

GO BIG OR STAY HOMELESS

FOR 12 YEARS, THE YOUTH OF THE HAIGHT ASHBURY HAD A REFUGE.
THAT REFUGE WAS HOMELESS YOUTH ALLIANCE'S DROP-IN CENTER.



IN 2013, WE LOST OUR LEASE.

AND HUNDREDS OF YOUTH LOST THE ONLY HOME THEY HAD.

WE CAN'T LET THEM FALL THROUGH THE CRACKS AND
BECOME CHRONICALLY HOMELESS.

OUR GOAL:

TO RESTORE INDOOR SERVICES TO HAIGHT-ASHBURY'S YOUTH.

IT'S TIME. LEARN HOW YOU CAN HELP.

- GO BIG OR STAY HOMELESS -

THE CAMPAIGN: GET HYA A HOME IN THE HAIGHT

WHO WE ARE: AN OASIS OF HOPE & HELP IN THE HAIGHT

Since 1992, HYA has been a refuge and safe space for runaway teens and young adults living on the streets in the Haight Ashbury, providing basic services, counseling, and medical and mental health care to over 5,500 youth annually. From our earliest days as Haight Ashbury Youth Outreach Team, a program of the legendary Haight Ashbury Free Clinics, Inc., to our emergence in 2006 as a stand-alone organization under the name **Homeless Youth Alliance**, we've helped legions of young people protect themselves from harm, make healthy choices, and transition off the streets.

*"This place is home to those of us who don't have one anymore."
-Trixie, 19*

HYA's goals are:

1. To treat every young person we interact with with respect and dignity and without judgement, and to build relationships that gives them the opportunity to create change in their own lives.
2. To reduce rates of overdose, homelessness, and untreated physical and mental illness among youth who cannot access mainstream services.
3. To prevent the spread of HIV, hepatitis, and other blood-borne diseases associated with injection drug use, unsafe sex, and other high-risk behaviors among youth experiencing homelessness.
4. To empower youth to make healthier choices, practice preventive health measures, and avoid emergency psychiatric and medical hospitalization. The cycle of homelessness cannot be broken without addressing immediate needs, such as hunger, addiction, and mental illness. By building honest, trusting relationships with participants, we lay the groundwork for long-term change.

HYA made getting clean and off the streets not only look attractive and possible - they gave me the support and the means to do both. I've been off the streets since 2006. Most of the people I was there with are also leading productive, responsible lives that include volunteer work. This place needs to exist, as much as San Francisco needs these kids to get clean and get indoors. HYA is the bridge; without it, many will not cross over. They will die, or continue to be a financial strain on the judicial and welfare systems, and a scar on the city's progressive reputation. -Stephen, 23

WHO DOES HYA HELP?

We work with youth ages 13 to 29 who mainly live in the parks and streets of San Francisco's Haight Ashbury. They come to this famous, iconic location in search of acceptance, tolerance, and love: everything they never got growing up. Many come from backgrounds of serious trauma, mental health issues, institutionalization, and poverty. These youth can be hard to reach, wary of adults and authority, and often resistant to therapy and medical care.

- 50% of HYA participants are LGBTQQI
- 57% deal with mental health issues, from PTSD to major depression to bipolar disorder and schizophrenia
- 34% spent time in the foster care system
- 17% have reported trading sex for food or a place to stay

On average, they left home at age 14. A sample of their self-reported reasons for leaving home: "I was in a group home, and being on the street is better," "There were too many mouths to feed," "I got emancipated from foster care," and "I didn't want to live with a rapist."

According to the 2015 Point-In-Time Youth Homelessness Count by the San Francisco Local Homelessness Coordinating Board, 86% of the city's homeless youth under 25 are entirely unsheltered. There are very few safe, youth-friendly spaces for them to go and get help. They often don't feel safe in the city's shelter system, and have a hard time accessing the limited city resources that are available. According to the Count:

- SF's homeless youth have more than double the rate of HIV/AIDS than their older, homeless peers (13% versus 6% for the broader population).
- 48% are LGBTQ (compared to 20% of homeless youth nationally).
- 82% stay in SF year-round. This disputes the popularly held notion that these youth are "travelers" who only come to the City for a short time.
- 45% are experiencing homelessness for the first time. (This illustrates how important it is to reach these youth immediately, during their first exposure to homelessness, before they slide into a state of chronic homelessness).
- 59% report that physical or sexual abuse at home contributed to their becoming homeless.
- More than half reported that their safety had been threatened one or more times in the past month.
- 40% of San Francisco's homeless youth who needed medical care in the past year reported going without care.
- 1/3 of homeless youth use SF General's Emergency Room as their primary provider, and only after their conditions have reached a crisis point.

