NOVEMBER 2025

INVESTING IN IMPACT

How State Investment Reduced Youth Homelessness in California

JOHN BURTON Advocates for Youth

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Executive Summary

Between 2019 and 2024, youth homelessness in California declined by 24 percent, despite an overall 24 percent increase in homelessness across the state, and an 11 percent increase in youth homelessness nationwide. California's progress, reflected in statewide Point-in-Time Count data, demonstrates the impact of the state's unprecedented, targeted investments in preventing and addressing youth homelessness.

While the PIT count is widely understood to be an undercount, particularly for youth, the trend is unmistakable: California's focused approach has yielded measurable results.

Over the past six years, California has taken a two-pronged approach to reducing youth homelessness: first, by targeting prevention efforts toward those at highest risk, such as youth exiting foster care, and second, by strengthening the broader safety net for young people who don't qualify for foster care-related programs but still face housing instability or homelessness due to similar challenges.

California's resources for youth aging out of foster care originated more than two decades ago and expanded with the extension of foster care to age 21 in 2012. However, California's statewide safety net to address youth homelessness is still in its infancy, funded primarily through the Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention (HHAP) program. HHAP requires local jurisdictions to dedicate a portion of their funds, known as the "youth set-aside," to addressing homelessness among youth. As of July 31, 2025, more than 50,000 youth have been served by HHAP-funded programs, which provide housing, rental assistance, supportive services, and preventative resources. Together with California's investments in extended foster care, HHAP helped drive the state's first significant decline in youth homelessness.

Now, California stands at a crossroads. For the first time since HHAP's creation in 2019, the Fiscal Year (FY) 2025–26 state budget excludes HHAP funding, putting this progress at risk. Although a $500 million allocation is proposed for FY 2026–27 (the youth sector to receive ten percent of it), its inclusion in the state's budget remains uncertain and contingent upon new legislation. At a moment when federal funding is also under threat, sustaining state investment is essential to preserve the gains made and ensure that no young person in California faces homelessness as they enter adulthood.

John Burton Advocates for Youth (JBAY) releases this report to document what has been achieved since HHAP's inception, and to underscore what is at stake if youth homelessness funding is diminished or lost altogether. The report offers findings from two analyses, summarized below, along with recommendations for the future:

Findings

Trends in Youth Homelessness Between 2019 and 2024

1. Between 2019 and 2024, the number of youth experiencing homelessness in California declined by 24 percent, despite an overall 24 percent increase in homelessness in California, and an 11 percent increase in youth homelessness nationwide.
2. More than two-thirds of California's Continuums of Care (CoCs) (68%) reported reductions in the number of youth experiencing homelessness between 2019 and 2024.
3. Just under one-third (32%) of CoCs in California reported increases in the number of youth experiencing homelessness between 2019 and 2024.
4. Eight of the ten CoCs with the highest numbers of youth experiencing homelessness saw reductions between 2019 and 2024.
5. Eleven CoCs reduced the number of youth experiencing homelessness by at least 50 percent between 2019 and 2024.

Statewide Analysis of Regionally Coordinated Homelessness Action Plans

1. Statewide, HHAP grantees are collectively investing 10.83 percent of round 5 funding in addressing youth homelessness.
2. Over one-quarter (27%) of HHAP grantees are investing more than the minimally-required 10 percent of round 5 funding in youth.
3. Compared to counties and large cities, a greater share of CoCs are investing more than the minimally-required 10 percent of round 5 HHAP funding in youth.
4. Nearly one-third of round 5 HHAP funding for youth is being used to fund rapid rehousing.
5. Large cities are most commonly funding rapid rehousing for youth, while CoCs and counties are most commonly funding interim housing.
6. About half of HHAP grantees are using their round 5 youth funding for a single intervention, while the other half are funding multiple approaches.

Recommendations

For the State of California

1. Establish an ongoing funding guarantee for youth within the Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention (HHAP) program.
2. Make it a state priority to reach functional zero youth homelessness.
3. Use HHAP to bridge support for vulnerable youth while recent housing reforms take effect.
4. Continue to include Continuums of Care, counties and large cities in future rounds of HHAP.
5. Continue to fund a broad range of eligible uses in future rounds of HHAP.
6. Adopt a youth set-aside in any state investment in housing development.
7. Sustain investments in targeted prevention for youth from the foster care system.
8. Expand upon the current HHAP Fiscal Dashboard to incorporate more detail on the use of funding for youth.

For Local Communities

1. Maximize use of federal funding still available for youth homelessness prevention.
2. Adopt strategies to improve the accuracy of the youth Point-In-Time (PIT) Count.

Introduction

Youth Homelessness in California

Between 2019 and 2024, homelessness declined 24 percent among youth under age 24 in California, from 13,019 to 9,902. This progress occurred despite overall homelessness in California increasing by 24 percent and youth homelessness nationwide rising by 11 percent. Unsheltered youth homelessness in California dropped even more sharply—by 42 percent, from 9,736 to 5,603.

This is according to the homeless Point-in-Time (PIT), a nationwide mandate to measure homelessness in order to receive funding from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Limitations with the methodology of the PIT count are widely acknowledged and understood to be an undercount, particularly regarding counting youth, whose homelessness is often less visible than that of older adults. However, the PIT serves as a strong tool for comparisons from year to year to gauge progress.

The 2024 California PIT count identified 9,902 youth under the age of 24, with 95 percent aged 18 to 24, and 5 percent minors. The majority of these young people were unaccompanied, however 8.6 percent were experiencing homelessness with children of their own. A 2023 study of youth experiencing homelessness in Los Angeles found that they were significantly more likely to report mental health conditions and substance use disorders, in addition to physical conditions such as physical disabilities, physical illnesses, traumatic brain injuries, developmental disabilities, or HIV.[1]

The national 2017 Voices of Youth Count study found that certain subpopulations of young people were at higher risk for homelessness, including those who haven't graduated high school; unmarried parenting youth; youth with very low income; LGTBQ youth; Black/African-American youth; and Hispanic, non-White youth.[2]

Between 2019 and 2024, youth homelessness in California declined by **24%**

9,902
young people under 24 still experiencing homelessness in California as of 2024

[1] Richards, J., Henwood, B. F., Porter, N., & Kuhn, R. (2023). Examining the role of duration and frequency of homelessness on health outcomes among unsheltered young adults. Journal of Adolescent Health, 73(6), 1038-1045. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jadohealth.2023.06.013

[2] Morton, M.H., Dworsky, A., & Samuels, G.M. (2017). Missed opportunities: Youth homelessness in America. National estimates. Chicago, IL: Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago.

California's Response to Youth Homelessness

A Dual Approach: Targeted Prevention + Universal Safety Net

California has taken great strides to recognize the critical importance of stability, safety and opportunity for transition-age youth. This progress reflects a dual approach:

1. **Targeted support for systems-involved youth:** Research shows that youth with experience in the foster care system are much more likely to experience homelessness than their same-age non-foster peers. California's investment in extended foster care for youth until age 21, and robust housing support for youth following their exit from care has reduced their risk. Research shows that youth who participate in extended foster care—versus opting to exit the system—are less likely to experience homelessness. It also shows that youth placed in settings that provide supportive services offer even greater protection against future homelessness, preventing youth from "crossing over" into the homelessness response system.[3]

2. **Broader safety net for all youth experiencing homelessness:** Despite often experiencing trauma and instability similar to those youth in foster care, many youth and young adults do not qualify for support through the child welfare system. This includes youth who never entered foster care to begin with as well as youth who were placed in foster care but exited prior to turning 18 and therefore don't qualify for most aftercare resources. To meet the needs of these youth and prevent them from becoming chronically homeless, California has built a safety net over the last six years, funded primarily by the Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention (HHAP) program. A portion of HHAP funding is statutorily required to be directed to addressing youth homelessness. HHAP provides the state's 44 homeless Continuums of Care (CoCs), 58 counties, and 13 largest cities with one-time grant funds to implement regionally coordinated homelessness interventions, including interim and permanent housing, services and prevention.

[3] Courtney, M., Park, S., Harty, J., 2025. "Foster care policy and homelessness among youth transitioning to adulthood from foster care." Child Abuse and Neglect, volume 169(107638). DOI: https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2025.107638

What Prompted California to Invest in Youth-Specific Funding?

California's policies acknowledge that youth homelessness requires responses that are tailored to the needs and experiences of young people, and that in order to ensure youth are served, funding specific to this purpose is required. This is reflected in the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) Housing Inventory Count, which shows that even after years of increased awareness about youth homelessness, in 2024, just 3 percent of the HUD homelessness beds in California administered by CoCs were for unaccompanied homeless youth.

Historically, outside of investments focused on current and former foster youth, there has been very limited funding to address youth homelessness on both the federal and state levels, relative to the amount of funding to address adult homelessness. As of 2018, there were two youth-specific federal funding sources: The first is the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA), established in 1974, which grants funds directly to providers nationwide to operate four programs for youth up to age 21: Basic Center Program (youth shelter), Transitional Living Program, Maternity Group Homes for pregnant and parenting youth, and Street Outreach Program.

The second is the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP), established in 2016, which is administered to CoCs nationwide to develop and implement a coordinated approach to preventing and ending youth homelessness, serving young people up to age 24. Combined, these two federal funding sources provided less than $10 million to California communities in 2018. As of 2025, this figure has climbed to approximately $45 million, reaching CoCs or providers across 18 of California's 58 counties.

