



Identifying and Serving Homeless Youth in Rural Colorado



*2023 Rural Collaborative
Annual Report*

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Introduction Program Overview

The Rural Collaborative (RC) was formed in 2008 as a Collective Impact Initiative, which is defined as long-term commitments by a group of key stakeholders who provide services to rural homeless youth across Colorado (Rural Collaborative Lead Agencies) to form and pursue a common agenda for solving rural youth homelessness. The RC connects rural Colorado communities through shared resources, knowledge, and expertise to form an effective safety net of support for youth without safe and stable housing. The RC is made up of nine partner agencies that utilize the same programmatic resources and funding streams. The RC serves hundreds of youths experiencing homelessness and housing instability across rural Colorado through six different programs. This annual report provides a description of services, programming and outcomes achieved by the RC in 2023.

RC-led agencies provide a wide variety of services and resources to unstably housed youth using a positive youth development approach. These services fall into the broad categories of shelter/housing, health and well-being, education and employment, and permanent connections. Youth can receive services for short-term needs through brief contact or receive ongoing assistance for more long-term needs by enrolling in an RC program. The Colorado RC serves 31 rural and frontier counties across Colorado, which make up a majority of Colorado's Balance of State Continuum of Care (CoC). To learn more about each partner agency, including where they are located and the geographic area they serve, see the Appendix. See Figure 1.

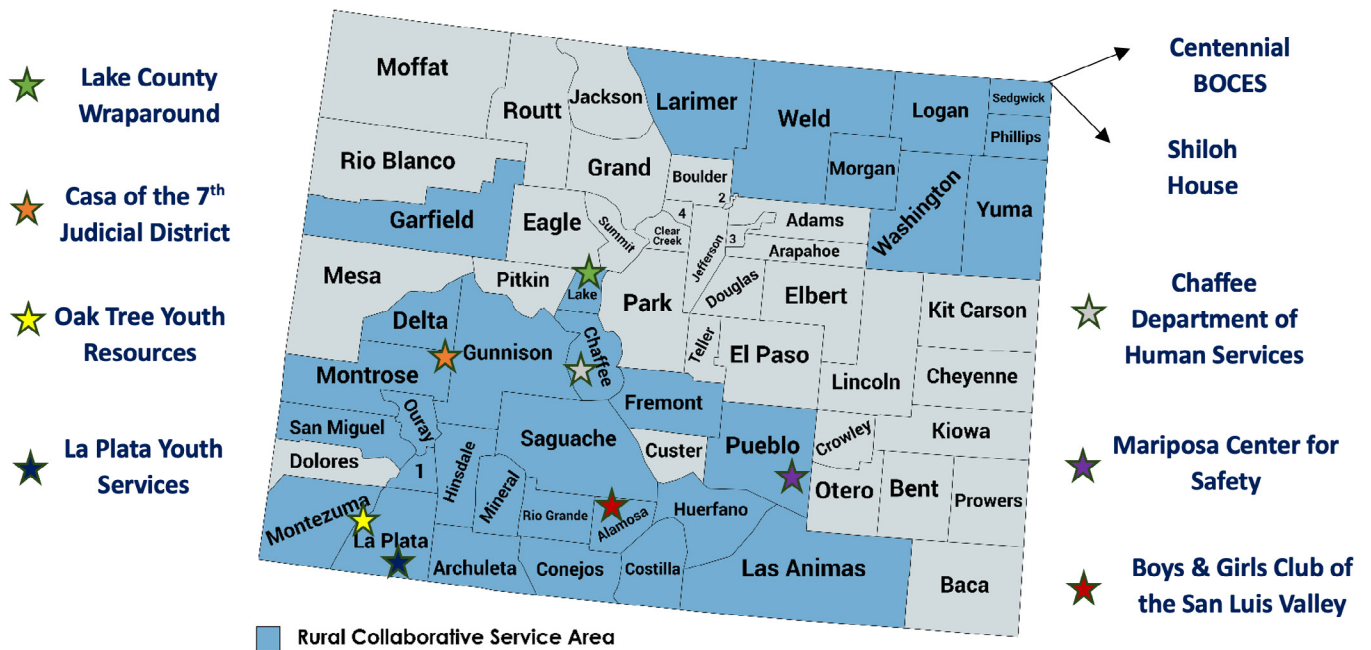


Formation of the Rural Collaborative

The RC was developed through a five-year Family and Youth Services Bureau (FYSB) Rural Runaway and Homeless Youth Demonstration Grant called Support Systems for Runaway and Homeless Youth (SSRHY). In 2013, the RC received a three-year Basic Center Program (BCP) grant to serve runaway and homeless youth under the age of 18, as well as two Statewide Strategic Use Fund grants (TANF). In 2018, the RC received another Basic Center Program (BCP) grant and began contracting with the Center for Policy Research (CPR) to provide technical assistance and evaluation services. Since then, the RC has continued to receive funding from FYSB for BCP and expanded their services to include the Street Outreach Program (SOP) and Transitional Living Program (TLP).¹ CPR continues to provide technical assistance and evaluation services for the RC and produces this annual report on the RC's impacts covering all funded programs.

¹ In Fiscal Year 2023-24, the RC, in partnership with Karis, Inc., was awarded FYSB's Prevention Demonstration Program (PDP) to prevent homelessness among youth under 22 living within Colorado's Balance of State Continuum of Care (CoC), which covers 54 rural/frontier and non-metro counties. CPR serves as the evaluator as well for PDP.

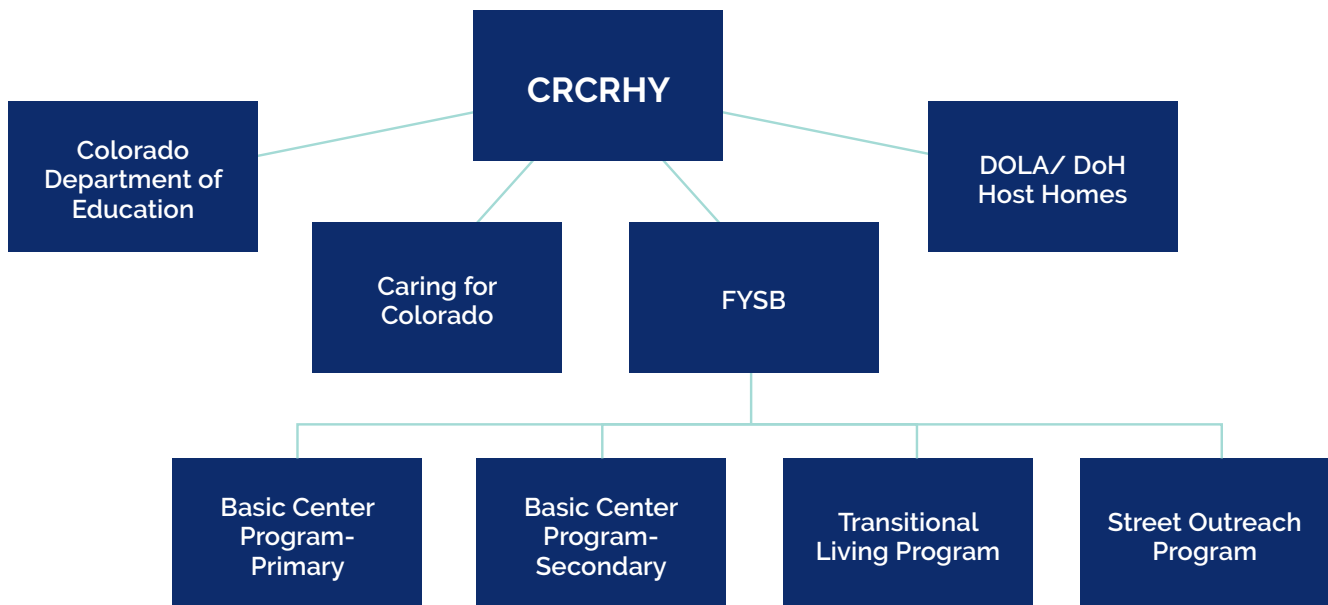
FIGURE 1: COLORADO COUNTIES SERVED IN THE RURAL COLLABORATIVE



Program Funding

The RC is supported by blending and braiding funds from a variety of sources, primarily from the Family and Youth Services Bureau (FYSB).

FIGURE 2: RURAL COLLABORATIVE STRUCTURE AND FUNDING SOURCES



RC Programs

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Family and Youth Services Bureau (FYSB) funds grants to community agencies that support Runaway and Homeless Youth (RHY). These funds support services across several program types. The RC receives funding from these RHY program grants to support services to homeless youth across rural Colorado. The RC also receives funding from the Colorado Division of Housing (DOH) through the Host Homes Program (HH), from the Colorado Department of Education (CDE) through the Outreach and Emergency Assistance Program, and through the Caring for Colorado Foundation. A brief description of the programs is provided below.

Basic Center Program (BCP): The BCP meets the immediate needs of runaway and homeless youth, or youth who are at risk of homelessness, aged 17 and younger. Enrollments come in two forms: emergency shelter or homeless prevention. BCP can include working to reunite young people with their families or locate appropriate alternative placements, which includes a variety of housing options, including host homes. BCP funding supports gateway services, temporary shelter using a host home model, counseling, crisis intervention, recreation programs, and aftercare services.

Transitional Living Program (TLP): TLP provides community-based, adult-supervised, long-term shelters, apartments, and scattered-site apartments for youth ages 16 to under 22 who are homeless and cannot safely live with their own families. Youth can be enrolled in TLP for up to 18 months, and in extenuating circumstances, up to 21 months. In rural areas of Colorado, there is very limited residential housing available, and housing support often takes the form of host homes, short-term rentals, and hotel stays. TLP funding supports safe and stable housing through a host home model, basic life skills building, educational opportunities, job attainment services, mental health care, and physical health care.

Street Outreach Program (SOP): The SOP supports community organizations in working with homeless, runaway, and street youth aged 21 or younger to help them find stable housing and services. The SOP focuses on developing relationships between outreach workers and young people that allow them to rebuild connections with caring adults. The ultimate goal is to prevent the sexual exploitation and abuse of youth on the streets. Its funding supports street-based education and outreach, gateway services, access to emergency shelter, survival aid, treatment and counseling, crisis intervention, and follow-up support.

DOH Host Homes: Host homes provide emergency shelter for youth aged 18–24 for up to six months. The RC provides at least 12 opportunities. Host homes are an arrangement between a community member and a service provider whereby the community member provides homeless youth with shelter, food, and sometimes transportation. Due to the lack of shelters and housing in rural areas caused by a lack of economies of scale and development costs, Host Homes can uniquely help to fill the gaps in emergency and traditional housing available.