A TROUBLING TREND: SOARING MORTALITY RATES OF SAN FRANCISCO'S HOMELESS YOUTH

In April 2016, UC Berkeley published a study on San Francisco's homeless youth based on six years of field research, a significant portion of which was done in the Haight Ashbury. The study reported that San Francisco's homeless youth have a mortality rate 10 times higher than their peers, mostly due to suicide and substance use. The study cited "stigma" as a major contributor to early death for these youth. And sadly, stigma in the Haight is a daily factor of life for most homeless youth. These youth are disproportionately targeted by police for "quality of life" citations, which, if they go to warrant, can impede a youth's ability to get off the street and into housing. And they are constantly scapegoated by certain residents who simply want these youth gone, and resist any services that exist to serve them.

HOMELESS YOUTH ALLIANCE: A LIFE-SAVING PROGRAM WITHOUT A HOME

From 2001-2013, HYA operated a drop-in center for youth experiencing homelessness at the corner of Haight and Clayton in a ground-floor storefront. Happening House Ventures (HHV) leased this space to HYA at below-market-rate rent (\$3,100 a month) for 12 years. In 2013, HYA's lease was terminated. The reason given for the lease termination was that HHV was required by the city to do a retrofit of the property. HYA could not operate on the ground floor while the retrofit was being completed. HHV then announced that it was "taking the building in a different direction" and would not continue renting to HYA after the retrofit was done, despite HYA's offer to pay higher rent and despite HHV's own statements to the effect that HYA's program provides a valuable service to the city and has always been a model tenant. The storefront is currently leased to a souvenir shop at a rate of \$11,000 a month.

For 12 years, HYA's Drop-In Center gave youth a place to call home. In a 3-hour shift up to 150 youth accessed our services.

HYA's final day operating our programs indoors was Christmas day, December 25, 2013. Since that day, we have completely reconfigured and transformed our mode of service delivery, providing our services—outreach, case management, crisis intervention, therapy, and medical care—on the streets of the Haight Ashbury. In this capacity, our staff makes more than 1,000 contacts per month with young people who live outdoors.

HOW WE'RE ADAPTING WITHOUT A HOME: THE IMPACT ON OUR SERVICES

OUR OUTREACH & MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Now, our Outreach Team and Mental Health Team are doing their best to provide services to marginalized youth entirely on the streets and in the parks of the Haight. We're holding case management sessions on park benches, street corners and in cafes. We're holding therapy and psychiatry appointments in donated office spaces and outdoors.

We're doing our administrative work—fundraising, oversight, case notes, staff trainings, staff meetings and supervision, entering participant data, strategic planning—in an office in the Lower Haight. The terms of our lease do not allow us to see participants onsite on this location. Throughout the day, Outreach Counselors must bounce between our Lower Haight office and the Upper Haight, where our participants are.

OUR SYRINGE ACCESS PROGRAM

From 2013 to 2017, we operated our syringe access site three nights a week on the sidewalk outside of our former drop-in center. This was a site where youth could return used syringes, obtain safer injecting equipment and Narcan (an opiate-antagonist that reverses overdoses), get HIV testing, receive education and referrals, and get immediate medical care. We also had a therapist onsite during syringe access hours, who provided on-demand, much-needed crisis intervention and counseling to youth who were in distress.

We saw our participant numbers rise considerably at our syringe access site, once it moved indoors. In the aftermath of our lease termination, this was the only place youth knew exactly where to find us, at a fixed time and in a stationary location, when they needed help.

And our syringe access site became much more than a place for injection drug users to get sterile equipment. Because of its stationary location and regular hours, it was utilized by many youth who didn't inject drugs, but knew they could come there to see the doctor or therapist, get a snack, get tested for HIV, to our sign-up sheet to be referred for supportive housing, and have a case management session with one of our Outreach Counselors.

On an average night, we'd provide services to at least 50 youth at our outdoor syringe access site. The site became an ersatz "safe space" for youth, a place they came to get help when they were in crisis. Many nights, we counseled suicidal youth on the street at this location, de-escalating volatile situations and securing help and medical treatment for them on the spot. More than once, shopkeepers or neighbors would come alert us when they saw someone overdosing in the area, and we would administer Narcan and save the person's life before paramedics came.

