



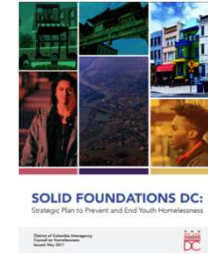
**SOLID FOUNDATIONS DC:**  
Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Youth Homelessness

Office of Community Development  
Department of Human Services  
District of Columbia

**GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
INTERAGENCY COUNCIL ON HOMELESSNESS**

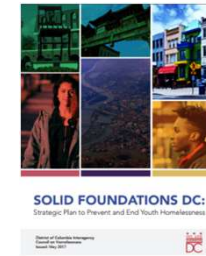
***ICH Youth Committee***  
***November 29, 2018***

# Community Connections



- Overview of housing and services offered by Community Connections.
  - Community Connections was established in 1984, and after initially focusing on recovery from mental and behavioral health problems, Community Connections grew during the nineties to help consumers cope with addictions, find housing, and recover from the impacts of trauma and violent victimization.
  - Community Connections runs a variety of housing programs for different populations (families, youth, veterans, and seniors) in housing programs that include: PSHP, HCVP, RRH for Vets, Group Homes, and Transitional Living. More recently, we have developed a robust Homeless Services Program serving Wards 5,6,7 and 8.

# Youth Rapid Rehousing (LIFT)



## Launch Initiative For Transitional-Age-Youth (LIFT)

LIFT is a RRH Program that utilizes a team effort and a person-centered approach to identify housing and employment resources for program participants, in partnership with community employers and landlords. Services are intended to help participants build their social supports, develop their financial literacy, leverage their strengths, and leave them empowered to meet their housing stability goals.

Assistance is offered without preconditions (such as employment, income, absence of criminal record, or sobriety).

Eligibility for this program is determined during an application and an intake and assessment process. To be eligible, participants must:

1. Be homeless as defined by the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Act of 2009.
2. Be 18 to 24 years of age at the time of program entry.
3. Score for Rapid Re-Housing (RRH) on the Transition Age Youth-Vulnerability Index-Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (TAY-VI-SPDAT) assessment prior to program entry.

To participate in our program, participants understand that:

- This is NOT an entitlement or voucher-based program.
- This is NOT a permanent subsidy program.
- LIFT is a short-term program only (up to 6 months), and not intended for long-term support.

In order to ensure success, participants must contribute 30% of their total adjusted annual income toward rent once they are housed, signed a lease, and have income.

*The LIFT Program is funded by U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development thru the District's Continuum of Care – The Community Partnership for the Prevention of Homelessness.*

# Youth Rapid Rehousing (LIFT)

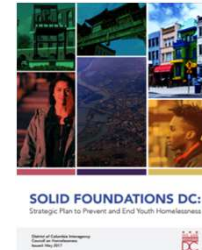
## Structure of LIFT–

LIFT is an intensive, time sensitive, intervention that requires our participants to actively work with all members of the LIFT Team from day one of their intake into the program.

Our goal is that participants will exit the program once their monthly income, left after paying rent, will be able to afford other household necessities such as food, clothes, and transportation, according to the person-centered basic budget assessment completed during initial intake.

Program engagement will be reassessed during reviews of participants' rental subsidy conducted every 30 days. To demonstrate engagement in our program, and continue receiving assistance, participants must have regular face-to-face contact with each member of their case management staff each month to include:

- ✓ 6 visits with their Rapid Rehousing Specialist, until housed
- ✓ 8 visits with their Workforce Development Specialist
- ✓ 8 visits with their Transition Specialist



# Youth Rapid Rehousing (LIFT)

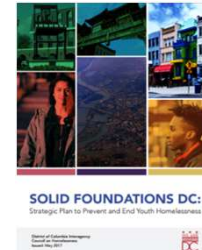
- How do we work with youth to identify rental options?
  - Housing preferences worksheet
  - Educated on rental market in the city (average costs, income requirements)
  - Given scripts and educated on what to say when contacting landlords
  - Youth are asked to share schedule weekly so that RRH specialist can alert them to open houses/viewing opportunities and to contact RRH Specialist about any landlord leads they find
  - Youth are asked to use their budget to consider what they can afford