Outreach and Emergency Assistance Program (CDE): The Colorado Department of Education (CDE) program seeks to bolster McKinney-Vento efforts by identifying youth who are at risk of dropping out due to homelessness. CDE funding allows sites to provide wraparound support and services to enable school attendance and participation in school activities.

Caring for Colorado (CFC): The RC is supported by blending and braiding funds from a variety of different sources, including CFC. These funds allow the RC to provide important services to runaway and homeless youth in rural communities. A portion of the CFC funds supplement the BCP. CFC funds are often used to support young people who do not meet the eligibility of the other funding streams mentioned above.

Service Model

The RC's comprehensive service model (see Figure 3) focuses on *social and emotional well-being*, where youth are connected with providers to help with health care (primary, substance use, mental health), personal safety, trafficking, and sexually risky behaviors; *permanent connections* where youth experience ongoing attachments to families, communities, schools, and other social networks; *education/employment* where youth connect to school or vocational training programs and improve interviewing and job attainment skills to obtain employment; and *safe and stable housing* where youth transition to safe and stable housing including moving in with family, when appropriate, or other safe, stable, and supportive housing.

FIGURE 3: COLORADO RURAL COLLABORATIVE COMPREHENSIVE SERVICE MODEL



Screening

Youth are identified and referred for services through a standard screening tool. The RC adopted a screening tool that is used across multiple agencies in Colorado, including the division of child welfare and coordinated entry process, among others, that screens for risk factors of homelessness. This tool identifies youth who are at an increased risk of homelessness by identifying risk factors such as a parent in jail/prison, use of marijuana before the age of 14, and child welfare involvement or detention prior to age 18. Any youth who identifies one or more risk factor is referred and eligible to receive services from the RC.

Services

Each RC site provides direct services to youth within the broad categories of social and emotional well-being, permanent connections, education/employment, and safe and stable housing. The services provided to each youth vary depending upon the youth's needs and the resources available in the community. Youth may receive services through brief contacts for short term needs or through full program enrollment. Services provided through brief contact include assistance with food, clothing, transportation, and referrals to other services such as mental health counseling. Some youth drop in for brief services and later reappear and enroll in an RC program for more robust support.

Case Management

Site coordinators at each RC site document each interaction with youths enrolled in an RC program through case management entries in Colorado Rural Collaboratives Management Information System (CRCMIS). CRCMIS was developed, implemented, and is managed by CPR. It is an online, secure management information system that allows rural providers to enter information and keep track of youth in real time. Each case management entry includes the date of service, length of contact, the RC program the youth is enrolled in, the issues discussed during the interaction, the types of services provided, and a detailed description of the interaction.

In all, 73% of enrolled youth received case management services while enrolled in an RC program. The remaining percentage may have also received services; however, these could have been drop-in or one-time basic needs services that do not get tracked in the system prior to enrollment. Services ranged from referrals to partner agencies that support youth in meeting their needs, general case management services that build relationships and guide youth in setting goals and overcoming barriers, advising youth on various outcome areas, or providing direct financial assistance (supportive services).

TABLE 1. CASE MANAGEMENT SERVICES OVERVIEW

	Youth (N=179)
Case Management (Services)	
Enrolled Youth Receiving Services	73%
Total Services Provided	837
Average per Youth (of those receiving)	6.3

Performance Measures by Program Type

The RC's goals are to support rural homeless youth through services geared toward the four outcome areas identified by the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness:

- **Social and Emotional Well-Being:** the skills, capacities, and characteristics that enable young people to understand and navigate their world in healthy, positive ways.
- **Permanent Connections:** the presence of supportive adults who provide physical and emotional support throughout the young person's life.
- **Education/Employment:** the ability to access and perform in both school and in employment toward self-sufficiency.
- **Safe and Stable Housing:** a safe, affordable, and stable place to live.

Each program has its own specific performance measures within these domains to evaluate successful outcomes for youth. The performance measures for BCP, TLP, and SOP are prescribed by FYSB; the performance measures for Host Homes are outlined by DOH; and the performance measures for the Outreach and Emergency Assistance Program are outlined by CDE. The performance measures tracked and reported in the RC are listed below by program:

Basic Center Program (BCP)

- **Social and Emotional Well-Being:** The average composite score of general health, mental health, and dental health status will be higher at exit from BCP than at entry.
- **Permanent Connections:** The percentage of youth who report at program exit that there is at least one adult in their life, other than RHY program staff, to whom they can go for advice or emotional support.
- **Education/Employment:** 60% of youth exiting BCP will be attending school or have graduated from high school/obtained a GED, and 20% will be employed or looking for work.
- **Safe and Stable Housing:** 90% of youth leaving a BCP shelter will exit to a safe and stable destination. The type of destination for each youth who exits a BCP will be reported.

Transitional Living Program (TLP)

- **Social and Emotional Well-Being:** The average composite score of general health, mental health, and dental health status will be higher at exit from TLP than at entry.
- **Permanent Connections:** The percentage of youth who report at program exit that there is at least one adult in their life, other than RHY program staff, to whom they can go to for advice or emotional support.
- **Education/Employment:** 66% of youth exiting TLP will be attending school or have graduated from high school/obtained a GED, and 75% will be employed or looking for work.
- **Safe and Stable Housing:** 90% of youth leaving a TLP must exit to a safe and stable destination. The type of destination for each youth who exists a TLP will be reported.

Street Outreach Program (SOP)

RHY providers will create a deliberate case plan or client assessment for approximately one-third (33%) of youth served (youth will enroll in the program).

Host Homes (HH)

- **Social and Emotional Well-Being:** The average composite score of general health, mental health, and dental health status will be higher at exit from HH than at entry.
- **Permanent Connections:** The percentage of youth who report at program exit that there is at least one adult in their life, other than RHY program staff, to whom they can go to for advice or emotional support.
- **Education/Employment:** 66% of youth exiting HH will be attending school or have graduated from high school/obtained a GED, and 75% will be employed or looking for work.
- **Safe and Stable Housing:** 90% of youth leaving a HH must exit to a safe and stable destination. The type of destination for each youth who exists a HH will be reported.

Outreach and Emergency Assistance Program (CDE)

- Identify and engage 125 school-age children and youth who are homeless with their family and those who are unaccompanied through increased outreach efforts.
- Provide immediate access to basic human needs to 125 students who are homeless.
- Provide wraparound (supportive) services to address the needs of 125 students who are homeless so they can enroll in and attend school and fully participate in school activities.
- Provide shelter and/or housing support for 50 qualified students so they can enroll in and attend school and fully participate in school.

Caring for Colorado (CFC)

- Serve an additional 20 youth who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless, particularly those who do not meet the eligibility/allowability requirements of their funding streams by the end of the grant program.
- Increase capacity of the Collective Impact backbone organization, Spark Community Foundation, to support the collective work of the CO Rural Collaborative and locally led agencies by the end of the grant period.

Research and Evaluation

The evaluation of Colorado's RC is conducted by the Center for Policy Research (CPR). CPR has been leading the evaluation, performance monitoring, and reporting for the RC since 2018. CPR implemented an online management information system called the CRCMIS in 2018 to support data collection, serve as an online case management record for sites, and securely host required forms for each site within the RC. CPR provides one-on-one database training, technical assistance, and data monitoring for all RC sites. CPR monitors progress and data entry through a Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) process and produces quarterly data dashboards that are shared and reviewed with all RC sites. Data for this report comes from the CRCMIS and is combined with data from the homeless management information system (HMIS), tracked and collected for HUD- and FYSB-funded programs to report on youth services and outcomes.



Description of Youth Served

Brief Contacts

A total of 562 brief contact services were provided across the RC, with 372 unique youth being served. The Street Outreach Program was the most common funding source for brief contacts (41%), while the CDE program served the largest number of unique youth (42%). Of the 372 youth that received brief contact services, 41 (11%) later fully enrolled into an RC program. Table 2 shows the full breakdown of brief contact services across all RC programs.

TABLE 2. BRIEF CONTACT SERVICES BY PROGRAM TYPE

Program Providing Services (January 2023–December 2023)	# of Youth Served (N=372)	% of Youth Served	# of Brief Contacts (N=562)	% of Brief Contact Services
Basic Center Program	64	17%	106	19%
DOH Host Homes	1	< 1%	3	< 1%
Transitional Living Program	5	1%	34	5%
Street Outreach Program	123	33%	230	41%
CDE	155	42%	157	28%
CFC	1	< 1%	1	< 1%
Other	23	6%	31	6%

Enrollments and Referrals

Combined, the RC served 179 youth across six programs from January 2023 through December 2023. A total of 167 youths were enrolled in the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), which is how the RC tracks youth for the federally funded programs. A total of 165 youths were enrolled in the

RC's online management information system, CRCMIS, and 153 were enrolled in both. The CRCMIS was created in 2018 for the RC to better track youth and record services across rural areas in Colorado. A total of 510 youth experiencing or at risk of homelessness were served through brief contact or full enrollment in RC programs during this reporting period. Table 3 shows the breakdown of program enrollments for youth.

- The Basic Center Program was the most common program providing services for youth, with 35% of the youth enrolled in BCP. The BCP is also the longest-running funding stream supporting the RC.
- The Transitional Living Program (TLP) and Street Outreach Program (SOP) were the second most common programs providing services with 34% and 32% of youth enrolled, respectively.

TABLE 3. YOUTH RECEIVING SERVICES BY PROGRAM TYPE

Program Providing Services (January 2023–December 2023)	# of Youth Served (N=179)	% of Youth Served
Basic Center Program	63	35%
<i>Homelessness Prevention</i>	42	
<i>Emergency Shelter</i>	25	
DOH Host Homes	10	6%
Transitional Living Program	61	34%
Street Outreach Program	58	32%
CDE	9	5%
CFC	6	3%

Note: Youth may receive services from multiple programs, so total percentage exceeds 100%. Youth may receive services from BCP homelessness prevention and emergency shelter; BCP HP enrollments and BCP ES enrollments exceed total BCP enrollments.

Most youth are identified for services through school systems (39%). Self-referrals (23%) were the second most common referral source, followed closely by friends or family (19%), each highlighting just how critical word of mouth is in rural communities. Other common referral sources are street outreach or other community agencies where youth appear for help, such as a food bank (9%). See Table 4 for a breakdown of common referral sources.

TABLE 4. REFERRAL SOURCES

January 2023–December 2023	# of Youth Referred (N=179)	% of Youth Referred
Parent/Guardian/Relative/Friend/Foster Parent/Other Individual	22	19%
School	46	39%
Self	27	23%
Government Agency*	11	9%
Outreach Project/Community Agency/Other Organization	11	9%

*Child Welfare/CPS/Caseworker/Community-worker/Juvenile Justice/Law Enforcement/Police

Characteristics of Youth Served

Once youth are screened and determined eligible for services, site leads enroll youth in services based on their risk factors, barriers, and needs. The RC serves homeless youth across broad sections of Colorado and provides a snapshot of rural youth homelessness in the state. These youth are evenly split between male and female and most identify as heterosexual (77%). Youth served across the RC are primarily white (58%), and nearly one-quarter are multi-racial (23%). One-quarter of the youth served report a disability. The average age of youth served by the RC is 18 years old.



