

 Point Source Youth

# HOST HOMES HANDBOOK

VERSION 2.0

A Resource  
Guide for Host  
Home Programs







Point  
Source  
Youth

# HOST HOMES HANDBOOK

VERSION 2.0

INFORMATION PROVIDED IN THIS HANDBOOK IS FOR EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES ONLY. EACH PROGRAM IS ADVISED TO SEEK THE AID OF AN ATTORNEY IN THEIR REVIEW OR USE OF MATERIALS CONTAINED IN THIS HANDBOOK.



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# Welcome to the Point Source Youth Host Home Handbook!

If you are reading this, it’s safe to assume that you are dedicated to ending youth homelessness in your community. Perhaps you are launching a Host Home program. Maybe you have an existing program that you want to grow and refine. Or it could be that you are thinking—is a Host Home program right for me and my community?

The goal of this handbook—and our mission at Point Source Youth—is to help you at wherever you are along the host home journey! Host homes are a community-driven, youth-centered solution and we believe that they are a critical part of any youth homelessness system. They mobilize community resources and caring adults, and communicate to youth that their community cares and is putting that care into action by literally opening doors.

As our partners at Avenues for Homeless Youth say so aptly, host homes are messy and magical! That’s right—messy. Home is a complex concept, and recruiting and training hosts is a relational process that involves individual relationships and conversations. Host homes are not a “technocratic” solution. But that is where the magic lies. Host Homes are at their core about connecting people with people and facilitating neighbor-to-neighbor, person-to-person solutions to youth homelessness. There is power and magic in this. Host Home programs put the “village” in “it takes a village.”

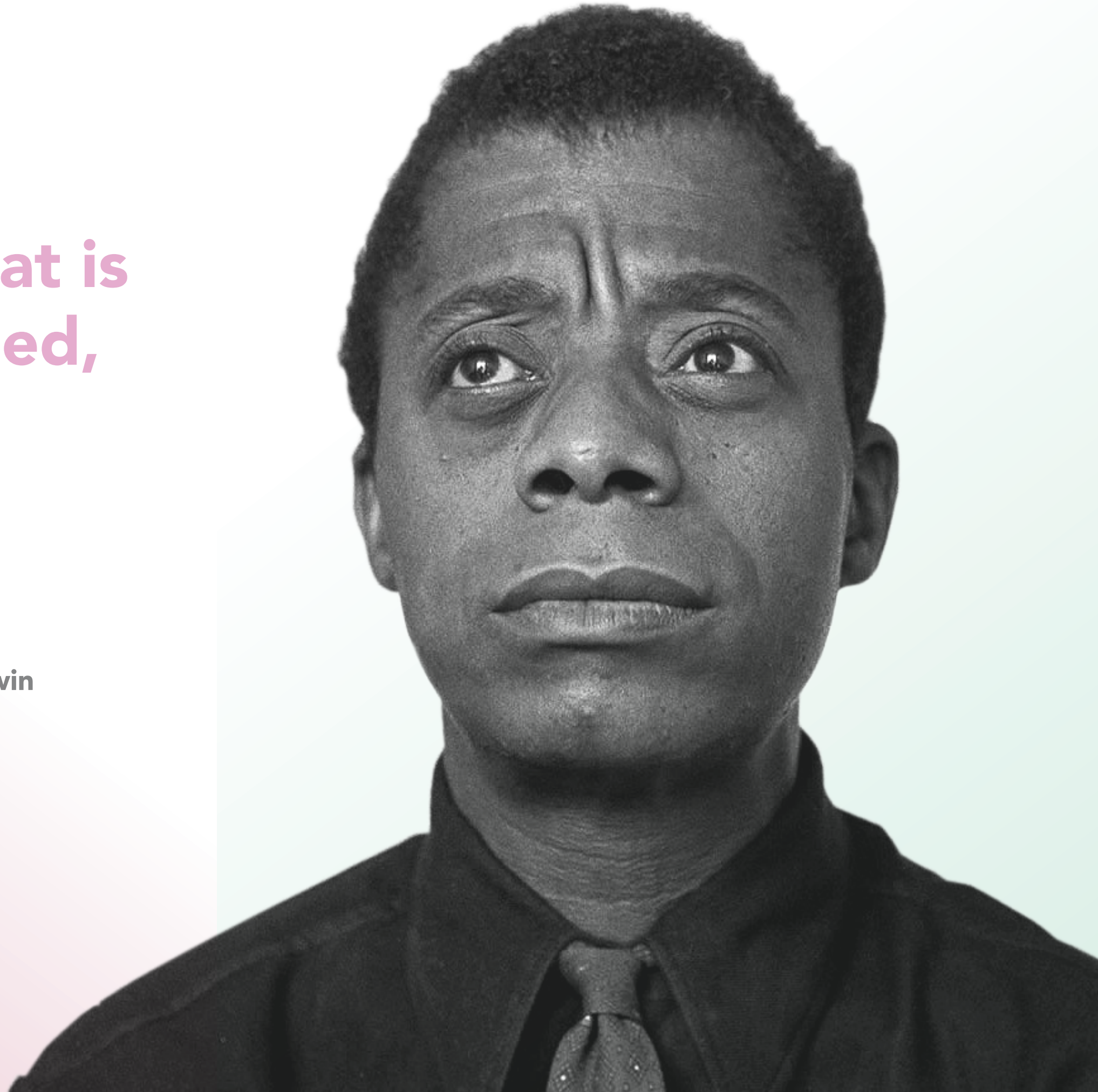
The following resources are compiled from our partners and share the gems and lessons they’ve learned along their host home journeys. Please use them, adapt them, share them— these resources are now yours, too! We are grateful to our partners - Safe Place for Youth, St. Ambrose Housing Aid Center, Avenues for Homeless Youth, and Safe and Supported—for their sharing (a key value among those who really thrive in implementing the Host Home model), and are here to support you however we can along the way.

Enjoy the handbook and, of course, the journey!  
The Point Source Youth Team and our growing list of partners



**“Not everything that is  
faced can be changed,  
but nothing can be  
changed until it is  
faced.”**

**—James Baldwin**





# A Safe Intervention

Short-term host homes are an intervention for youth who are currently experiencing homelessness for any variety of reasons, including but not limited to family conflict, poverty, gender identity and sexual orientation. The goal of short-term host homes is to provide a safe, temporary, welcoming space for up to six months where the young person has time to repair their relationships with self-identified family or make decisions about other housing options with the support of a caring housing case manager. Successful implementations of short-term host homes have generally been volunteer-based programs, with stays lasting from three to six months; however, other successful implementations addressing community needs have existed in the short-term housing system. Providing short-term host homes are a cost-effective and successful model for preventing youth homelessness in a wide range of cases.

## Where are Host Homes Currently Being Used?

Host homes are currently being used in numerous cities across the United States, including: Minneapolis, MN, Baltimore, MD, Louisville, KY, Venice, CA, Los Angeles, CA, San Jose, CA, Santa Cruz, CA, San Francisco, CA, Cincinnati, OH, Rochester, NY, Seattle, WA and others. Each community uniquely implemented the host home program to fit the needs of their youth. As with any program implementation, there is a mix of messy and magical moments that define this housing intervention.

## Why Short-Term Host Homes?

After two years of research, numerous interviews with service providers, site visits nationally and internationally, many conversations with leading researchers on homelessness, and evaluations with youth, we found that three solutions have the most initial evidence for success: family and kinship strengthening, short-term host homes, and rapid re-housing. They are also scalable, youth centered, and not paternalistic.

**Avenues for Homeless Youth** shares the following values with potential hosts, youth, and other stakeholders in their host home program. By articulating the program’s core values, they set the foundation for an equitable and youth-driven host home program:

- We seek to recognize and challenge systems of power that perpetuate barriers and injustice in young people’s lives (such as racism and classism), and we are aware that not all youth get the same results through the same hard work under these systems
- We approach youth work through a lens of social justice and youth empowerment
- We value diversity in all its forms
- We believe in supporting youth regardless of their racial or ethnic identity, religious affiliations, or lack thereof, gender identity or sexual orientation
- We acknowledge that a youth’s sexual and gender identity may change throughout their adolescence; a youth who identifies as straight or a specific gender when they are referred into the program may begin to question their sexual orientation or gender identity at any time
- We believe in trauma-informed and harm reduction strategies that affirm youths’ strengths and their own agency
- We believe in leading through example and fostering shared leadership
- We understand that all youth will sometimes make choices we don’t agree with, and we acknowledge the youth’s right to make those choices for themselves
- We understand that choices youth make about sexual activity or other behaviors might be different from those we might wish or expect for our own children and we do not fill a parental role for the youth in the program
- We believe that youth benefit from living with adult allies who are aware of the inherent power dynamics of the host home model and strive to minimize misuse of power



Here is a standard budget for host home programs that you can adapt based on your community and needs! This is a helpful starting point for grant applications and communicating host home costs to funders.

Youth Housed in 12 Months: 10  
Average Length of Stay: 5 Months

Year 1

Units	Category	Description	Amount	Salary	Benefits
1	Host Home Coordinator	Program Manager Salary + Benefits	\$62,500.00	\$50,000	25%
1	Case Manager	Case Manager + Benefits - Starting 6 months post implementation	\$28,125.00	\$45,000	25%
10	Host Stipends	\$400/month for average of 5 months	\$20,000.00		
10	Youth welcome kit	\$100	\$1,000.00		
10	Transportation	Youth transportation + home visits \$100 per youth	\$1,000.00		
10	Technical Assistance & Evaluation	Training costs, Evaluation, Youth Stipends	\$10,000.00		

Total \$122,625.00

# Diversifying Hosts through Stipends

A common question we hear is: are hosts paid? Some express concerns that paying hosts will make a host home program seem too similar to foster care. Others want to make sure that all community members, not just those with disposable income, are able to open their doors. Check out how our partner communities have decided to navigate these questions below:

Many host home programs across the country provide host stipends to help offset the increased costs of food and utilities (water and electricity) while hosting youth. The stipend is voluntary (i.e. the host can choose whether or not to receive the stipend based on their own needs) and varies in amount based on the local community.

Currently Los Angeles provides a stipend up to \$500 per month, San Jose is up to \$800 per month, and Baltimore is up to \$400 per month. Local communities determine stipend amounts based on fair market rental rates, agency budgets, and foster care payment rates. Stipends should provide a fair amount to offset increased living costs without encouraging hosting for payment.

Providing the option for stipends may allow for a more diverse group of hosts that can include individuals/families who may otherwise not be able to host a youth due to financial constraints. In many communities this has resulted in agencies having more hosts with marginalized identities (people of color, LGBTQ+, etc.) that align with the identities of youth they are serving. We know many of these individuals have been informally hosting for years, and this stipend helps to eliminate the stress associated with costs.

## Staffing a Host Home Program

A key lesson we’ve learned at Point Source Youth is that successful host home programs have dedicated and thoughtful staff! We’ve created a position description template for a Host Home Coordinator that you can edit for your program.



# Programs Need

Best practices suggest an organization hiring two staff members, a host homes program coordinator and a case manager for youth. Each position will be geared towards ensuring the success of the participants and the host home program. The program coordinator is charged with maintaining the overall program and serving as the main contact for hosts. This means the program coordinator will maintain weekly contact with the host in order to provide support, consultation, and, if needed, mediation. The case manager will provide the same weekly support for young people living in the house.

## Hiring a Host Home Coordinator

*Below is an editable job description that can be used to hire a new host home program coordinator.*

Job Title:

Host Home Program Coordinator

Summary:

The Host Home Program Coordinator will co-design, implement, lead, and help evaluate the Program.

The Host Home Program identifies, screens, and trains community members who volunteer to host for youth aged 18-24 who are in need of immediate housing, for which hosts receive a stipend and ongoing support from the Host Home Program Coordinator.

The Host Home Program emphasizes participation by LGBTQ+ welcoming and affirming hosts. The Host Home Program Coordinator will collaborate with local partners and appropriately connect young people in need of housing with hosts.

# Great Staff

Essential Duties and Responsibilities:

- **Program Development:** Co-create program policies and procedures based on Host Home Program best practices. Areas to develop include:
  - Recruitment, screening, ongoing support, and retention of hosts
  - Communication practices between partner organizations to assure needs and concerns of youth and hosts are being addressed in a regular and systematic way
- **Program Implementation:** Plan and execute activities to implement the Host Home Program. This includes:
  - Activities to recruit, screen, support, and retain hosts
  - Ongoing case management of hosts
  - Regular communication and collaborative meetings with youth case management partners
- **Engage youth in Host Home Program:** consultation and feedback: meet with youth consultants in development of Host Home Program policies and procedures and attend bimonthly Youth Consultant Team meetings
- **Attend staff meetings**
- **Participate in Host Home Program evaluation**
- **Cultivate culture of learning for Host Home Program:** plan and attend regular, ongoing trainings related to topics connected to Host Home Program including supporting LGBTQ+ youth experiencing housing instability, positive youth development, trauma-informed care, and host home best practices



#### Qualifications:

- BA with 5+ years experience in field of social services, housing, community organizing, or other relevant work; candidates with relevant experience in place of a BA encouraged to apply
- Demonstrated experience with working with LGBTQ+ youth of color and commitment to integrating youth voice and best practices working with LGBTQ+ youth of color into all components of the Host Home Program
- Project management and/or program development experience
- Experience working in a collaborative setting
- Experience recruiting, training, and supporting staff, volunteers, teams, community coalitions, and/or another group working toward a common goal
- Personal qualities of integrity, credibility, creativity, and a commitment to and passion for the organization's mission and the mission of ending youth homelessness

#### Salary Range:

Depending on education and experience, \$XXXX with benefits. Benefits include employer paid medical, dental, vision, life/ADD insurance and Long-Term Disability. We also offer a Flexible Spending Plan, Retirement Plan with discretionary employer contributions at eligibility, generous Personal Time Off Plan and paid holidays.

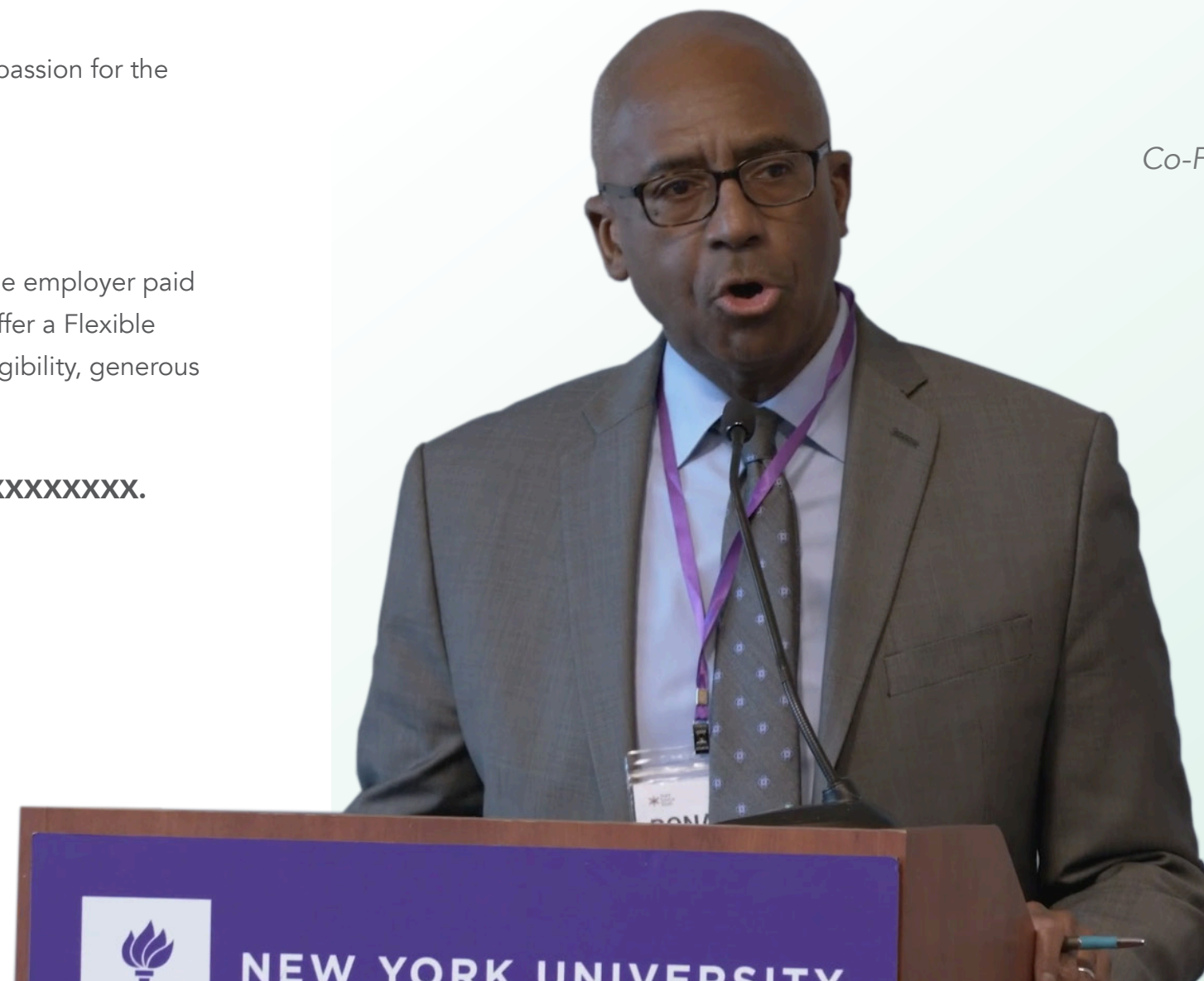
**For consideration, please submit cover letter and resume to XXXXXX by XXXXXXXX.**

**Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis.**

**“Health is not a privilege it’s a human right. Housing is a human right—being housed, adequately housed. That’s the way our society should be... We don’t have to live in an unjust world. We don’t have to accept that.”**

**—Ronald Johnson**

*Co-Founder and Board President,  
Point Source Youth*



An essential part of the host home program is the hosts. Recruiting hosts can be challenging. Our best words of advice are to be patient and take a step back to think of how your organization operates. Do you have a large community presence? Do you have a large number of volunteers and supporters? The first step is to get the word out to as many as you can. This will build support for the program and ensure that others understand what the “ask” is. As program support builds, use those who have learned about host homes to serve as program ambassadors and commit to spread the word further.

