

YSS LIAISON REPORT

Liaison: Nancy Brooks

Need for Program: YSS provides services to youth and families of central Iowa, particularly at-risk youth. YSS provides many programs in the following four areas:

- Prevention: 486 children cared for through YSS Kid's Club
6,459 youth served with school-based prevention programs
- Treatment: YSS provides a continuum of behavioral health services
108 teens received residential treatment for addiction
- Child Welfare: 191 youth cared for in emergency shelter
318 days of crisis stabilization provided
- Transition: 20,075 nights of housing provided to homeless youth
30 youth placed in Rapid Re-housing apartments

Due to a dramatic rise in youth anxiety and depression, schools are identifying more troubled youth including mental health issues, substance abuse/addiction, and suicidal ideation.

ASSET Priorities addressed by YSS programs include:

Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment

Sheltering/Temporary/Transitional Housing

Crisis Intervention/Stabilization and Outpatient Services

Public Education and Awareness

Youth Development

Program Strengths:

- YSS has a long and successful history of providing local emergency youth shelter.
- YSS collaborates with local law enforcement, schools, DHS & JCS and local professionals/agencies to maintain the safety and well-being of youth and families
- YSS programs appropriately target different populations to address the needs of the community.
- YSS was able to seamlessly transition 400 mental health clients to Tele-Health within 2 weeks due to Covid-19.
- YSS professional staff quickly adapt to situations and started some face-to-face counseling for younger children in September. Family development programs were converted to all virtual while YSS is developing more virtual Education & Awareness programming for schools.

Program Weaknesses/Constraints: The most significant constraints for YSS exist now due to the pandemic.

- An unmet need for Behavioral Health Outpatients is many YSS clients don't have reliable access to technology and internet for tele counseling.
- Due to Covid-19, YSS has a need for technology (phones, data plans and computers) for homeless youth to stay connected to schools, work and therapy appointments.

- YSS is facing the challenge of safely housing homeless youth and youth experiencing human trafficking victimization in Story County.
- Rosedale shelter implemented necessary Covid-19 safety protocols thus increasing staff time and supplies.

Financial Outlook: YSS utilizes program fees with sliding fee scales, fundraising and grants to fund its operation. The following funding changes are being requested:

- Kid's Club provides before and after-school developmental programs for children of working or single parents in Story County and is a top priority for YSS. Due to Covid-19, participation is down 60% and alternative spaces were needed. YSS has certain fixed costs that exceed the sliding fee scale services fees.
- Rosedale Shelter requests funding to support 1 reserved bed/day.
- Transitional Housing program is requesting an increase of \$10,444 for a total request of \$27,000 based on the expansion of housing services for transition age youth. YSS is adding 10 additional housing units in Story Co. for homeless or at-risk youth.
- YSS is requesting to move dollars from 3.17 Nursing Care Coordination and 3.17 Psych. Evaluation and Medical Mgmt. into 3.13 Service Coordination for consolidation and efficiency. 3.13 Service Coordination help Story Co. residents access services and identifies those residents who don't have other ways to pay for services, identifying which funding source the service is billed based on whether the client is a City of Ames resident, ISU student and/or Story County resident.

The top priorities for funding are: Kid's Club, Public Education as it relates to suicide prevention and Transitional Living Program (TLP).

Internal Management Practice: YSS has a very professional, knowledgeable and experienced management staff. YSS has an active corporate Board of Directors that address policy and practice. The Board meets bi-monthly and approves strategic direction quarterly. YSS also has Community Advisory Boards. CEO, Andrew Allen meets bi-weekly with the Chairs of each Board.

YSS takes service data collection very seriously to track client performance and outcomes. YSS utilizes Care Logic electronic client record system to track outpatient demographics and determine whether a client fits the requirements of ASSET funders. Transitional housing utilizes electronic systems to track number of homeless youth in Story Co. annually.

General Assessment: A site visit was conducted on October 26. YSS is a well-organized and well respected agency meeting the increasing needs of our youth in the community. Covid-19 presented many challenges to service delivery and YSS successfully adapted to meet the growing needs.

YSS continues to face the challenge of competing for qualified staff due to the difficulty of the work and low pay. The staff are very dedicated and professional, yet have worked years without pay raises.