In this location, on the sidewalk, HYA's staff regularly acted as first responders, securing help and care for people who would fall through the cracks had we not been there.

As of 2017, due to neighbors' resistance to us operating our syringe access site outdoors, we were forced to move this necessary public health resource to the upper floor of the Haight Ashbury Free Clinics, with very little lead time to let our participants know we were moving. We now provide the same syringe access services, but due to our new and not-highly-visible location, we're seeing half the youth we used to.

The rest of our services—outreach, case management, mental health treatment—are still provided entirely on the streets.

WE'RE STILL MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Even in these transitional and less-than-ideal circumstances, we're making a difference. Our team continues to place vulnerable youth in permanent housing, help them access substance use treatment and benefits, provide mental health care and medical care, and give youth the tools to prevent HIV, overdose, and other fatal harms.

In 2016, Homeless Youth Alliance:

- Outreach Counselors made **14,824 contacts** on Outreach, up from **12,097** in 2015
- Outreach Counselors held **1,009 Case Management Sessions** in restaurants, cafes and on the street
- Our Therapist had **1,159 therapeutic contacts** with **505 youth**, up from 568 therapeutic contacts with 333 youth in 2015
- Reached thousands of youth during street outreach, distributing snacks, hygiene supplies, and safer sex supplies, and fostering trusting relationships
- Facilitated more than **48 groups**, attended by **783 youth** up from 207 youth in 2015
- **6,527 people** received 435,453 syringes and returned 424,018 syringes. That's a 97% return rate higher than any other SF Syringe Access Program.
- Assisted in securing housing for **81 young people** and referred **307 youth** to substance use treatment
- Our Medical Team had **759 contacts** during our Syringe Access program
- **159 people** received Narcan at HYA and got **110 Refills = LIVES SAVED**

We've done all this while homeless ourselves.

However, despite the fact that our program is still making a difference, we can't deny that things have gotten worse and more desperate for many youth on the streets since we lost our drop-in center.

THE COST OF HYA'S HOMELESSNESS

NO INDOOR SERVICES, NO SAFE SPACES, NO RESPITE: THE DEVASTATING EFFECT OF HYA'S EVICTION ON HOMELESS YOUTH IN THE HAIGHT-ASHBURY, 3 YEARS LATER

"Since HYA was evicted, I would argue there have been a lot more homeless youth and a lot more homeless on the streets of the Haight Ashbury."

-James Sword, President of the Haight Ashbury Neighborhood Council (HANC), quoted in an article in Hoodline, May 2016.

"Leaving young people on our streets without proper emotional support is morally wrong. We must find a better way. This is a matter of life and death for so many of our youth." -SF District Supervisor Jeff Sheehy, at the Board of Supervisors Public Safety & Neighborhood Services Committee, May 11, 2017

"If people don't have their basic needs met, their mental health issues increase, and their quality of life decreases. It actually has more of a burden on the neighborhood as a whole than if we still had a drop-in center, and people still had access to water and food and a shower and a bathroom."

-Mary Howe, Executive Director of HYA, quoted in Hoodline article, May 2016

NO INDOOR SERVICES = FEWER OPPORTUNITIES FOR HOMELESS YOUTH TO GET OFF STREETS

Of the nearly 1,600 unaccompanied youth counted in the City's most recent point-in-time count, 35% are located in the Upper Haight and Golden Gate Park. Between 2013 and 2015, the number of homeless youth in District 5 (which includes the Upper Haight) has more than doubled. Since late 2013, the Haight Ashbury has been entirely without any indoor basic services for these struggling young people.

For the past three years, the neighborhood's unhoused youth have had zero access to indoor bathrooms or showers. They have no access to hot meals. If they're in crisis or suicidal, they have nowhere to go. If they need to talk to a therapist on-demand, they have to do so in public, on a park bench or in a café. If they've been attacked or sexually assaulted, they are left to confide their distress to HYA's Counselors on the street, in full view of anyone who might walk by—or to not confide at all, and to cope using drugs or seclusion instead.

GREATER DANGER, FEWER RESOURCES

The city's point-in-time homeless youth counts show some alarming differences in the population's safety and well-being between 2013 and 2015. Risky behaviors and dangerous situations have been on the rise. For example, 27% of youth reported they had traded drugs for a place to stay in 2015, compared to 8% of youth in 2013. Twenty percent reported they had traded sex for a place to stay, compared to 5% in 2013.