*Below are several strategies used by our partners to recruit hosts:*

- Distributing Flyers
  - Flea Markets
  - Coffee Shops
  - Social Events
  - Festival Booths
  - Community Events
- Presenting to different organizations
  - Retirees
  - Police Stations
  - Community Leaders/ Events
  - Schools & University Staff/ Faculty
  - Volunteer Organizations
- Rotary Clubs
- United Way
- Boys & Girl Clubs Board Members
  - Social Service Agencies
  - Neighborhood Council Meetings
  - Faith-based Organizations
- Facebook lead ads
  - An advertisement that is set to target an audience for a period of time.
- Interviews with local media
- Outreach by partners to their supporters & volunteers
- Email Blasts

Reach out to Point Source Youth if you’d like a copy of this flyer to customize for your community!

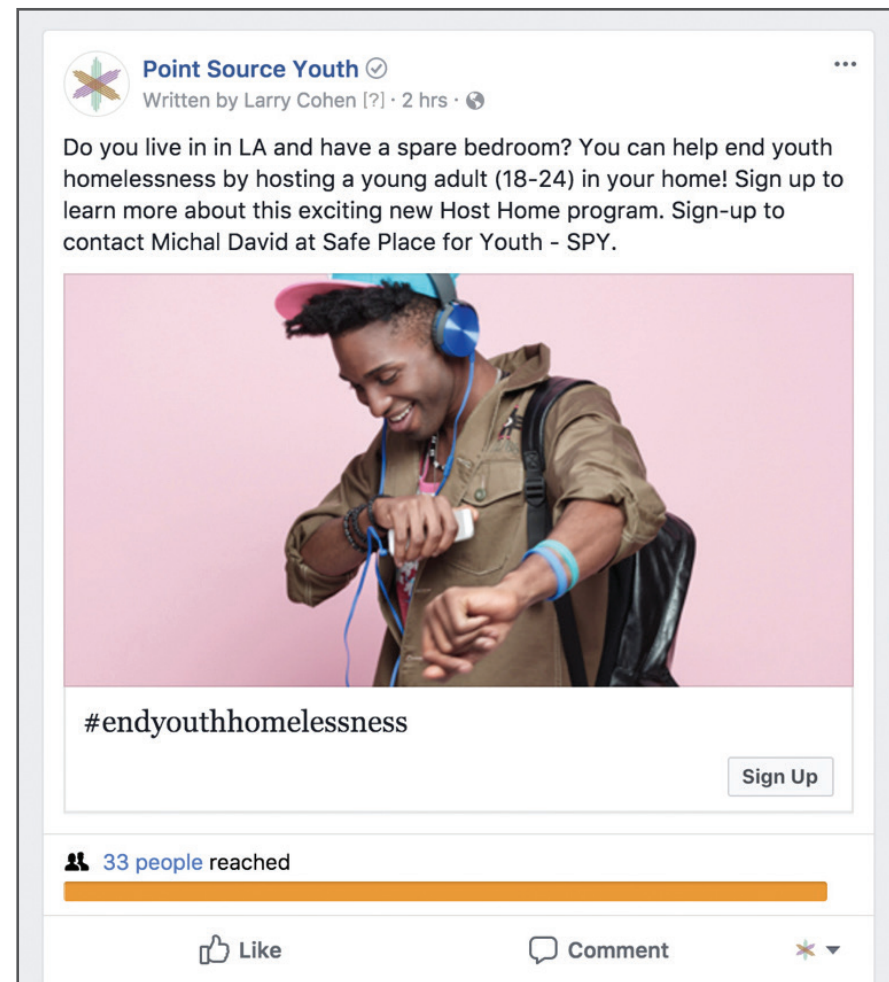
Sample Flyer:





## Facebook advertisement:

Facebook Lead advertisements are targeted characteristic ads. They work by taking an individual's public profile information such as age, location, interest groups, etc. and link it to customizable key words. The targeted information is then displayed in the advertise section of their Facebook page. If an individual is interested, they can click and add their contact information (name, phone number, email). Their contact information is then downloadable.



# HOST APPLICATION PROCESS

A Resource  
Guidebook for  
Host Home Programs



*You’ve recruited interested hosts! What next? Check out the following resources from our partners and remember - you are not alone! There is a network of host home programs that has your back.*

# Sample Host Home Letter

## Welcome!

Thank you for your interest in the XXXX Host Home Program!

XXXX Host Home, a program of Avenues for Homeless Youth, is a community and volunteer-based response to youth homelessness. All youth who participate in this program are queer-identified and matched with hosts.

Hosts in the XXXX Host Home Program are adults who open their homes to young people who are looking for short term resources and support. We ask hosts to provide food and shelter for up to X months.

XXXX Host Home will succeed only because of the involvement and support from the community. The program and the people behind it have a deep commitment to our communities, our youth and social change – not just through the sharing of resources, but through a transformative and intimate process of sharing our homes and our lives. We are thrilled to invite you into this partnership.

We know from research that youth experiencing homelessness are best supported when they are able to remain in the communities where they are comfortable, have friends, attend school, and go to work. For this reason, the goal of the program is to recruit, screen, and provide support to volunteers who are willing to open their homes to young people ages 16 through 24 in their own communities who are experiencing homelessness or have unstable housing (16 and 17 year olds will be able to participate with authorization from their parents or guardians).

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Being a host is a powerful and unique experience, and far from being easy. The commitment you are willing to make in order to be a host volunteer is an intense one, as is that of a youth who is moving into a host home. In turn, it will hopefully prove to be a gratifying and empowering experience for all involved.

XXXX Host Home is committed to keeping you informed, being clear about expectations, being up front and honest about decisions made regarding your application, listening to your concerns and feedback, respecting your input, finding the best match for you and a youth, and providing ongoing support and training.

Please read carefully the information included in this packet. There is an application form, eligibility requirements, and questions to ponder before getting started. Once we receive the returned packet from you, we will read your application, start the background checks, and set up time for an initial interview. Two representatives of the program will screen applicants and do the initial interview.

Again, thank you so much for wanting to be a part of this program. It is only through the generosity, spirit of solidarity and commitment of people like you that we are able to offer safe and affirming homes to youth.



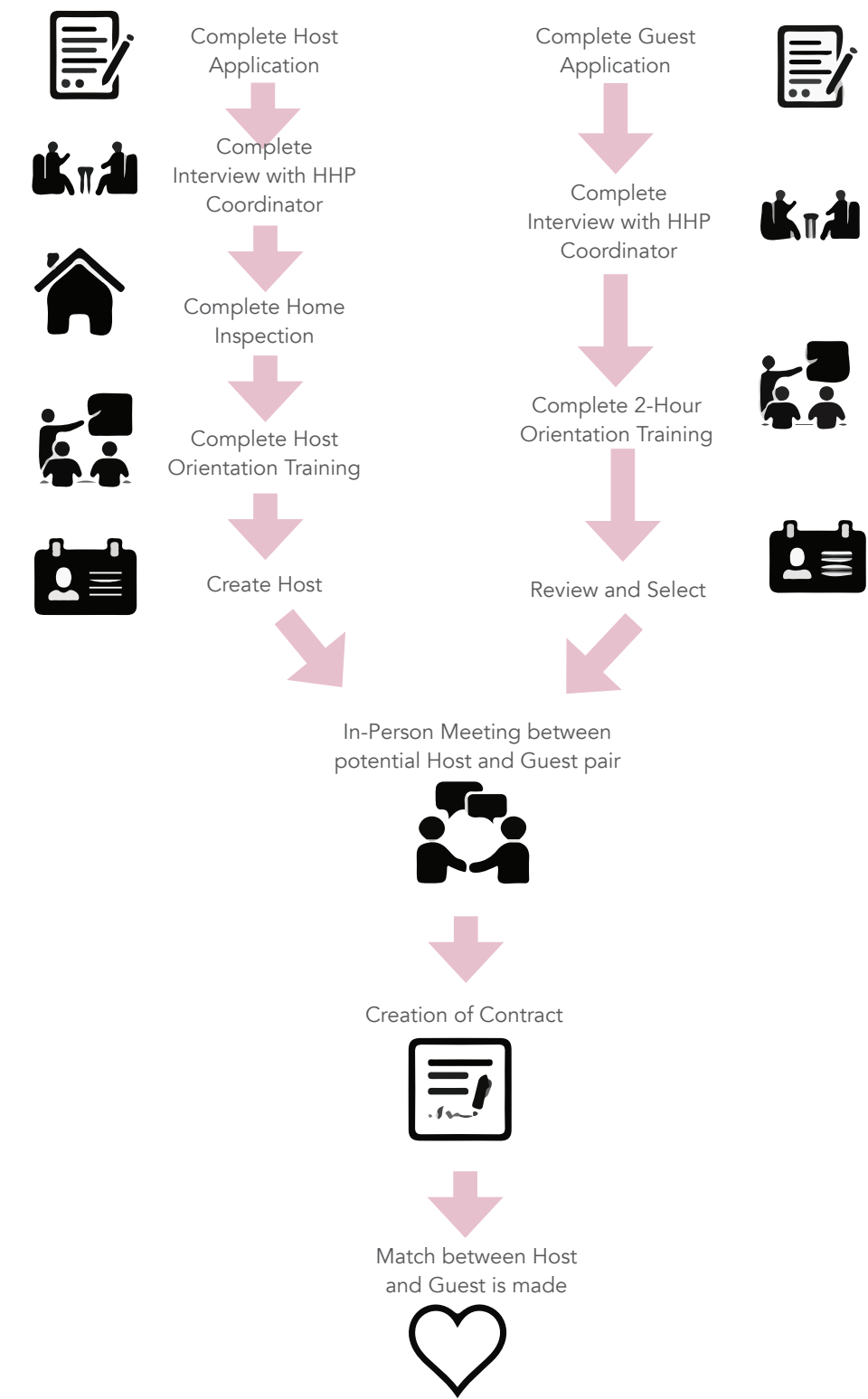
# Host Application & Guest Match Overview

Here is a sample process through which you can screen and train hosts, match hosts with youth, and support them throughout their hosting experience.

1. Potential Host Home applicants attend informational meeting
2. Applicants fill out required forms and turn them into Host Homes coordinator
3. Host Homes coordinator performs background checks and sends reference requests
4. Applicants have first interview with Host Homes coordinator
5. Applicants attend and participate in an 8 to 16-hour training
6. Applicants are chosen as host volunteers
7. Applicants have second interview with Host Homes coordinator and youth (in applicants' homes)
8. Host files are made available to youth for youth-driven selection
  - Youth review host files, including the host letter to youth participants.
  - Meeting of youth with potential hosts (with case manager and LGBTQ+ program manager at first)
  - Release of Liability waivers signed
  - Youth moves in
  - Review goals, expectations, etc.
9. Host Homes coordinator provides support to hosts
10. Host Homes case manager provides support to youth
11. Hosts attend ongoing support training
  - Monthly support group (hosts and HHP manager, 1-2 hours)
  - Trainings as part of the support group 3-4 times a year
12. Social and community building activities planned for youth, hosts, extended family, and friends

# Host-Guest Matching Process

SPY's host home program uses the following flowchart to conceptualize their host home program process for youth and hosts. Use it as a tool to define your program's flow!



## Eligibility & Expectations for Volunteer Hosts

### All applicants must:

1. Have an extra bedroom (providing privacy) for the youth
2. Be at least 25 years old
3. Have lived in the XXXXX for at least a year
4. Live in the greater Metro area
5. Complete the application form, providing any relevant information
6. Have renter/homeowner's insurance, providing a file copy if requested
7. Provide three references
8. Authorize and pass background checks which include:
  - a. Public Records (e.g. arrest reports)
  - b. IntelliCorp Records, Inc.
9. Complete necessary interviews
10. Complete the initial training session

The above criteria need to be successfully completed in order for an applicant to be qualified as a host. Participation of applicants can be terminated at any point in the screening process if the program manager believes they are not qualified/ready to be a host volunteer. Applicants need to demonstrate a strong commitment to work with a youth to build a healthy and trusting relationship, an ability to provide a supportive environment and consistently demonstrate skills necessary to make that happen.

### Host Home Support:

After approval and once hosting, volunteers are provided regular support groups. These meetings will provide the hosts with an opportunity to share their experiences and learn from each other, as well as to learn from outside trainers up to four times a year. Youth involved in the program will receive ongoing support from their case managers. The main support person for the volunteer hosts is the program manager, whereas the main support person for the youth is the youth advocate/case manager. The case manager will work closely with the program manager to ensure that the Host Home receives the appropriate level of support throughout participation. Participation includes scheduled and unscheduled (if warranted) home visits which will also be a part of the support system provided.

## Questions for Hosts to Think About

*At Avenues for Homeless Youth, hosts are encouraged to think about key issues questions that will prepare them to create a safe, welcoming space for youth. Use these questions for your hosts or adapt them to meet your program's needs!*

### What are the 'rules' of your home?

Think about sharing your living space with a youth you don't know very well. Think about the rules and expectations that will be important for that person to know (e.g. no smoking in the house). The youth moving in will also have rules/expectations of their own (e.g. knock before you enter). Most importantly, what are your non-negotiables?

### What are your expectations of the youth while they live with you?

The Host Home Program is an opportunity for the youth to live in a safer and healthier environment while they work on self-determined goals, which they develop with the support of their case manager. As your relationship with a youth grows and deepens, so might your involvement re: goals/things they want to do. This is really up to the youth to decide. Note: Hosts tend to almost never feel like the youth is working hard enough/fast enough/genuinely enough on said goals, regardless of how open-minded they are. The program will support and challenge you in managing your own expectations and dealing with frustrations that may arise.

### What is your financial commitment to this youth?

You will be responsible for providing food for this youth for the duration of their stay. Expect your utility and groceries bills to go up. Aside from food and a supportive home, you will not be responsible for other expenses. The case manager and program manager can work with you on setting appropriate boundaries re: expenses.

### Is your living space ready for a young person?

The youth must have their own room or private space. That room/space should be clean when the youth moves in. Make sure that your smoke alarms work and that you have accessible fire extinguishers. If you have alcohol in the house, it should be kept in a safe place where the youth is less likely to have access to it.



## Questions for Hosts to Think About

### **Have you ever lived with a queer and/or transgender youth?**

You should get acquainted with LGBTQ+ youth issues and explore your own feelings about sexual orientation and gender identity and learn to be able to talk about those issues. Even many people who identify as gay, lesbian or bisexual don't necessarily have much awareness about transgender and gender-queer identities.

### **Have you explored (personally or otherwise) issues such as white privilege and racism?**

The majority of hosts in our host home programs are white, whereas many of the homeless youth are youth of color. If you are white, it is extremely important that you become more aware of race, racism, and white privilege and the implications of living with that privilege. Talking about this will be part of the training and is an ongoing expectation of all white hosts.

### **Are you willing to put in some time to create a nurturing relationship with a youth?**

Developing a trusting relationship with a youth may take some time and hard work. This may require you to be an active participant in that young person's life (e.g. driving them places, helping with schoolwork, meeting with case manager). According to some hosts, this often feels like "parenting."

