

2018 LifeWorks Annual Report

CJ, Austin Youth Collective



LIFEWORKS IS A FEARLESS ADVOCATE FOR YOUTH AND FAMILIES SEEKING SELF-SUFFICIENCY. We are committed to innovative problem solving, shared accountability, and a relentless focus on achieving real, sustainable, and measurable results.

lifew@rks



OUR JOURNEY TO END YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

2018 was a year of significant growth and impact, and I'm pleased to present our Annual Report. We maintain three core beliefs that frame every service we provide our courageous youth:

Everyone Deserves a Place to Call Home: With the leadership of Milestone Community Builders, we broke ground on the Works II, which will add 29 units of supported housing for youth. We also opened three programs that will drive our community's movement to End Youth Homelessness by 2020. Homelessness Diversion works at the systems level to prevent homelessness; the PORT (Permanency Through Outreach and Rapid Transitions) provides transitional living and rapid linkages to housing; and, through a powerful partnership with ECHO, The SAFE Alliance, and Caritas of Austin, Rapid Rehousing has moved 56 youth to permanent housing in its first three months.

Everyone Deserves the Opportunity to Work: We increased capacity of our evidence-based Workforce Development program for youth who have survived trauma. Youth in this program successfully maintain employment in areas they wish to explore for long-term career development.

Everyone Deserves the Chance to Heal: With the support of the St. David's Foundation, we dramatically expanded our Peer Support team with the goal of offering all youth exiting homelessness through LifeWorks the opportunity to connect with someone who understands first-hand the issues they confront.

Our commitment to real, measurable impact through disciplined data analysis and evidence-based programming resulted in good outcomes for our clients and information that our organization uses every day to learn, grow, and improve. It also allows us to lead in our field. Last year, LifeWorks staff and youth presented at more than 30 state and national conferences.

Our most powerful data is what we learn from youth and young adults with lived experience. As we escalate our efforts to End Youth Homelessness by housing youth, the St. David's Foundation has provided a grant for youth-led research into the best way to support youth in thriving and succeeding in housing.

Our efforts in 2018 resulted in a 32% growth moving into 2019. We could not do any of this without the thousands of individuals who support LifeWorks through their generous and fearless commitment. Your dedicated partnership will continue to help us move our mission forward.

My thanks,
Susan

02 PROGRAMS

HOUSING AND HOMELESS SERVICES

The goal of LifeWorks Housing Services is to provide a continuum of support that will help transition youth from homelessness to permanent housing and independence.

- Street Outreach
- Emergency Shelter
- Diversion
- PORT (Permanency through Outreach & Rapid Transitions)
- Rapid Rehousing
- Transitional Living Program
- Young Parents Program
- Permanent Supportive Housing
- After Care Transitional Services
- Life Skills Training

1,002
CLIENTS SERVED

EDUCATION, WORKFORCE, AND YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

LifeWorks Education and Workforce Division is focused on developing the knowledge and skills needed to navigate the challenges of adolescence, move toward independence, and break the cycle of poverty.

- GED & Literacy
- Workforce Development & Supported Education
- Next Step
- REAL Talk
- Teen Parent Services

2,145
CLIENTS SERVED

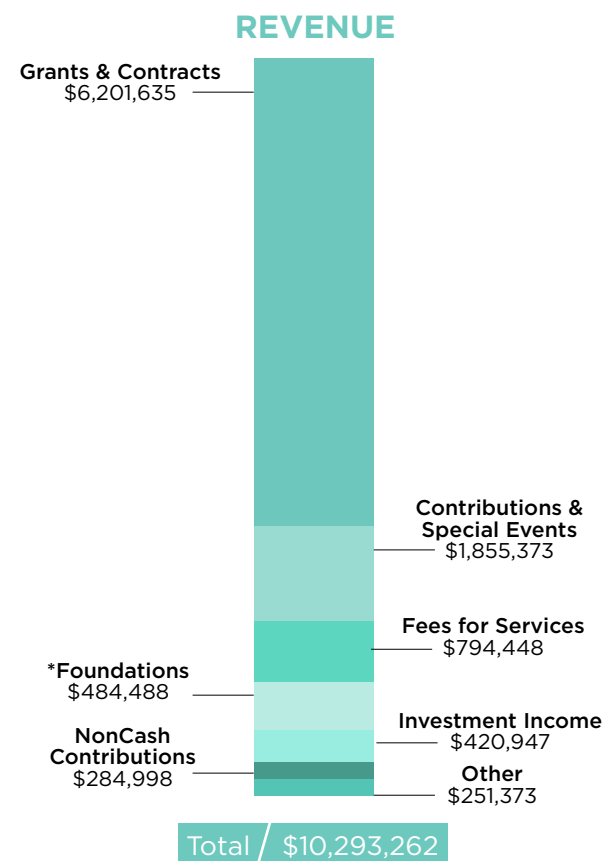
COUNSELING SERVICES

LifeWorks Counseling provides support for individuals and families who are struggling with issues such as family conflict, abuse, trauma, anxiety, depression, and the stress of everyday life.