TABLE 5. DEMOGRAPHICS OF ENROLLED YOUTH

January 2023-December 2023	# of Youth (N=179)	% of Youth
Gender		
Male	83	48%
Female	80	47%
Trans, Nonbinary, Questioning	9	5%
Sexual Orientation		
Heterosexual	116	77%
Gay or Lesbian	8	5%
Bisexual	16	11%
Questioning, Unsure, Other	10	7%
Race/Ethnicity		
American Indian, Alaska Native, or Indigenous	10	6%
Black, African American, or African	3	2%
Hispanic or Latinx	19	11%
Multi-Racial	38	23%
White	98	58%
Has Reported Disability	42	25%
Age at Intake		
Average: 17.7 years		
Median: 18.1 years		



Feedback from Youth

To gather input from the rural homeless youth who receive services from the RC sites, the research team conducted two individual interviews and two focus groups with a total of 15 youth for the 2023 annual report on the RC. Both individual interviews were conducted virtually with youth in Lake County, an in-person focus group was conducted with 10 youth in La Plata County, and a virtual focus group was conducted with 3 youth in Yuma and Phillips counties. The virtual focus group was conducted in Spanish with youth in the Migrant Education Program at Centennial BOCES. The average age among youth was 17.7 years old, with 7 youth identifying as male and 8 youth identifying as female. Before beginning, researchers first gained informed consent and permission to audio record the youth. The interviews and focus groups each lasted approximately one hour. Afterwards, researchers provided each youth with a \$50 gift card for their time and participation.

Most of the youth were experiencing homelessness or housing instability due to their parents or caregivers being unable to meet their basic needs for a variety of reasons. Youth reported their parents/caregivers were neglectful and/or abusive and struggled with substance abuse, and the youth in the migrant education program shared that they came to the U.S. without their parents. Despite most youth being enrolled in school, being involved in systems such as child welfare, and having many interactions with law enforcement, all the youth were connected to services through word of mouth, which is a common strategy in rural Colorado. Youth also talked about how they struggled to trust most adults but felt connected to and supported by the adults running the RC site where they access and receive services.

"I think another big part about Wraparound is less the financial support and more just the social aspect of it. Like actually having somebody to talk to, to organize all these things and develop plans for the future and whatnot. That's also really helpful too."

Youth receiving services from Lake County Wraparound

"Every time that I have needed something that has to do with services, or any kind of help, I go to [CBOCES], and [they've] always helped."

Youth receiving services from Centennial BOCES

Youth received a variety of services and resources through RC organizations, including food (direct assistance and grocery cards), clothes (and laundry services), transportation (gas cards, bus vouchers, etc.), referrals for physical and mental health care, and support finding and paying for housing. Additionally, youth received assistance from RC organizations in accessing public benefits such as health insurance and food stamps (SNAP). Youth in Lake, Yuma, and Phillips counties reported receiving all the services that they need, while youth in La Plata County have faced barriers to receiving housing services due to a lack of parental consent, which is required for specific programs.

The youths reported many challenges to accessing services in rural Colorado, particularly housing and physical/mental health services. There are very few, if any, shelters available in rural areas, and housing is scarce and unaffordable for most youth, highlighting the critical need for Host Homes and other nontraditional housing options. Youth also report having limited options for receiving physical and mental health care. In La Plata County, many youths discussed a lack of options due to long wait times, providers not accepting Medicaid, and a lack of overall providers in the area. One youth described what happened when she experienced a mental health crisis and needed help:

"You have to get put in an ambulance, strapped to a bed, then have to sit in this uncomfortable car for six hours on your way to a mental hospital (in Denver). It's traumatic. It makes you feel even more crazy than you feel already."

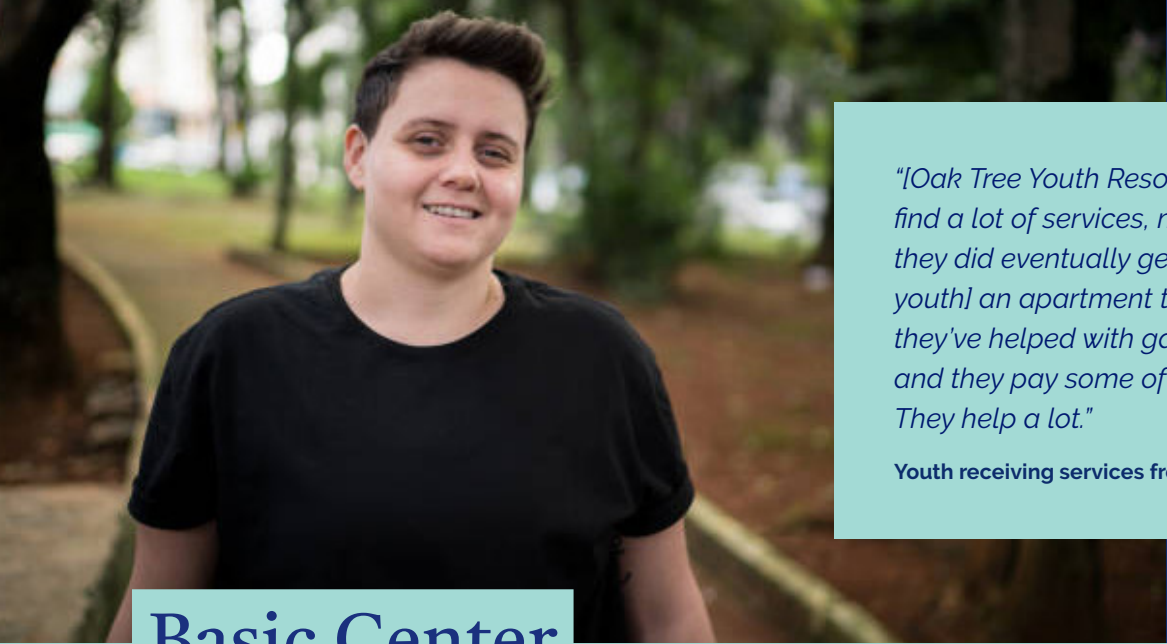
Youth receiving services from Oak Tree Youth Resources

The youths showed great resilience despite their trauma and ongoing struggles to get their basic needs met. All the youths were either enrolled in school, employed, or both. When asked about their plans for the future, youth were optimistic and discussed graduating high school, going to college or trade school, and attending job corps. In thinking about what might have prevented them from becoming homeless, youth discussed just how critical it is to have access to reliable, safe, and stable housing such as a shelter.

"They can't really get on their feet without shelter. Like, sure you can go out and get a job, but then, you're going to, where are you going to go home to? You're going to still be sleeping outside and wrapping yourself up in blankets and risking getting trespassed or something like that...and if that happens enough times, you might just end up in jail and then you might not be able to go to your work anyways."

Youth receiving services from Lake County Wraparound

The next sections of this report take a deeper look at the youth who enrolled and received services from the RC by program type (BCP, TLP, SOP, HH, and CDE). Each section describes youth served by each program, their risk factors, the services received, and the outcomes and performance measures achieved for each program.



"[Oak Tree Youth Resources] helped me find a lot of services, my therapy, and then they did eventually get me and [another RC youth] an apartment that I still have, and they've helped with gas cards and food, and they pay some of the bills sometimes. They help a lot."

Youth receiving services from OTYR

Basic Center Program

A total of 114 youth received services through the Basic Center Program (BCP), with 51 through brief contact, 50 through full program enrollment, and 13 through both. Full program enrollments increased by 17% from 2022. The BCP is designed to meet the immediate needs of youth aged 17 or younger that are homeless or are at risk of homelessness and/or have run away. Youth may have become homeless because they left an unsafe home, were abandoned by a caretaker, or due to family conflict. BCP enrollments come in two forms, emergency shelter (ES) or homeless prevention (HP). Although youth cannot be enrolled in both ES and HP at the same time, they can shift between the two as needed. BCP funds can be used for a variety of expenses including:

- Up to 21 days of shelter
- Food, clothing, and medical care
- Individual, group, and family counseling
- Crisis Intervention
- Family reunification
- Recreation programs
- Aftercare services
- Staff time/case management

A typical youth enrolled in the BCP will initially meet with their site coordinator to discuss their needs and help build a care plan. Youth in the BCP met with their site coordinator an average of 3.4 times throughout their program enrollment. For youth enrolled in the BCP for homelessness prevention (HP), typical services might include grocery store cards, clothing, and referrals to physical or mental health care. For those enrolled in emergency shelter (ES), youth might be given a motel voucher or placed with a host home for up to 21 days.

Screening and Referral (Risk Factors)

The most common risk factors among youth were “ever been homeless or used a shelter,” “mom or dad ever in jail,” and “became homeless because of violence, running away, or religious differences.” Table 5 provides a breakdown of the risk factors that youth who were enrolled in the BCP identified at enrollment.

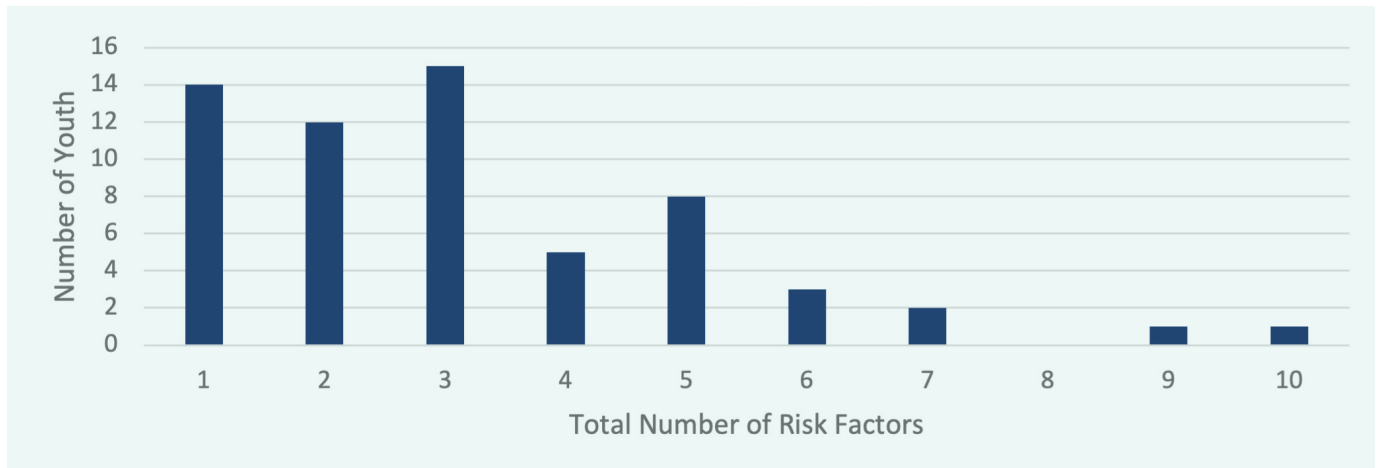
TABLE 5. PERCENTAGE OF SCREENED YOUTH WITH ASSOCIATED RISK FACTORS FOR ENROLLED YOUTH (N=63)

Risk Factor (July 2021–December 2022)	Number of Youth Responding Yes	% of Youth Responding Yes
Ever been homeless or used a shelter	41	76%
Mom or dad ever in jail	33	75%
Became homeless because of violence, running away, or religious differences	27	55%
Ever used marijuana	22	48%
Current or prior foster care involvement or placement	16	32%
Mom or dad ever in foster care	7	17%
Jail or detention prior to turning 18	6	12%
Been pregnant or gotten someone else pregnant	4	8%
Ever been trafficked or sexually exploited	3	6%

*Percentage is based on the number of valid responses for each question.