### **Are you capable of living with a youth who may be working through difficult issues?**

You need to be conscious that the young people who participate in the Host Home program will likely have experienced trauma. These issues will also be discussed during the training. Your role as a host is not to 'rescue' youth, but to be an adult ally.

# Writing the unwritten— Speaking the unspoken

*Here is another exercise from Avenues for Homeless Youth to help hosts prepare for welcoming youth into their home!*

**What are the "invisible rules" for your household related to the following?** *(please spend a bit of time writing your thoughts down after each and then we will share/discuss)* food, money, sex, arguing, drugs/alcohol, cleanliness, personal hygiene, religion/spirituality, honesty, work ethic, politics, authority, visitors/guests, community, communication, decision-making, privacy

If someone were video-taping you being angry, sad, happy, scared or anxious, stressed... they would notice...

What feeling do you have the easiest time feeling or showing and why?

What feeling do you have the hardest time feeling or showing and why?

How might a youth be impacted by any of the ways you respond to certain feelings and what could you do to keep lines of communication open?

What are the bottom lines you hold?

Sample Host Application

Here is the host application used by St. Ambrose Housing Aid in Baltimore. As always, this is yours to use as a reference or adapt for your purposes! Sharing is caring - a common belief of Point Source Youth partners.

Applicant's Name (Last, First, MI)	Gender Identity	Pronouns Used	Birth Date
Co-Applicant's Name (Last, First, MI)	Gender Identity	Pronouns Used	Birth Date

Relationship of Applicants:

Street Address:	Applicant cell-phone:	Applicant work-phone:
City:	Applicant email:	
State:      Zip Code:	Co-applicant cell phone:	Co-applicant cell phone:
Home Phone:	Co-applicant email:	



Sample Host Application

Is e-mail a good mode of communication for you?

How long have you lived in XX?

Applicant: ____/____ years/mos	Applicant: ____/____ years/mos
-----------------------------------	-----------------------------------

What other states have you lived in (past 10 years)?

Applicant:	Co-Applicant:
------------	---------------

Please describe how to reach your home from XXXXXXXXXX (transportation route):

Bus lines near your home: \_\_\_\_\_

All Children and Adults Living/Working in Your Home			
Name (Last, First, MI)	Relationship	Gender Identity	Birth Date

Do you have any pets living with you? Please specify: \_\_\_\_\_

Housing Information (check all that apply)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Owned	<input type="checkbox"/> Rented	<input type="checkbox"/> Single-Family House	<input type="checkbox"/> Mobile Home
<input type="checkbox"/> Multi-unit	<input type="checkbox"/> Basement Unit	<input type="checkbox"/> Second Floor	<input type="checkbox"/> Apartment/Condo
How long have you lived there?			
Do you have homeowner's/renter's insurance? <input type="checkbox"/> yes <input type="checkbox"/> no If yes, what is the name and policy # of your carrier?			
Are you able to provide an extra bedroom/private space for a youth?			
Are you planning on moving within the next year?			

Do you have a current driver's license? ☐yes ☐no

Do you have a car? ☐yes ☐no

If yes, what is your driver's license number?

Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_ Co-Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_

What is the name of your car insurance company?

Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_ Co-Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_

List two references whom you have known at least 1 year and one reference whom you have known 5 years. If you are applying with another person, your references should know both of you and how you function as a family. An e-mail will be sent to them with questions.		
Name	E-mail Address	Relationship

The following pages contain questions which are to be answered individually. There are two copies: one for the applicant, one for the co-applicant. If you are applying by yourself, please mail the blank co-applicant form to the host home coordinator together with your completed application

Sample Host Application

Are you (check all that apply):

☐ Lesbian

☐ Bisexual

☐ Gay

☐ Transgender

☐ Heterosexual

☐ Queer

☐ Genderqueer

Other:\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How would you characterize your comfort level with your sexual orientation and gender identity (please circle corresponding number below)?

1= not comfortable at all    5= extremely comfortable

sexual orientation    1    2    3    4    5

gender identity    1    2    3    4    5

If you are LGBTQ+, are you out to/at:

☐ friends

☐ work

☐ parents

☐ siblings

☐ relatives

☐ other (specify)

How easy is it for you to talk about sexual orientation and gender identity issues?

1= not easy at all    5= extremely easy

sexual orientation    1    2    3    4    5

gender identity    1    2    3    4    5

How would you characterize your ability and willingness to talk about power and privilege, especially re: racial and economic justice?

ability    1    2    3    4    5

willingness    1    2    3    4    5

Are you bilingual or multilingual? If yes, what languages do you speak?

You may use the back of the page for the following questions if you need more space.

1) Please write a little bit about why you are interested in hosting a young person in your home:

2) Please describe the characteristics of a young person you **would** wish to host:

3) Please describe the characteristics of a young person you **would not** wish to host:

4) How do you self-identify (i.e. gender, race, ethnicity, class, ability)?

5) Please write about your strengths, skills and any other relevant information that you would like to share:

6) Please describe any physical and/or mental health concerns in your family that could impact someone living in your home:



Have you ever	YES	NO
been arrested by any law enforcement officer?		
been charged with any offense even if dismissed?		
been convicted of any offense?		
been charged with or convicted of an offense against a youth/minor?		
abused, neglected, or molested any child?		
If you checked yes to any of the above, please explain the circumstances and dates:		

Employment for past 5 years, starting with current job				
Occupation	Place of employment	City	Phone	Time employed
If you are currently not working, what is your source of income/resources?				

Do you smoke? \_\_\_\_yes \_\_\_\_no      If yes, do you smoke in your home? \_\_\_\_yes \_\_\_\_no

Do you drink alcohol? \_\_\_\_yes \_\_\_\_no

Do you have any concerns about your drinking? \_\_\_\_yes \_\_\_\_no

If yes, please explain why you are concerned:

Have you ever used illegal drugs? \_\_\_\_yes \_\_\_\_no

If yes, do you currently use illegal drugs? \_\_\_\_yes \_\_\_\_no

I hereby certify that the facts contained in the XXXX Host Home Program Application are true and complete to the best of my knowledge.

Signature Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Don't forget to complete the creative assignment and attached it to your application.

Creative Assignment

Please write a letter talking about yourself, your family and community, some of your life experiences, strengths, etc. Write it with a young person in mind as the reader. The purpose of this letter is for them to get to know you a bit, find out why you want to be a host, and see if you might be someone they would like to live with. In addition, this letter will help the LGBTQ+ HHP manager have a better sense of you as a potential volunteer host. Poems, drawings, and other ways of expression are welcomed.

# Sample Host Interview Questions

Interviews are a critical tool for screening hosts. Avenues for Homeless Youth does two interviews with host candidates using the following questions. Not only will this help you get to know potential hosts better, it will also help potential hosts more deeply understand the nuances of what hosting entails!

## First Interview

- 1) (couples only) Who first brought up the idea of becoming hosts? How did you talk through the decision?
- 2) What are your hopes and dreams about being a host?
- 3) How do you think you can be supportive to a youth who might bring some challenging survival skills to your home?
- 4) Tell us a little about your background.
- 5) How do you resolve differences/compromise with someone?
- 6) (couples only) How do you fight?
- 7) What do you think will be challenging to you in being a host (think of a youth in your home)?

- 8) What are some of the ground rules and expectations that you have about sharing living space? How flexible are you around those rules and expectations?
- 9) What’s your comfort level around sharing material goods (e.g. stereo, computer)?
- 10) (for parents) How have you talked to your children about the possibility of hosting?
- 11) How do you deal with stress? How do you relax?
- 12) What does your support system look like?
- 13) What are some of your experiences (positive or negative) with people of backgrounds/ cultures different from yours (class, religion, race, etc. )?
- 14) White folks: what kind of work/examining have you done around awareness of what it means to be white in this country?
- 15) How do you feel about living with a transgender or gender non-conforming youth?
- 16) Do you feel that your home would be a good place for a youth of color to live in?

### SCENARIOS – Pick two numbers between 1 and 7

- 1) The young person living with you develops a crush on you and comes on to you. What do you do?
- 2) The young person comes home from a party much later than the agreed upon time and is drunk. What do you do?
- 3) A pan is sitting on the stove dirty for three days and it is bugging you. What do you do?
- 4) The young woman living with you asks if her boyfriend can stay over for a couple of days. Two weeks later, he is still there. What do you do?
- 5) The money jar that you keep in your bedroom dresser is empty. It wasn't empty when you left the house earlier. What do you do?
- 6) You suspect that the youth living with you is experiencing depression. They sleep a lot, seem unmotivated and spends most of their time in their bedroom on the computer. What do you do?

### Second Interview

- 1) Why do you want to be a host volunteer?
- 2) What do you think a young person might need from you?
- 3) Why do you think so many young people are homeless?
- 4) What is one thing you'd want a youth to say about you (after having lived with you)?
- 5) What have you done to prepare yourself for being a host?
- 6) How would you know that the youth is a good match for your home?
- 7) What would you initially do to make the youth feel comfortable in your home?



Host & Guest Contract

Thank you for participating in the XXXX Host Homes Pilot! We are excited that you have come this far in the matching process. The goal of this contract is to provide a forum through which Hosts and Guests can explicitly discuss expectations they have of each other as they prepare to begin their relationship. With the support of the Host Homes Coordinator, Hosts and Guests will collaboratively develop and come to agreement around a set of norms that will be upheld during the course of Host stay. Outlining these communal agreements up-front will allow for a smoother transition into the Host-Guest relationship and ability to address concerns if they come up.

This contract can be revisited and revised at a later date if circumstances change. Please contact the Host Homes Coordinator to renegotiate any of these agreements.

Guests will receive a 'Welcome Home Kit', including \$500 to cover transportation, room essentials, grocery basket, or toiletry costs. As such Hosts are not responsible for paying for food and basic toiletries for their Guests. Some Hosts may decide that they are comfortable with Guests sharing the food and toiletries in their home. Please discuss and describe any agreements you have come to around basic needs and expenditures:

Guest	Host

Once you’ve matched a host and youth, what’s next? Los Angeles-based SPY uses the following template to facilitate a co-created hosting agreement between youth and hosts. Facilitated conversations about expectations and boundaries within the home are critical for setting youth and hosts up for a positive experience.

Privacy:

Guests must have their own private area or room in a host home placement. Please discuss and describe any additional agreements around privacy issues:

Guest	Host

Children:

If children are present in the home, guests are not expected to help with child care unless they are interested in doing so and the Host agree. What does your Guest need to know about children in your home? Does the Guest have children in their care or will children ever visit the Guest at the host home? Please discuss any related issues.

Guest	Host

Common Space:

Which rooms in the host home are available to the young person and/or their guest/s? What time/s, if any, are common spaces off limits? Please discuss and describe any agreements about shared TV, computer or phone use here too:

Guest	Host

Kitchen Use:

Guests must have access to a kitchen where they can prepare meals. Guests are expected to provide and prepare their own food, unless otherwise agreed upon. Are any kitchen appliances off-limits? What are expectations around cleaning after kitchen use? Please discuss and describe any agreements about kitchen use and meals here.

Guest	Host

Family Meals:

Host and Guests agree to share one meal/week at no cost to the Host or Guest. This meal can either be enjoyed in the home or in a restaurant. What day of the week will this meal occur? What kinds of foods do both Hosts and Guests enjoy?

Guest	Host

Family Meetings:

Some families schedule time on a regular basis to discuss household issues, rules, upcoming family events, holidays and other matters. Please discuss your plans for family meetings, if any, here:

Guest	Host



Host & Guest Contract

Chores:

Hosts are expected to provide a safe and sanitary home for their Guest. Hosts may ask Guests to contribute to a reasonable amount of housework in order to maintain the home. Chores might include cleaning their own room and helping clean common areas such as the living room, kitchen or bathroom. Can Guests utilize the laundry facilities? What days of the week are typically cleaning days? Please specify chore agreements here:

Guest	Host

Pets:

If Host families have a pet, what does the Guest need to know about its care? While Guests should not be expected to care for pets, is the guest interested in helping with animal care in any way? Does the Guest have animals in their care or animals ever visit the Guest at the host home? Please describe any additional agreements regarding animal care here:

Guest	Host

Noise/Quiet Hours:

Please outline agreements around noise and quiet hours both parties want to observe:

Guest	Host

Vacations/Absences:

While HHP does not recommend Hosts leave for extended periods during a host stay, this does happen. If Host/s go out of town, can the Guest stay in the home? What safety precautions would be needed? Would the Guest have more responsibilities during this time (e.g. pet care, grocery shopping, etc.)? If Guests wants to leave for a period of time, how will this be arranged? Please consult XXX staff as soon as these situations are known.

Guest	Host

Visitors:

Guests are not to have any overnight visitors while staying in their Host Home. What rules, if any, are there around youth bringing visitors into the home during the day? For example, should young people introduce their guest to their Host/s in advance? Do they need to ask for permission in advance? How far in advance?

Guest	Host

Smoking:

Families may come to different agreements around smoking. Please discuss and describe agreements here. Be specific about where, if anywhere, smoking is allowed:

Guest	Host

Alcohol and Drug Use:

Guests are not to engage in illegal drug consumption or alcohol consumption inside of host homes. Please discuss and describe any agreements you come to regarding Guests returning to host homes while under the influence of alcohol or other substances:

Guest	Host



Host & Guest Contract

Borrowing:

Please ask for permission when borrowing from other household members. Any agreements about borrowing (ex: what is OK, what is off-limits, etc.) can be listed here:

Guest	Host

Theft:

Host relationships thrive when trust is developed and maintained. If one party suspects another has stolen something from the other, how should they resolve this issue? Note: stolen or damaged property is never the responsibility of SPY.

Guest	Host

Confidentiality:

Guests may need to use their Host’s address and/or phone number for school and job applications. Under what circumstances can a youth give out information about their host home? What information does the Guest want kept confidential?

Guest	Host

Emergencies:

Always call 911 in case of an emergency. Once the situation is stabilized, please call SPY staff during office hours (9am-6pm). What emergency procedures exist in your household? Does everyone know which family members to call in case of an emergency? Who is aware of and adheres to these emergency procedures?

Guest	Host

The following agreements are basic program requirements that must be followed. Next to each of the following, please initial, confirming you understand and will adhere to that principle.

**Sexual Activity & Sexual Harassment:**

There is to be no sexual activity between host family members and the young person placed in their home. Any sexual harassment or threatening or aggressive behavior towards anyone in the home should be reported to SPY staff as soon as possible.

Initials: \_\_\_\_\_

**Violence:**

Violence of any kind is unacceptable in the host home. All household members must feel safe in the home. If someone does not feel safe, this must be reported to SPY staff as soon as possible.

Initials: \_\_\_\_\_

**Weapons:**

There are to be no weapons of any kind in the host home. Please initial your understanding here:

Initials: \_\_\_\_\_

**Length of Stay:**

Host family agrees to have young person stay in their home for months barring extenuating circumstances. An extension of this stay can be explored at a later date.

Initials: \_\_\_\_\_

**Termination:**

If either youth or host family wants to end this placement for any reason prior to the agreed upon amount of time, they must contact SPY staff as soon as possible.

Initials: \_\_\_\_\_

**Other Agreements:**

Guest	Host

*Every home is different. What, if any, additional agreements do host/s and youth agree on? Please detail all such agreements below:*

Host & Guest Contract

Signatures:  
I agree that I have participated in the above contract development process with Safe Place for Youth staff and agree to the above specifications. I understand that I can ask for a renegotiation of this contract at any time, which will entail an in-person meeting with Host, Guest, and Host Homes Coordinator.

**Guest:**  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Host/s:**  
Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**SPY Host Homes Coordinator:**  
Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**SPY Director of Housing Advocacy:**  
Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Congratulations on your new Host-Guest Relationship! These guidelines will help maintain and protect this relationship as you get to know one another more deeply**

“We need to move from band-aids and a corporate colonialist model to a humane approach.”