Forty-three percent of youth respondents in 2015 reported they had been attacked or physically assaulted in the past 12 months, up from 28% in 2013. And the percent of youth reporting being victims of another form of crime nearly doubled, from 31% in 2013 to 68% in 2015.

Although youth are less safe and in greater danger than ever before on the streets of the Haight, they now have no indoor refuge where they can seek a reprieve, talk privately with a counselor or therapist, or process their day-to-day traumas in a confidential, supportive environment. This utter lack of a safe indoor resource contributes to their mental health difficulties and creates a sense of hopelessness and chaos that impedes their ability to accept help or engage with service workers.

"I can't tell you the amount of times a month we sit on a sidewalk with someone who is suicidal and we cannot get any city department to come help us. We take them on the bus to [San Francisco] General Hospital, where they are discharged later."

-Mary Howe, HYA, quoted in The San Francisco Examiner, May 11, 2017

THE CITY'S FAILURE TO INTERVENE = LIVES LOST TO CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS

Unfortunately, the City has a long track record of failing to invest in adequate interventions for San Francisco's growing population of youth experiencing homelessness. The most recent San Francisco Homeless Count showed that youth homelessness in District 5, which includes the Haight, has more than doubled since 2013. In the Castro district, the rate has almost tripled.

And yet, these rising figures have not been met with a rising investment from the City. As the San Francisco Examiner reported in May 2017, just 6 percent of the Department of Homelessness and Supportive Housing's budget specifically targets homeless youth in the current fiscal year, while 76 percent is for homeless adults.

Adele Failes-Carpenter, director of the City's Youth Commission, on which serve 17 young people appointed by the mayor and the Board of Supervisors, recently told The San Francisco Examiner that the City's 10-year plan to create 400 new units of transitional-age youth housing by 2015 resulted in just 188 units. "Overall," she said, "there are still 120 units that are not being planned for yet at this time in order to meet the 2015 goal." The City is not on track to meet the goals it set for itself. And in the meantime, the number of marginalized and under-served youth continues to grow, especially in the Haight Ashbury.

THE HAIGHT ASHBURY: GROUND ZERO FOR YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

Since HYA lost our drop-in center to a lease termination over three years ago, the City has done little to assist this neighborhood in filling the huge service gap left by our center's closure. As a result, at-risk youth are suffering more than ever and becoming more unreachable; neighbors are more vocally frustrated than ever before with the City's negligence toward an ever-worsening situation in this neighborhood; and HYA, still providing life-saving services as a mobile program, is still unable to find a landlord willing to rent us a space for a new drop in-center.

Since 2013, we've applied for close to 200 spaces in the neighborhood, with no luck. Not because of lack of ability to pay, and not because of a lack of good references, but because landlords do not want to rent to a social services program serving youth who are homeless. There is still a pervasive stigma toward youth experiencing homelessness in the Haight, and there is still an irrational fear that having stationary services in the neighborhood will "attract homeless people," despite the fact that they are already here, and have been for decades.

In 2015 ThinkProgress reported, the biggest obstacle for youth-based services in the City, including housing development, is neighborhood opposition:

"The pushback comes from NIMBYists – residents who don't want to see these kinds of low-income housing developments in their backyards. They dispute anything from zoning changes to environmental impact reports to the potential of increased criminal activity in their neighborhoods. With resistance like this, TAY housing developments can miss important funding deadlines, adding years to a project's timeline. Some transitional housing developments, such as the Booker T. Washington and the Edward II facilities, were delayed by over three years because of lawsuits and appeals."

As HYA's situation has made abundantly clear, even non-residential services, like drop-in centers, are targets of NIMBY opposition. The opposition sends a clear message to vulnerable youth: "You are not wanted."

As Hoodline reported in 2016, HYA has documented an uptick in verbal abuse youth receive from housed residents and police, who are frustrated with their presence in the neighborhood, since the loss of our drop-in center.

In 2016, we even conducted a survey with 100 of our youth, asking about their typical neighborhood interactions. One of the survey questions was, How many times in a month do you get something mean said to you by neighborhood residents?

The result: 95% of youth said they received unprovoked verbal abuse multiple times a day.

All of these factors constantly reinforce the stigma that the UC Berkeley study cited as so corrosive and fatal to youth on the street.