This stands in sharp contrast to the funding available for the adult system, which is provided statewide through the Continuum of Care program, Emergency Solutions Grant Program, and Housing Opportunities for People with HIV/AIDS. Combined, these funding sources totaled $498.3 million in 2018 and have increased to $717.1 million in 2025, reaching all of California's 44 CoCs.

It was in this context of extreme funding disparity that California made its first statewide investment in youth homelessness outside of the child welfare system, in Fiscal Year (FY) 2018-19 under Governor Jerry Brown. That year, California established a "youth set-aside" policy within the $500 million Homeless Emergency Aid Program (HEAP). This marked the first time that youth-specific funding was incorporated into a broader homelessness initiative. Grantees were required to dedicate at least 5 percent of their HEAP allocations to addressing youth homelessness.

Building on that foundation, at the start of Governor Gavin Newsom's term, California launched the Homeless Housing, Assistance, and Prevention (HHAP) program in 2019-20, which has received consecutive one-time allocations through FY 2024-25. HHAP expanded the youth set-aside, starting at 8 percent, and increasing to 10 percent in FY 2021-22, with total program funding ranging from $300 million to $1 billion, funded at $1 billion in each of the past four years as demonstrated in Figure A. With the six rounds of HHAP funding being just over halfway spent (53%), as of July 31, 2025, a total of 50,431 youth have been served through HHAP-funded programs statewide, according to California's Homeless Data Integration System.

This approach was further reinforced in California's Homekey program, a pandemic era investment which funded the creation of new housing. Beginning with Homekey round 2, the state reserved 8 percent of funds for youth-focused housing projects—which took spending on youth projects from less than 1 percent on youth in round 1, to a collective 10 percent across rounds 2 and 3.[4]

FIGURE A: AMOUNT OF HHAP FUNDING, NUMBER OF YOUTH SERVED, AND PERCENT EXPENDED (2019-2024)[5]

Fiscal Year	Round	HHAP Funding Included in State Budget Homeless	HHAP Funding Allocated to Continuums of Care, Counties & Large Cities	Youth Set-Aside	Number of Youth Served as of 7/31/25	Percent of Total HHAP Funding Expended as of 8/31/25
2019-20	1	$650,000,000	$618,000,000	$49,440,000	11,344	100%
2020-21	2	$300,000,000	$284,999,998	$22,800,000	11,549	90%
2021-22	3	$1,000,000,000	$760,000,000	$76,000,000	13,383	75%
2022-23	4	$1,000,000,000	$760,000,000	$76,000,000	13,595	65%
2023-24	5	$1,000,000,000	$869,500,000	$86,950,000	560	23%
2024-25	6	$1,000,000,000	$760,000,000	$76,000,000	N/A	0%
Total	**1-6**	**$4,950,000,000**	**$4,052,499,998**	**$387,190,000**	**50,431**	**53%**

[4] California Department of Housing and Community Development. Homekey Awards Dashboard. URL: https://www.hcd.ca.gov/funding/homekey/awards

[5] HHAP funding allocated to Continuums of Care, counties and cities, as well as expenditure progress was drawn from the California Department of Housing and Community Development's HHAP Fiscal Data Dashboard: https://www.hcd.ca.gov/housing-open-data-tools/hhap-dashboard. The number of youth served by HHAP was drawn from the Homeless Data Integration System managed by the California Interagency Council on Homelessness. URL: https://bcsh.ca.gov/calich/hdis.html.

A Turning Point

With the 2025-26 state budget, California faces a critical inflection point. For the first time since HHAP's creation, no funding was included for the program. The budget proposes a $500 million appropriation in 2026-27, contingent on new legislation to increase accountability, but the reduction in funding and the uncertainty of its inclusion and continued availability place years of progress at risk.

John Burton Advocates for Youth releases this report to promote awareness and better understanding of what has been achieved since HHAP's inception—and to underscore what is at stake if youth homelessness funding is diminished or lost altogether.

This comes amid broader fiscal uncertainty: federal investments in youth homelessness remain severely limited and are themselves at risk. Both the Runaway and Homeless Youth Act (RHYA) programs and the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP) face potential cuts and currently support only a small share of California communities with limited funds.

Methodology

This report consists of two findings sections and a collection of seven program profiles. The methodology for each is described below.

Findings Section 1:

Trends in Youth Homelessness and the Impact of State Investment

This section analyzed data from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), provided in the Continuum of Care Homeless Populations and Subpopulations report for each of the years between 2019 and 2024, with the exception of 2021. In this report, the number of youth experiencing homelessness was determined using the sum of those reported as “Unaccompanied Youth” and “Parenting Youth,” and includes both minors and nonminors up to age 24. Data from 2021 was omitted from the analysis due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which made the count optional for communities and resulted in severe inconsistencies and undercounts.

Findings Section 2:

Statewide Analysis of Regionally Coordinated Homelessness Action Plans

JBAY conducted an analytic review of every Regionally Coordinated Homelessness Action Plan (RCHAP) used to apply for round 5 HHAP funding, which are available on the website of the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). In total, there were 41 RCHAPs downloaded, with 79 discrete Administrative Entities identified as funding applicants. Following data collection, JBAY uploaded all 41 regional plans into an open-source qualitative analysis software designed for systematic text coding and data management. For a detailed description of how this software was utilized to conduct the analysis, refer to Appendix A. Note: San Francisco’s administrative entity (San Francisco Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing) qualifies as a Continuum of Care (CoC), county, and large city. For the purposes of this report, it is categorized as a CoC in the analysis.

Program Profiles:

How Communities Use the Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention Program to Respond to Youth Homelessness

Between July and August of 2025, JBAY conducted hour-long interviews with staff members from organizations serving youth supported with HHAP funding under contracts with their local CoC, county or city. Staff were asked about the nature of their services, their programming and capacity prior to receiving HHAP funding, how their work has evolved as a result of that funding, and how the young people they serve would be affected if their HHAP contracts were reduced or discontinued.

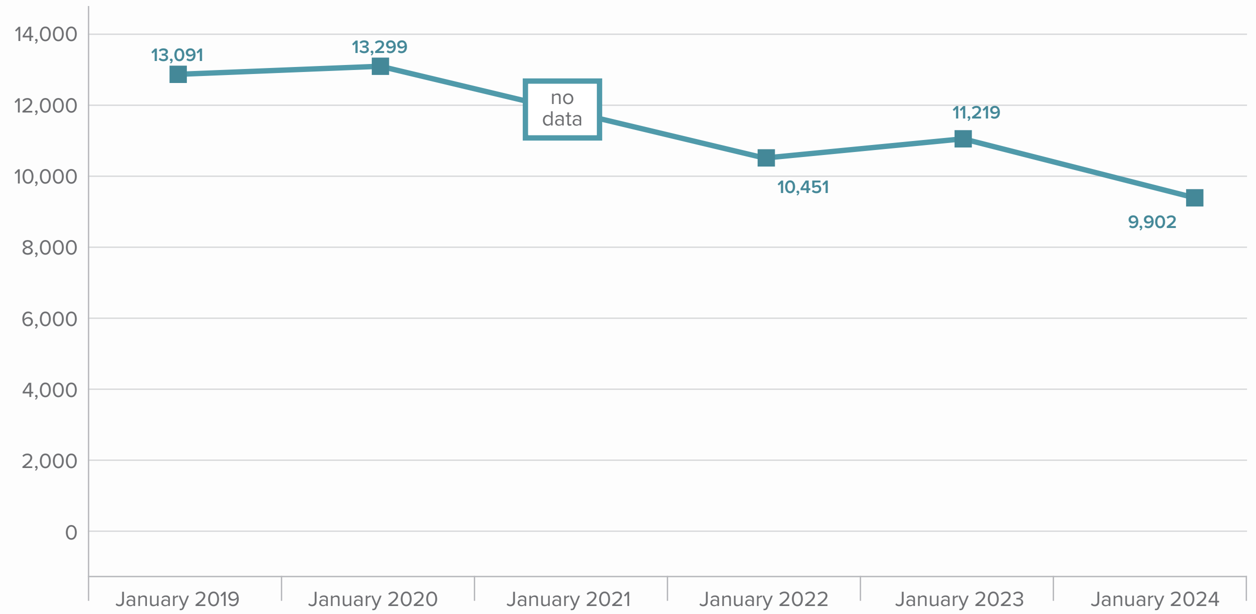
Findings

The findings in this report are divided into two sections. The first examines how the number of youth experiencing homelessness changed between 2019 and 2024 according to the homeless Point-In-Time (PIT) Count. The second section provides a glimpse into how communities are using the Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention (HHAP) program to address youth homelessness through a statewide analysis of Regionally Coordinated Homelessness Action Plans.

Trends in Youth Homelessness Between 2019 and 2024

1. **Between 2019 and 2024, the number of youth experiencing homelessness in California declined by 24 percent.** As shown in Figure B, in 2019, a total of 13,091 youth were identified as experiencing homelessness in California by the January 2019 PIT Count. The following year, the number remained relatively stable at 13,299. After HHAP funding began reaching local communities and overall allocations increased, the number of youth experiencing homelessness dropped sharply—by 21 percent to 10,451 in 2022. Between 2022 and 2023, the count rose slightly by 7 percent before falling again to 9,902 in 2024, the lowest figure reported in the last decade. This 24 percent decline occurred as overall homelessness in California increased by 24 percent and youth homelessness nationwide rose by 11 percent.