–Maddox Guerrilla

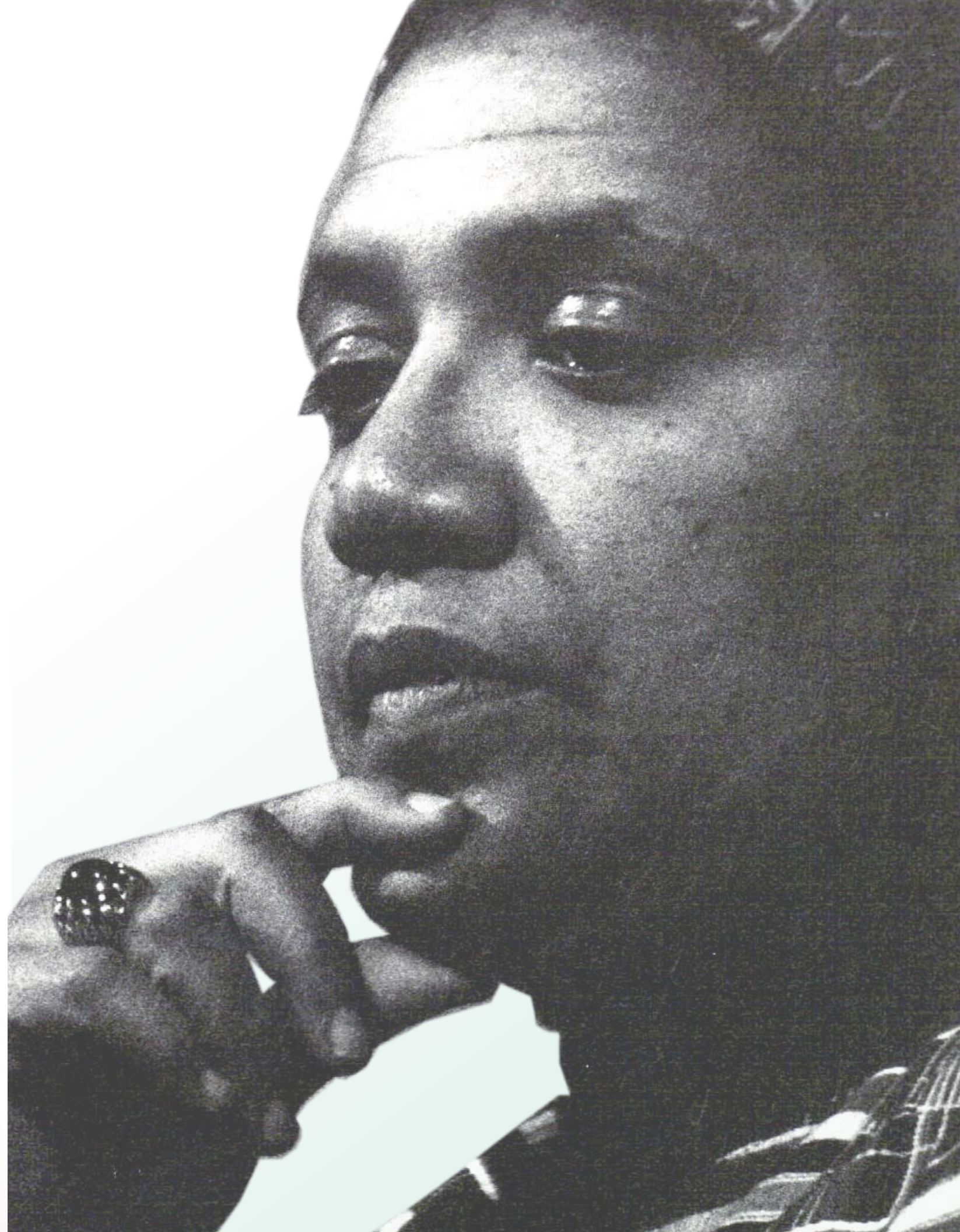
*Artist, Youth Advocate  
and 2018 True Colors Media Fellow,  
2018 National Symposium on Solutions  
to End Youth Homelessness*





**"When I dare to be powerful—to use my strength in the service of my vision, then it becomes less and less important whether I am afraid."**

**—Audre Lorde**





Sample Reference Letter

Hello!\_\_\_\_\_has/have applied to be host volunteer(s) with XXXXXXXXXXXX Host Home Program. This program screens, trains, and provides ongoing support to nurturing adults who volunteer to open their homes to homeless youth ages 18-21. While living in a host home, the youth works toward stabilization and self-determination. The goal of the program is to provide safer housing and food for youth experiencing homelessness, and also to help young folks reach their objectives and to build stronger and healthier communities. Because being a host volunteer is a huge commitment, I need your help in evaluating the applicant(s). Your name was given to me as one of three references. **The information you provide is confidential and will become a part of the total screening process.**

Please answer the following questions frankly. Concerns that you bring up will not necessarily disqualify the applicant(s).

I appreciate your cooperation. Please reply as soon as you can to the address listed below. If you have any questions, feel free to call me at XXX-XXX-XXXX. You may also e-mail me your responses at XXXXXXXXXXXX. Thank you!

Sincerely,

Sample Reference Questions

*You may ask for references as you screen hosts! Below is the reference process used by Avenues for Homeless Youth, shared for your reference and use.*

If you need more space answering the following questions (there are questions on the back as well), please attach an extra sheet of paper.

- 1) How and when did you become acquainted with the applicant(s)?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 2) What do you see as each applicant’s strengths and weaknesses, especially as they relate to working with LGBTQ+ youth and youth of color?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 3) How would you describe them as a couple/family? (if only one applicant, please skip the question)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 4) Why do you think the applicant(s) has/have applied to be host volunteers?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 5) In what ways do you anticipate the applicant(s) needing help in hosting a youth?

- 6) Describe a young person who would fit well with this person/couple.
- 7) Describe a young person who would not fit well with this person/couple.
- 8) Please describe any concerns you have about the comfort or safety of a young person who stays with the applicants(s).

Thank you again for taking the time to answer these questions. Please sign and provide a telephone number and/or e-mail so I may contact you for any follow-up questions.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

*How does liability work? That’s one of the most frequent questions we receive at Point Source Youth! Below is the liability waiver used by Avenues for Homeless Youth. We encourage you to discuss liability with your organization’s general counsel for more organization-specific guidance, and to use this letter as a template when discussing liability with hosts and youth.*

**Avenues for Homeless Youth—Host Home Programs  
Acknowledgement Release and Waiver of Liability**

This Acknowledgment, Release and Waiver of Liability (this “Agreement”) is made and entered into as of \_\_\_\_\_, 2016 (the “Effective Date”), by and between the following parties:

“Participant”: \_\_\_\_\_, an individual resident of the State of Minnesota.

“Host(s)”: \_\_\_\_\_, an individual resident or individual residents of the State of Minnesota.

“AHY”: Avenues for Homeless Youth, a Minnesota nonprofit corporation.

Participant, Host(s) and AHY shall be referred to in this Agreement individually as a “party” and collectively as the “parties.”

**Avenues for Homeless Youth—Background**

AHY’s Host Home Program (the “HHP”) arranges for and supports short-term housing in the homes of community volunteers for homeless youth and young adults ages 16 through 21. AHY is a Minnesota nonprofit corporation, and AHY and the HHP depend upon the voluntary participation of Host(s) and Participants.

# Sample Release and Waiver of Liability

The parties acknowledge that good communication, cooperation, disclosure of necessary and known information to Host(s) about Participant, and being clear about expectations and limitations is crucial to the success of the HHP for all parties. Therefore, AHY requires the Participant and Host(s) to read and sign this Agreement.

## Agreement

### I. Consideration:

- A. The parties are signing this Agreement in consideration of and exchange for the services that AHY is providing to Participant and Host(s).
- B. Participant understands and agrees that other organizations besides AHY provide housing to homeless youth, and that Host(s) and AHY are offering this opportunity for housing and support for Participant without compensation. Participant has chosen to use the services of AHY.

### II. Communication, Cooperation and Disclosure of Information:

- A. Participant and Host(s) understand and agree that they have discussed the risks, limits and expectations of the HHP with AHY and with each other, and recognize communicate clearly and regularly, cooperate, set and achieve goals, resolve that success of the HHP depends upon good faith efforts by all parties to differences that arise and disclose information that may be necessary to best support Participant and Host(s).
- B. Participant represents to AHY and Host(s) that relevant information Participant has provided to AHY and Host(s) to date has been true and complete.

- C. Host(s) represents to Participant and AHY that relevant information Host(s) has provided to Participant and AHY to date has been true and complete.
- D. Participant and Host(s) shall continue to communicate clearly and regularly, cooperate, set and achieve goals, resolve differences that arise and disclose information that may be necessary to best support Participant and Host(s).

### III. HHP Terms and Conditions:

- A. Participant and Host(s) understand and agree that AHY is not financially responsible for any personal debts or obligations incurred by Participant and Host(s), including but not limited to medical bills, educational expenses, day-to- day necessities, and phone bills.
- B. Participant understands and agrees that they shall be solely responsible for any personal debts or obligations that Participant may incur while living with the Host(s), other than the room and board provided by Host(s).
- C. Host(s) understands and agrees that they shall be solely responsible for any personal debts or obligations that Host(s) may incur while Participant is living with the Host(s).
- D. Participant and Host(s) understand and agree there are inherent risks involved in the HHP. These risks may include, but are not limited to, physical, mental, and emotional harm to Participant and Host(s), and to others, damage to personal possessions, damage to the home and real estate of Host(s), and harm to the reputation of individuals. Participant and Host(s) acknowledge these risks and agree to assume these risks.

E. Parties understand and agree that, because HHP is a voluntary program and they are entering into this on a voluntary basis, any party may end their participation at any time, thereby terminating this Agreement. Parties also agree that AHY may terminate this Agreement at any time.

IV. Release and Limitation of Liability:

A. PARTICIPANT PERSONALLY AND FOR THEIR RESPECTIVE HEIRS, ADMINISTRATORS, PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVES, ASSIGNS, AND INSURERS HEREBY RELEASES AHY, ITS DIRECTORS, AGENTS, EMPLOYEES, OFFICERS, REPRESENTATIVES, ASSIGNS, AFFILIATED ORGANIZATIONS, VOLUNTEERS, AND INSURERS FROM ANY AND ALL LIABILITIES, CLAIMS, DEMANDS, RIGHTS OF INDEMNIFICATION, AND CAUSES OF ACTION, EITHER IN LAW OR IN EQUITY, OTHER THAN THOSE ARISING FROM GROSS NEGLIGENCE OR INTENTIONAL TORTS OF AHY OR HOST(S), WHETHER THOSE CLAIMS OR LIABILITIES ARE KNOWN OR UNKNOWN TO PARTICIPANT.

C. HOST(S), FOR THEMSELVES AND FOR THEIR RESPECTIVE HEIRS, ADMINISTRATORS, PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVES, ASSIGNS, AND INSURERS HEREBY RELEASE AHY, ITS DIRECTORS, AGENTS, EMPLOYEES, OFFICERS, REPRESENTATIVES, ASSIGNS, AFFILIATED ORGANIZATIONS, VOLUNTEERS, AND INSURERS, FROM ANY AND ALL LIABILITIES, CLAIMS, DEMANDS, RIGHTS OF INDEMNIFICATION, AND CAUSES OF ACTION, EITHER IN LAW OR IN EQUITY, OTHER THAN THOSE ARISING FROM GROSS NEGLIGENCE OR INTENTIONAL TORTS OF AHY, WHETHER THOSE CLAIMS OR LIABILITIES ARE KNOWN OR UNKNOWN TO HOST(S)

D. HOST(S) PERSONALLY AND FOR THEIR RESPECTIVE HEIRS, ADMINISTRATORS, PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVES, AND ASSIGNS, HEREBY RELEASES PARTICIPANT,

THEIR RESPECTIVE HEIRS, ADMINISTRATORS, PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVES, AND ASSIGNS, AND INSURERS, FROM ANY AND ALL LIABILITIES, CLAIMS, DEMANDS, RIGHTS OF INDEMNIFICATION, AND CAUSES OF ACTION, EITHER IN LAW OR IN EQUITY, OTHER THAN THOSE ARISING FROM GROSS NEGLIGENCE OR INTENTIONAL TORTS OF AHY OR PARTICIPANT, WHETHER THOSE CLAIMS OR LIABILITIES ARE KNOWN OR UNKNOWN TO HOST(S).

E. Except to the extent that suits, claims, losses, damages and/or liabilities arise out of Host(s) gross negligence or intentional torts, to the fullest extent permitted by Minnesota law, Participant agrees that their sole and exclusive remedy against Host(s) arising out of or based upon the participation of Host(s) in the HHP shall be to terminate this Agreement, and to remove his or her self from the care of Host(s). F. \_\_\_\_\_ Participant shall defend, indemnify and hold harmless (i) AHY, its directors, agents, employees, officers, representatives, assigns, affiliated organizations, and insurers and (ii) Host(s), their agents, heirs, estate, assigns and insurers from and against any suits, claims, losses, demands, damages and/or liabilities, including without limitation any attorney fees and court costs, arising out of or related to the Participant’s participation in the HHP or care of the Participant by the Host(s), including but not limited to actions for damages to real or tangible personal property, or for bodily injury or death, except to the extent that such suits, claims, losses, damages and/or liabilities arise out of Host(s) or AHY’s gross negligence or intentional torts.

A. EACH PARTHEREIN. I HAVE BEEN ADVISED TO SEEK THE AID OF AN ATTORNEY IN MY REVIEW AND EXECUTION OF THIS AGREEMENT, AND HAVE EITHER DONE SO OR HAVE DECLINED TO DO SO. I HAVE SIGNED THIS CONTRACT OF MY OWN FREE WILL.

VI. Term and Termination:

A. This Agreement shall be effective as of the Effective Date and continue until one or more of the parties elects to terminate their involvement in the program or terminate Participant’s stay in the home of the Host(s).



VII. Miscellaneous:

- A. Each party represents and warrants to the other party that it has full power and authority to enter into this Agreement and perform its obligations described in this Agreement, without the consent or approval of any other person or entity
- B. No provision of this Agreement shall be deemed unenforceable if it is subject to an interpretation that would render it enforceable. If a court of competent jurisdiction finds that any provision of this Agreement, including but not limited to any provision set forth in Article V, is unenforceable, in whole or in part, (a) such a finding will not disturb the validity and enforceability of the remaining provisions of this Agreement, and (b) the court shall have the authority to modify and/or “blue pencil” this Agreement in order to render it enforceable and to effect the original intent of the Parties to the fullest extent permitted by law.
- C. This Agreement shall be interpreted and governed in all respects by the laws of the State of Minnesota, without giving effect to conflict of laws principles thereof.
- D. This Agreement contains all of the agreements of the parties with respect to any matter covered or mentioned in this Agreement and no prior agreements or understandings pertaining to any such matters shall be effective for any purpose. This Agreement may not be changed orally, but only by an agreement in writing signed by the parties. Any waiver of any term or condition of this Agreement shall not operate as a waiver of any other such term or condition or as any continuing waiver, nor shall any failure to enforce any provision hereof operate as a waiver of such provision or of any other provision hereof.
- E. The provisions of Articles III, IV, V, and VII, and all defined terms, shall survive termination or expiration of this Agreement for any reason.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have executed this Acknowledgment, Release and Waiver of Liability as of the Effective Date.

PARTICIPANT

By:

HOST(S)

By:

By:

AVENUES FOR HOMELESS YOUTH

By:

Sample Background Check Form

Avenues for Homeless Youth shares the below form with Hosts before conducting background checks. Knowing that hosts have completed a background check can—among other things—give youth greater peace of mind when making the brave and often scary choice to enter a Host Home program.

AUTHORIZATION FOR CRIMINAL AND CIVIL RECORDS CHECK

XXXXX HOST HOME PROGRAM

1234 Street Address Here

Town Name, XX ZIP CODE

Phone: XXX-XXX-XXXX Fax: XXX-XXX-XXXX

(please print)

Last name: \_\_\_\_\_

First name: \_\_\_\_\_

Middle: \_\_\_\_\_

Maiden, Alias, Former: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Date of birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Gender: \_\_\_\_\_

Social Security Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Driver's License Number: \_\_\_\_\_

I give permission for the XXXX Host Home Program to obtain criminal and civil record checks from IntelliCorp Records Inc., the XXXX Department of Human Services, XXXX Department of Public Safety, Bureau of Criminal Apprehension, Criminal Justice Information Systems Section or other law enforcement agencies for the purpose of determining qualifications for volunteering with the XXXX Host Home Program.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



“If you’re in a position of privilege or if you’re in a position of power, then it is your responsibility as adults or changemakers or folks who are at the table to make sure that young people have access to the table and are being heard at the table.”

