



Youth Homelessness end-of-the-year report

Committee Members: Celina Jackson and Megan Warshaw

Goal

This year we created the Youth Homelessness committee out of a desire to learn more about an issue that is under the radar for many people, hard to relate to personally, and misrepresented by stereotypes. In order to become tomorrow's leaders in an effective way, youth must understand the systemic causes of homelessness and what it really looks like. Our goal for this year was to impart all this information in a relatable way to high school students, as well as call their attention to the resources and volunteer opportunities out there.

Planning Meetings

We planned an after-school forum at Garfield High School in order to educate students on the issue of youth homelessness. In order to prepare, committee members attended the ROOTS' Ropes homeless youth training, conducted research on youth homelessness, and facilitated two planning meetings with community homeless youth providers and Marci Curtin, our policy advisor from the city's Human Services Department. Based off the two planning sessions, we created a curriculum for an after school forum at Garfield.

Homeless youth agencies who participated in the planning and implementation of the forum: Neighborcare Health's 45th St. Clinic, Catholic Community Center's University District Youth Center, YouthCare's Orion Center, Peace for the Streets by Kids from the Streets - including three homeless youth - and Therapeutic Health's Central Youth and Family Services.

Accomplishments

We organized and executed a forum after school at Garfield on April 12, 2012 as a pilot for future forums (see attached forum curriculum and evaluation results). We also created a flyer with volunteer opportunities for minors, which we handed out at the forum. (see attached volunteer flyer)

Lessons Learned & Next Steps

We were pleased with the overall success of the forum. However, we could have done more promoting through social media and looked into offering extra credit from teachers in order to get more students to attend. We also could have better managed our time at the forum by making more strict time limits for the activities and reducing the number of service providers at the forum.

In the next year, we want to put on more forums, including another at Garfield. We are considering holding a forum in a classroom so that we have a large group to participate. We would also like to hold forums at other schools or at one of Seattle's community colleges (Central or South). In addition to this, we intend on creating a group to volunteer with some of the service providers.