The average number of risk factors identified by youth receiving services in the RC was 3 and a range of 1–10. See Figure 4.

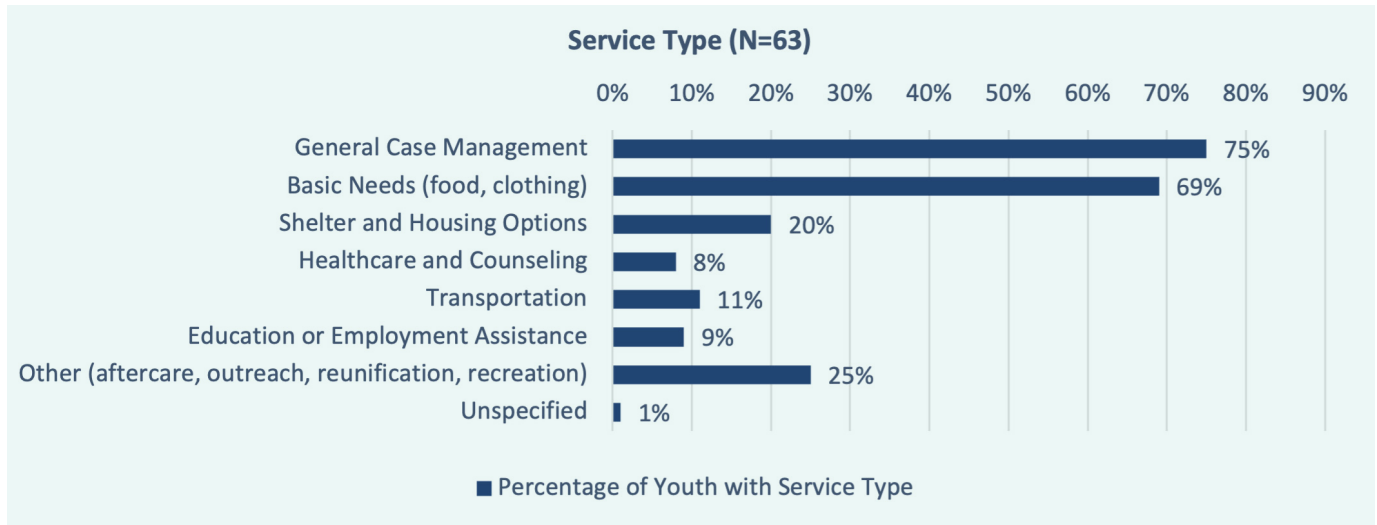
FIGURE 4. NUMBER OF RISK FACTORS IDENTIFIED BY YOUTH AT ENROLLMENT (N=63)



Services

The most common services provided to youth enrolled in BCP were general case management (75%) and basic needs (69%). Figure 5 shows the distribution of services provided to BCP youth.

FIGURE 5. SERVICE TYPES



Outcomes

Social and Emotional Well-Being

- 78% of youth reported excellent, very good, or good general health upon program exit, with only 23% reporting fair or poor general health.
- In contrast, only 57% of youth reported excellent, very good, or good mental health upon program exit.

TABLE 6. HEALTH AND WELL-BEING AT EXIT (N=48)

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
General Health Status	18%	24%	33%	19%	4%
Mental Health Status	10%	16%	31%	35%	8%

Safe and Stable Housing

- About one-third as many youths experienced homelessness at program exit compared to program enrollment.
- Nearly 90% of youth exited to safe and stable housing

TABLE 7. HOUSING OUTCOMES

Housing Situation	Program Enrollment (N=63)	Exit Destination HMIS (N=48)
Foster, group home, residential treatment, ILA	5%	0%
Home of family member or friend	58%	72%
Own home or apartment	2%	4%
Homeless, couch surfing, car	12%	4%
Hotel/motel/shelter	18%	11%
Transitional Housing/Safe Haven/Host Home	2%	4%
Other	4%	4%

*Percentage is based on the number of valid responses for each question.

Education and Employment

- About 70% of youth either attend school regularly or graduated high school upon program exit.
- Almost half (48%) of youth are either employed or looking for employment at program exit.

TABLE 8. EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES

	Program Enrollment (N=63)
Education	
<i>Graduated from High School</i>	6%
<i>Attending School Regularly</i>	64%
<i>Attending School Irregularly</i>	25%
<i>Dropped Out</i>	6%
<i>Expelled</i>	0%
Employed	
<i>Yes</i>	33%
<i>No</i>	52%
<i>No, but looking for employment</i>	15%



"I have been using Wraparound for resources, like getting money for food. So now I get Safeway cards so I can buy groceries and stuff. But also, they help us out with clothing and getting some extra things that we need that we may not be able to afford."

**Youth receiving services
from Lake County Wraparound**

Transitional Living Program

A total of 61 youths received services through the Transitional Living Program (TLP), which represented a 165% increase from 2022. The TLP is designed to support youth ages 16 through 21 who are homeless with long-term housing (up to 18 months, and in some cases under extenuating circumstances can be extended up to 21 months) services to create and maintain housing stability. TLP funds can be used for a variety of expenses including:

- Safe and stable living accommodations
- Basic life skills building
- Educational opportunities
- Job attainment services
- Mental health care
- Physical health care
- Staff time/case management

Youth enrolled in the TLP start by meeting with their site coordinator to discuss their needs and help build an initial care plan. Residential housing is very limited in rural Colorado, so most youth enrolled in TLP will stay in host homes, short-term rentals, or hotels. In addition to safe and stable housing, youth in the TLP are connected to services for employment, education, and social and emotional well-being.

Screening and Referral (Risk Factors)

The most common risk factors among youth identified for enrollment in TLP were "ever been homeless or used a shelter," "ever used marijuana," and "became homeless because of violence, running away, or religious differences." Table 9 provides a breakdown of the risk factors that youth who were served by the TLP identified at enrollment.

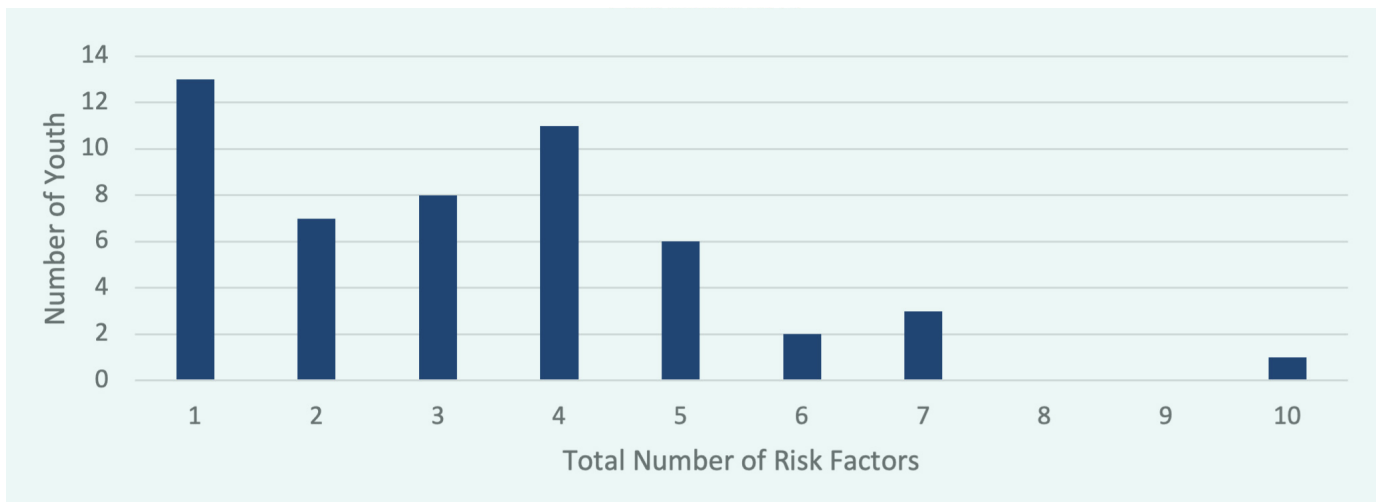
TABLE 9. PERCENTAGE OF SCREENED YOUTH WITH ASSOCIATED RISK FACTORS FOR ENROLLED YOUTH (N=61)

Risk Factor (January 2023–December 2023)	Number of Youth Responding Yes	% of Youth Responding Yes
Current or prior foster care involvement or placement	13	32%
Ever been homeless or used a shelter	38	81%
Became homeless because of violence, running away, or religious differences	29	71%
Been pregnant or gotten someone else pregnant	5	13%
Ever used marijuana	28	78%
Jail or detention prior to turning 18	6	15%
Mom or dad ever in jail	22	63%
Mom or dad ever in foster care	2	7%
Ever been trafficked or sexually exploited	4	11%

*Percentage is based on the number of valid responses for each question.

The average number of risk factors identified by youth receiving services in the RC was 3 and a range of 1–10. See Figure 6.