—Louie Ortiz-Fonseca

Director of LGBTQ Health & Rights, Advocates for Youth,  
2018 National Symposium on Solutions to End Youth Homelessness



**“Hire these young people  
[with lived experiences of  
homelessness]. Put it in your  
overhead budgets, find the  
money, get a donor, it’s  
unacceptable [not to].”**


**—Marc Dones**

*Senior Lead, Equitable Systems,  
Future Laboratories,*

*2018 National Symposium on  
Solutions to End Youth  
Homelessness*



**NEW YORK UNIVERSITY**

 Point Source Youth

 SAFE AND SUPPORTED  
A Project of Lighthouse Youth & Family Services

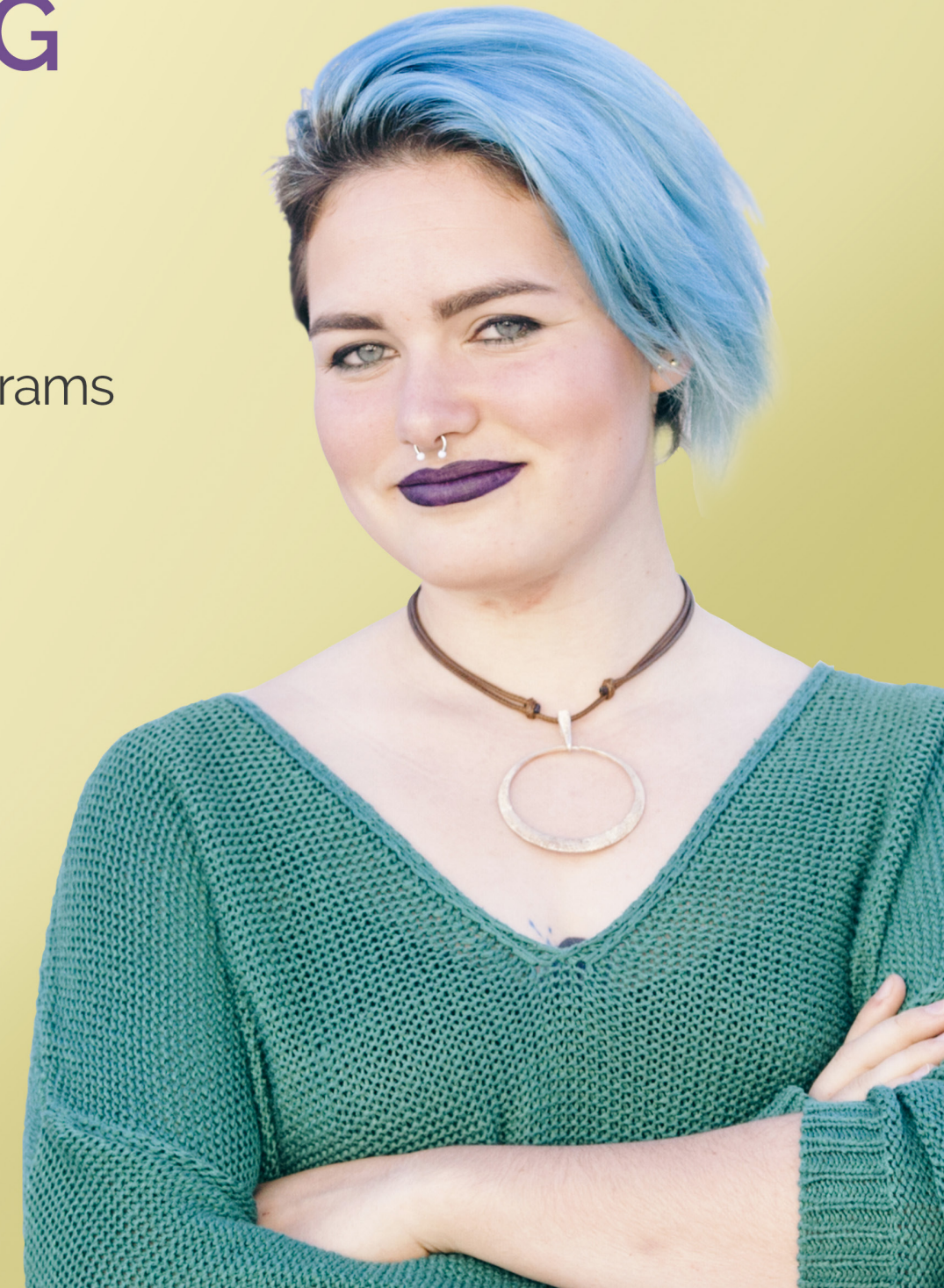
 S.P.Y.  
safe place for youth

 ST. AMBROSE  
HOUSING AID CENTER

 AVENUES  
FOR HOMELESS YOUTH

# BUILDING A HOST HOME TRAINING

A Resource  
Guidebook for  
Host Home Programs



Okay, you’ve found and screened your hosts - congratulations! Now how do you prepare them? We’ve compiled training tools from our partners for your edification and delight (and, most importantly, your use)!

Here are the themes and topics that our host home program partners have found helpful to include in training for hosts. We encourage you to customize topics based on your local needs, and are sharing these because the topics are common across regions:

- Personal biases
- Cultural competency
- LGBTQ+ 101
- Assertive Communication
- Trauma & Resiliency
- Power & Privilege
- Adultism

Check out this agenda for a full-day host training with St. Ambrose Housing Aid in Baltimore!

One Day Training

- 9am – 9:15am** – Breakfast/Icebreakers
- 9:15am – 9:45am** – Homeless Youth: Finding Home—The Infamous T
- 9:45am – 10:15am** – Discussion and unpacking film
- 10:15am – 12:00pm** – Positive Youth Development
  - Trauma and Resiliency
  - Values/Boundaries/Expectations
  - Adultism
- 12:00pm – 12:45pm** – Lunch
- 12:45pm – 2:00pm** – White Privilege/Cultural Competency
- 2pm – 3:30pm** – LGBTQ+ 101
- 3:30pm – 4:30pm** – Panel of Youth
- 4:30pm – 5:00pm** – Wrap-up



# Sample Host Home Training Agendas

Avenues for Homeless Youth shared the below two-day host training agenda for your reference. The panels of past/current hosts and youth have been a powerful way to end each day of training!

## Two Day Training

### **SATURDAY, 9:00am – 5:00pm**

*Understanding the Context*

**9:00am – 11:00am** - Homeless Youth: Finding Home; The Infamous T  
An Overview of the issues (videos + discussion)

**11:00am – 1:00pm** - Positive Youth Development

**1:00pm – 1:30pm** - Lunch

**1:30pm – 3:30pm** - Trauma and Resiliency

*Bringing It Home*

**3:30pm-5pm** - Panel of Past/Current Hosts

## Two Day Training (cont.)

### **SUNDAY, 9:00am - 5:00pm**

*Understanding Ourselves*

**9:00am – 11:00am** - Values/Boundaries/Expectations

**11:00am – 1:00pm** - White Privilege

**1:00pm – 1:30pm** - Lunch

**1:30pm – 3:30pm** - Gender/Transgender 101

*Bringing It Home*

**3:30pm – 5:00pm** - Panel of Past/Current Youth

Sample Host Training 1

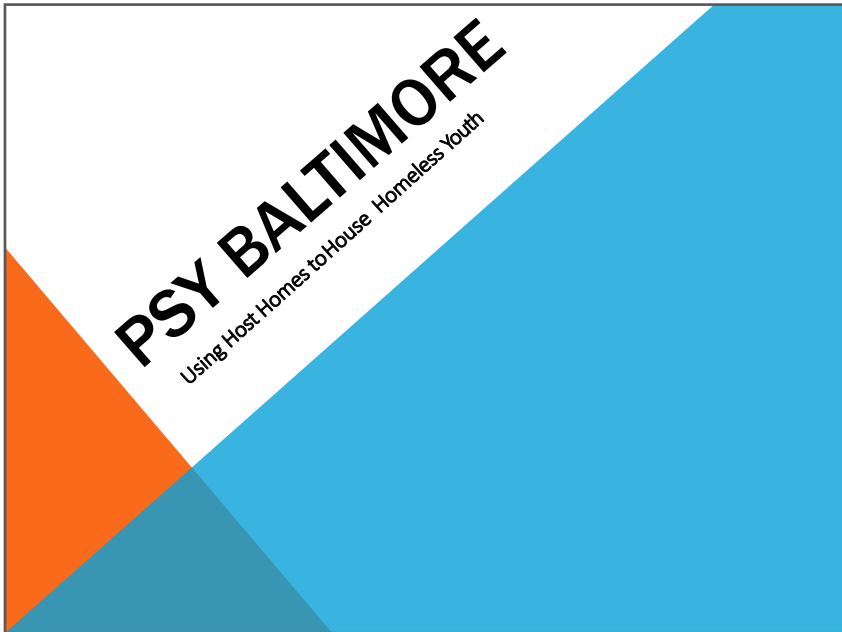

Renee Stainrod, Host Home Coordinator at St. Ambrose Housing Aid in Baltimore, created the following slide deck to orient and train hosts. Feel free to use, modify, and be inspired from her work!

PSY Baltimore Host Home Program  
Training Presentation

By

Renee Stainrod

St. Ambrose Host Home Coordinator

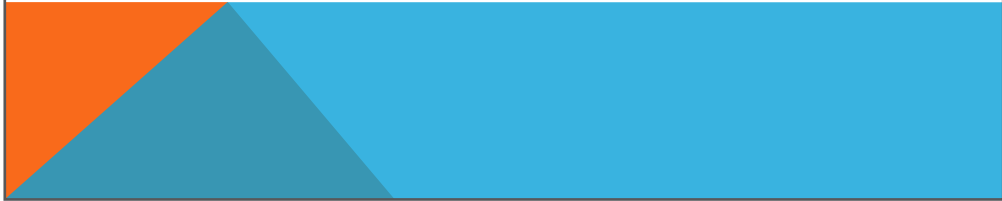


PSY BALTIMORE

Using Host Homes to House Homeless Youth



POINT SOURCE YOUTH BALTIMORE

In June 2017, key stakeholders in Baltimore, MD assembled to kick off Baltimore’s first Host Home Program for homeless youth who identify as LGBTQ. The following partners are each contributing their unique strengths and knowledge to reduce youth homelessness:



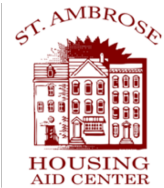
POINT SOURCE YOUTH

Point Source Youth is working to implement research and scale the, Family and Kinship Strengthening, Short-Term Host Homes, and Rapid Rehousing programs that will help in the prevention of youth homelessness in Baltimore.



ST. AMBROSE HOUSING AID CENTER

St. Ambrose has a long history of connecting homeowners to interested Marylanders who may not have the capital or credit to thrive in Baltimore's housing market. They are excited to expand to short-term host homes for youth and will recruit 15 hosts in 2017.



STAR TRACK

Star Track is launching family and individual therapy designed for young adults who are homelessness or unstably housed. Program therapists are youth-centered and use a justice framework.



YOUTH EMPOWERED SOCIETY

Youth Empowered Society focuses on serving homeless youth while allying with them to create the change that is needed. YES! will be offering rapid re-housing units with an emphasis on case management and connection to employment.



INFAMOUS T MOVIE



# DISCUSSION

## YOUTH HOMELESSNESS IN BALTIMORE

- In Baltimore City**
- City schools estimate 2,289 students are homeless
- According to the 2007 Baltimore Homeless Youth Initiative (BHYI),**
- On any given day you will find 166 homeless young people between the ages of 18 and 24.

## YOUTH HOMELESSNESS IN MARYLAND

- Maryland ranks 18<sup>th</sup> in the Nation in child homelessness (0-18 years old).
- In 2010, there were an estimated 12,810 children/youth experiencing homelessness in Maryland, (this number does include the 844 homeless, unaccompanied youth).
- Of the 131,000 children/youth living in poverty in Maryland, one out of every 10 (10%) are homeless.
- In January 2011 the Center for Adolescent Health at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health documented 640 unaccompanied homeless youth in Baltimore based upon a one day “census.” However, this is certainly an undercount as it is only a reflection of the young people who sought out services at the handful of services providers in the city catering to homeless youth.

## LGBTQ YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

- According to the National Alliance to End Homelessness:**
- LGBTQ youth represent approximately 20% of homeless youth. This is disproportionate to the number of LGBTQ youth (10%) in the general population.
  - Each year over 300,000 LGBTQ youth experience at least one night of homelessness in America.
  - Once homeless, LGBTQ youth experience higher rates of physical and sexual assault and higher incidence of mental health problems and unsafe sexual behaviors than heterosexual homeless youth.
  - LGB homeless youth are twice as likely to attempt suicide (62 percent) as their heterosexual homeless peers (29 percent).



CAUSES AND UNDERLYING FACTORS



- **Youth homelessness is largely a reflection of family breakdown.**
- **Youth become homeless for varying reasons, including:**
  - Leaving home because of physical, emotional, and/or sexual abuse;
  - Being abandoned by their parents or guardians – e.g., because of non-acceptance of the youth’s gender identity or sexual orientation; parents’ incarceration, parents’ substance abuse, parents’ mental health problems
  - Being emancipated – e.g., because of teen pregnancy;
  - Exiting Foster Care and/or the Juvenile Correctional System

HOW IT’S DONE

- **Outside the system**
  - We recruit, screen, train and support community volunteers who then provide short-term, supportive housing and food for youth who are homeless or precariously housed
  - Program Coordinator supports hosts – regular contact, monthly meetings, support groups
  - Youth referred by YES and Star Track– homeless youth agencies, school and county social workers, community advocates
  - Youth receive ongoing case management

WHY HOST HOMES

- **Safer transition-like housing, rooted in community, non-institutional**
- **Cost-effective**
- **The Intangibles/Icing on the Cake:**
  - Long-term/life-long relationships can be established
  - Changes lives – youth AND hosts
  - By extension, changes the community

HOST INFORMATION

- **Host recruitment and screening**
  - Community organizing, relationship-building
  - Application form, background checks, 2-3 interviews, reference letters
- **Host training (8 hours)**
  - Videos to provide context to homelessness
  - Training on Self-awareness, LGBTQ Safe Space, Boundary Setting ,Conflict Mediation, Managing Expectations, Cultural Competency, Power and Privilege
  - Focus on host applicants: self-reflection exercises, power and privilege awareness

KEY FEATURES – HOST HOMES

- **Careful youth referrals**
  - Case manager needs to work with youth at least one month prior to referral (typically much longer)
  - Youth are voluntary participants
  - When youth call who have no case manager/connection to advocate, our HHP Case Manager will work with them and assess program appropriateness
  - Provide case management even if youth can't or decides not to be in HHP
- **Youth-driven matching process**
- **Consistent support of hosts and youth**

QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

STIPEND

Host's will received \$400 per month for UP to 3 months to help off-set any additional cost incurred due to participation in the Host Home Program.

PSY BALTIMORE  
HOST HOME PROGRAM

**Renee Stainrod**  
Homesharing Host Home Program  
Coordinator  
St. Ambrose Housing Aid Center  
ReneeS@stambros.org  
410-366-8550 x233  
860-532-8835 (Cell)

Check out the following host training slide deck from the fabulous Host Home Team at SPY in Los Angeles! They ground their training by providing context on youth homelessness in LA and the demographics of youth supported by SPY.



Welcome & Introductions!

- Share with the group:
  - Name
  - Pronoun: what you like to be called (ex: she/her, he/him)
  - What was your favorite way to spend your time as a child?
  - What is your favorite way to spend your time now?
- Turn to a partner and share:
  - What excites you about this training?
  - What anxieties and questions are you coming in with?