## Quick facts to consider regarding budgeting:

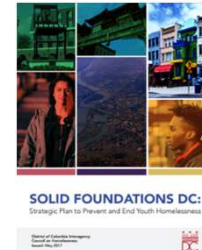
**\*Average monthly rent (without assistance) for all housed LIFT Participants (N= 5) \$1074.2 (Range \$845-1175)**

**\* Average Monthly LIVING Expenses excluding rent for all that completed Day 2 Intake Budget, (N=20): \$618.15**

**\*Average (REPORTED BUT UNDOCUMENTED) monthly income at Day 2 Intake Budget for all that completed Day 2 Intake Budget (N=20): \$1296.40**



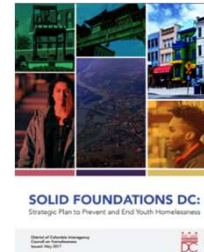
# Youth Rapid Rehousing (Program Name)



## Structure of your program –

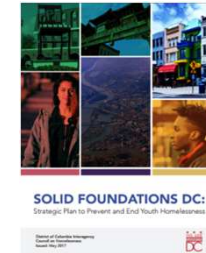
- Roommates? How is this done? (how are the leases structured etc)
  - Participants are asked to consider the pros and cons of a roommate, given a worksheet to review and complete
  - Roommate matching tool and option to be matched to other LIFT participants
  - LIFT Participant would sign a separate lease from roommate
  - Of the 20 LIFT Participants that completed program intake, only 8 have indicated that they would consider a roommate
- What services are offered?
  - Participants complete a Housing Stability Plan or a case plan at Day 2 intake with the LIFT Team. This plan is reviewed monthly and identifies, at a minimum, a housing goal and an employment/education goal for the month and the action steps that need to be completed for the coming month to work towards those goals.
    - Job coaching, resume review, interview prep, assistance with job applications and referrals to job opportunities
    - Full SPDAT scheduled after intake to help determine needs assessment
    - Transportation costs
    - Educational or training costs/fees
    - Benefits application assistance
    - Financial education and literacy (credit score and history, establishing a bank account)

# Landlord Experiences



- Landlords are contacted and outreached on a weekly basis by Rapid Rehousing Specialist and contacts and relevant information are maintained in an excel spreadsheet. Interested landlords are provided a fact sheet on LIFT and educated on RRH.
- Efforts have been made to identify landlords that are willing to work with the program with some success (ex. TurnAround Inc. and Eagles Crossing)
- Approximately 10-15% of landlords contacted are willing to work with the program if the participant has documented income of >25k yearly earnings
- Landlords must have a business license and pass an inspection administered by TCP

## Current Data



- How many youth have been matched?

In May LIFT began accepting matches to the program. As of 11/19/2018, 30 youth have been matched to the LIFT Program. Of those 30 that have been matched, 13 are active participants and actively enrolled and engaged in the program. For the remaining 17, several were deemed ineligible for the Program, some declined as they felt it was not an appropriate program for them at that time, several were discharged due to lack of contact or engagement, several were unable to be contacted or complete the intake process, and one is in the process of being terminated from the program due to behavior and conduct.

- How many youth have been housed?

5 as of 11/27/2018

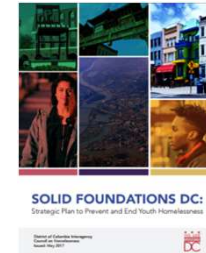
- Length of time to lease up?

Average length of time from completing Day 2 intake in LIFT to lease up is currently at 99.8 days (Range 62-136 days).



# Lessons Learned

- What has worked well?
  - Clear expectations about program engagement from Day 1 intake
  - Clear expectations about length of time it will take to be housed and how increasing income helps to speed up housing process
  - Being flexible and adapting to meet youth where they are
- What challenges have you experienced?
  - Adapting the messaging to fit a population that has no to very little knowledge on housing in the city (lots of misinformation on what “affordable” housing is, etc.)
  - Accepting that youth will not always be focused on the long-term versus short-term thinking that has dominated their survival
  - Keeping youth engaged and motivated when it is taking months to be housed
    - \*Consider developmentally where some of these youth may be and how that impacts decision making and autonomy



# Lessons Learned



**SOLID FOUNDATIONS DC:**  
Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Youth Homelessness  
Office of Children, Youth, & Families  
Department of Human Services  
June 2014

### TAY VI SPDAT Scores of Active versus Discharged LIFT Participants