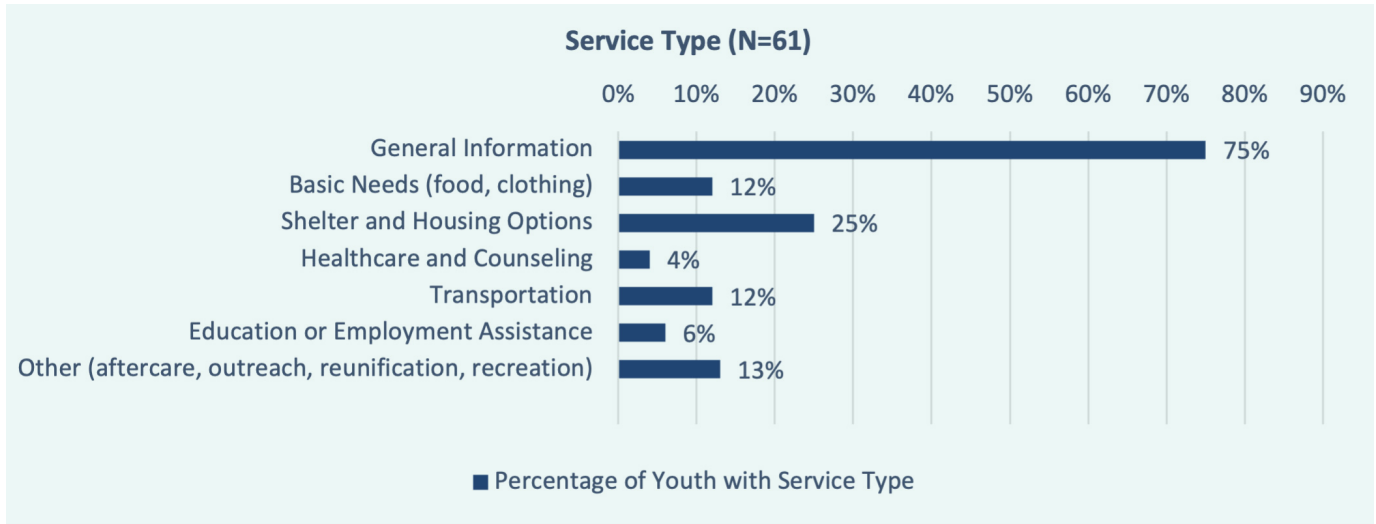
FIGURE 6. NUMBER OF RISK FACTORS IDENTIFIED BY YOUTH AT ENROLLMENT



Services

Three-quarters of youth receiving services from TLP received general case management information. The second most common services provided to youth enrolled in TLP were shelter and housing options (25%). Figure 7 shows the distribution of services provided to TLP youth.

FIGURE 7. SERVICE TYPES



Outcomes

Social and Emotional Well-Being

- 79% of youth reported excellent, very good, or good general health upon program exit, with only 22% reporting fair or poor general health.
- About half of the youth (52%) reported excellent, very good, or good mental health upon program exit, and half (49%) reported fair or poor mental health.

TABLE 10. HEALTH AND WELL-BEING AT EXIT (N=44)

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor
General Health Status	9%	16%	54%	20%	2%
Mental Health Status	6%	6%	40%	40%	9%

Safe and Stable Housing

- The percentage of youth experiencing homelessness dropped from 17% at program enrollment to 0% at program exit.
- The percentage of youth living in their own home or apartment tripled from program enrollment to program exit.

TABLE 11. HOUSING OUTCOMES

Housing Situation	Program Enrollment (N=61)	Exit Destination HMIS (N=44)
Foster, group home, residential treatment, ILA	2%	0%
Home of family member or friend	58%	46%
Own home or apartment	10%	30%
Homeless, couch surfing, car	17%	0%
Hotel/motel/shelter	2%	3%
Transitional Housing/Safe Haven/Host Home	10%	14%
Other	2%	5%

*Percentage is based on the number of valid responses for each question.

Education and Employment

- Almost two-thirds of youth (64%) are either attending school regularly or have already graduated from high school at the time of program exit.
- A majority of youth (61%) are either employed or looking for employment at program exit.

TABLE 12. EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT OUTCOMES

	Program Enrollment (N=44)
Education	
<i>Graduated from High School</i>	33%
<i>Attending School Regularly</i>	31%
<i>Attending School Irregularly</i>	9%
<i>Dropped Out</i>	25%
<i>Expelled</i>	2%
Employed	
<i>Yes</i>	54%
<i>No</i>	39%
<i>No, but looking for employment</i>	7%



"[CBOCES] helped me pay for housing, food, transportation, and helped with sorting out my housing situation too."

Youth receiving services from Centennial BOCES

Street Outreach Program

172 youth received services through the street outreach program (SOP), with 114 through brief contact, 49 through full program enrollment, and 9 enrolled in both. Full program enrollments increased by 829% from 2022, when the program was new to the RC. SOP supports community organizations in working with homeless, runaway, and street youth ages 21 or younger to help them find stable housing and services.

One main goal of SOP is to develop relationships with young people that allow them to rebuild connections with caring adults. To facilitate these relationships, the RC employs the Streetworks model as best practice to identify and engage youth. RC site coordinators are first trained in a variety of topics such as harm reduction, crisis stabilization, and trauma-informed care. They are responsible for creating and distributing relevant materials to inform youth of their options for safe basic needs, including safe and stable housing, so that they are best equipped to connect with youth.

The SOP differs from BCP and TLP in that a large number of youths access brief contact services and do not formally enroll in the program. Approximately one-third of the youths that receive SOP support will go on to formally enroll in the program. SOP funds can be used for a variety of expenses including:

- Street-based education and outreach
- Access to emergency shelter
- Survival aid
- Treatment and counseling
- Crisis intervention
- Follow-up support
- Staff time/case management

Youth in the SOP typically connect with their local RHY provider through mobile outreach or drop-in centers and often first receive services to address their basic needs through brief contact. After

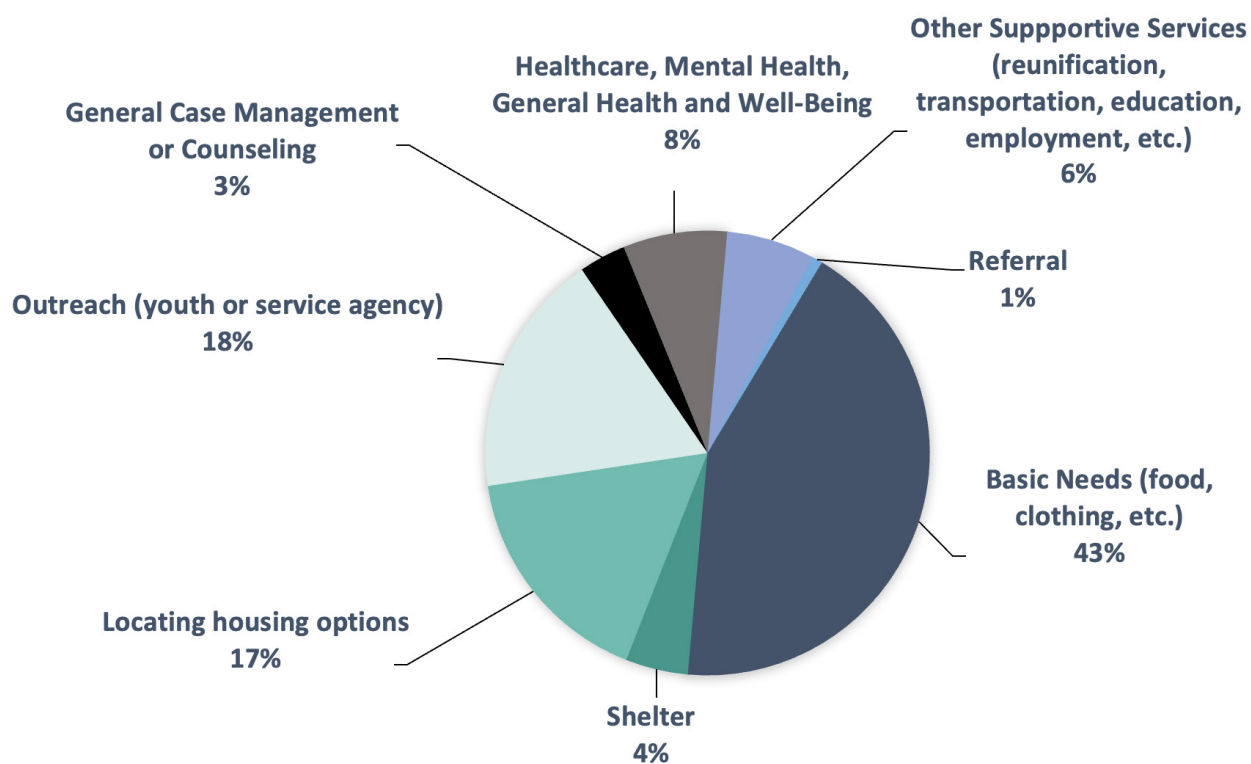
establishing a relationship with youth, site coordinators might offer full program enrollment if the youth is experiencing longer-term needs. Once enrolled, the site coordinator will meet with the youth to discuss needs and build a care plan. A typical SOP youth might receive help finding housing options, access to food and clothing, and assistance paying for mental health counseling.

Outreach/Drop-In

RC partner agencies serve youth in rural areas across the state of Colorado, and due to the large area covered, many must employ mobile outreach strategies to reach all the youth in need. Some partner agencies also have drop-in centers where youth can come in as needed. Many youths are only looking for short-term assistance to meet their basic needs and instead of being fully enrolled into a program, are served in a brief contact method.

A total of 264 brief contact services were provided with SOP funding, with 128 (48%) different youth served. Nearly half of all services provided were for basic needs (43%) such as food and clothing. A full breakdown of the types of drop-in services provided is shown in Figure 8.

FIGURE 8. BRIEF CONTACT SERVICE TYPES



On average, Site Coordinators spent about 48 minutes during each brief contact interaction, with about one-third of all interactions lasting over one hour.

Enrolled Youth

Fifty-eight youth were enrolled in SOP, of which 22 (38%) first received services through brief contact. In total, 164 youth were served by SOP through either brief contact or full program enrollment. RC service providers created a deliberate case plan or client assessment for approximately 35% of youth served through SOP.

Screening and Referral (Risk Factors)

Table 13 shows the risk factors that youth served by the RC identified at enrollment. The most common risk factors among youth were “ever used marijuana,” “mom or dad ever in jail,” “became homeless because of violence, running away, or religious differences,” and “ever been homeless or used a shelter.”

