



Since 1973, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services has partnered with private non-profit providers to serve runaway and homeless youth, and their families, in Michigan. The statewide network known as the Michigan Network for Youth and Families (MNYF) represents 19 agencies providing services to runaway, homeless and at-risk youth, eighteen of whom contract with MDHHS.

We are among the most successful in the nation due in part to our extensive history of providing quality services and the cooperation of member agencies to assist one another. 95% of the young people discharged from our shelters are reunified with their families, and 88% remain enrolled in some education. However, in recent years we have lacked sufficient capacity to provide services at the level necessary to protect all of our state's most vulnerable youth, and seen a total of six program closures leaving multiple Michigan counties with a gap in service access for homeless and runaway youth.

Over the years, more youth are experiencing more instability and trauma, including sexual or physical abuse, domestic violence, and parental incarceration. Youth are finding fewer services in other similarly underfunded institutional programs and come to us, including: youth aging out of, or who are seen as problem placements in, foster care; youth who are leaving residential, delinquency and corrections facilities without a certain or stable plan; youth in need of respite mental health care; and youth who have families in homeless and domestic violence shelters that are unable to house adolescent males.

Contracted agencies were recognized two years ago with a modest increase of \$500,000 for the first time since 2001, which was retained for 2020 in the MDHHS budget. A further increase in last year's legislatively-passed budget of \$300,000, however, was line item vetoed. Our recent increase was utilized for workforce retention, facility improvements, youth services, and staff training. While very much appreciated, we view this as an initial step for rebuilding a stronger statewide network to help youth and families. Therefore, we are asking for continuation of the recent increase and **3 million dollars to continue these efforts and keep pace with the increasing demand for more complex services, the first step in an effort to ensure that every young person experiencing or at imminent risk of homelessness and their families can access quality services. We ask that you urge all of your colleagues, on both sides of the aisle, to support this request.**

Please help us rebuild the safety net for our youth and families in crisis as well as one critical piece of a strategy to prevent family instability. After all, the citizens of this State deserve nothing less.

Thank you.

Benjamin Moe, LMSW
Executive Director, Do'chas II
Board President, Michigan Network for Youth and Families

DOMEDAY 2020

Wednesday, March 4
8:15 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Michigan State Capitol
100 N Capitol Avenue
Lansing, MI 48933



8:15 - 8:45 a.m.	Registration, pick up packets, breakfast on First Floor, West Wing
8:15 - 8:45 a.m.	Set up displays on First Floor, South Wing
8:45 - 8:50 a.m.	Dome Day Welcome, Benjamin Moe, MNYF President
8:50 - 9:15 a.m.	Prepare for Visits
9:30 a.m. - Noon	Visit with Legislators, participate in Committee meetings, tour the Capitol
11:30 - 12:30 p.m.	Meeting with Sheila Alles, Chief Deputy Superintendent for the Michigan Department of Education, Room S101
12:00 - 1:00 p.m.	Lunch on First Floor, West Wing
1:00 - 3:00 p.m.	Visit with Legislators, participate in Committee meetings, tour the Capitol
3:00 p.m.	Take down displays, complete evaluations, and pick up thank you cards on First Floor, South Wing