Because of the dearth of retail spaces for rent in the Haight and the reluctance of landlords to rent to a social services program, we have explored the possibility of using city-owned property to provide our services. Unfortunately, the only city-owned property in this neighborhood is located in the Park, under the auspices of the Recreation and Parks Department. The Director of Rec & Parks is adamantly against using any buildings on park land—even ones that are under-utilized or partly-utilized—for any type of human services, which he has reiterated repeatedly to our District Supervisor and to the City's Director of Homeless Services.

As a result, the Haight finds itself at a bureaucratic impasse, and both the housed and unhoused residents of this neighborhood are caught in the middle and paying the price. As one of our neighbors said during a recent Park Precinct police meeting, "The city doesn't care about this neighborhood, because Google and Twitter aren't here."

It's sad to think this may be the case. And it's unfortunate that some of the city's biggest tech companies—including ones that have named homelessness as a main priority for their philanthropy—limit their concern to those unhoused people who are in their employees' direct sight line. Shortly after our lease termination, for example, we had the opportunity to talk with a community liaison from Twitter. She told us the company was not interested in helping homeless people in the Haight, because their focus is limited to mid-Market, where Twitter headquarters is located.

"It's time for The City to intervene. We need to be looking at city-owned land. Enough is enough."

-District Supervisor Hillary Ronen, addressing the Board of Supervisors Public Safety and Neighborhood Services Committee regarding HYA's Lease Termination & Lack of Services in the Haight, May 11, 2017

WITHOUT BASIC SERVICES, HOMELESS YOUTH BECOME CHRONICALLY HOMELESS ADULTS

"For a young person, having an extended period of homelessness is really going to relegate them to a bleaker future."

-Bevan Dufty, former San Francisco's director of Housing Opportunity, Partnerships and Engagement (HOPE)

The desperate and growing plight of unhoused youth in San Francisco has been ignored by both the City and its biggest corporate philanthropists. And despite the negligence, the problem is not going away.

Countless studies have shown that unhoused youth respond to interventions that are on-demand, culturally competent, and easily accessible; and that this population, more than any other, has the potential to transition off the streets entirely and become self-sufficient with proper help and resources.

HYA's decades of serving this population has proven this to be true. Countless young people we've worked with—teens and twenty-somethings who were in grave, desperate circumstances when we met them, who struggled with substance use, abusive pasts, domestic violence, and mental illness—have been able to turn their lives around with our help.

"I don't know how I would have coped without having that kind of support and without having a safe place to go. Being able to just go into the [drop-in center], and being in a safe, supportive environment, it's completely different than receiving services on the streets ... It helped me believe that, okay, these people give a shit about me; I should at least give a shit about myself."

-Audra, former HYA Participant, quoted in an article in Hoodline, May 2016

"All the Homeless Youth Alliance is doing is providing services so eventually kids can, like myself, transition from being in a place where they have to live on the street to a place where they can become employable and go to school and find housing and change their lives. Those neighbors don't have to look at me any longer because I used the services, and now, I've transitioned from that period of my life."

-Lawrence Welch, former HYA Participant, now employed as an audio engineer, quoted in Hoodline, May 2016

However, without adequate, coordinated interventions and the infrastructure necessary to disseminate services flexibly, quickly, and on-demand, homeless youth turn into chronically homeless adults. And currently, there is an entire generation of unhoused youth in this City that faces that fate, unless something is done to address the disgraceful lack of services for this population.

THE TIME IS NOW. THE PLACE IS THE HAIGHT.

"Maintaining a stable place for the area's homeless youth to get off the streets and use the bathroom, shower, and obtain vital health and human services is an investment in the commercial viability and residential well-being of the entire neighborhood. That's why the Haight Ashbury Merchants Association (HAMA), representing over 160 merchants in the Haight-Ashbury commercial corridor, has signed on as a community partner in support of HYA's campaign to secure a new space."

-Christin Evans, Board Director, Haight Ashbury Merchants Association

It's in the best interests of the community, the city, and obviously the youth themselves for HYA to once again have a permanent space from which to provide integrated, coordinated health and human services. Our campaign to secure a new permanent location is endorsed by the Haight Ashbury Merchants Association, Haight Ashbury Neighborhood Council, the San Francisco Department of Public Health, and many Haight residents, fellow nonprofits, and community groups.