Common reasons for youth homelessness:

- Family Problems (abuse/neglect, parental drug use, family financial concerns)
- Systems failures (schools, foster care, social services, juvenile justice)
- Situational Conflicts



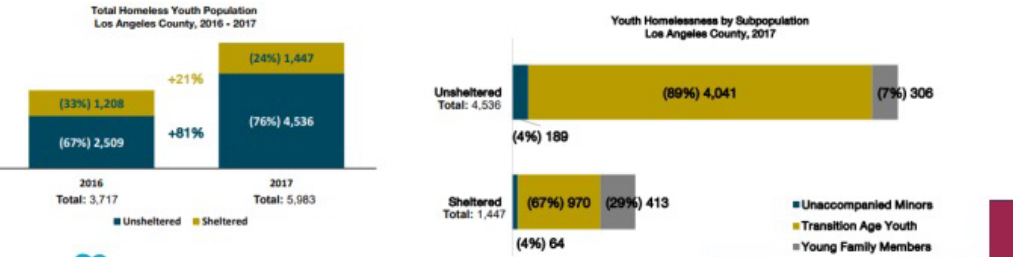
Common experiences of homeless youth:

- Mental health concerns
- Difficulty developing positive relationships with peers and trusting relationships with adults
- Community violence from predatory adults, other homeless individuals or police
  - LGBTQ youth are more likely to experience such violence
- Abusive or exploitative relationships
- Substance use as a means of self-medication
  - Keeps them from entering residential programs
- Survival sex
  - Increased risk for STIs, HIV and Unplanned Pregnancies

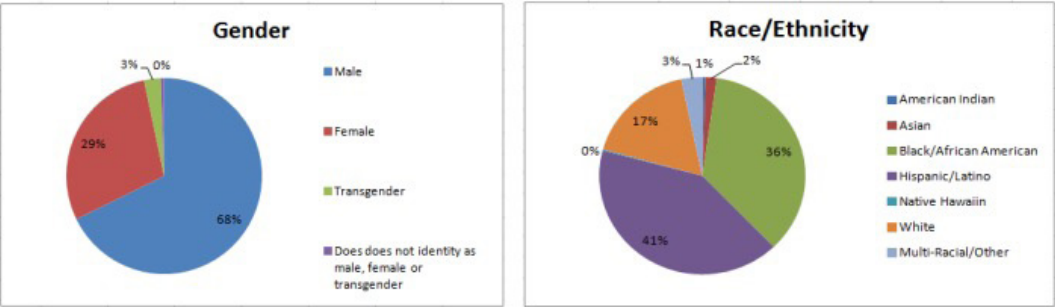


Youth Homelessness in Los Angeles:

- 5,983 youth experiencing homelessness on a given night in 2017
- 63% increase from 2016
- 89% of youth experiencing homelessness are TAY (18-25 yr olds)

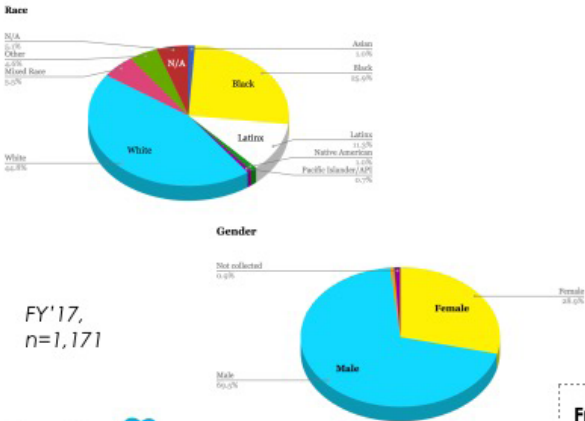


Youth Homelessness in Los Angeles:



2017 Youth Count, LA County

SPY Member Demographics:



FY'17, n=1,171

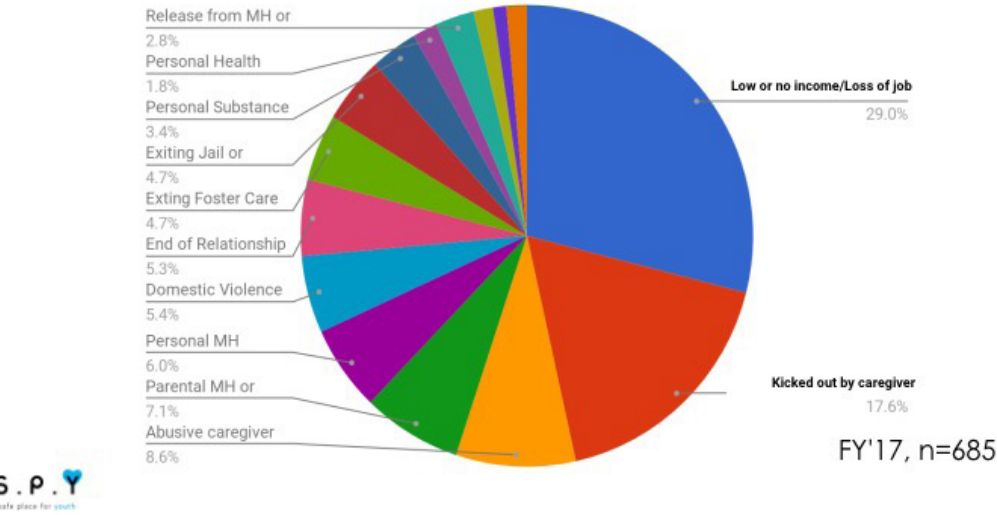


- \*Age** - 65% are 21-25  
<2% are minors
- \*Gender** - 69% are male
- \*LGBTQ** - 18%
- \*Race** - 44.6% caucasian, 26% African American, 11% hispanic/latino, 5.5% mixed, 4.6% other, 1% Native American, 1% Asian, .67% API/Pacific Islander, 5.3 % declined

From the US - 95%  
From outside California - 65%  
From California - 35% (12% from LA County)



"What first contributed to your housing instability/ homelessness?"



Positive Youth Development

S.P.Y. safe place for youth

What is Positive Youth Development (PYD)?

A philosophy or approach that guides communities in the way they organize programs, supports and opportunities so that young people can develop to their full potential.

- Focus on building positive outcomes
- Youth voice and engagement
- Long-term involvement/Developmentally appropriate
- Universal/Inclusive
- Community-based/Collaborative

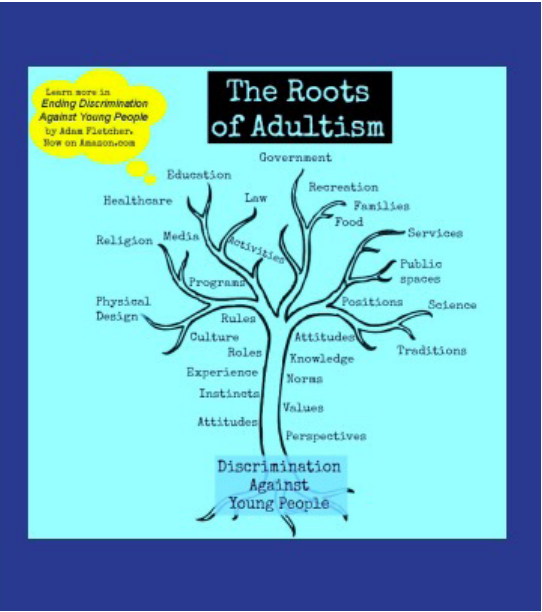
S.P.Y. safe place for youth

Obstacle: Adultism

...the behaviors and attitudes which flow from negative stereotypes adults hold about youth.

John Bell, 1995

S.P.Y. safe place for youth



A Paradigm Shift:  
A Strengths-Based Approach

- People are active participants in the helping process (empowerment)
- All people have strengths, often untapped or unrecognized
- Strengths foster motivation for growth
- Strengths are internal and environmental
- Focus on the developmental stage of an individual



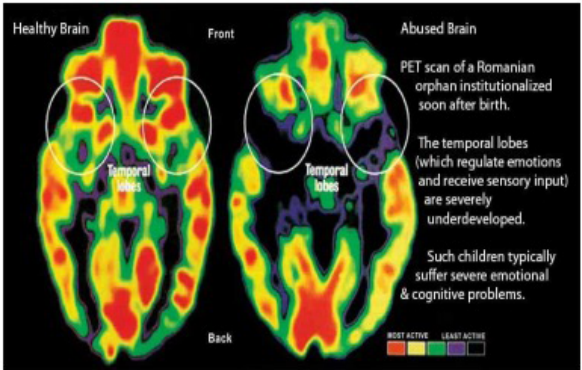
Trauma and the Brain:

Childhood and repeat trauma can negatively impact brain development, particularly in areas linked to emotional regulation, executive functioning, and narrative language.

**Strengths-based approach**

Acknowledge developmental & chronological age might not match. Help youth identify and practice skills gradually.

**S.P.Y.**  
safe place for youth



A tool for supporting  
PYD: Harm Reduction

**Harm reduction** is an approach to supporting others that is designed to lessen the negative social and/or physical consequences associated with various risky human behaviors.



Trauma & Resilience


**S.P.Y.**  
safe place for youth

SPY Member Panel:  
A Youth Perspective



Closing & Thank You!

- What is one key learning that you are taking away with you today?




SPY Host Homes Training

January 20th-21st, 2018



Welcome Back...

To Day Two!!





Exercise: Putting a Strengths-Based Approach into Practice:

- Break into groups of three
- Read your assigned scenario aloud
- Answer the following questions as a group:
  - What individual strengths does the youth in your scenario demonstrate?
  - What environmental strengths does the youth in your scenario have?





4 Basic Communication Styles

<p><b>Passive:</b> avoids communicating needs, to one's own detriment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Little eye contact</li><li>• Soft tone</li><li>• Apologetic speech</li><li>• Self-deprecating</li><li>• Only expresses opinion after others</li></ul> 	<p><b>Aggressive:</b> expresses needs, to the detriment of others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Clenched fist or jaw</li><li>• Loud tone</li><li>• Blaming speech</li><li>• Sarcastic, or critical</li><li>• Expresses opinion first and often</li></ul> 
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4 Basic Communication Styles (Cont'd)

<p><b>Passive- Aggressive:</b> relies on indirect, hostile ways to communicate needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Sulked posture</li><li>• Muttering</li><li>• Complaining speech</li><li>• Mismatched tone &amp; expression</li><li>• Deny issues when confronted</li></ul> 	<p><b>Assertive:</b> firmly upholds one's own needs w/o violating the needs of others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Direct eye contact</li><li>• Firm tone</li><li>• Self-affirming speech</li><li>• Calm facial expression</li><li>• Shares space/ listens, as well as speaks</li></ul> 
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We're never all one thing or another. Situation, context, and past experience, **including trauma**, have a big effect.



## Tips for Assertive Communication

- ★ Practice “I” Statements
- ★ Try the XYZ formula
- ★ Use simple, neutral vocabulary
- ★ Be aware of tone of voice, facial expression, posture, & gaze
- ★ Create “Safe Exits”
- ★ Allow silence
- ★ Say No.



## Putting our tools into practice!



## Power & Privilege

### Terminology:

- Power:
  - the capacity or ability to direct or influence the behavior of others or the course of events
- Privilege:
  - is a right or exemption from liability or duty granted as a special benefit or advantage
- Oppression:
  - Results from conscious and unconscious, harassment, discrimination, exploitation, prejudice and other forms of unequal treatment that impact different groups through the use of institutional power and privilege
- Marginalized:
  - Excluded, ignored, or relegated to the outer edge of a group



From: University of Massachusetts, Office of Multicultural Affairs

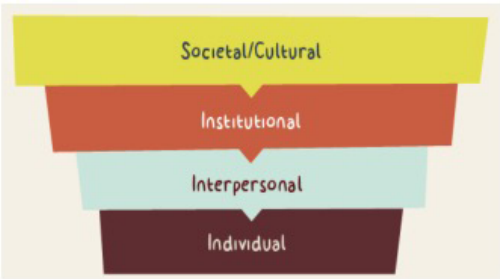
Sometimes you're a Caterpillar:



Oppression:

Oppression happens at all levels, reinforced by:

- societal norms,
  - collective ideas about what is "right"
- institutional biases,
  - legal system, education system, public policy, hiring practices, media images
- interpersonal interactions,
  - actions, behaviors and language
- individual beliefs
  - feelings, beliefs, values



POWER

Type of Oppression	Target Group	Non-Target Group
Racial	People of color	White people
Class	Poor; working class	Middle, owning class
Gender	Women	Men
Sexual orientation	Lesbian, gay, transgender, bisexual	Heterosexual people
Ability	People with disabilities	People without disabilities
Religion	Non-Christian	Christian
Age	People over 40	Young people
Youth	Children and young adults	Older adults
Rank/status	People without college degree	People with college degree
Military service	Vietnam veterans	Veterans of other wars
Immigrant status	Immigrant	U.S.-born
Language	Non-English	English

PRIVILEGE

Exercise: The Privilege Walk

- I'll be asking a series of questions
- Listen carefully, each statement will provide you with directions to either take one step forward or one step back
- Only take a step if you feel comfortable doing so
- Please remain quiet during the duration of the activity

# Values, Expectations & Boundaries

## Values:

"A value is defined as a principle, standard, or quality considered inherently worthwhile or desirable. Individuals, groups, and whole societies hold values. **Values are what motivate and fulfill you. They imbue your work and your life with meaning.** ...In essence, a value is what is important to you."

-- Julie Jansen, I Don't Know What I Want, But I Know It's Not This

"Values are a matter of what **guides you through every day, every task, every encounter with another human being.**"

-- Richard N. Bolles, What Color is Your Parachute?

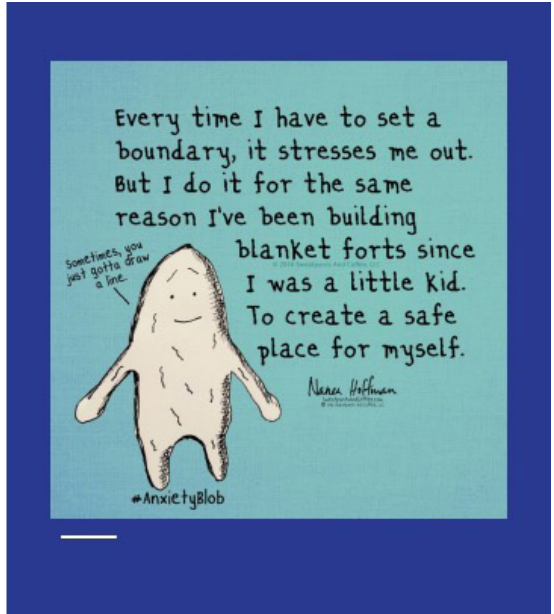
## Expectations:

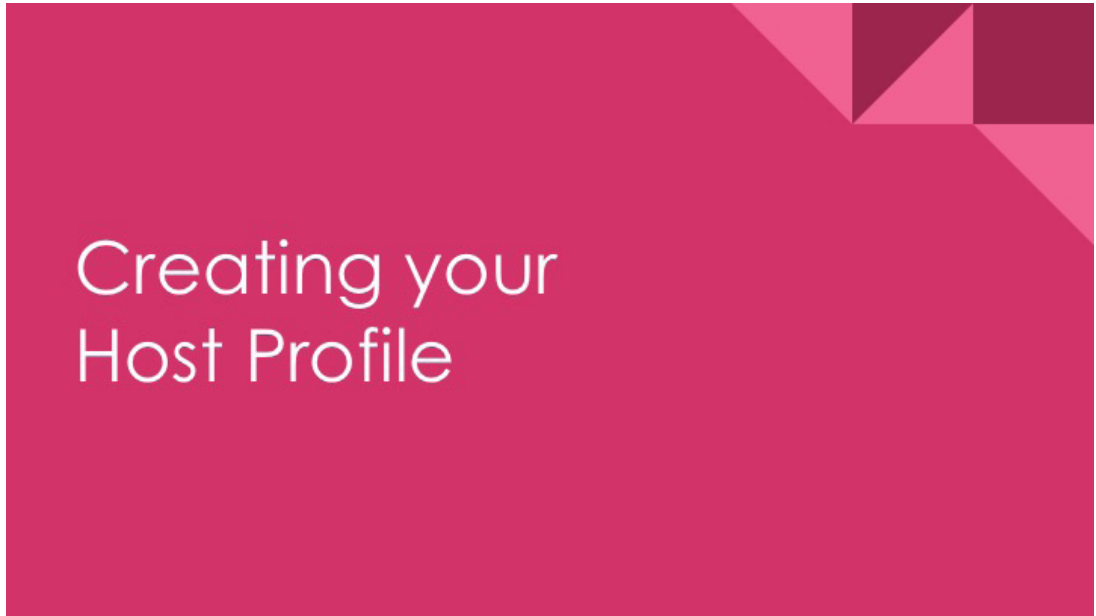
- The values that we hold influence the expectations that we set up for ourselves and for those around us in terms of behaviors, demeanours, speech, etc.
- However, shared values do not always lead to shared expectations; this is why clarifying our expectations is crucial

Question: What are the expectations that you set up for yourself and for others based on your core values?

## Boundaries:

- Some of the expectations we have may also turn into boundaries we set
- Boundaries are especially important as mechanisms for making sure that we maintain a safe environment
- When our expectations do become boundaries, it is important that we make them clear for others so we are not setting up ourselves for disappointment
- We at SPY value self-determination and reciprocal relationships and so we hope that you and your guests enter your relationship with openness around your boundaries





Exercise: Cultural Diversity Self-Assessment

*Time to reflect!*





## Opening Line Activity

*Avenues for Homeless Youth uses the following activities to help hosts reflect on what has emerged for them during the training process. How will they respond to potentially challenging situations while hosting? What have they learned about themselves and the hosting process? We recommend using interactive and discussion-based activities to help hosts synthesize what they have learned and to process that learning with their peers!*

You discovered that your takeout leftovers are gone even after you asked that they do not be eaten (you are fairly certain your partner did not eat them).

The youth has not been home for the last 3 nights but has been checking in to let you know where they are.

The youth has not been home for the last 3 nights and has not called to let you know where they are.

The youth said they would not have anyone over while you were away, and you have clear evidence to the contrary.

The youth rarely goes out and seems to look to you to find them things to do.

The youth has what appears to be razor cut on their arm.

The youth absolutely LOVES you but has nothing nice to say about your partner.

The youth has been noticeably withdrawn over the last few days and doesn't seem open to dialogue... just says everything is fine.