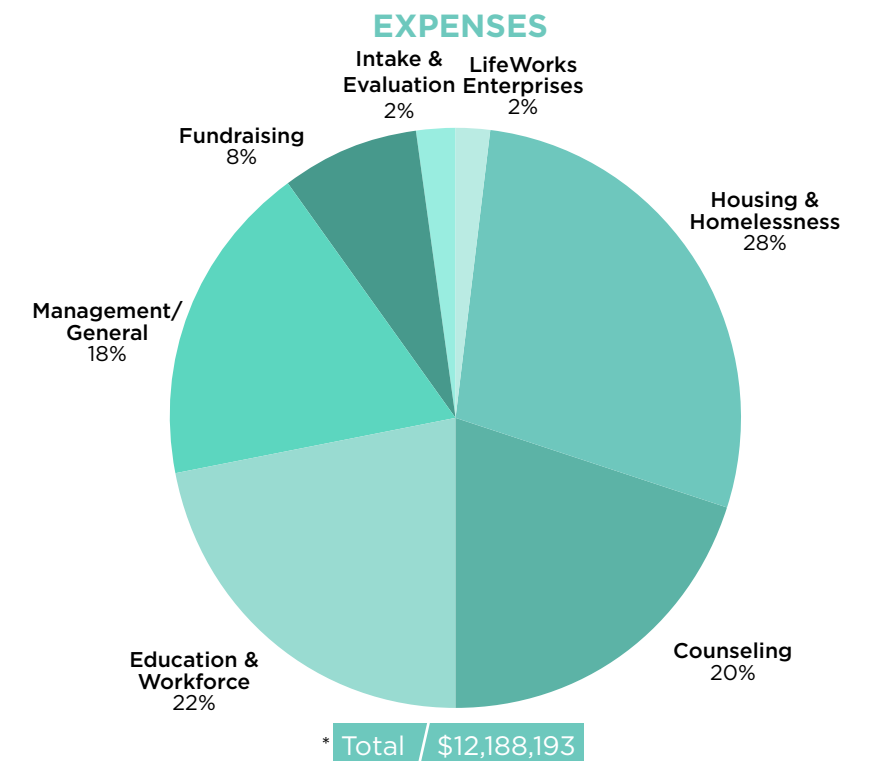
- Youth & Adult Counseling
- Resolution Counseling
- Community-Based Services

2,053
CLIENTS SERVED

03 FINANCIAL OVERVIEW



*Does not include multi-year foundation commitments from prior years



*Deficit due to receipt of multi-year grants in 2017

NET ASSETS
9/30/2018 / \$16,019,523

THE POWER OF LIVED EXPERIENCE

YOUTH EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS FACE DAILY CHALLENGES MOST AUSTIN RESIDENTS HAVE NEVER ENCOUNTERED.

Navigating the stresses of homelessness – access to food, maintaining possession of your belongings, and securing a safe place to sleep – can have profound physical and mental health effects on the youth we serve.

At LifeWorks, we believe their previous challenges and choices can serve as a source of strength in their journey to self-sufficiency.

When certain obstacles appear along the way, professionals supporting our clients use their own lived experience to help youth process and weigh options for next steps.

Together, we can build on the power of lived experience as we move forward in our mission to end youth homelessness.



“
I didn't have much of a say so in my life. I didn't have a future to look forward to, or I didn't think I would. From the age of 11 until about 18, I spent in foster care. It was pretty bad. I never got to have stable relationships, stable friendships, or somebody I could hang out with.
”
-Reyna, Counseling

“
Living life on the streets in the beginning for me wasn't something I saw as a consequence, I saw it as a freedom. It wasn't until I realized that I needed shelter and food and basic things to really make me a happy person.
”
-Alex, Austin Youth Collective



LifeWorks Research team alongside youth, are conducting studies in three key areas...

What is Self-Sufficiency?

Service providers, funders, and federal officials are all interested in promoting the self-sufficiency of youth and their families. However, self-sufficiency has historically had a very narrow definition – basically, a lack of reliance on public assistance. At LifeWorks, we recognize that self-sufficiency involves more than a steady job and adequate income – it requires housing security, stable mental health, positive social connections, and adequate childcare, among other things.

That said, we also recognize that our understanding of self-sufficiency may not always align with how the youth we serve conceptualize self-sufficiency. That's why we are conducting a qualitative study to better understand the ways that youth define self-sufficiency. By conducting in-depth interviews with approximately 25 youth, we hope to learn how their own experiences shape their understanding of self-sufficiency, and to make sure that we are measuring what matters most to the clients we serve.

(projected end date: Dec 2019; findings to be released in 2020)

The Art and Science of Implementing Evidence-Based Programs

At LifeWorks, all case managers are trained in the Strengths Model, an evidence-based approach to case management that helps youth identify and leverage their unique strengths to achieve their goals, while building natural supports and connecting to the broader community. LifeWorks is the first organization to implement this model with vulnerable transition-age youth, and we are the first organization to centralize oversight of the model into a single position (instead of burdening supervisors with the model's requirements). We don't view evidence-based models as rigid or formulaic – instead, we use these models as a framework for further innovation, and we are committed to sharing what we learn. That's why we're studying our approach to implementation and conducting interviews and focus groups with case managers, supervisors, support staff, executive leadership, and the youth we serve.

(projected end date: June 2019; findings to be released in fall/winter 2019 through 2020)

Ending Youth Homelessness: What it Takes

In addition to implementing three new programs to prevent and end youth homelessness by 2020, we're studying what we're learning every step of the way. Quarterly interviews with key stakeholders are held to understand how the programs evolve over time. Direct service staff, community partners, and youth who transitioned into housing are also interviewed – and that doesn't begin to mention the robust analyses that are being used to monitor our progress! By investing in comprehensive evaluation of our efforts to end youth homelessness, we'll be able to help other communities and broaden our impact.

(projected end date: Dec 2020; findings to be released in 2021)



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