FIGURE B: NUMBER OF YOUTH EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS IN CALIFORNIA (2019-2024)



2. **More than two-thirds of California's Continuums of Care (CoCs) (68%) reported reductions in the number of youth experiencing homelessness between 2019 and 2024.** Of California's 44 CoCs, 30 saw a decline, including seven that reduced their counts by more than 100 youth. Figure C lists the seven CoCs that experienced a reduction in their PIT Count of more than 100 youth. For a complete list of CoCs and their corresponding PIT data for 2019 and 2024, see Appendix B.

FIGURE C: CALIFORNIA COCS WITH REDUCTIONS OF MORE THAN 100 YOUTH EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS (2019-2024)

Continuum of Care	Number of Youth Homeless According to PIT Count		Reduction Amount	
	2019	2024	# of Youth	% Change
San Jose/Santa Clara City & County	1,926	821	-1,105	-57%
Los Angeles City & County	3,389	2,776	-613	-18%
Santa Rosa, Petaluma/Sonoma County	666	156	-510	-77%
Watsonville/Santa Cruz City & County	625	199	-426	-68%
Oakland, Berkeley/Alameda County	751	427	-324	-43%
Vallejo/Solano County	215	67	-148	-69%
San Luis Obispo County	179	34	-145	-81%

3. **Just under one-third (32%) of CoCs in California reported increases in the number of youth experiencing homelessness between 2019 and 2024.** Of the state's 44 CoCs, 14 saw an increase, including two with rises of more than 100 youth: Stockton/San Joaquin County, which increased by 189 youth, and San Diego City & County, which increased by 130 youth. Two key factors may have contributed to these increases: San Diego County experienced a 49 percent increase in Fair Market Rent during this period, and Stockton/San Joaquin County saw one of the largest overall increases in homelessness in the state. The remaining 12 CoCs with increases are primarily rural communities. (Figure D)

FIGURE D: CALIFORNIA COCS WITH INCREASES IN YOUTH HOMELESSNESS (2019-2024)

Continuum of Care	Number of Youth Homeless According to PIT Count		Increase Amount	
	2019	2024	# of Youth	% Change
Lake County	8	28	20	250%
Stockton/San Joaquin County	129	318	189	147%
Daly/San Mateo County	47	88	41	87%
Merced City & County	21	37	16	76%
Fresno City & County/Madera County	119	186	67	56%
Redding/Shasta, Siskiyou, Lassen, Plumas, Del Norte, Modoc, Sierra Counties	97	146	49	51%
Richmond/Contra Costa County	125	171	46	37%
Visalia/Kings, Tulare Counties	68	92	24	35%
Mendocino County	48	62	14	29%
Pasadena	31	38	7	23%
San Diego City and County	675	805	130	19%
Colusa, Glenn, Trinity Counties	6	7	1	17%
Marin County	110	111	1	1%
Humboldt County	93	94	1	1%

4. **Eight of the ten CoCs with the highest numbers of youth experiencing homelessness saw reductions between 2019 and 2024.** Figure E lists California's ten CoCs with the largest numbers of youth experiencing homelessness, as identified in the 2024 PIT Count. Among these, eight CoCs reported declines since 2019. San Jose/Santa Clara City & County CoC saw the largest decrease, cutting its total by more than half, from 1,926 to 821. The Oakland, Berkeley/Alameda County CoC also experienced a notable decline of 324 youth or 43 percent. Salinas/Monterey, San Benito Counties CoC reduced by 22 percent, and Los Angeles City & County CoC—which consistently reports the highest numbers due to its large population and geography—saw a 18 percent reduction. The two CoCs that experienced increases were Stockton/San Joaquin County (up 145 percent) and San Diego City and County (up 19 percent).

FIGURE E: TEN CALIFORNIA COCS WITH HIGHEST NUMBER OF YOUTH EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS IN 2024: CHANGE IN NUMBER OF YOUTH (2019-2024)

Continuum of Care	Number of Youth Homeless According to PIT Count		Increase/Decrease Amount	
	2019	2024	# of Youth	% Change
Los Angeles City & County	3,389	2,776	-613	-18%
San Francisco	1,189	1,157	-32	-3%
San Jose/Santa Clara City & County	1,926	821	-1,105	-57%
San Diego City and County	675	805	130	19%
Oakland, Berkeley/Alameda County	751	427	-324	-43%
Sacramento City & County	430	414	-16	-4%
Stockton/San Joaquin County	130	318	188	145%
Riverside City & County	297	289	-8	-3%
Salinas/Monterey, San Benito Counties	333	260	-73	-22%
Santa Ana, Anaheim/Orange County	263	258	-5	-2%

5. **Eleven CoCs reduced the number of youth experiencing homelessness by at least 50 percent between 2019 and 2024.** Figure F shows the change in youth homelessness among these 11 CoCs. Of them, three ranked in the top ten in 2019 for the number of youth experiencing homelessness—Santa Rosa, Petaluma/Sonoma; Watsonville/Santa Cruz City & County; and San Jose/Santa Clara City & County. Five of the 11 CoCs reported reductions of at least 100 youth. It is important to note that CoCs with smaller youth populations tend to show more pronounced fluctuations in percentage changes.

FIGURE F: CALIFORNIA COCS WITH REDUCTIONS IN YOUTH HOMELESSNESS BY 50 PERCENT OR MORE (2019-2024)

Continuum of Care	Number of Youth Homeless According to PIT Count		Reduction Amount	
	2019	2024	# of Youth	% Change
Alpine, Inyo, Mono Counties	30	5	-25	-83%
San Luis Obispo County	179	34	-145	-81%
Amador, Calaveras, Mariposa, Tuolumne Counties	57	13	-44	-77%
El Dorado County	117	27	-90	-77%
Santa Rosa, Petaluma/Sonoma County	666	156	-510	-77%
Vallejo/Solano County	215	67	-148	-69%
Watsonville/Santa Cruz City & County	625	199	-426	-68%
Nevada County	31	12	-19	-61%
San Jose/Santa Clara City & County	1,926	821	-1,105	-57%
Davis, Woodland/Yolo County	44	20	-24	-55%
Napa City & County	23	11	-12	-52%

Statewide Analysis of Regionally Coordinated Homelessness Action Plans

The findings in this section are based on a statewide analysis of the Regionally Coordinated Homelessness Action Plans (RCHAPs) developed as part of the round 5 application process for the Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention (HHAP) program. Because each HHAP appropriation spans a five-year expenditure period, there is a significant delay between when funds are awarded and when final outcomes are reported. As a result, communities' most recent RCHAPs offer the most current and comprehensive publicly available information on how HHAP funding is being used to address youth homelessness.

Beginning with round 5, applicants—Continuums of Care (CoCs), counties and large cities—were required to prepare and submit RCHAPs as a part of a "region," defined as the geographic area served by a county, including all large cities and the CoC(s) within it. When multiple counties are served by the same CoC, those counties had the option to apply together or as separate county regions. As a result, 41 RCHAPs were submitted for round 5, by 79 distinct administrative entities applying for funding. A complete list of administrative entities and whether they applied jointly with their regional partners is available in Appendix C.

Round 5 HHAP applications include detailed funding plans, along with the RCHAP, which outlines roles and responsibilities of participating applicants within the region; system performance measures and improvement plans; and key actions to ensure racial and gender equity, reduce exits to homelessness from institutional settings, utilize funds to end homelessness, and connect people to benefit programs. While RCHAPs cover a wide range of topics, this report's analysis focuses specifically on information related to youth.

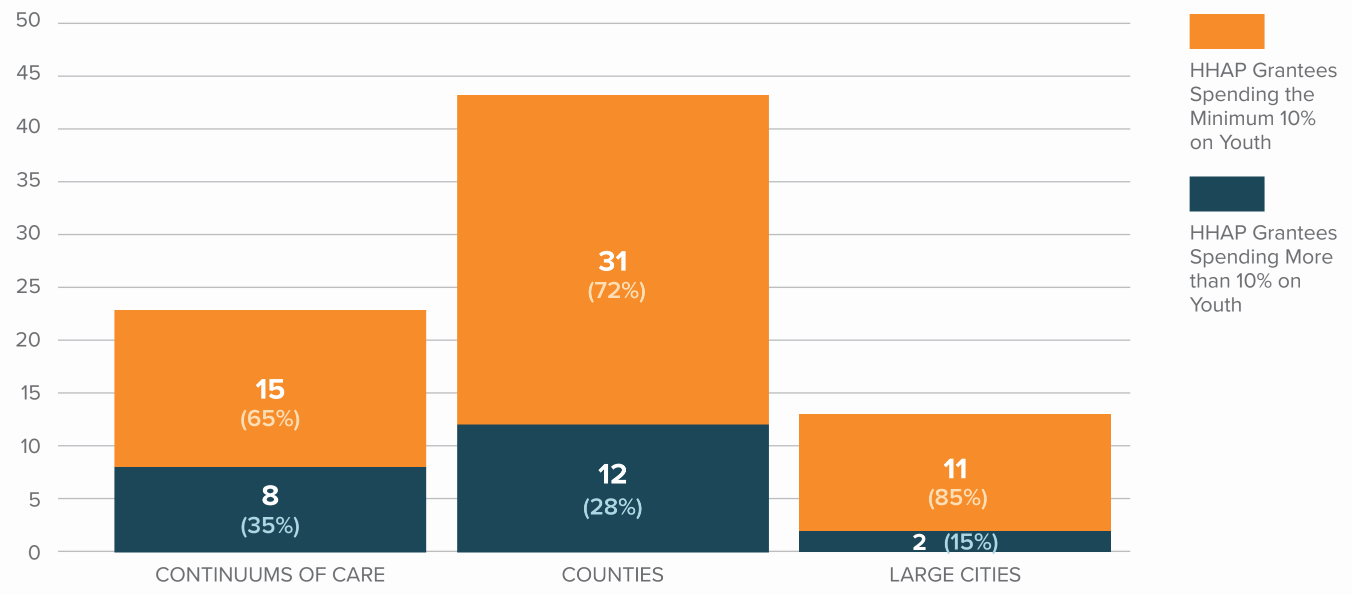
1. **Statewide, HHAP grantees are collectively investing 10.83 percent of round 5 funding in addressing youth homelessness.** According to the RCHAPs submitted, this represents $94,183,840 of the $869,076,454 allocated to CoCs, counties, and large cities.
2. **Over one-quarter (27%) of HHAP grantees are investing more than the minimally-required 10 percent of round 5 funding in youth.** Of the 79 administrative entities that applied for HHAP funding, 22 of their plans state they are spending more than the statutorily-required 10 percent to serve youth. These 22 grantees are listed in Figure G. The HHAP grantee with the highest proportion of round 5 HHAP funding dedicated to youth is Lassen County, which is spending more than half (51.39%) of its HHAP allocation on youth. The County of Santa Cruz came in second, spending more than one-quarter (26.02%) of its HHAP allocation on youth.