The youth hasn't eaten any food from the fridge for a couple of weeks.

You ask the youth to clean the bathtub and get rid of all the hair, and you hear them mutter under their breath "racist fuck."

## Closure Conversation

What are you taking away from this discussion that will be helpful to you?

What is one strength you have and one growing edge?

## Films for Training

Host Home trainings are very flexible. Each community decides what topics are to be covered during their trainings. Many partners have used short videos such as *The Infamous T* and *Israel's Path* to begin a conversation about what it is like to host a young person. Both videos share young peoples' experiences and reasoning for needing to be hosted.

Since the trainings often take place on weekends and it can be challenging getting to all the information you'd like, some partners have sent a link out as homework several days before the training. This allowed the partner to use the video for an opening discussion and save time from showing the video. You'll notice that both videos deal with youth who identify with the LGBTQ+ community as many programs have a special LGBTQ+ focus since these youth are disproportionately affected by homelessness. Please see below for more information on each video.

# The Infamous T

([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_UvnXLMKf6Y](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_UvnXLMKf6Y))

Running time: 30 minutes, 10 seconds

### Description:

*The Infamous T* examines an intimate year in the life of Jonathon, a young gay man finding himself while living at the intersection of queer and black identities and struggling with a lifetime of homelessness. As he struggles to balance his family of origin and family of choice, stay in school, and be his most authentic self, Jonathon discovers that home is more than four walls, and friendship can transform us. Director Melissa Koch's award winning film deftly examines the complexities of race, class, and the power of love of all kinds.

### Ways to use:

The video depicts what it's like to live in a host home and several of the challenges that can arise. Many partners use this as a way to begin a discussion around what it's like to host and how to address common issues. The video is a great chance to get a feel of what possible hosts are thinking. The video covers several themes including hosting, miscommunication, avoidance, problem solving, dealing with the guilt of leaving family behind, and navigating different realities. Because this video is rather long, it can also be emailed before the date of your training for folks to view at their leisure. It is a great discussion starter.

# Israel's Path

(<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oV-40tKNReo>)

Running time: 6 minutes, 30 seconds

### Description:

Nineteen-year-old Israel Moncado spent his childhood being shuffled from one foster care setting to the next. After years of untreated gender dysphoria, and the bouts of self-harm and social isolation that often result from stigma, Israel visits his first LGBTQ+ center and discovers he's not alone. When he finds a safe space in a transgender community, Israel begins to embrace his identity. The "Your Path to Our Health" project explores the interplay between culture and health and aims to spotlight how cultural filters shape the way each of us understands and pursues health and well-being.

### Ways to use:

This video is another example of a host homes program. Although it is a lot less informal, it provides a glimpse of the needs and what it is like to be hosted. The video covers themes including foster care, gender non-conforming, fitting in, and depression. This video can also be used to spark a discussion about identity and the importance of safety in being hosted.



“Do we allow our kids to be homeless and sleep in the streets and not anyone care for them? Or do we step up and actually do something about it—something meaningful?”

—**Sophie-Rose Cadle**

*Transgender,  
Gender Non-conforming,  
& Non-binary (TGNCNB)  
Youth Policy Advocate,  
Point Source Youth*



# YOUTH APPLICATION PROCESS

A Resource  
Guidebook for  
Host Home Programs





Sample Youth Application

Check out this sample application shared by Avenues for Homeless Youth! It includes sections to be completed by both the young person interested in host homes and the case manager referring them, as well as thoughtful discourse about disclosing sensitive information during the application process.

We’ve found that making a youth-centered and straightforward application helps reduce barriers to youth applying to the host home program - and it also sets the foundation for a program that prioritizes positive youth development and trauma-informed care!

YOUTH APPLICATION FORM

Hi! We’re glad that you’re interested in the XXXX Host Home Program (XXXX HHP). Here are some initial questions that will help us figure out how best to move forward:

Are you already working with our XXXX HHP Case Manager, Rosie Benser?  
\_\_\_\_\_ yes    \_\_\_\_\_ no

If yes, for how long have you been working with her?

Are you being referred to the XXXX HHP by a case manager/youth worker/advocate who is not Rosie?    \_\_\_\_\_ yes    \_\_\_\_\_ no  
If yes, what is their name and where do they work?

Note: If you have no case manager/advocate and you are **self-referring**, please know that you will need to contact Rosie and work with her for at least **one month** before being able to apply for the XXXX HHP. XXXX’s number is XXX-XXX-XXXX. Thank you!

Another Note: If you are **being referred** by a youth worker/case manager/advocate (not Rosie), please give this form to them after you’ve completed it so they can send it to us along with the referral form. Thanks!

Now to the more interesting stuff (information about you)!

Your Name:\_\_\_\_\_

Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth:\_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone:(        ) \_\_\_\_\_-

Pronouns Used (he/him, she/her, they/them, other):

- 1) How do you self-identify (race, gender, ethnicity, etc.)?
- 2) Where did you grow up?
- 3) How long have you been in **XXXX** or **XXXXXX** (please circle which)? Other City:
- 4) Where are you currently living (e.g. friend’s house, shelter, family, foster care, squat)?
- 5) Do you have a **GED** or **high school diploma** (please circle which)?  
\_\_\_\_\_ yes    \_\_\_\_\_ no  
If yes, from where?
- 6) What are some of the things you are now working on (e.g. trying to get a job, GED)?



- 7) Why did you pick the XXXX Host Home Program over other housing programs?
- 8) How do you think the XXXX Host Home Program will support you?
- 9) What are some of the strengths that you would bring into the program (e.g. great sense of humor, artistic abilities, hard work)?
- 10) Are you willing to develop a case plan and work towards your goals together with your case manager/advocate and host volunteers?   \_\_\_\_\_ yes   \_\_\_\_\_ no
- 11) What kind of host volunteers would you like to live with?
- 12) Do you have any allergies?
- 13) Once you’re in a host home, who would you like us to contact in case of an emergency?

RELEASE OF INFORMATION

Please sign here to authorize your advocate/agency, the XXXX Host Home Program staff and potential hosts to respectfully share relevant information about you with each other. This will help us find the best match possible for you and also provide you with on-going support. Thank you.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

If you are self-referring or already working with Rosie, please contact her so you can give her this completed form. If not, please have your case manager/advocate send this completed form along with his/her/their completed referral form to:

Agency Name  
XXXX HHP  
1234 Address Here  
State, XX Zip Code

Fax XXX-XXX-XXXX  
name@xxxx.org

GRIEVANCE

If you have a grievance about this program, please speak to your case manager. They can help you set up a time to talk with Deb Loon, Executive Director of Avenues for Homeless Youth to discuss your grievance.

Case Manager Referral Form

(to be sent with Youth Application Form)

First, thank you for thinking of the XXXX HHP and supporting young people as they explore housing options. Below are some expectations we have about the referral process, as well as some guidelines for sharing relevant information. We encourage you to read this form with/to the young person. The main reason for doing this is to minimize the possibility of ‘setting-up’ youth and hosts. Thank you. In Community – the XXXX HHP Team.

Guidelines for Disclosing Sensitive Information and Case Manager Expectations

Disclosing sensitive information during the referral process:

Upon referring a youth, please take some time to think about and talk with your client about his/her/their readiness for the XXXX HHP. Here are some examples of issues that should be disclosed to the XXXX HHP Team throughout the referral process:

History of:

- Chemical Dependency
- Involvement in prostitution/survival sex/sex work/the sex trades
- Drug dealing
- Stealing
- Violence (physical, sexual, emotional)
- Mental Health issues
- Medical concerns (i.e. diabetes, asthma, allergies)

Because the XXXX HHP is meant to be a transition between homelessness and greater housing stability, it is crucial to assess the youth’s readiness and willingness to break away from – or at least not bring into the host home - activities/behaviors associated with street life. The issues listed above are all too present in the population of homeless youth – the XXXX HHP does NOT expect an absence of such issues. The XXXX HHP does, however, expect the youth to have already done some work around those issues. For example, a host home is very appropriate for someone who is needing/wanting a supportive environment around staying sober as one of his/her/their goals. It is NOT appropriate for someone who needs a place to get sober. Hosts are not trained to provide that kind of support.

When talking with a youth who is applying for the XXXX HHP, please discuss the fact that the youth application has a release of information statement at the bottom, which needs to be signed by that young person. Talk about what he/she/they think should be shared, what he/she/they is comfortable disclosing themselves to the XXXX HHP team, and what they would like you, as the referring case manager to disclose about their history. Also indicate the issues you think need to be talked about – issues that the youth may not have thought of or feels reluctant about sharing. These conversations will help you, the youth, and the XXXX HHP team figure out if the XXXX HHP is indeed the appropriate choice for your client. If the XXXX HHP is a good option for the youth, then these conversations will help us in matching your client to a host home and developing an effective goal plan.

**Please be clear with the youth that the above information will be disclosed.**

Disclosing sensitive information after the referral process:

The XXXX HHP will provide case management for your client while they are in a host home. However, in situations where the referring case manager has a well established relationship with, or has been providing intensive case management for the referred youth, the XXXX HHP requests that the referring case manager offer follow through and after-care through the first home visit, which is usually two weeks after the youth moves into a host home. After-care includes following up with a young person after they have moved into a host home. During your client’s transition into host home, you may learn information that needs to be shared with the XXXX HHP team and hosts. The issues we listed are examples of what MUST be discussed. Some behaviors associated with street life (such as dealing/using drugs) are not acceptable or viable in a host home. This does not mean that a youth is automatically out of the XXXX HHP if, for example, they are involved in sex work outside of the host home. If the youth is willing to address legitimate concerns that come up for us and/or the host(s), they could potentially remain in the host home. In order to assess your client’s willingness and readiness to stay, you must inform the XXXX HHP manager and set up a meeting for further discussion.

***A lot of the behaviors associated with homelessness are, of course, survival skills. They have helped keep many young people alive. We are very aware that many of these ‘behaviors’ are reactions to systemic barriers that young people experience, especially LGBTQ+ youth of color.*** Hopefully, the XXXX HHP can provide some youth with an opportunity to work on other skills and figure out what it means to live in a safer and caring environment, as defined by them.

***I have read and understood the Guidelines for Disclosing Sensitive information and understand my role as referring case manager.***

**Case Manager Signature:**

Name of youth/client:

D.O.B:

Referring CM Name:

Referring Agency:

- 1) How long have you been working with the young person?
- 2) How often have you met/do you meet?
- 3) How many conversations have you had with the young person about the XXXX HHP?
- 4) We require that referring case managers check for outstanding citations/warrants. Have you done this? Are there any?
- 5) Why do you feel that the XXXX Host Home Program would be a good fit for the young person?

6.) Are there any concerns regarding any of the following? (Mark all that apply, if there are concerns, these will be discussed via phone with a member of the XXXX HHP team)

- ☐ Chemical Dependency
- ☐ Involvement in prostitution/survival sex/sex work/the sex trades
- ☐ Drug dealing
- ☐ Stealing
- ☐ Violence (physical, sexual, emotional)
- ☐ Mental Health Issues
- ☐ Medical concerns (i.e. diabetes, asthma, allergies, etc)

Case Manager Signature:  
  
\_\_\_\_\_

Date:  
  
\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Memorandum of Understanding

*As a referral source for youth to the Host Home program, I understand that the following steps are expected to have taken place before my referral:*

- That I have known the referred youth for at least one month and believe that they are a good candidate for the Program.
- That I have met the youth at least four times.
- That I have talked about the youth’s potential participation in the Program with my supervisor and have their support in this referral.
- That I have checked for outstanding citations and warrants for the youth I am referring.

*Once the youth is in the Program, I understand that the following are expected of me as a case manager/advocate for that youth:*

- That I will continue to provide case management and advocacy for the youth while they live in a host home, being in contact weekly, and that I will be the main source of outside support for them.
- That I will be responsible for developing/checking the goal plan (together with youth).
- That I will work with the Host Home Program Manager to make sure we are providing the best support possible for the hosts and the youth. I understand that the Program Manager will be the main support person for the hosts.
- That I will be the first contact for the youth if they have a grievance about the program and will help them set up a meeting with the Executive Director of Avenues for Homeless Youth, to talk about that grievance.
- That I will do home visits once a month, or as often as is appropriate depending on the host home situation. Those home visits will be done together with the Host Home Program Manager.
- That my supervisor is aware of these expectations and supports my involvement in the Host Home Program.

Case Manager Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor Signature: \_\_\_\_\_



**“If there aren’t folks with lived experience that are at your program... actually helping to deliver services, then you need to really examine that.”**

**—Blair Franklin**

*Executive Director,  
Youth Empowered Society,*

*2018 National Symposium on  
Solutions to End Youth Homelessness*



**“If you don’t have a lens that’s been trained to look at how various forms of discrimination come together, you’re unlikely to develop a set of policies that will be as inclusive as they need to be.”**

**—Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw**





Working together to end the crisis of youth homelessness requires us all to expand our intersectional understanding of structural and systemic inequalities in the United States. For all of us to better serve our communities and create braver spaces we need to commit ourselves to decolonizing the literature and media we consume. We’ve compiled a list of resources, although not exhaustive, to assist you in your journeys to better understand various inequalities, histories, solutions, and perspectives in the U.S.

Books & Articles

Intersectional LGBTQ+ Voices



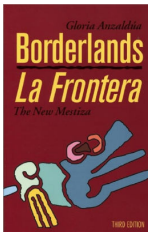
Gay Voices Of The Harlem Renaissance (Blacks In The Diaspora): A History Of Bisexuality, Steven Angelides



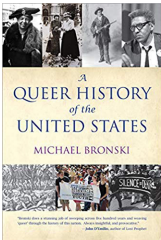
Asegi Stories: Cherokee Queer And Two-spirit Memory, Qwo-li Driskill



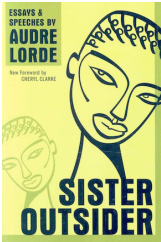
Black On Both Sides: A Racial History Of Trans Identity, Riley Snorton



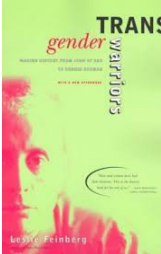
Borderlands / La Frontera, Gloria Anzaldua



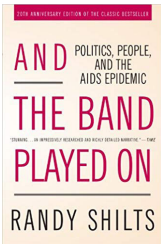
A Queer History of the United States (ReVisioning American History for Young People), Michael Bronski



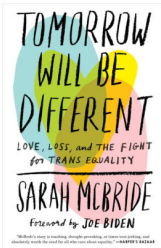
Sister Outsider, Audre Lorde



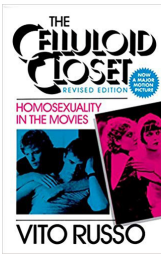
Transgender Warriors, Leslie Feinberg



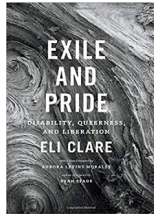
And The Band Played On, Randy Shilts



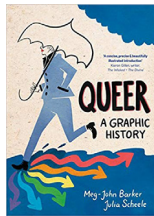
Tomorrow Will Be Different: Love, Loss, And The Fight For Trans Equality, Sarah McBride



The Celluloid Closet, Vito Russo

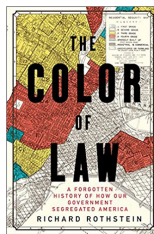


*Exile and Pride: Disability, Queerness, and Liberation*, Eli Clare

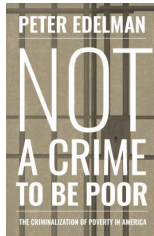


*Queer: A Graphic History*, Dr. Meg-John Barker (Author), Julia Scheele (Illustrator)

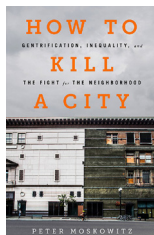
## Housing, Economics and Poverty



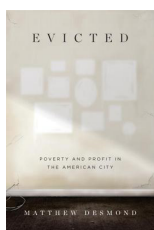
*The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America*, Richard Rothstein



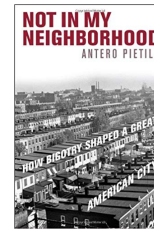
*Not a Crime to be Poor: The Criminalization of Poverty in America*, Peter Edelman



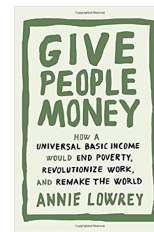
*How to Kill a City: Gentrification, Inequality, and the Fight for the Neighborhood*, Peter Moskowitz



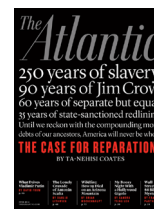
*Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City*, Matthew Desmond



*Not in my Neighborhood: How Bigotry Shaped a Great American City*, Antero Pietila