To adequately meet the staggering need we encounter every day, HYA needs a building. And in order to be truly effective and accessible to the very singular and hard-to-engage population we've successfully reached for decades, we must remain in the Haight neighborhood.

HYA works with a very geographically specific group of youth. These youth typically do not leave the Haight Ashbury, and they live in the Park. There are many reasons why homeless and runaway youth come to the Haight and stay there: the cultural lure of this historically countercultural area; the fact that tourist traffic creates more opportunities for panhandling; the neighborhood's adjacency to a large public park; and the fact that the Haight is considered by youth to be far safer than other city neighborhoods like the Tenderloin or South of Market. Over and over again, we hear from youth that the Haight has less crack and meth, and that there is much less pressure in the Haight to engage in sex work, and less danger of sexual assault/exploitation.

Decades of working with this particular population has demonstrated to us that HYA must operate where its participants are: in the Upper Haight. Relocating to another neighborhood would defeat the purpose of providing low-threshold, on-demand services to this critically under-served population. Homeless Haight youth tend to be wary of service providers in the first place; they tend to live and travel in familial-type groups with pets; and they are drawn to certain locales based on where their community is and what feels safe to them, not what kind of services are available in the vicinity. They do not migrate to where services are located—not because they don't need services, but because they simply do not operate within a market-based paradigm of supply and demand. In order to be effective, the services for this population must be culturally competent, adaptive, and geographically convenient for them. The key to engaging this population successfully is to eliminate roadblocks and logistical barriers, not create more. If services aren't easy and simple to access, homeless youth will remain disengaged and marginalized, with potentially tragic results. We see evidence of this every day: even though their only source for showers, hot meals, bathrooms, and indoor medical care has been removed from the Haight neighborhood, homeless youth still come here in droves and stay here. They do not relocate to the Tenderloin or elsewhere simply because they can more readily take a shower or get a hot meal there.

Our goal is to secure a space that has the amenities our previous drop-in center lacked:

- A larger, better-equipped medical room
- Multiple showers and bathrooms
- Outdoor gated community space
- Additional office spaces for youth to meet privately with therapists and Outreach Counselors, so that more youth can see a mental health provider or Counselor on-demand, without a wait.
- A full-service kitchen serving hot, balanced meals onsite
- Laundry facilities
- Group room

And so we need a permanent program site in the Haight, safeguarded against the vagaries of the rental market, the tide of gentrification, and the whims of speculators eager to cash in on the city's transforming landscape. A place where youth can use the shower and bathroom, sit down for a hot meal, see a therapist or psychiatrist, get medical care in an atmosphere of privacy and confidentiality, and work with an Outreach Counselor to find housing and shelter, access treatment for substance use, find employment, and get the tools to protect themselves from HIV, hepatitis, overdose, and self-harm.

The past three years have made several factors abundantly clear:

- The Haight Ashbury has no indoor services for the youth who live here, and they are in danger of becoming chronically homeless as a result.
- HYA has an inarguable track record of reaching the hardest-to-reach youth, lowering their rates of premature death, HIV and Hepatitis, and overdose, and enabling them to permanently transition off the street.
- HYA can't reach as many youth or serve them as comprehensively as we're capable of without an indoor home base where they can get their basic physical needs met and see a doctor, therapist, and psychiatrist, INDOORS.
- The City needs to follow through on its plan to open a youth-specific, low-threshold, indoor drop-in center serving unhoused young people, using city-owned property if necessary.
- The center needs to be in the Haight, where the majority of the city's homeless youth are living and are woefully under-served.
- HYA, as the program with the most entrenched, trusting, and successful established relationships with the homeless youth of this neighborhood, needs to run it.

"For so many of the HYA kids I see, the loss of the space reminds them of losses in their lives. It's a bit re-traumatizing, because it duplicates events in their lives that have left them feeling abandoned. If you don't have many safe, stable spaces to go in your life, you identify the program and the help you get there so much with the physical place itself."

-Maurice Byrd, MFT, staff therapist at HYA

This needs to be an immediate priority, because this sizable segment of San Francisco's homeless population has gone under-served and ignored for far too long.

The consequences: soaring costs to the city in terms of street clean-up, quality-of-life citations issued, preventable conditions being treated in our overburdened emergency rooms; and, not least of all, an entire generation of young people who will fall through the cracks and become chronically unhoused in San Francisco.