FIGURE G: HHAP GRANTEES INVESTING MORE THAN 10 PERCENT OF ROUND 5 FUNDING IN YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

Grantee Type	HHAP Grantees When grantees applied jointly, the lead applicant is listed first and bolded	HHAP Funding Being Invested in Youth		Total Round 5 HHAP Allocation
		$ Amount	% of HHAP Allocation	
Continuums of Care	• **Sacramento City & County CoC**	$2,268,818	17.00%	$13,345,988
	• **Santa Rosa, Petaluma/Sonoma County CoC**	$487,353	14.96%	$3,258,485
	• **San Francisco CoC** ◦ San Francisco County ◦ City of San Francisco	$4,716,052	10.85%	$43,463,970
	• **Roseville, Rocklin/Placer County CoC**	$108,801	10.67%	$1,019,535
	• **Visalia/Kings, Tulare Counties CoC**	$215,000	10.17%	$2,113,846
	• **Amador, Calaveras, Mariposa, Tuolumne Counties CoC** • **Amador County** ◦ Calaveras County ◦ Mariposa County ◦ Tuolumne County	$208,895	10.14%	$2,059,676
	• **Lake County CoC**	$67,000	10.13%	$661,476
	• **Nevada County CoC** ◦ Nevada County	$138,700	10.01%	$1,386,266
Counties	• **Lassen County**	$95,000	51.39%	$184,870
	• **Santa Cruz County** ◦ Watsonville/Santa Cruz City & County CoC	$1,322,404	26.02%	$5,082,977
	• **San Diego County**	$3,600,000	25.42%	$14,160,464
	• **Yuba County** ◦ Yuba City & County/Sutter County CoC	$150,379	20.00%	$751,895
	• **Fresno County** ◦ Fresno City & County/Madera County CoC	$1,875,202	16.00%	$11,720,018
	• **Solano County**	$254,533	15.37%	$1,655,549
	• **Napa County**	$104,714	15.00%	$698,090
	• **Orange County**	$1,252,009	15.00%	$8,346,727
	• **Glenn County** ◦ Colusa, Glenn, Trinity Counties CoC ◦ Colusa County ◦ Trinity County	$135,158	13.32%	$1,014,341
	• **Marin County** ◦ Marin County CoC	$394,242	12.52%	$3,150,093
	• **Sonoma County**	$314,000	10.04%	$3,126,229
	• **El Dorado County** ◦ El Dorado County CoC	$138,603	10.02%	$1,383,449
Large Cities	• **City of San Jose**	$4,000,000	13.86%	$28,866,312
	• **City of Oakland**	$3,000,000	10.55%	$28,446,566

3. **Compared to counties and large cities, a greater share of CoCs are investing more than the minimally-required 10 percent of round 5 HHAP funding in youth homelessness.** Of the 23 CoCs that submitted HHAP applications—either individually or jointly—eight (35%) indicated in their RCHAPs that they intend to exceed the required 10 percent. Counties were the next most likely to do so, with 12 of 42 (29%) reporting plans to invest above the minimum, followed by large cities, with 2 of 13 (14%) indicating this plan. (Figure H)

FIGURE H: NUMBER AND PROPORTION OF CONTINUUMS OF CARE, COUNTIES, AND LARGE CITIES INVESTING MORE THAN 10 PERCENT OF ROUND 5 HHAP FUNDING IN YOUTH HOMELESSNESS



4. **Nearly one-third of round 5 HHAP funding for youth is being used to fund rapid rehousing.** As illustrated in Figure I, of HHAP's nine eligible uses, the largest share of HHAP funding for youth (31%) is funding rapid rehousing. The second highest investment is in interim housing, with 21 percent of the total youth funding allocated to this use. Street outreach and systems support were funded at the lowest levels, with each of them supported with 2 percent of total funds. A description of the various interventions funded by HHAP can be found in the round 5 HHAP Notice of Funding Availability.[6]

FIGURE I: AMOUNT OF ROUND 5 HHAP FUNDING FOR YOUTH ALLOCATED TO EACH ELIGIBLE USE CATEGORY

HHAP Eligible Use	Youth Funding Allocated in RCHAP	
	$	%
Rapid Rehousing	$29,450,849	31%
Interim Housing	$18,719,488	20%
Operating Subsidies – Interim Housing	$18,268,548	19%
Prevention & Shelter Diversion	$9,202,038	10%
Services Coordination	$6,608,913	7%
Delivery of Permanent Housing and Innovative Solutions	$4,329,839	5%
Operating Subsidies – Permanent Housing	$3,381,431	4%
Street Outreach	$1,963,519	2%
Systems Support	$1,960,142	2%
Total:	**$93,884,768***	**100%**

[6] California Interagency Council on Homelessness. Regionally Coordinated Homeless Housing Assistance and Prevention Program Round 5 Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA). URL: https://www.hcd.ca.gov/sites/default/files/docs/grants-and-funding/calich/hhapround5funding.pdf

*$299,072 is not reflected in this figure because it was absorbed in administrative costs.

5. **Large cities are most commonly funding rapid rehousing for youth, while CoCs and counties are most commonly funding interim housing.** As shown in Figure J, more than half (52%) of large cities are funding rapid rehousing with their round 5 HHAP funding for youth. CoCs and counties are most commonly funding interim housing, which refers to several short-term housing models, including shelter, navigation centers, bridge housing, transitional housing, or other models which do not require occupants to sign leases or occupancy agreements. A total of 27 percent of CoCs are devoting their funds to operating subsidies for interim housing, and one-third (33%) of counties are using their funds for the broader interim housing category, which may include capital development as well as the provision of services.

FIGURE J: USE OF ROUND 5 HHAP FUNDING FOR YOUTH, BY ELIGIBLE USE AND GRANTEE TYPE

Eligible Use	% of CoCs	% of Counties	% of Large Cities
Rapid Rehousing	25%	15%	52%
Prevention & shelter Diversion	12%	6%	12%
Delivery of Permanent Housing & Innovative Solutions	2%	7%	4%
Operating Subsidies - Permanent Housing	1%	7%	2%
Operating Subsidies - Interim Housing	27%	15%	18%
Interim Housing	19%	33%	7%
Street Outreach	1%	3%	2%
Services Coordination	10%	10%	2%
Systems Support	3%	3%	0%

6. **About half of HHAP grantees are using their round 5 youth funding for a single intervention, while the other half are funding multiple approaches.** As shown in Figure K, 39 HHAP grantees (49%) indicated in their RCHAP that they are investing all youth funds in one eligible use, while 40 (51%) are spreading their funding across two or more eligible uses for youth. Among the three types of HHAP grantees, large cities are most likely to focus their youth funding on a single intervention—more than half (61%) reported this plan.

FIGURE K: AMOUNT OF ELIGIBLE USES FUNDED FOR YOUTH IN ROUND 5 OF HHAP

Type of HHAP Grantee	1 Eligible Use		2 Eligible Uses		3 Eligible Uses		4 Eligible Uses	
	# Grantees	% Grantees	# Grantees	% Grantees	# Grantees	% Grantees	# Grantees	% Grantees
CoC	10	42%	7	29%	5	21%	2	8%
County	21	50%	7	17%	6	14%	8	19%
Large City	8	61%	4	31%	1	8%	0	0%
All HHAP Grantees	**39**	**49%**	**18**	**23%**	**12**	**15%**	**10**	**13%**

Program Profiles

How Communities Use the Homeless Housing Assistance and Prevention (HHAP) Program to Respond to Youth Homelessness

3RD STREET YOUTH CENTER AND CLINIC
San Francisco City and County

BILL WILSON CENTER
Santa Clara County

THE CHANNEL ISLANDS YMCA
Santa Barbara County

JOVENES, INC.
Los Angeles County

KERN COUNTY NETWORK FOR CHILDREN
Kern County

LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICES OF NORTHERN CALIFORNIA
Sacramento County

ON THE MOVE/VOICES
Solano County

PROGRAM PROFILES

3rd Street Youth Center & Clinic

3rd Street Youth Center & Clinic Uses HHAP to Provide San Francisco's Youth a Pathway to Stability

LOCATED IN SAN FRANCISCO CITY AND COUNTY

Rooted in the Bayview-Hunters Point neighborhood of San Francisco, **3rd Street Youth Center & Clinic** offers pathways toward stability, self-sufficiency, and long-term wellness for youth and young adults, ages 18 to 27. HHAP funding from the **San Francisco Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing** supports the operational costs of 3rd Street's Lower Polk Transition-Aged Youth (TAY) Navigation Center. This 24-hour facility provides temporary housing to 75 youth at a moment in time. In 2024, the program provided shelter to 307 youth.

