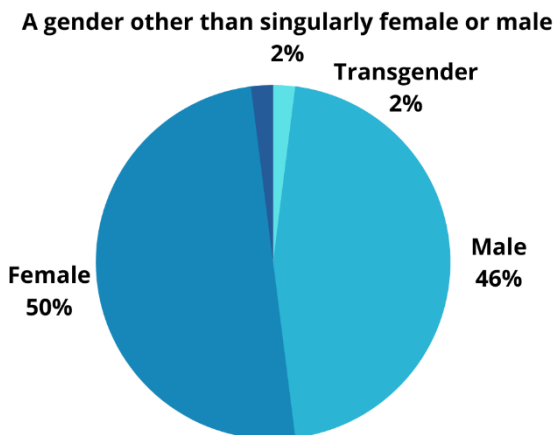
### RACE



### ETHNICITY



### GENDER



### SEXUAL ORIENTATION