TABLE 13. PERCENTAGE OF SCREENED YOUTH WITH ASSOCIATED RISK FACTORS FOR ENROLLED YOUTH (N=58)

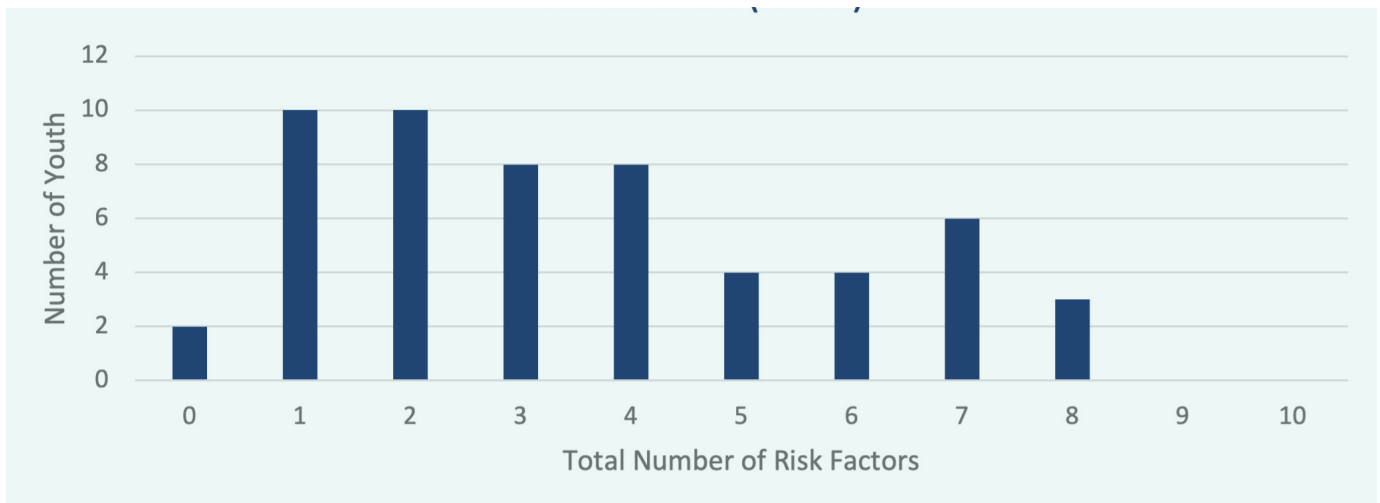
Risk Factor (January 2023–December 2023)	Number of Youth Responding Yes	% of Youth Responding Yes
Current or prior foster care involvement or placement	13	28%
Ever been homeless or used a shelter	27	59%
Became homeless because of violence, running away, or religious differences	28	60%
Been pregnant or gotten someone else pregnant	6	13%
Ever used marijuana	34	77%
Jail or detention prior to turning 18	8	17%
Mom or dad ever in jail	33	75%
Mom or dad ever in foster care	8	21%
Ever been trafficked or sexually exploited	6	13%

*Percentage is based on the number of valid responses for each question.

The average number of risk factors identified by youth receiving services in the RC was 3.6 with a range of 0–8. See Figure 9.



FIGURE 9. NUMBER OF RISK FACTORS IDENTIFIED BY YOUTH AT ENROLLMENT (N=58)

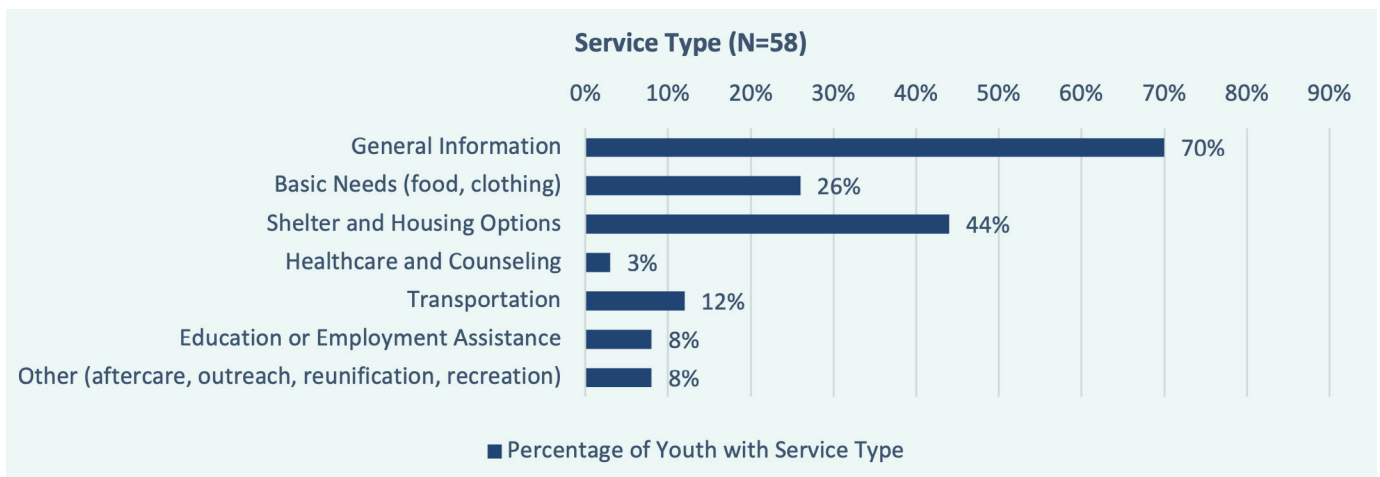


Services

Services for Enrolled Youth

Approximately 70% of youth received general case management services. Almost half (44%) received services for shelter or housing, and about one-quarter (26%) received services for basic needs. Figure 10 shows a breakdown of the types of services received by youth enrolled in the SOP.

FIGURE 10. SERVICE TYPES AND DOMAINS





"Well, I had some problems at the house I was staying at. So, it was either to stay like this with her or return to Mexico. Since I was doing very well in school, I decided to seek help so I could stay."

Youth receiving services from Centennial BOCES

Host Homes Program

The RC has been providing services under the Host Home model (HH) since 2021 and has faced many challenges to creating and supporting Host Homes in rural areas. In 2011, Colorado enacted House Bill 1079 that provided a certification process for Host Homes for homeless youth. The requirements and process to certify a Host Home were listed in the foster care section of the Children's Code and created the ability for foster homes to be duly licensed as a Host Home. The RC received funds via a homeless prevention grant to develop both the process, procedures, and steps for the certification of Host Homes. The RC then piloted the process to develop Host Homes and show their success in providing emergency shelter using the model. However, the RC was unable to sustain the Host Home model given the fiscal constraints posed by running a rural, geographically diverse model. Primarily, the model required the Department of Human Services to license homes without an allowable funding stream, and Child Placement agency was required to certify the Host Homes, a barrier that was challenging to overcome in rural areas. In 2021, the RC hosted a Host Home learning community, met with the Department of Human Services, Division of Child Welfare, and County departments of Human Services to research and discuss options for a model that would ensure Host Homes for RHY youth meet the requirements of the federal RHY Act, while still being able to utilize host homes as a valuable housing option. Working with the child welfare intern committee and key partners, SB 24-191 was passed this year with broad support to address the challenges of implementing a HH model in rural areas. The bill moved Host Homes for RHY to fall under homeless youth programs in the Children's Code and better defined the difference and relationship between the HH Program and the Host Home. Host Homes are now a regular process that can be done in real time in rural areas. As a result, the number of safe home-like environments that youth have available to them has increased. The HH model is youth driven and increases the ability of the RC to prevent short-term crises from becoming longer-term homelessness for youth. Key to the RC's HH model is a stronger link to kinship opportunities through child welfare if the youth cannot safely return home within 21 days. The HH model, as implemented by the RC, increases the growth of permanent connections and natural supports for youth in rural Colorado.

This year, 10 youth received services through the HH Program. HH supports youth ages 18 through 24 who are or are at risk of homelessness and/or have run away with around six months of Host Home housing and case management to create long-term housing stability. HH enrollments come in two forms, Temporary Housing Assistance or Supportive Services. HH funds can be used for a variety of expenses including:

- Temporary Housing Assistance:
 - Stipend for host family
 - Transportation/moving
 - Maintenance costs
- Supportive Services:
 - Securing housing
 - Connection to benefits
 - Staff time/case management

Youth enrolled in the HH Program meet with a site coordinator to discuss their needs and help build an initial care plan. On average, HH youth meet with their site coordinator six times throughout their program enrollment. In addition to providing safe and stable housing for up to six months, youth may also receive assistance in getting connected to public benefits such as Medicaid and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

Screening and Referral (Risk Factors)

Table 14 shows the risk factors that youth served by the RC HH Program identified at enrollment. The most common risk factors among youth were "mom or dad ever in jail", "became homeless because of violence, running away or religious differences," and "ever been homeless or used a shelter."

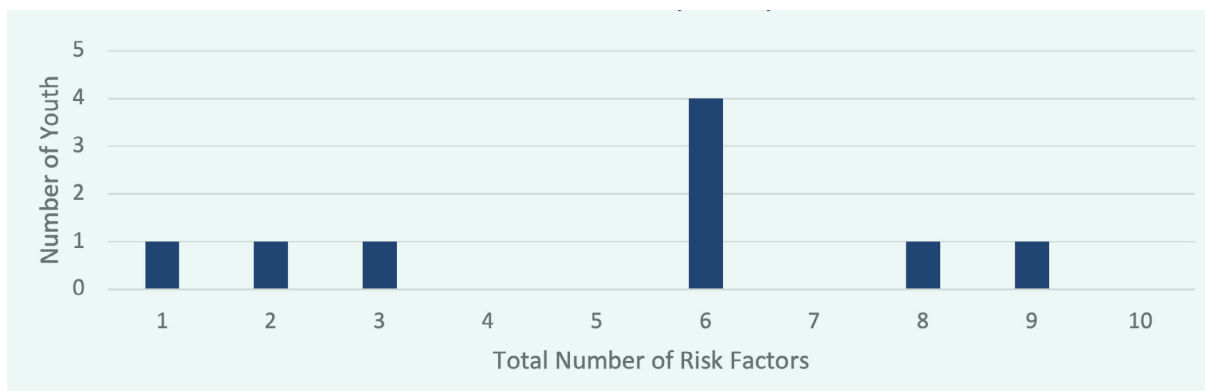
TABLE 14. PERCENTAGE OF SCREENED YOUTH WITH ASSOCIATED RISK FACTORS FOR ENROLLED YOUTH (N=10)

Risk Factor (January 2023–December 2023)	Number of Youth Responding Yes	% of Youth Responding Yes
Current or prior foster care involvement or placement	5	56%
Ever been homeless or used a shelter	8	88%
Became homeless because of violence, running away, or religious differences	8	88%
Been pregnant or gotten someone else pregnant	1	11%
Ever used marijuana	4	50%
Jail or detention prior to turning 18	1	13%
Mom or dad ever in jail	7	88%
Mom or dad ever in foster care	3	60%
Ever been trafficked or sexually exploited	1	14%

*Percentage is based on the number of valid responses for each question.

The average number of risk factors identified by youth receiving services in the RC was 5 and a range of 1–9. See Figure 11.