"We see homelessness as a health issue, and try to tackle it that way--holistically," shared Joi Jackson-Morgan, the Chief Executive Officer of 3rd Street. The organization's former Director of Housing, Bernah Posadas, added, "we've been successful because of the strength of our collaborative partnerships and our hardworking staff—we have everything a youth could need to become stable onsite." 3rd Street's Lower Polk TAY Navigation Center provides behavioral health support and access to healthcare through its on-site clinic, three meals per day, legal services, workforce development opportunities, and in-house case managers that assist with all housing and systems navigation.

For youth who access shelter at Lower Polk, their average length of stay is 157 days, just shy of six months. During that time, staff are working to reconnect young people to their support networks if they have them which may include family reunification or assisting young parents with regaining custody of their children. Staff also help youth gain access to important legal documents, support them with employment and education and other life skills such as how to feed themselves and do laundry. Jackson-Morgan explained, "The endgame is to help them transition successfully to stable housing, which is a struggle because of the limited availability of affordable housing in the Bay Area."

With HHAP being the primary source of funding for the center, the prospect of a decline or elimination of these funds would be devastating for their program. Posadas explained they've already seen reductions in other social service programs in San Francisco, such as food assistance and behavioral health services that their clients depend on. "Losing our program would have a profound effect. It would mean putting our youth at risk of violence, living on the street." With the support of HHAP funding, the Lower Polk TAY Navigation Center has become a staple in the community for young people to rebuild and gain stability. "Without the funds [HHAP], we simply won't be able to provide that." Posadas concluded.

PROGRAM PROFILES

Bill Wilson Center

Bill Wilson Center Uses HHAP Funding to Address College Student Homelessness

LOCATED IN SANTA CLARA COUNTY

Since 1973, the **Bill Wilson Center (BWC)** has been a crucial lifeline for runaway and homeless youth in Santa Clara County. Their commitment to building the self-confidence of youth and giving them the tools to improve their lives has enabled them to provide services to more than 5,000 children, youth, young adults and families.

With HHAP funding from the **City of San Jose**, BWC partners with **San Jose City College** to address the college student homelessness crisis. With recent data indicating nearly half (48%) of California Community College students experience housing insecurity and 14% experience homelessness, high-cost communities like San Jose are hit particularly hard.

The program provides targeted financial relief to transition-age youth enrolled at San Jose City College who are at risk of homelessness. The program currently serves 55 students, providing them with a monthly Direct Cash Transfer in the amount of $1,100 for 18 months. Students enrolled in the program are offered intensive case management services in addition to individualized housing navigation, financial literacy, social networking opportunities, and wraparound services.

Financial support for students began in July 2024 and is set to conclude in December 2025. "We designed this program to be as low-barrier as possible. It's easy for youth to fall off if there are roadblocks in a program's design" shared Monica Simons, the Family Resources Center Director at BWC.

Students in the program complete a monthly survey that BWC uses to gauge progress and impact. Simons highlighted, "Almost every single student has shared with us in the surveys how they've gone from enduring feelings of chaos and instability to now feeling empowered and self-determined. It's a powerful thing to help them come out of survival mode."

The surveys also indicate that after 8 months in the program, 51 of 55 students report being stably housed, and 29 report that the program has had a beneficial impact on their mental health. Despite strong early outcomes, Simons reports concerns about the collapse of other resources in the community and the effect this will have on these students, such as food assistance and health insurance. She asserts "this program is helping young people avoid chronic homelessness 10-15 years from now. All these students have dreams, and we have a responsibility to help them achieve them."

PROGRAM PROFILES

Channel Islands YMCA

Channel Islands YMCA Uses HHAP to Provide Targeted Support and Increase Regional Coordination

LOCATED IN SANTA BARBARA COUNTY

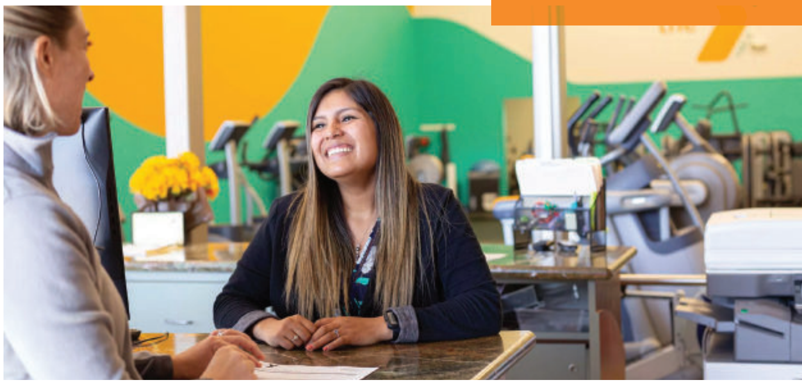
The Channel Islands YMCA is one of the largest providers serving youth experiencing homelessness located in Santa Barbara County. Offered through their Youth & Family Services (YFS) YMCA branch, the Noah's Anchorage Youth Shelter and Haley St. Navigation Center provides all-encompassing services including case management, rapid rehousing, emergency shelter, and transitional housing programming serving youth ages 12-24 years old. Over 2024-25, they served 486 youth across these programs, most of them located in the city of Santa Barbara.

Sixth highest in rental costs of California's 58 counties, Santa Barbara County's median rent averages $2,688 for a one-bedroom apartment, making stable housing often out of reach for low-income renters and youth transitioning to adulthood without family support. "Renting in Santa Barbara is so difficult for low-income earners—there's a real disparity for many of the people working and living here" shared Amy Tovias, the YFS Operations Director. She continues, "it's common for multiple families to double up and live in a one- or two-bedroom apartment. A lot of the youth we serve experienced conflict in these homes and then they ended up on the street."

The Channel Islands YMCA uses HHAP funding provided by the **Santa Barbara County Community Services Department** to provide street-based outreach, rapid rehousing, and case management to youth. Channel Islands YMCA has maximized resources by strengthening their relationship with service providers in the city of Santa Maria to ensure they are not duplicating efforts and are coordinating services across the region.

Tovias reports that HHAP's youth set-aside policy has been instrumental in creating targeted services for young people in the Santa Barbara community. She shares, "The reality is that [without designated funding for youth] a lot of these young adults would get funneled into the adult homeless services system. They don't meet the same acuity standards of people who are chronically homeless, so they'd be lower priority and not get the same kind of attention we are able to provide."

The upcoming gap in HHAP funding—in addition to the uncertainty of continued federal funding—creates long-term complications for their programming. Tovias says, "It's a delicate dance we're doing right now balancing funds. If we don't have the infrastructure, then we won't have the capacity to provide the level of service we have in the last few years. Without HHAP funding for youth, we'd be on the precipice of erasing all the progress we've made."



PROGRAM PROFILES

Jovenes, Inc.

Jovenes, Inc. Uses HHAP to Stably House Youth in Southeast Los Angeles through Time Limited Subsidies

LOCATED IN LOS ANGELES COUNTY

Located in Boyle Heights and serving communities throughout Southeast Los Angeles County, **Jovenes, Inc.** works to end the cycle of homelessness for transition-aged youth. Jovenes was founded in the late 1980s by Father Richard Estada, a priest and leader in the Chicano Rights Movement, who encountered unaccompanied youth from Central America, fleeing the violent and tumultuous conditions of their countries of origin. Over 30 years later, Jovenes has developed a robust continuum of services that provides youth with stability, resources, and housing to empower them to live to their full potential.

Jovenes plays an important role in Los Angeles County's homelessness response system for youth, serving as the lead regional coordinator for the Youth Coordinated Entry System, covering the Southeast portion of the county. A HHAP contract from the **Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority** funds 31 youth in their Time-Limited Subsidy program in addition to their Problem Solving and Access Center services.

"The reality our youth are facing is that they have no rental history and limited credit, and the cost of living in LA is high," explained Andrea Marchetti, Executive Director of Jovenes. Marchetti emphasized the importance of youth-specific programming in an environment where youth can't compete with chronically homeless adults for housing, and where adult services are not designed with youth in mind. Jovenes' approach has been successful in securing units where youth are signing leases and retaining their units.

"We're having a challenging year right now when it comes to our programs' budgets," Marchetti shared. "HHAP has played a huge role the last several years in our regional coordinated entry work and in funding programming like the Time Limited Subsidies." Jovenes has already received the unfortunate news that they will not be receiving funding for this program in 2026-27, due to the absence of HHAP in the state budget. "That's 219 slots going away. The bottom line is that there's already not much out there for TAY, and if the funding is not renewed, we're leaving thousands of young people without support."