WE CAN CHANGE IT FOR THE BETTER, AND FOR THE LONG-TERM

We can change this outcome, together. But it needs to happen the right way, and it needs to happen soon. The youth of the Haight Ashbury are waiting out in the cold, and they deserve a chance not only to survive, but to thrive.

And that will create many, many more outcomes like Joseph's, a 28-year-old former participant who wrote the following testimonial:

"HYA saved my life. They fed me when I couldn't feed myself, helped me get off of heroin, connected me with every possible resource available. I was able to see a therapist on site every week to work out the traumas and issues I had acquired growing up as a homeless youth/ young adult. They are solely responsible for doing what is most of the time impossible, which is saving kids and young adults from never ending cycle of street life and addiction. Even for the one's everybody else has given up on, they keep trying with the diligence and patience of a loving family that most of us would never know. Once I was out of the darkness, they helped me realize that my life had value and purpose. Mary Howe, the director, whom I admire and love dearly, gave me a job doing outreach to homeless people in trouble my age. This was something I'd never known. I'd felt two things that I'd never felt in my life, direction and moral responsibility, to my community, to myself and the world at large. I went on in that direction discovering a healthy life I never knew existed. Now I have a very nice apartment, a business of my own and so much time clean and sober that I stopped keeping track."

WHAT \$5 MILLION WILL DO

To establish a permanent refuge for homeless youth in the Haight, we need to raise \$5 million. These funds will allow us to:

- Purchase and customize a new space in the Haight Ashbury, which will likely cost between \$1 million and \$3 million, depending on its size, condition, and exact location.
- Assist with travel costs, publicity costs, and additional staffing costs associated with running a comprehensive Capital Campaign of this size and magnitude, including growing our Development operations so we can permanently diversify our income streams
- Permanently increase the size of our Outreach Team, Medical Team, and Mental Health Team, enabling us to engage with, treat, and serve an additional 1,000 at-risk youth annually

Youth living outside in the Haight Ashbury already face so many obstacles to stability, health, and functioning. You can help eliminate those obstacles and be part of the solution. Eliminating homelessness entirely may not be within our grasp, but what we can do— what we do every day—is make it a little easier for at-risk youth to open up, get help, and salvage their lives and their dreams. Ultimately, a permanent building will enable us to multiply our impact exponentially.

WHY SHOULD I HELP?

Youth homelessness in the Haight Ashbury is nothing new. Neither is the need for services that reach people who distrust traditional forms of care. In the 1960s, the famous Haight Ashbury Free Clinics opened in response to an influx of youth into the Haight. At the time, setting up services for this population was highly controversial and attracted resistance from neighbors and law enforcement. But as the decades went by and marginalized youth didn't stop coming to the Haight, it became clear that there would always be a need for places like HYA. Treating youth experiencing homelessness, and giving them a place where they can find trust and belonging, is always going to be much more effective than criminalizing homelessness and stigmatizing youth more than they already have been.

So when you contribute to HYA's Capital Campaign, you'll be making an investment in the safety, health, and well-being of the community. You'll be investing in a concrete result you'll actually be able to see and measure, in real time. Our successful Campaign will result in fewer youth at loose ends on street corners, utterly isolated, suffering from untreated medical issues, drug use, and untreated mental health issues. It'll result in a significant decrease in debris, paraphernalia, and human waste on the streets; in far fewer youth sleeping in the neighborhood's parks and doorways; of fewer youth clogging the court system with warrants from unpaid citations for sitting, lying down, and camping on the streets; and in police officers' time not being wasted on

issuing countless quality-of-life citations instead of targeting real crime. Ultimately, a permanent home for HYA will mean safer and cleaner streets, improved property values, better and more efficient use of police resources, and thriving businesses. As one Haight business owner said to a reporter regarding HYA's closure, "Every day, I see people lined up outside that center, waiting to get services. When it closes, where are they going to go?"

Homeless youth in the Haight aren't going anywhere. And HYA has a proven track record of getting the hardest-to-reach youth off the streets, housed, in recovery, discovering and living their dreams. It doesn't happen overnight. But it does happen. The cycle of homelessness is a tough one to break, but isn't it better to engage with the problem directly than to sweep it under the rug and hope it goes away?

You can be part of the solution. Your philanthropy can affect countless lives in positive ways. And when HYA's new building opens its doors, offering more services and amenities than ever before, reaching more hard-to-reach kids than ever, you'll know it couldn't have happened without your generosity, your compassion, and your vision.

HOW CAN I HELP?