*Give People Money: How a Universal Basic Income Would End Poverty, Revolutionize Work, and Remake the World*, Annie Lowrey



"The Case for Reparations", *The Atlantic*, Ta-Nehisi Coates

## White Supremacy, Colonialism, and Structural Oppression



*From #BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation*, Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor

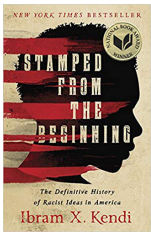


*Between the World and Me*, Ta-Nehisi Coates

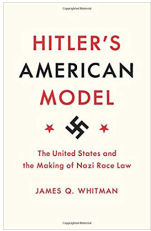


*Racism without Racists: Color-Blind Racism and the Persistence of Racial Inequality in America*, Eduardo Bonilla-Silva

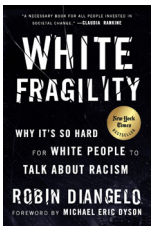




*Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America*, Ibram X. Kendi



*Hitler's American Model: The United States and the Making of Nazi Race Law*, James Q. Whitman



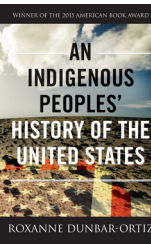
*White Fragility: Why It's So Hard for White People to Talk About Racism*, Robin J. DiAngelo



*White Rage: The Unspoken Truth of Our Racial Divide*, Carol Anderson, Ph.D

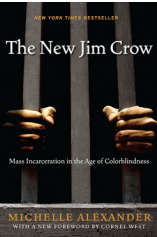


*Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Paulo Freire

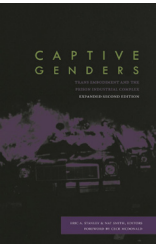


*An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States*, Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz

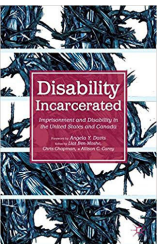
The Criminal (In)justice System and Mass Incarceration



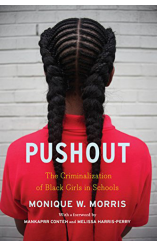
*The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness*, Michelle Alexander



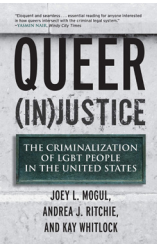
*Captive Genders: Trans Embodiment and the Prison Industrial Complex*, Eric A. Stanley (Editor), Nat Smith (Editor), CeCe McDonald (Foreword)



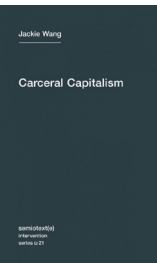
*Disability Incarcerated: Imprisonment and Disability in the United States and Canada*, Allison C. Carey (Editor), Liat Ben-Moshe (Editor), Chris Chapman (Editor), Angela Y. Davis (Foreword)



*Pushout: The Criminalization of Black Girls in Schools*, Monique Morris

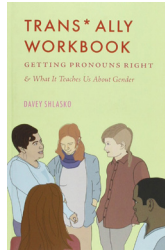


*Queer (In)Justice: The Criminalization Of LGBT People In The United States*, Joey L. Mogul

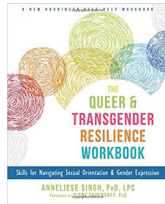


*Carceral Capitalism*, Jackie Wang

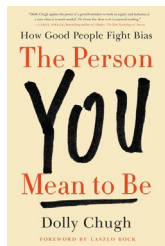
## Allyship and Resilience



*Trans Allyship Workbook: Building Skills to Support Trans People In Our Lives, Davey Shlasko*



*The Queer and Transgender Resilience Workbook: Skills for Navigating Sexual Orientation Gender Expression, Anneliese A. Singh*

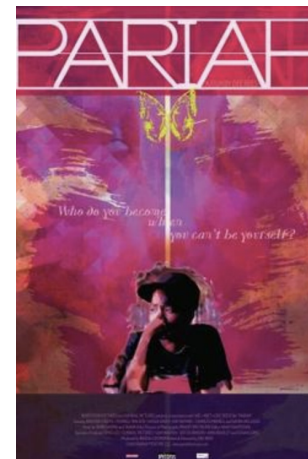


*The Person You Mean to Be: How Good People Fight Bias, Dolly Chugh*

## Films



**Paris is Burning** (1990), is a documentary that chronicles the ball culture of New York City in the 1980s and the Black American and Latinx LGBTQ+ communities who revolutionized the space.



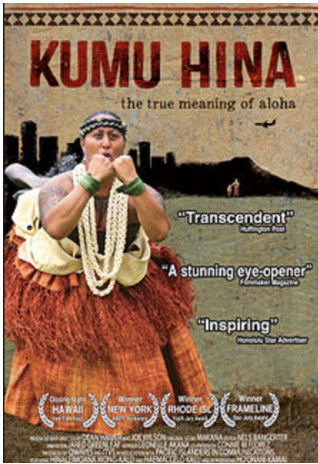
**Pariah** (2011) is an American film written and directed by Dee Rees, the first black woman to be nominated for the Academy Award for Best Adapted Screenplay. Pariah follows the story of Alike, a 17-year-old Black woman who lives with her parents and younger sister in Brooklyn's Fort Greene neighborhood. This movie is a powerful coming-out and coming of age story of a young black lesbian and her journey to be who she wants to be, not who others want her to be.



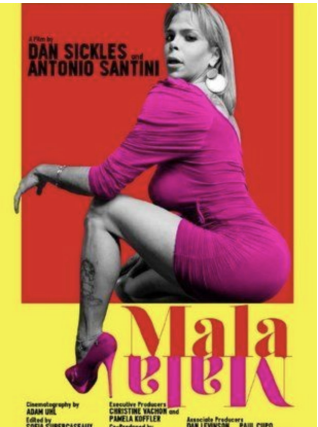
**13th** (2016) is a powerful documentary directed by Ava DuVernay featuring interviews by scholars, activists and politicians analyzing the criminalization of Black Americans and the mass incarceration crisis in the US.



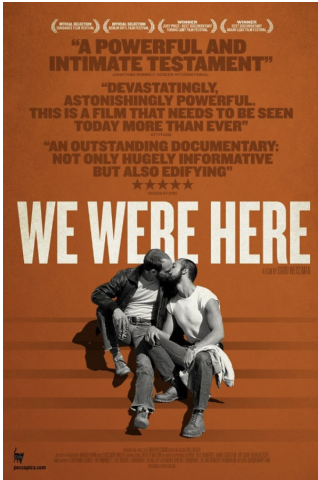
Intersectional Resources



**Kumu Hina** (2014) chronicles the struggle to maintain Pacific Islander culture and values within the Westernized society of modern day Hawaii. The story is told through the lens of a proud and empowered mähū, or transgender woman and Native Hawaiian. An honored and respected kumu (teacher), cultural practitioner, and community leader, the film follows her as she inspires a young girl to lead the school's male hula troupe.



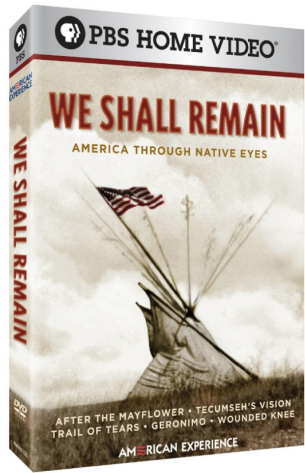
**Mala Mala** (2014) is a documentary following the powerful stories of 9 trans-identifying individuals in Puerto Rico. The film also chronicles the historic victory of the LGBT community with the approval and signature of Law 238-2014 (in Puerto Rico), which prevents discrimination in employment based on sexual orientation and/or gender identity.



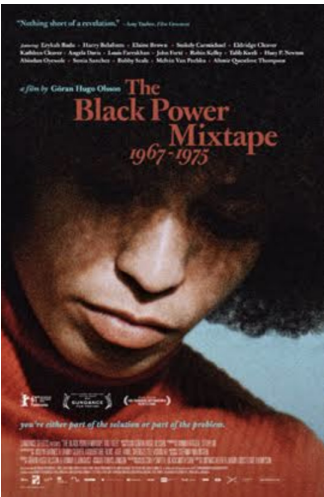
**We Were Here** (2010) is a historical documentary. The film begins in the 1970s in San Francisco, which became a safe haven for the LGBTQ+ community and transitions into the San Francisco as ground zero of the AIDS epidemic. We Were Here explores the love and loss through the stories of five individuals who experienced it firsthand.



**Call Me Kuchu** (2012) is a documentary following openly gay activist David Kato and his friends working to defeat new legislation in their home country of Uganda that would make homosexuality punishable by death.



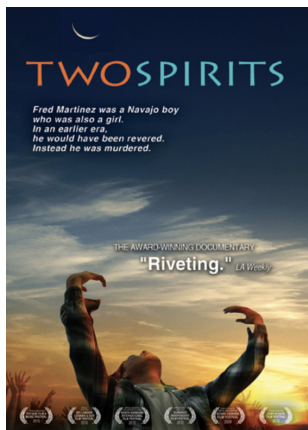
**We Shall Remain** (2009) is a five-part, 7.5-hour PBS documentary series about the history of Indigenous Americans spanning the 17th century to the 20th century.



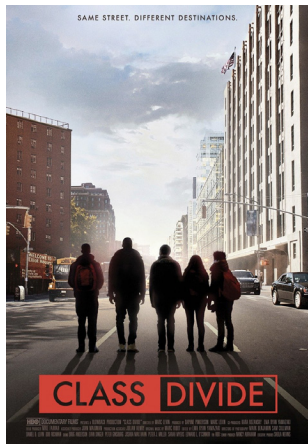
**The Black Power Mixtape** (2011) chronicles the evolution of the Black Power movement in the United States from 1967 to 1975. It features footage of the movement shot by Swedish journalists in the US between 1967–1975 with appearances by activists, community leaders, and artists such as Angela Davis, Bobby Seale, Huey P. Newton and Eldridge Cleaver.



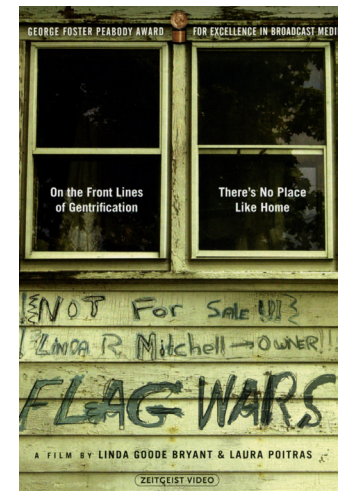
**Small Town Gay Bar** (2006) is a documentary that focuses on two gay bars in the rural deep Southeast region of the US. The film explores a bar in Shannon, Mississippi, and one in Meridian, Mississippi and their functions as places of refuge for communities fighting against discrimination and intolerance.



**Two Spirits** (2009) is a documentary on the story of Fred Martinez who was a part of an honored Navajo tradition of nádleehí or two spirits, representing a balance of ‘feminine’ and ‘masculine’ traits. Fred became one of the youngest hate-crime victims when Fred was brutally murdered at sixteen.



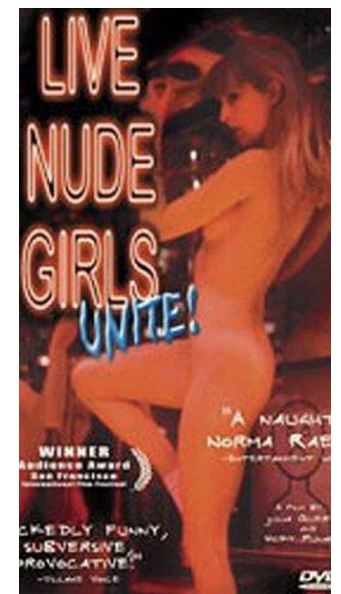
**The Class Divide** (2015) is an HBO documentary that examines the recent effects of hyper-gentrification in New York City's West Chelsea neighborhood.



**Flag Wars** (2003) is a gripping personal look at a historically black neighborhood in the Old Towne East area of Columbus, Ohio, and the tension between residents who perceive themselves to be forced out by affluent LGBTQ+ couples gentrifying the neighborhood. The documentary touches on the nuance of gentrification through the intersections of race, gender, and sexuality in the U.S.



**A Road to Home** (2015) follows the lives of six LGBTQ+ young people experiencing homelessness over the span of 18 months and the intersections of homophobia, racism, and poverty.



**Live Nude Girls Unite!** (2000) is a first-person documentary about a group of strippers who formed the only union of exotic dancers in the US, making labor history.



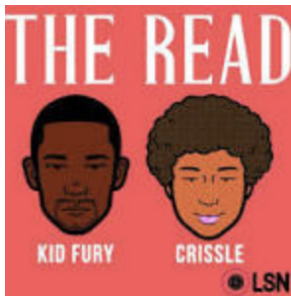


**Notes from the Field** (2015) is a play, written and performed by Anna Deavere Smith. It discusses issues surrounding race, class, and America’s school-to-prison pipeline. Its content is drawn from over 200 interviews with students, parents, teachers, and administrators caught in the system.

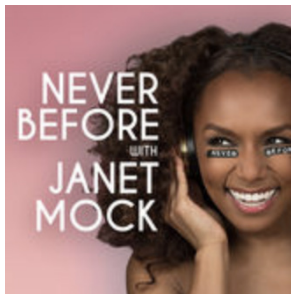
## Podcasts/YouTube



**Pod Save The People** is an American political podcast hosted by community organizer and activist DeRay Mckesson. The podcast examines culture, social justice, and politics by exploring the history, language, and people who are shaping the struggle for progress.



**The Read** is a weekly pop culture podcast hosted by vlogger Kid Fury and comedian/internet personality Crissle West. The podcast explores topics like hip-hop, celebrity gossip, life in New York City, and the Black queer experience.



**Never Before** is a podcast hosted by author and trans activist Janet Mock. The podcast explores interesting themes and features amazing guests, all working to center the voices and stories of queer people of color in the United States.



**Nancy** is a podcast hosted by best friends Kathy Tu and Tobin Low, that addresses the struggles faced by the LGBTQ+ community, especially for the queer Asian community.



**The BiCast** is a podcast that works to provide a platform for and amplifying bi voices and experiences in the U.S.



**LGBTQ&A** is an interview podcast documenting modern queer and trans history, hosted by Huffington Post writer Jeffrey Masters.



**Black Girl Dangerous** is a podcast hosted by queer and trans activist Raquel Willis that amplifies the voices of queer and trans people of color through intersectional conversations on cultural moments and events.



**Cafe Con Chisme** is a Latinx podcast co-hosted by siblings Sebastián and Yasmin Ferrada that explores conversations on racism, issues impacting the LGBTQ+ community, and self-care through a Latinx lens. The podcast also seeks to promote health self-care practices empowering listeners to survive and thrive.

# You’ve reached the end of the handbook—but Point Source Youth is still here!

The Point Source Youth team is so excited to support you on your host home journey! We believe that host home programs are a critical piece of the community response to youth homeless. As such, we are here to do whatever it takes to make sure that you feel empowered and supported while using host homes in your community! We have your back for the messy and magical, and no question or concern is too small to discuss with us.

Please use us as a resource! We can answer questions (it’s worth repeating that none is too small!), connect you to peer organizations, invite you to our learning collaboratives and host home retreats, and add sections to this handbook based on your feedback. We pride ourselves on being flexible and partner-centered, because we believe that is what it will take to do our part in ending youth homelessness.

Looking forward to hearing from you!



<http://www.pointsourceyouth.org>  
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*Associate Director, Communications, Storytelling and Development*  
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**"Self-care is critical. It's an ethical dilemma. If we're not caring for ourselves we will not be able to care for anyone else in a way that's meaningful or helpful."**

**—Dr. Cynthia Lubin Langtiw**

*Professor,  
The Chicago School of Professional Psychology  
and Board Member/Board Vice President,  
Point Source Youth*

*2018 National Symposium on  
Solutions to End Youth Homelessness*



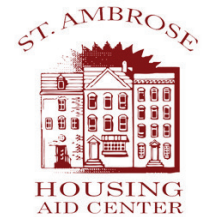
**Safe Place for Youth**

<http://www.safeplaceforyouth.org>  
[info@safeplaceforyouth.org](mailto:info@safeplaceforyouth.org)



**St. Ambrose Housing Aid Center**

<http://www.stambrose.com>  
[stambrose@stambros.org](mailto:stambrose@stambros.org)



**Avenues for Homeless Youth**

<http://avenuesforyouth.org/>  
[info@avenuesforyouth.org](mailto:info@avenuesforyouth.org)



**Safe and Supported**

<http://www.safeandsupported.org>  
513-487-7115











# Point Source Youth