PROGRAM PROFILES

Kern County Network for Children

HHAP Funds the Only Drop-in Center for Youth in the County

LOCATED IN KERN COUNTY

Based in the city of Bakersfield, **Kern County Network for Children** was established in 1992 to harness the power of community action to address the most critical challenges facing youth in Kern County. Among its key programs, the "Dream Center" stands out as the only youth-specific space in the county, offering a drop-in center for foster youth and youth at risk of or experiencing homelessness.

When founded, the Dream Center served only young people from the foster care system. Before HHAP, no dedicated funding existed in Kern County to support youth experiencing homelessness who weren't currently or formerly in foster care. Thanks to HHAP funding from **The City of Bakersfield** and **Kern County**, the Dream Center expanded its reach to serve a broader population, increasing the number of youth receiving case management and outreach services. Since funding began in 2020, 201 youth have received case management services.

The Dream Center brings together a collaborative of community partners to provide a comprehensive suite of services, including mental and behavioral health treatment, employment services, substance use disorder treatment, child welfare access, a probation unit, and independent living skills. The impact is clear: Since 2020, 339 of the 395 youth (86%) who received outreach services exited the program into safe and stable housing.

Youth consistently emphasize the value of having all services and supports located in one accessible space. Prevention Specialist Bryanna Wood explains how this model fosters trust and lasting change: "We stress self-sufficiency and help youth set incremental goals. It's so important for us to focus on skill-building so that when they encounter an obstacle, they don't have to fall back on homeless services."

In a county where housing subsidies are scarce, the Dream Center maximizes every resource to help young people build stable futures. Wood states, "I share with all our youth that my dream for them is to own a home or reach their highest goal possible. And then we start the work on that foundation and chart a course together."

For communities like Kern County where youth-serving infrastructure is limited, HHAP funding is vital. Wood notes, "We're the only youth-specific drop-in space in the county. Losing HHAP would be such a detriment. It would mean youth would have no choice but to resort to accessing services through the adult system designed for people who have experienced homelessness for longer lengths of time."

Without significant private funding, the Dream Center will not be able to sustain its expanded services for youth experiencing homelessness. The county was recently awarded Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP) funding, however, proposals are on the table to cut new YHDP awards. If YHDP continues, it remains highly competitive—just 12 of California's 44 Continuums of Care have been funded since 2016.

PROGRAM PROFILES

Lutheran Social Services of Northern California

A Pioneer in Diversion, Prevention, and Intervention: Lutheran Social Services Keeps Youth Homelessness Rare and Brief with HHAP Funding

LOCATED IN SACRAMENTO COUNTY

With over 50 years of experience, **Lutheran Social Services (LSS) of Northern California** is a leading homeless services provider that offers a robust range of services to support their participants' journey to stability and self-sufficiency. Founded in faith but open to all, LSS traces its history back to 1883 in San Francisco. In 1968 LSS merged with several social services agencies to become a unified regional organization, its reach now spanning from San Luis Obispo to the Oregon border.

Among its many programs, LSS operates one of California's first prevention-based programs, a model that uses HHAP funding from **Sacramento County Department of Homeless Services and Housing** to provide diversion, prevention, and intervention services to transition-age youth in Sacramento County. The program helps young people avoid homelessness before it begins, offering flexible, one-time housing supports tailored to the youth's circumstance, such as temporary rental assistance, security deposits, landlord mediation, and systems navigation.

From 2023-2024, LSS provided prevention services to 86 youth, including 36 who were at immediate risk and successfully diverted from homelessness. "Over the years we've had to increase the amount of prevention funds we provide to keep up with inflating rent costs," said Deisy Madrigal, the Prevention and Intervention Coordinator at LSS. Madrigal described a leap in rental costs over the last two years, from $1,100-$1,300 to $1,600-$1,800. Madrigal continued, "Every year we have more youth referred to us, and their financial needs get more dire every year." Madrigal explained that some youth pay upwards of 70-80% of their income towards rent. "It's unrealistic and unsustainable, so we work to create a plan for financial stability—so this won't continue to happen."

Having been with the program since its inception, Madrigal speaks on how the flexibility of HHAP funding has been instrumental in the program's success: "Prevention programs are one of the best bangs-for-your-buck when it comes to keeping young people from becoming homeless." Madrigal is encouraged by recent reductions in Sacramento's homeless youth point-in-time count, however fears that looming threats to HHAP will reverse this progress.

PROGRAM PROFILES

On The Move/VOICES

On The Move's VOICES Program Uses HHAP to Give Youth a New Future

LOCATED IN SOLANO COUNTY

Founded in 2003, **On The Move** began as a program designed to build public service leadership skills for young people attending a Bay Area charter school. Building on its early successes in supporting youth, On The Move has expanded its operational scope to address a range of critical and unmet needs for young adults through their seven community-based initiatives. One of these initiatives is **VOICES**, a program that operates out of Napa, Sonoma, and Solano County. VOICES is a youth-developed program designed to empower underserved transition-age youth by addressing their housing, education, employment, and wellness needs. A crucial component of VOICES is a drop-in center located in Solano County that supports youth in various systems of care.

Through HHAP funding awarded by the **Vallejo/ Solano County Continuum of Care**, VOICES established youth-dedicated street outreach and rapid rehousing rental assistance in Solano County. VOICES' programming is based on recommendations from a cohort of youth with lived experience who provided input on service gaps in the region.

"Being able to fund outreach and housing support *specific to youth* is so critical for our community" shared Andres Cantera, the Operations Manager for VOICES. Cantera described how recent trends in the demographics of VOICES' youth participants underscores the importance of youth-dedicated programming. "Our youth have parents with histories of substance abuse and violence. Some of these youth will then find a family in a local gang. If we're lucky we can catch them before they're too deeply involved."

Cantera recounted the significant time and energy spent educating young people regarding gang-involvement, coupled with the independent living skills necessary to maintain stable housing. "When we first meet them, they'll almost always say that there is nothing positive waiting for them later in life." Cantera explained that VOICES immediately engages youth in their drop-in center where other services are co-located. "Part of our goal is to get them to see themselves as a part of a community and out of a hyper-individual survivalist mindset," Cantera added.

VOICES is the only provider in Solano County that provides this type of intervention for youth. Cantera said "These funds [HHAP] have been instrumental to helping us build up a program where youth can see a way off the streets." Cantera explained that Solano's resources are limited. "Losing HHAP is going to mean we will have to reduce the number of youth we're able to serve and how we serve them."

Recommendations

For the State of California

1. **Establish an ongoing funding guarantee for youth within the Homeless Housing, Assistance and Prevention (HHAP) program.** California's progress in reducing youth homelessness demonstrates that the greatest barrier to ending the crisis has been a lack of sustained investment. Since 2015, when consistent federal data became available, the number of youth experiencing homelessness in California held steady between 13,000 and just over 16,000, until communities gained the resources to launch a coordinated, youth-focused response.

   Between 2019 and 2024, as HHAP funding reached local communities, youth homelessness dropped 24 percent statewide—from 13,019 to 9,902—even as overall homelessness in California rose by 24 percent and youth homelessness nationally increased by 11 percent. Unsheltered youth homelessness in California fell even more sharply, by 42 percent, from 9,736 to 5,603.

   This progress underscores the impact of targeted investment, but also its fragility. Without stable funding, local programs risk losing capacity and reversing these gains. Based on previous spending, establishing an ongoing youth funding guarantee of at least $80 million would safeguard this progress by ensuring that even if HHAP is unfunded or reduced in future state budgets, a consistent level of investment remains dedicated to youth homelessness. Given HHAP's unique role as the foundation of California's youth homelessness response, this guarantee is essential to sustaining and building on the state's success.

2 **Make it a state priority to reach functional zero youth homelessness.** If California established an ongoing funding guarantee for youth within HHAP, a key benefit is the reliability of the funding, enabling communities to implement long-term interventions that require sustained staffing and infrastructure—investments that are too risky when funding is uncertain. One initiative that could be prioritized under ongoing HHAP funding for youth is the pursuit of "functional zero" youth homelessness. This approach focuses on reforming how data is collected and used over time to build a local homeless services system that is able to prevent homelessness whenever possible and ensure that when homelessness does occur, it is rare, brief and one-time.

3 **Use HHAP to bridge support for vulnerable youth while housing reforms take effect.** Together, Governor Newsom and the California State Legislature have made substantial progress toward improving housing affordability through a comprehensive set of policy reforms. These include streamlining the California Environmental Quality Act, advancing policies that encourage dense infill housing in urbanized areas, and, perhaps most importantly, enforcing regional housing production targets through the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) process.

Since 2021, every region in California has been engaged in updating its Housing Element, a process expected to drive new housing production and, over time, stabilize housing costs. These efforts signal real momentum toward expanding the state's housing supply and curbing further market escalation. However, these outcomes will take time. Most jurisdictions adopted new Housing Elements within the past two years, and translating those plans into zoning changes, permitting reforms, and actual housing construction will unfold gradually. It's important for the state to understand the critical role played by HHAP as a bridge during this transition, providing targeted support for vulnerable youth, while the broader housing reforms take effect.