DONATE! You can donate money directly to HYA in a number of ways:

- online through our website at www.homelessyouthalliance.org. Write in "Capital Campaign" in the "dedicate my donation" line.
- visit our Crowdrise page at www.crowdrise.com/GoBigorGoHomeless
- mail a check to us at PO Box 170427, San Francisco CA 94117. Make checks payable to Tides Center/HYA with Capital Campaign in the memo line.
- if you have property to donate please call us for additional information

REMEMBER that every donation you give is tax-deductible.

VOLUNTEER! Join the Capital Campaign Committee

The HYA Capital Campaign Committee is a group of leaders who believe in the work of HYA and understand the importance of the Campaign's success. As a Capital Campaign Committee leader, you can help in three main ways. First, be willing to support the Campaign financially or with connections that lead to financial support, property donation(s), or construction services. Second, be willing to talk about the Campaign in the community. Finally, meet with and ask your peers, colleagues, and networks to support the campaign as well. If you have ideas about how to secure a building in the Haight-Ashbury neighborhood, we need your help.

PROMOTE! Spread the word. Use social media to promote HYA.

You can follow us on twitter (@homelessyouth) and on Facebook ("Homeless Youth Alliance") and use social media as a platform to promote our Campaign, encouraging your followers to help out. You can bring HYA's Campaign to the attention of any media contacts you have.

There are other ways to help as well. You can donate a venue or entertainment for our fundraising events. You can help us organize an auction, house party, or a benefit to raise funds for the Campaign. You can get your colleagues and friends involved, start a fundraising drive for HYA at your workplace, and ask your employer to match your donations.

To get in touch with us about helping out, contact us at campaign@homelessyouthalliance.org.

Last but not least, you can look a homeless young person in the eye and give them a friendly smile. Over decades of working with homeless youth in the Haight, we've discovered that's how real change begins: with an acknowledgment of someone's humanity.

It sounds simple, but it works wonders. It can build much more than bricks and mortar. It can build hope.

Let's build both. We can do this together.

*"HYA does tremendous work with kids no one else can reach or work with. Getting to know the kids served by Homeless Youth Alliance has shown me that we all have to recognize the humanity of youth on the streets."
- Bevan Dufty, Former Director, San Francisco Mayor's Office of Housing Opportunity, Partnerships and Engagement (HOPE)*

\$5 MILLION WILL ALLOW STORIES OF CHANGE LIKE THESE TO CONTINUE:

KHRISTINE

- Found HYA at age 20
- HYA Outreach Counselor, 2006 – 2012
- HYA Advisory Board Member, 2012-present
- Current Full-Time Yoga Instructor
- “When I was a homeless IV drug user, HYA was the only place I could go at that point in my life and feel fully human.”

SARAH

- Found HYA at age 17
- HYA Outreach Counselor, 2004 – 2007
- MSW from UC Berkeley, 2010
- Became a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, 2014
- “Homeless Youth Alliance changed my life...in fact, helped me to create the life I wanted to live.”

LARRY

- Found HYA at age 26
- BSN and RN from University San Francisco, Certified Personal Trainer, USA Weightlifting Level 2 Coach
- “I was able to escape a life on the streets and drug addiction disease free thanks to the philosophy of harm reduction. HYA provided a place that was safe and loving and ready to help me when I was ready. Mary’s team saved my life, and in turn I plan to spend my life giving back. There were dark moments in my recovery and counseling where I dug up painful memories which left me raw. It was the counselors that took me aside and helped me process the work I was doing. There is no better feeling than having someone, anyone, believe in you, and that is what they did. Everyday I am thankful for the gift of life. I challenge myself to be better than I was the day before, not just for myself, but to honor those who helped me become who I am today.”

JENN aka YEAH YEAH

- Found HYA at age 14
- HYA Outreach Counselor, 2010 - present
- Psychology major at SF State
- “I know I’m not the only one to say this, but this place saved my life. There’s really not another place like this in the city. I think it’s amazing that this place makes homeless kids feel like people.”

HILLARY

- Found HYA at age 19
- Interned, Mayor’s Office of Housing Opportunity, Partnership, and Engagement
- Student at UC Berkeley
- “What I remember most about being homeless is being constantly ignored. HYA was the only place that treated me like a human being. I think there should be a lot more people with stories like mine.”
- “I say Homeless Youth Alliance is my mom. Now they’re homeless, but I’m not - because of them.”

