



Know Your Client's Legal Rights

PRACTICAL STRATEGIES FOR PROVIDERS

INTRODUCTIONS

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Please introduce yourself by sharing your name, organization, location and years working with RHY.

SESSION OBJECTIVES

Each attendee will:

1. Understand that every youth experiencing homelessness has legal barriers that must be resolved before the youth will be able to successfully move forward with housing, education and employment;
2. Understand how his or her program can learn and access legal resources that exist in their community and surrounding area;
3. Learn how to improve legal services for systemic issues, and
4. Become better equipped to handle legal troubling issues that have evaded resolution.

WHAT WE KNOW

- Who is homeless? Broad definition includes sleeping on the streets, in shelters, being kicked out, running away and couch surfing.
- One in 10 youth ages 18-25 experience homelessness without a parent or guardian over the course of one year: 3.5 million young adults
- One in 30 youth ages 13-17 experience homelessness without a parent or guardian over the course of one year: 700,000 youth
- Urban and rural youth experience homelessness at similar rates
- Certain populations are at higher risk of homelessness:
 - Black and Hispanic youth
 - LGBTQ youth
 - Youth who do not complete high school
 - Youth who are parents and are unmarried

*Data from “Missed Opportunities: Youth Homelessness in America,” Chapin Hall, Voices of Youth Count, 2017

WHAT WE KNOW 2

1. Youth homelessness is a broad and hidden challenge. More resources are needed.
2. Youth homelessness involves diverse experiences and circumstances. Assessment and delivery systems must be responsive.
3. Prevention and early intervention are essential, especially in systems where children are in our care: child welfare, juvenile justice and education. Adapt services to meet the needs of a young population.
4. Youth homelessness affects rural youth at similar levels. Supports must be tailored to reach over a larger terrain.
5. Some youth are at greater risk of experiencing homelessness. Develop strategies for these subpopulations.

*Data from “Missed Opportunities: Youth Homelessness in America,” Chapin Hall, Voices of Youth Count, 2017

MOST COMMON LEGAL ISSUES?

LET'S HEAR 'EM!

****Please raise your hand and share the legal issues that the youth you serve experience****

MOST COMMON LEGAL ISSUES

- Access to identification (birth cert, ID, SS card, etc.)
- Access to employment
- Access to education (and/or transportation, after-school activities, etc.)
- Access to benefits (i.e. SSI)
- Access to housing
- Criminalization/outstanding warrants/fines and fees/ status
- offenses
- Credit issues
- Consumer law
- Child custody
- Child welfare
- Civil rights
- Disability
- Domestic violence
- Eviction
- Expungement
- Family law
- FEMA
- Immigration
- Insurance
- Privacy/safety concerns
- Probate
- Personal injury

WHAT CAN LAWYERS DO

Lawyers can:

- Urge legislators to pass or improve safe harbor laws, which prevent children under 18 from being prosecuted for prostitution and direct them to non-punitive specialized services.
- Advocate for improved day and overnight shelters, treatment, and therapeutic services in your community.
- Organize a “Know Your Rights” session at a shelter, church, or youth gathering place so that youth are educated about the legal barriers they face.
- Organize a clinic for youth so that their records can be sealed or expunged.
- Represent a youth who needs legal help to access benefits, education, and employment.
- Sponsor a trafficking expert to train officers at a local police station.
- Sponsor training for hotel staffs so they can spot and report trafficking in their facilities.

BENEFITS OF ENGAGING A LAWYER

- Expand bandwidth of shelter service providers
- Increase the number of beds available for homeless youth in the community
- More effective case management in navigating systems
- Expand the number of wrap around services
- Clinical benefit – increase youth agency
- Secure life saving and supportive benefits for the youth

GREAT!

NOW...HOW CAN I ENGAGE A LAWYER?

How have you engaged a lawyer?