4 **Continue to include Continuums of Care, counties and large cities in future rounds of HHAP.** Each type of administrative entity eligible to apply for HHAP funding has outlined in its Regionally Coordinated Homelessness Action Plan (RCHAP) how it will dedicate at least 10 percent of its HHAP allocation to serving youth. Moreover, more than one in four (27%) HHAP grantees are investing above the minimum requirement of 10 percent to serving youth. This suggests that, although youth-focused resources are relatively new, CoCs, counties, and large cities are generally well positioned to deploy local resources to address youth homelessness.

5 **Continue to fund a broad range of eligible uses in future rounds of HHAP.** Just over half (51%) of HHAP grantees are supporting two or more types of interventions for youth, including rapid rehousing, prevention and shelter diversion, permanent housing and innovative solutions, operating subsidies, interim housing, street outreach, services coordination and systems support. This highlights the importance of maintaining a diverse set of resources to meet the varying needs of young people at risk of or experiencing homelessness. It also suggests that HHAP's success in reducing youth homelessness is not tied to any single approach, but rather to the availability of multiple, complementary responses and resources.

6 **Adopt a youth set-aside in any state investment in housing development.** In California, affordable housing is especially critical for youth who lack family financial support and are working entry-level jobs or attending school. Yet, housing development rarely targets tenants ages 18 to 24. The notable exception is California's Homekey program, which reserves 8 percent of its funding for youth housing.

Recent legislative sessions have included proposals for housing bonds to finance affordable housing and home ownership programs. Any future proposals should follow Homekey's precedent by including a youth set-aside. Alternatively, the state could establish a youth-specific housing bond, as has been proposed in prior legislative sessions.

7 **Sustain investments in targeted prevention for youth from the foster care system.** Research shows that youth with foster care experience are far more likely to experience homelessness than their same-age peers who have not been in care. In a nation where over half (57%) of young adults aged 18 to 24 live with their parents, those without the safety net of a family face steep challenges in California's housing market, often ranked as second or third most expensive in the nation.[7] This makes California's investments in extended foster care and housing support for former foster youth critical to preventing them from entering the homelessness response system, where resources are more limited.

As California faces difficult budget decisions amid federal cuts under the Trump Administration, it is essential to prioritize prevention efforts for current and former foster youth, some of which unlock federal funding or receive federal matching funds. This includes maintaining programs administered by the California Department of Housing and Community Development to county child welfare agencies to serve current and former foster youth, as well as sustaining investments in California's reform of foster care rates. The California Department of Social Services' newly proposed Tiered Rate Structure will increase monthly payments for youth in independent foster care placements, to ensure they can afford and maintain stable housing.

[7] Pew Research Center, January 2024, "Parents, Young Adult Children and the Transition to Adulthood." URL: https:// www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/2024/01/25/parentsyoung-adult-children-and-the-transition-to-adulthood/

8 **Expand upon the current HHAP Fiscal Dashboard to incorporate more detail on the use of funding for youth.** The California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) maintains a public-facing HHAP Fiscal Dashboard that provides aggregated data on awarded, obligated, expended, and unobligated funds, along with downloadable, unaggregated data submitted by HHAP grantees.[8] While the Dashboard enhances transparency, it currently lacks detail on how HHAP funds are being used specifically to address youth homelessness. A valuable improvement would be to include functionality that allows users to see which eligible use categories are being funded through the youth set-aside. It would also strengthen accountability and analysis if the Dashboard displayed HHAP spending by year, rather than solely by funding round.

[8] HHAP Fiscal Dashboard URL: https://www.hcd.ca.gov/housing-open-data-tools/hhap-dashboard

For Local Communities

1. **Maximize use of federal funding still available for youth homelessness prevention.** In light of recent and proposed federal funding cuts and their ripple effects on state and local budgets, it is essential to fully leverage the federal resources that remain available. One key program is the Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) initiative, administered by the U.S. Department of Urban Development (HUD). Public Housing Authorities in a formal partnership with a local Public Child Welfare Agency may request Housing Choice Vouchers from HUD through the FYI program on a non-competitive, on-demand basis, for youth ages 18 to 24 who have left foster care or will leave foster care within 180 days. Despite broader threats to HUD funding, the FYI program continues to receive federal support. Maximizing its use can help prevent former foster youth from entering the homelessness response system, where resources are far more limited, and instead provide them with stable housing at a critical transition point.

2. **Adopt strategies to improve the accuracy of the youth Point-In-Time (PIT) Count.** While the PIT Count is not the most accurate method of measuring homelessness or youth `homelessness, it is an important tool because it determines funding levels for certain federal and state programs. Over the last several years, many communities have adopted improved methods of conducting the youth count, such as strengthening partnerships with youth-serving organizations, recruiting and training youth and young adults who have experienced homelessness, coordinating with schools and McKinney-Vento liaisons, using technology such as online mobile surveys and social media to reach hidden populations, conducting the count over an extended period instead of just one day, creating a dedicated youth count planning committee, improving data integration and follow up, and providing incentives for participation.

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- Bill Wilson Center
- The Channel Islands YMCA
- Jovenes, Inc.
- Kern County Network for Children
- Lutheran Social Services of Northern California
- On the Move/VOICES

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This publication can be found online at https://jbay.org/resources/investing-in-impact-2025/. For questions, please contact info@jbay.org. To view JBAY's previous reports on HHAP, visit https://jbay.org/resources/youth-set-aside-reports.

Appendices

Appendix A: Detailed Methodology for Analysis of Regionally Coordinated Homelessness Action Plans

Data Collection and Compilation

JBAY conducted an analytic review of every Regionally Coordinated Homelessness Action Plan (RCHAP) used to apply for HHAP round 5 funding, which are available on the website of the California Department of Housing and Community Development. Every RCHAP was downloaded and categorized according to the region represented, resulting in 41 unique regional PDFs, representing all regions participating in California's Round 5 planning process.

Within these 41 regional plans, a total of 79 discrete Administrative Entities were identified as funding applicants, each responsible for developing localized strategies and budget requests. These entities collectively requested resources across 12 distinct Eligible Use Categories. This manual collection ensured the inclusion of all finalized, publicly posted Round 5 plans and maintained the integrity of each jurisdiction's original submission.

Coding and Database Development

Following data collection, JBAY uploaded all 41 regional plans into Taguette, an open-source qualitative analysis software designed for systematic text coding and data management. Each PDF was imported as a separate source within the Taguette workspace, and metadata tags were assigned to indicate the corresponding region and administrative entity, enabling cross-regional and intra-regional comparison. Then, the researcher reviewed each of the eligible use categories and manually extracted all text used to describe that use category, including any utility of youth-set-asides. In addition, the researcher systematically coded for requested dollar amounts across each of the 12 Eligible Use Categories, as well as any youth-set-aside funding requests, resulting in two quantitative dollar categories aligned with each eligible use type.

Because the original PDFs contained embedded tables that prevented automated text recognition, all dollar amounts were manually extracted from the documents. Each numeric request was paired with its corresponding narrative justification or program description, which was manually coded and linked in Taguette to preserve context. This dual process—manual numeric extraction and qualitative tagging of textual rationales—ensured that the database accurately captured both the scale and intent of each funding request across all regions.

Data Cleaning and Export

Upon completion of the coding process, Taguette's export feature was used to generate a structured dataset (.csv) containing each coded excerpt, its associated region, administrative entity, eligible use category, and corresponding dollar amount fields. The exported data were then cleaned and standardized in Google Sheets to ensure consistency in variable names, regional identifiers, and funding category labels. During this process, all extracted values from Taguette were systematically cross-referenced with the original regional PDFs to verify accuracy and fidelity to the source documents. To enable uniform analysis, zeros were inserted for any budget lines that did not include a funding request within a given eligible use category, ensuring that every administrative entity had complete numeric data across all 12 categories. This standardization allowed for efficient sorting, aggregation, and statistical analysis across both qualitative and quantitative fields.

Appendix B: Percentage Change in Youth Experiencing Homelessness as Reported in the Point-In-Time Count by California Continuums of Care (2019-2024)

CoC Region	2019: # of Youth Homeless	2024: # of Youth Homeless	Percentage Change
Alpine, Inyo, Mono Counties	30	5	-83%
San Luis Obispo County	179	34	-81%
Amador, Calaveras, Mariposa, Tuolumne Counties	57	13	-77%
El Dorado County	117	27	-77%
Santa Rosa, Petaluma/Sonoma County	666	156	-77%
Vallejo/Solano County	215	67	-69%
Watsonville/Santa Cruz City & County	625	199	-68%
Nevada County	31	12	-61%
San Jose/Santa Clara City & County	1,926	821	-57%
Davis, Woodland/Yolo County	44	20	-55%
Napa City & County	23	11	-52%
Oakland, Berkeley/Alameda County	751	427	-43%
Bakersfield/Kern County	100	64	-36%
Glendale	9	6	-33%
Tehama County	19	14	-26%
Chico, Paradise/Butte County	86	65	-24%
Salinas/Monterey, San Benito Counties	333	260	-22%
Los Angeles City & County	3,389	2,776	-18%
Long Beach	46	40	-13%
Yuba City & County/Sutter County	23	20	-13%
Imperial County	91	82	-10%
Rocklin/Roseville/Placer County	31	29	-6%
San Bernardino City & County	186	176	-5%
Oxnard, San Buenaventura/Ventura County	88	84	-5%