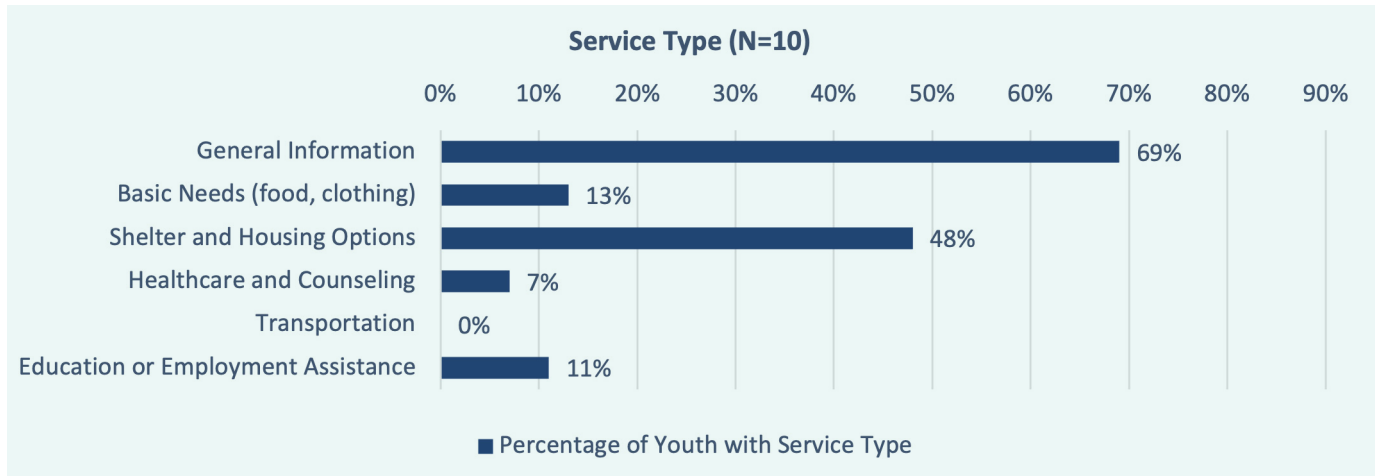
FIGURE 11. NUMBER OF RISK FACTORS IDENTIFIED BY YOUTH AT ENROLLMENT (N=10)



Services

Almost 70% of youth enrolled in HH received general case management services. Approximately half (48%) received services for shelter or housing. Figure 12 shows a breakdown of all services provided to youth enrolled in HH.

FIGURE 12. SERVICE TYPES



Outcomes

Safe and Stable Housing

- 89% of youth exited to safe and stable housing, such as their own apartment/home, the home a family member or friend, or transitional housing. Table 15 shows a full breakdown of housing at program entry and program exit.

TABLE 15. HOUSING OUTCOMES

Housing Situation	Program Enrollment (N=10)	Exit Destination HMIS (N=9)
Foster, group home, residential treatment, ILA	0%	0%
Home of family member or friend	60%	56%
Own home or apartment	0%	11%
Homeless, couch surfing, car	10%	11%
Hotel/motel/shelter	30%	11%
Transitional Housing/Safe Haven/Host Home	10%	11%
Other	0%	0%

*Percentage is based on the number of valid responses for each question.



"[CBOCES] have helped me a lot since I was going to drop out of school, and I was going to stop studying to work. But thanks [all the aid], I'm still studying."

Youth receiving services from Centennial BOCES

Outreach and Emergency Assistance Program (CDE)

The RC expanded the programming and services offered through new funding from the Colorado Department of Education, Outreach and Emergency Assistance Program (CDE). This year, 162 youth received services through the CDE program, with 153 through brief contact, 7 through full program enrollment, and 2 through both. The CDE aims to identify school-aged youth who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and provide support and services to enable school attendance and participation in school activities. CDE funds can be used for a variety of expenses including:

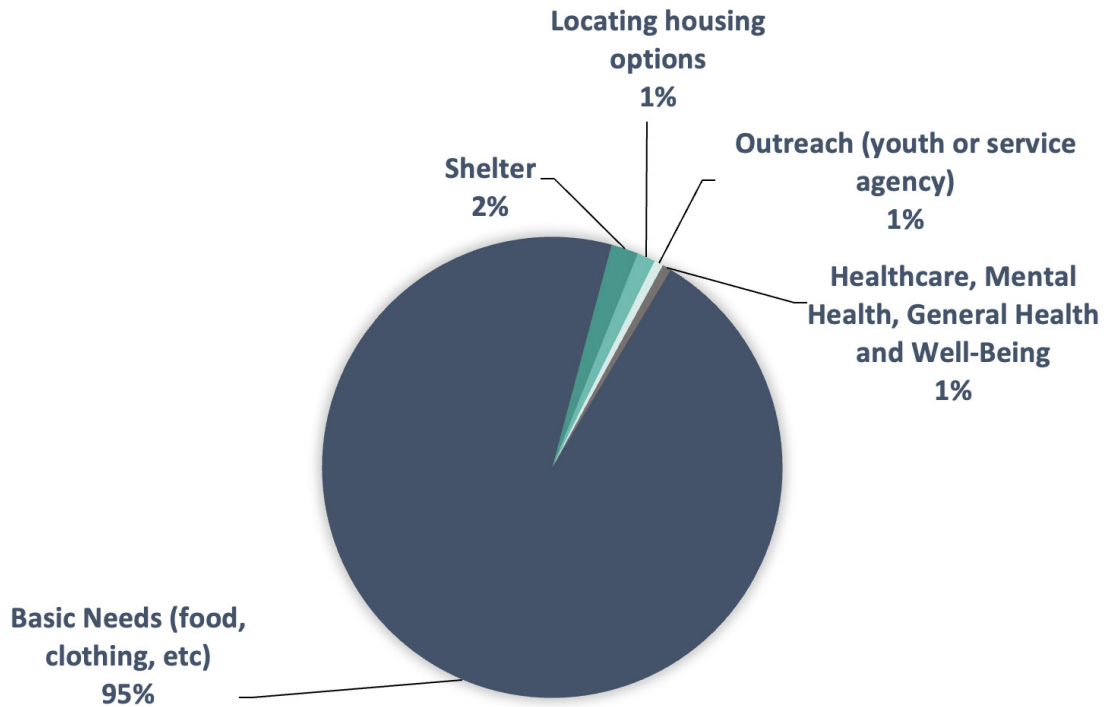
- Wraparound services
- Needed supplies
- Transportation
- Connectivity devices (phones, computers, etc.)
- Internet access
- Temporary housing
- Gift cards/prepaid cards for needed items
- Staff time/case management

Youth in the CDE program typically get connected to their local RHY provider through mobile outreach or drop-in centers or are referred through school staff. CDE youth are most commonly provided wraparound services through brief contacts to assist in meeting their basic needs. Once enrolled in the program, youth meet with a site coordinator to discuss their needs and assist in building a care plan. A typical youth enrolled in the CDE program might receive a laptop for doing schoolwork, a bicycle for getting to school, and grocery gift cards to help pay for food.

Outreach/Drop-In

Most of the youth served through CDE are through brief contact, where short-term needs are addressed but youth do not fully enroll into the program. A total of 157 brief contact services were provided with CDE funding, with 155 (99%) different youth served. Nearly all services provided were for basic needs (95%) such as food and clothing. A full breakdown of the types of brief contact services provided is shown in Figure 13.

FIGURE 13. TYPES OF SERVICE PROVIDED BY BRIEF CONTACT



On average, site coordinators spent about 66 minutes during each brief contact interaction, with 32% of all interactions lasting over 75 minutes.

Enrolled Youth

Nine youth were enrolled in CDE, of which only 1 (11%) first received services through brief contact. In total, 164 youth were served by CDE through either brief contact or full program enrollment. RC service providers created a deliberate case plan or client assessment for approximately 5% of youth served through CDE.

Screening and Referral (Risk Factors)

Table 16 shows the risk factors that youth served by the RC identified at enrollment. The most common risk factors among youth were “Ever been homeless or used a shelter,” “mom or dad ever in jail,” and “became homeless because of violence, running away or religious differences.”

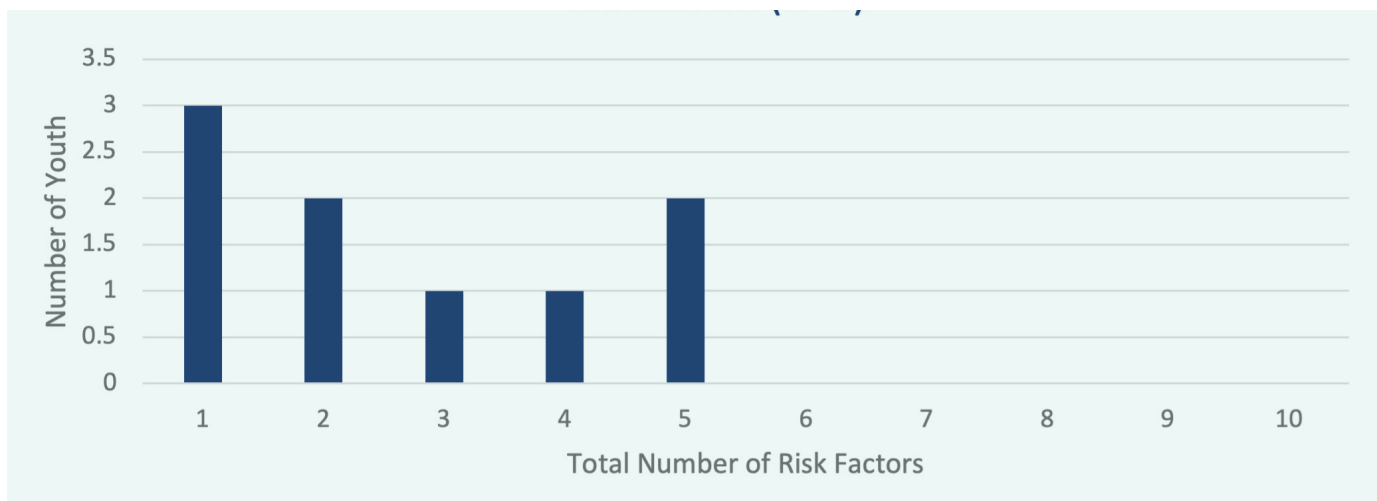
TABLE 16. PERCENTAGE OF SCREENED YOUTH WITH ASSOCIATED RISK FACTORS FOR ENROLLED YOUTH (N=9)

Risk Factor (January 2023–December 2023)	Number of Youth Responding Yes	% of Youth Responding Yes
Current or prior foster care involvement or placement	2	22%
Ever been homeless or used a shelter	7	78%
Became homeless because of violence, running away, or religious differences	5	56%
Been pregnant or gotten someone else pregnant	1	11%
Ever used marijuana	1	13%
Jail or detention prior to turning 18	0	0%
Mom or dad ever in jail	5	56%
Mom or dad ever in foster care	1	11%
Ever been trafficked or sexually exploited	0	0%

*Percentage is based on the number of valid responses for each question.

The average number of risk factors identified by youth receiving services in the RC was 3, and the range was 1–5. See Figure 14.