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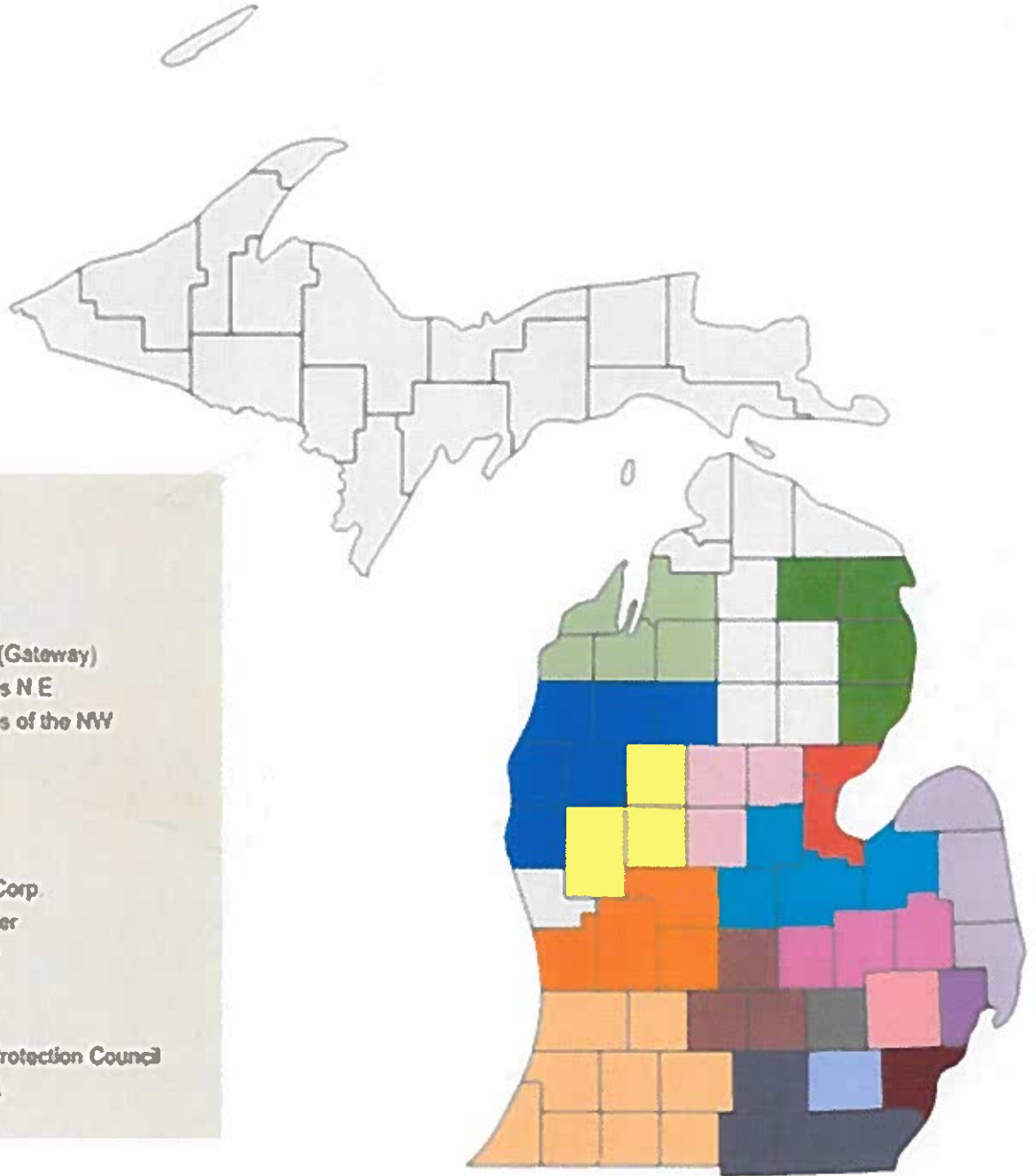


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Flint, MI 48502
mnyf.org



215 S. Washington Square
Lansing, Michigan 48933
michiganschildren.org

Michigan Network for Youth and Families



HYR Provider

- No HYR Provider
- Alternatives for Girls
- Arbor Circle
- Catholic Family Services
- Child & Family Charities (Gateway)
- Child and Family Services N E
- Child and Family Services of the NW
- Common Ground
- CYS (FYI)
- CYS (Harbor)
- Do'Chas II
- Genesee County Youth Corp.
- Listening Ear Crisis Center
- Livingston Family Center
- Mid Michigan CAA
- Ozone House Inc.
- Saginaw County Youth Protection Council
- Staircase Youth Services
- Youth Attention Center



February, 2020

Successful Youth Transitions in the Michigan State Budget: Runaway and Homeless Youth

The economic success of Michigan depends on getting all Michigan children ready for post-secondary education, work, and life. Over 13,000 youth in grades eight and above reported being homeless in Michigan in 2018-2019, an experience that makes traditional adult transition pathways difficult, resulting in a four-year high school graduation rate of 55% in 2018. Youth with unique vulnerabilities, including sexual or physical abuse, parental incarceration, mental health issues, or substance use, and poverty, tend to experience homelessness. Fewer than 60% of young adults who have experienced foster care report having stable housing. Additionally, 60% of child sex trafficking survivors have experienced foster care.

Michigan's network of agencies that provide runaway and homeless youth with crisis and transition services are effective. 95% of youth discharged from emergency shelters are reunified with their families, and 88% are actively enrolled in education, yet recent years have overtaxed their service capacity due to increased severity of needs experienced by youth, and some program closures due to lack of funds have left multiple Michigan counties with a gap in service access for homeless and runaway youth. As a result, the percentage of runaway and homeless youth receiving services in Michigan is declining.

Two years ago, Michigan provided a modest increase of \$500,000 for the first time since 2001. A further increase in last year's legislatively-passed budget of \$300,000, however, was line-item vetoed. These increases, while significant, are not enough to bring back closed programs or meet the increased needs of youth. They must serve as the first step for re-building a network of support for youth and families.

Current Situation: The Governor's budget recommendation includes no increase for runaway and homeless youth services, and does not restore the Governor's line-item veto.

Recommendations

- **Urge House and Senate leaders to increase state funding in the MDHHS budget for runaway and homeless youth programs, by \$3 million, including restoring the line-item veto, as a first step towards rebuilding service access statewide.**