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CoC Region	2019: # of Youth Homeless	2024: # of Youth Homeless	Percentage Change
Santa Maria/Santa Barbara County	94	90	-4%
Sacramento City & County	430	414	-4%
Riverside City & County	297	289	-3%
San Francisco	1,189	1,157	-3%
Santa Ana, Anaheim/Orange County	263	258	-2%
Turlock, Modesto/Stanislaus County	104	103	-1%
Marin County	110	111	1%
Humboldt County	93	94	1%
Colusa, Glenn, Trinity Counties	6	7	17%
San Diego City and County	675	805	19%
Pasadena	31	38	23%
Mendocino County	48	62	29%
Visalia/Kings, Tulare Counties	68	92	35%
Richmond/Contra Costa County	125	171	37%
Redding/Shasta, Siskiyou, Lassen, Plumas, Del Norte, Modoc, Sierra Counties	97	146	51%
Fresno City & County/Madera County	119	186	56%
Merced City & County	21	37	76%
Daly/San Mateo County	47	88	87%
Stockton/San Joaquin County	129	318	147%
Lake County	8	28	250%
Total:	**13,019**	**9,902**	**-24%**

Appendix C: Round 5 HHAP Grantees, Total HHAP Awards, and Proportion of HHAP Allocations Invested in Youth

Region	HHAP Grantees When grantees applied jointly, the lead applicant is listed first and bolded	HHAP Funding Invested in Youth		Total Round 5 HHAP Allocation
		$ Amount	% of HHAP Allocation	
Alameda Region	• **Alameda County** ◦ Oakland, Berkeley/Alameda County CoC	$3,000,000	10.55%	$28,446,566
	• **City of Oakland**	$2,750,012	10.00%	$27,497,101
Amador, Calaveras, Mariposa, and Tuolumne Region	• **Amador, Calaveras, Mariposa, Tuolumne Counties CoC** ◦ Amador County ◦ Calaveras County ◦ Mariposa County ◦ Tuolumne County	$208,895	10.14%	$2,059,676
Butte Region	• **Butte County** ◦ Chico, Paradise/ Butte County CoC	$348,539	10.00%	$3,485,389
Colusa, Glenn, and Trinity Region	• **Glenn County** ◦ Colusa, Glenn, Trinity Counties CoC ◦ Colusa County ◦ Trinity County	$135,158	13.32%	$1,014,341
Contra Costa Region	• **Contra Costa County** ◦ Richmond/Contra Costa County CoC	$668,338	10.00%	$6,683,382
Del Norte, Lassen, Modoc, Plumas, Shasta, Sierra, and Siskiyou Region	• **Redding/Shasta, Siskiyou, Lassen, Plumas, Del Norte, Modoc, Sierra Counties CoC** ◦ Modoc County ◦ Plumas County ◦ Sierra County	$362,517	10.00%	$3,625,174
	• **Lassen County**	$95,000	51.39%	$184,870
	• **Shasta County**	$139,756	10.00%	$1,397,559
	• **Siskiyou County**	$69,947	10.00%	$699,470
	• **Del Norte County**	$95,746	10.00%	$957,459
El Dorado Region	• **El Dorado County** ◦ El Dorado County CoC	$138,603	10.02%	$1,383,449
Fresno and Madera Region	• **Fresno County** ◦ Fresno City & County/Madera County CoC	$1,875,202	16.00%	$11,720,018
	• **Madera County**	$93,952	10.00%	$939,524
	• **City of Fresno**	$1,309,667	10.00%	$13,096,672
Humboldt Region	• **Humboldt County** ◦ Humboldt County CoC	$466,597	10.00%	$4,665,970

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Imperial Region	• **Imperial County**	$367,135	10.00%	$3,671,352
Inyo and Mono Region	• **Inyo County** ◦ Alpine, Inyo, Mono Counties CoC ◦ Mono County	$24,795	10.00%	$247,950
Kern Region	• **Bakersfield/Kern County CoC**	$280,121	10.00%	$2,801,205
	• **Kern County**	$268,751	10.00%	$2,687,508
	• **City of Bakersfield**	$567,824	10.00%	$5,678,237
Kings & Tulare Region	• **Visalia/Kings, Tulare Counties CoC**	$215,000	10.17%	$2,113,845
	• **Kings County**	$57,530	10.00%	$575,303
	• **Tulare County**	$145,274	10.00%	$1,452,744
Lake Region	• **Lake County CoC**	$67,000	10.13%	$661,476
	• **Lake County**	$63,463	10.00%	$634,627
Los Angeles Region	• **Los Angeles City & County CoC**	$9,738,400	10.00%	$97,384,000
	• **Glendale CoC**	$28,041	10.00%	$280,408
	• **Pasadena CoC**	$79,952	10.00%	$799,523
	• **Los Angeles County**	$10,255,747	10.00%	$102,557,467
	• **City of Los Angeles**	$16,433,550	10.00%	$164,335,500
	• **City of Long Beach** ◦ Long Beach CoC	$1,500,443	10.00%	$15,004,433
Marin Region	• **Marin County** ◦ Marin County CoC	$394,242	12.52%	$3,150,093
Mendocino Region	• **Mendocino County** ◦ Mendocino County CoC	$178,356	10.00%	$1,783,550
Merced Region	• **Merced County CoC**	$112,738	10.00%	$1,127,384
	• **Merced County**	$108,163	10.00%	$1,081,625
Monterey and San Benito Region	• **Salinas/Monterey, San Benito Counties CoC**	$318,083	10.00%	$3,180,835
	• **Monterey County**	$255,506	10.00%	$2,555,064
	• **San Benito County**	$49,666	10.00%	$496,665
Napa Region	• **Napa City & County CoC**	$72,762	10.00%	$727,623
	• **Napa County**	$104,714	15.00%	$698,090
Nevada Region	• **Nevada County CoC** ◦ Nevada County	$138,700	10.01%	$1,386,266

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Orange Region	• Santa Ana, Anaheim/Orange County CoC	$587,839	10.00%	$5,878,393
	• Orange County	$1,252,009	15.00%	$8,346,727
	• City of Anaheim	$587,839	10.00%	$5,878,393
	• City of Irvine	$587,839	10.00%	$5,878,393
	• City of Santa Ana	$587,839	10.00%	$5,878,393
Placer Region	• Roseville, Rocklin/Placer County CoC	$108,801	10.67%	$1,019,535
	• Placer County	$97,815	10.00%	$978,154
Riverside Region	• Riverside City & County CoC	$535,651	10.00%	$5,356,514
	• Riverside County	$513,910	10.00%	$5,139,101
	• City of Riverside	$1,085,802	10.00%	$10,858,024
Sacramento Region	• Sacramento City & County CoC	$2,268,818	17.00%	$13,345,988
	• Sacramento County	$1,280,430	10.00%	$12,804,293
	• City of Sacramento	$2,705,324	10.00%	$27,053,241
San Bernardino Region	• San Bernardino County o San Bernardino City & County CoC	$1,181,989	10.00%	$11,819,893
San Diego Region	• San Diego City and County CoC	$1,475,953	10.00%	$14,759,532
	• San Diego County	$3,600,000	25.42%	$14,160,464
	• City of San Diego	$2,991,860	10.00%	$29,918,593
San Francisco Region	• San Francisco CoC o San Francisco County o City of San Francisco	$4,716,052	10.85%	$43,463,970
San Joaquin Region	• San Joaquin County o Stockton/San Joaquin County CoC	$691,443	10.00%	$6,914,426
	• City of Stockton	$715,318	10.00%	$7,153,179
San Luis Obispo Region	• San Luis Obispo County o San Luis Obispo County CoC	$431,659	10.00%	$4,316,586
San Mateo Region	• San Mateo County o Daly/San Mateo County CoC	$523,795	10.00%	$5,237,946
Santa Barbara Region	• Santa Barbara County o Santa Maria/Santa Barbara County CoC	$531,686	10.00%	$5,316,839
Santa Clara Region	• Santa Clara County o Santa Clara City & County CoC	$2,790,284	10.00%	$27,902,837
	• City of San Jose	$4,000,000	13.86%	$28,866,312
Santa Cruz Region	• Santa Cruz County o Watsonville/Santa Cruz City & County CoC	$1,322,404	26.02%	$5,082,977
Solano Region	• Vallejo/Solano County CoC	$172,559	10.00%	$1,725,588
	• Solano County	$254,533	15.37%	$1,655,549

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Sonoma Region	• **Santa Rosa, Petaluma/Sonoma County CoC**	$487,353	14.96%	$3,258,485
	• **Sonoma County**	$314,000	10.04%	$3,126,229
Stanislaus Region	• **Stanislaus County** ◦ Turlock, Modesto/Stanislaus County CoC	$589,163	10.00%	$5,891,632
Tehama Region	• **Tehama County CoC** ◦ Tehama County	$85,656	10.00%	$856,555
Ventura Region	• **Ventura County** ◦ Oxnard, San Buenaventura/Ventura County CoC	$688,000	10.00%	$6,877,797
Yolo Region	• **Davis, Woodland/Yolo County CoC**	$105,980	10.00%	$1,059,799
	• **Yolo County**	$101,678	10.00%	$1,016,783
Yuba Region	• **Yuba City & County/Sutter County CoC** ◦ Sutter County	$196,147	10.00%	$1,961,468
	• **Yuba County** ◦ Yuba City & County/Sutter County CoC	$150,379	20.00%	$751,895

John Burton Advocates for Youth improves the quality of life for youth in California who have been in foster care or homeless by advocating for better laws, training communities to strengthen local practices and conducting research to inform policy solutions.

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