FIGURE 14. NUMBER OF RISK FACTORS IDENTIFIED BY YOUTH AT ENROLLMENT (N=9)

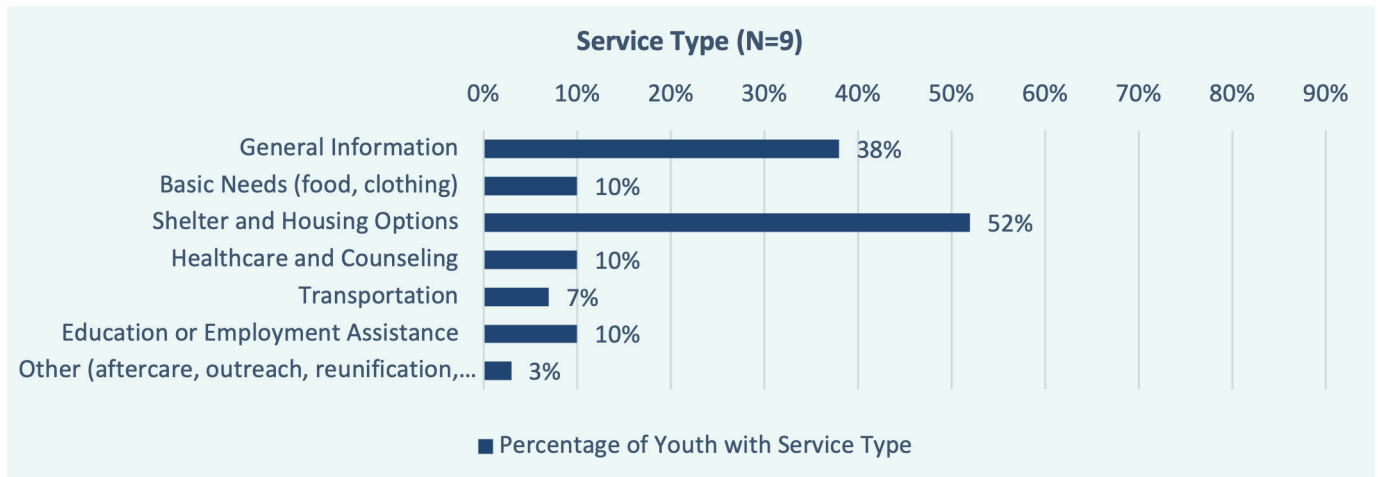


Services

Services for Enrolled Youth

Approximately half of the youth received services for shelter and/or locating housing. The second most common type of service for CDE youth was general case management. Figure 15 provides a full breakdown of the services provided to youth in the CDE program.

FIGURE 15. SERVICE TYPES AND DOMAINS



Outcomes

Basic Needs/Wraparound Services

- 156 youth received services for basic needs and wraparound services through CDE. This includes food, clothing, and toiletries. Oftentimes, food assistance comes in the form of direct food support or grocery gift cards.

Shelter/Housing

- Ten youth received services for shelter or housing support through CDE to enable school attendance and participation in school activities.



Summary and Impacts

The Rural Collaborative for Runaway and Homeless Youth is a unique entity that fills a desperately needed gap by providing critical services to unstably housed and homeless youth in rural areas across Colorado. Without these providers, youth would be living on the streets without access to supportive services or would be forced to leave their community to seek services in other more urban areas where services are more readily available. These local community service providers come together from across Colorado, representing rural, frontier, mountain, and plains communities to fill a gap in services for their communities. Youth and staff both routinely report the critical need for the services provided in these communities; without them, youth would be left to fend for themselves or move to where services are available. The RC's unique model is supported by blending and braiding funding from federal, state, and local partners with a shared mission of preventing and ending youth homelessness. Colorado's RC serves as a model in supporting rural youth homelessness in other states. The annual report provides a picture of the important work of the RC and its structure, programs, service delivery model, and outcomes achieved.

"[Without Lake County Wraparound,] I'd be definitely struggling a lot with food and trying to save money. That [would] make it even harder to move out and be out on [my] own... There wouldn't be any places I could go here in Leadville if I lost my current housing arrangement (couch surfing). Now we're back out on the streets, yeah, I'd probably have to go to Denver to find shelter, in which case I would have to lose my job here"

Youth receiving services from Lake County Wraparound

RC Impacts

In 2023, the RC served 510 youth across 31 rural and frontier counties in Colorado: 331 youth were served through brief contact, 138 youth were served through full program enrollment, and 41 youth were first served through brief contact and later through full program enrollment. Youth who received brief contact services most commonly did so through CDE (42%), SOP (33%), and BCP (17%). The most common full program enrollments were through BCP (35%), TLP (34%), and SOP (32%).

The RC serves a population of youth that is much more diverse in terms of race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, and disability status than the general population in both the rural counties in which they live and the state of Colorado as a whole. This overrepresentation of youth with marginalized identities experiencing homelessness suggests that there are likely additional barriers to accessing safe and stable housing and achieving economic security for youth in these populations. RC youth identified as 58% white (Colorado is 61.6%), 23% multi-racial, 11% Hispanic or Latinx, 6% American Indian, Alaska Native, or Indigenous, and 2% Black, African American, or African. In terms of gender, most youth identified as male (48%) or female (47%), with an additional 5% identifying as transgender, non-binary, or questioning. About three-quarters of RC youth (77%) identified as heterosexual, with the remaining youth identifying as bisexual (11%), questioning/unsure/other (7%), and gay or lesbian (5%). The average age

of RC youth was 17.7 years. One-quarter of youth reported having a disability. It is important to note that demographic information was only collected for youth that were fully enrolled in an RC program and not for youth receiving brief contact services.

Although there was some variation by RC program in risk factors identified through the screening form, overall, four factors were the most common among youth: "mom or dad ever in jail," "became homeless because of violence, running away, or religious differences," "ever been homeless or used a shelter," and "ever used marijuana." The average number of total risk factors among all RC youth was 3.5, with similar totals appearing in all programs except host homes (5.2). There were no significant differences in the average number of risk factors by gender, sexual orientation, and race/ethnicity.

The most common type of service provided among each of the four major programs (BCP, TLP, SOP, and HH) was general case management and information. The second most common service provided for BCP was basic needs, while the second most common type of service for TLP, SOP, and HH was shelter and housing options. The most common type of service provided for those receiving brief contact was basic needs for all programs.

Overall, RC programs achieved their respective performance measures, a sign that youth are receiving the services they need. RC programs were most effective in reducing homelessness and providing youth with access to resources to meet their basic needs.

- The RC made their biggest impact this year by supporting approximately 90% of all youth with safe and stable housing. Specifically, three programs (BCP, TLP, HH) met or exceeded their performance metrics of housing 90% of youth in a variety of safe housing environments such as their own house/apartment, transitional housing, in a Host Home, or with a friend or family member.
- The RC successfully served 172 youth through the SOP and created a deliberate case plan or client assessment for approximately one-third of the youth served (35%). Most youth enrolled in the SOP received support meeting their basic needs (food, clothing, etc.) and assistance locating shelter and/or long-term housing options.
- The CDE funding allowed the RC to provide essentials such as food, toiletries, and clothing to nearly every youth served this year (162 total youth).
- All the youth in the RC were successful in developing permanent supportive connections with adults in their lives.
- The RC successfully supported youth in pursuing their education and employment goals. This year, the RC was successful in achieving the education/employment performance measures for BCP, which includes 70% attending school or graduated and almost half employed or looking for work (48%).
- The RC's latest funding for CFC is on track to serve 20 youth by July 2024. Youth are enrolled in CFC if they do not meet the eligibility of RC programs and receive various services such as food, shelter, and transportation.

The RC continued to grow and expand its capacity in 2023. This year, the RC provided additional youth services through two new programs and expanded its reach through onboarding new sites. The RC's impact in 2023 was highlighted by the number of youth served and achieving their performance measures set by program funding streams. In 2024, the RC will further expand and introduce an additional program focused on preventing youth homelessness, the Runaway and Homeless Youth Prevention Demonstration Project (RHY-PDP).

Appendix



Shiloh House is a nonprofit organization that offers youth and families support and services to overcome challenges, enhancing their success in the community and maintains a vision of every youth and family flourishing. Shiloh House serves youth in Arapahoe, Douglas, Morgan, Larimer, Weld, Logan, Sedgwick, Phillips, and Yuma counties.



Centennial BOCES (C-BOCES) services range from high-quality professional development, four annual regional McKinney-Vento Summits (Limon, Sterling, Fort Morgan, and Greeley), on-site consultation with district staff and students, community resource development and delivery, and solution-focused problem solving with students/families as they confront educational, social barriers, and houselessness. C-BOCES serves youth in Larimer, Weld, Morgan, Logan, Washington, Sedgwick, Phillips, and Yuma counties.



Chaffee County Family & Youth Initiatives builds strengths and reduces risk for youth, families, and neighborhoods by providing evidence-based programs to build a strong community. It is the prevention division of Chaffee County Human Services and has been serving the community for over 15 years.



Lake County Wraparound serves youth aged 0–21 who benefit from a facilitated team-based process to help them address challenges in their lives and build resilience. Through its program, families and youth develop their own vision and a plan with formal and natural supports to reach that vision.



La Plata Youth Services serves as a resource to schools, law enforcement agencies, local human services departments, and other community agencies that come in contact with youth who are in need of additional support. LPYS serves youth in La Plata and San Juan counties.



Oak Tree Youth Resources is a youth-serving nonprofit in rural Southwest Colorado. It offers young people the chance to re-enter school, complete their education, learn job skills, employment assistance, supportive services, and seek stability while avoiding homelessness. OTYR serves youth in Montezuma and La Plata counties.



CASA of the Seventh Judicial District's Advocacy Program, Youth & Family Advocacy Services has become a regional resource providing supervised visitation, parenting classes, mental health services, supportive housing, and life skills for youth and young adults coming out of foster care or currently homeless. It aims to break the cycle of abuse and neglect through prevention, advocacy, and intervention, and to maintain a vision of a community where children and youth become tomorrow's champions of hope, purpose, and family. CASA7JD serves youth in Montrose, Delta, Gunnison, Hinsdale, Ouray, and San Miguel counties.



The Boys & Girls Club of San Luis Valley operates under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act to ensure every student succeeds by providing specific resources and information for school district liaisons and other audiences to ensure access to a free and appropriate public education for homeless children and youth, and success in school once enrolled.



Mariposa Center for Safety's motto is rebuilding lives, renewing hope. Empowering adults and their children with the skills they need to live a life that is free of fear and to move forward on their healing journey. Its mission is to empower survivors of domestic violence, human trafficking, sexual assault, and family abuse through increasing self-sufficiency and self-worth, education, prevention, and victim advocacy, and by offering emergency services, provisions and shelter when needed. Pueblo YWCA also supports runaway and homeless youth.