****Please raise your hand and share your experiences****

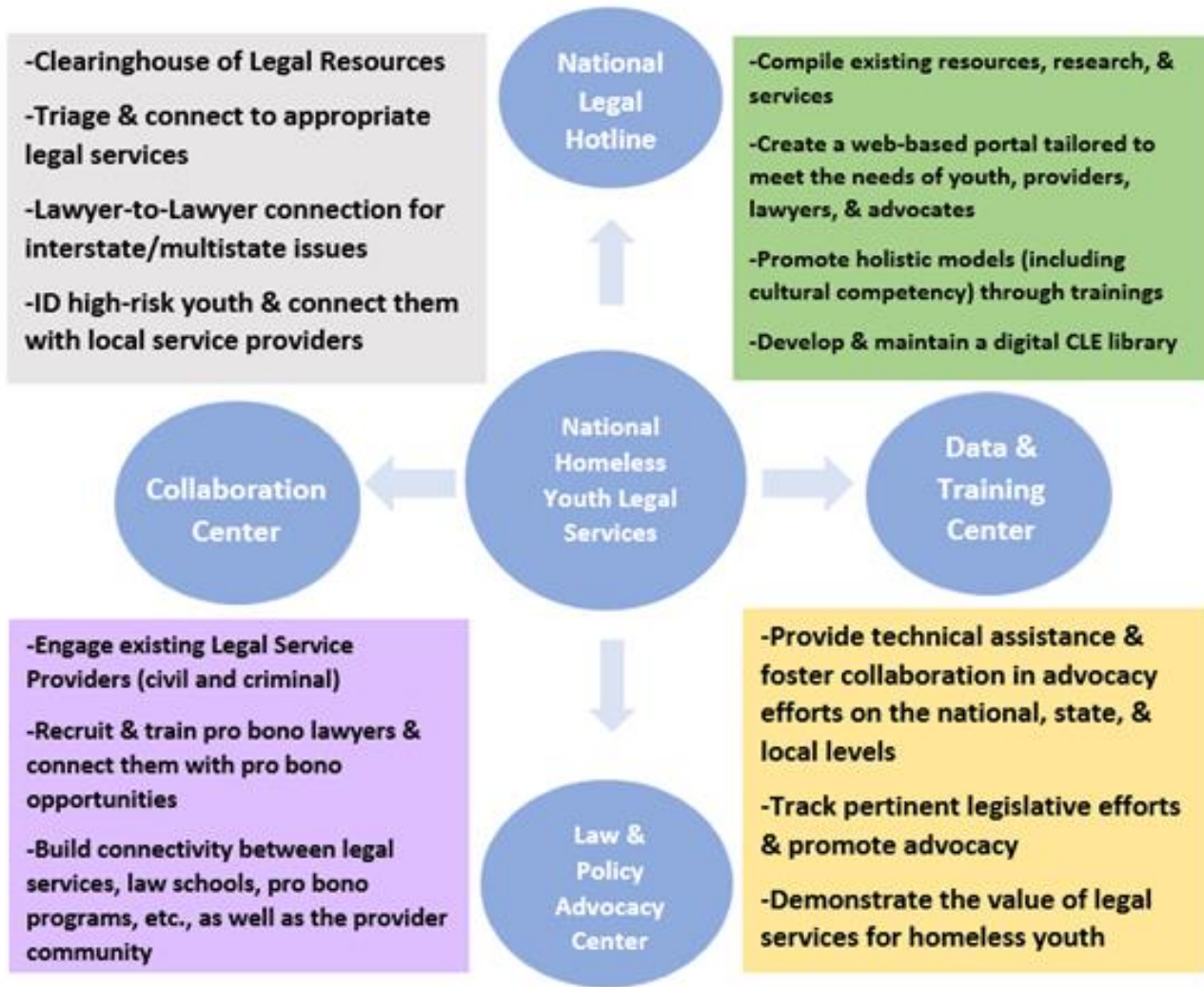
WHERE TO FIND A LAWYER

- **Directory of Legal Services: ambar.org/HYLN**
- Criminal – Public Defender
- Civil Legal Services/Legal Aid – lsc.gov
- Bar Associations: ABA, State and Local – FindLegalHelp.org
- Law School Clinical Programs
- Law Firm Pro Bono Programs
- Courts
- Other Service Providers
- Policy Advocates/National Campaigns

BUILDING SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIPS

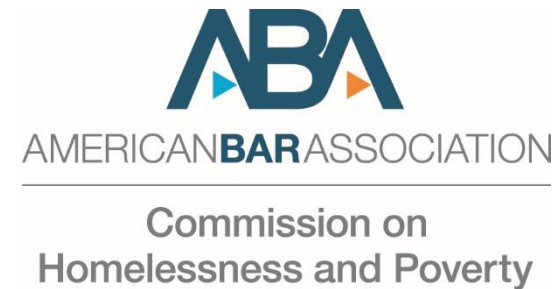
- Reach out to:
 - Legal aid attorney
 - Juvenile public defender
 - Dependency attorney
 - American/ State/ Local Bar Associations
 - Private/ Pro Bono attorney
- Educate the community – who are the youth you work with, dispel myths, outcomes and impact
- Start with a discrete legal issue that a lawyer can help with
- Help lawyers understand youth and their behaviors with a trauma-informed lens and the value of a strengths based approach

National Homeless Youth Legal Services



The American Bar Association Homeless Youth Legal Network was established to increase legal services for youth and young adults experiencing homelessness to remove administrative, civil and criminal legal barriers—as well as systemic policy barriers—to housing, education, employment, benefits, treatment and services.

HYLN serves a catalyst and convener to address the *legal* issues of homeless youth and improve outcomes for those transitioning from the child welfare system and exiting the juvenile justice system. The ABA invites federal partners and national, state and local organizations to join the effort.



For more information and to get involved, please contact:
 Kelly Russo
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HYLN RESOURCES

Visit **ambar.org/HYLN** for:

- National directory of legal service providers
- Federal advocacy and model state statutes
- Technical assistance to communities and stakeholders
- Model legal services programs and data
- Webinars, reports, articles, toolkits and more!

HYLN COMMUNITY ROUNDTABLES

- **What?** Community-led roundtables across the country to facilitate network-, strategy-, and information-building to increase local homeless youth's access to legal resources related to education, the justice system, and more.
- **Where?** Las Vegas, Tampa, DC, Denver, Detroit, Northern VA...more to come!
- **Who joins?** Stakeholders from homeless youth service providers (including health and mental health), city/county agencies and systems (including juvenile justice and the school system), the legal community (local legal aid providers, local and state bar associations, pro bono attorneys), funders, and other local advocates or government officials.
- **Outcomes?** Depending on the particular community's needs:
 - Legal referral directories, new partnerships, state legislative advocacy, toolkits and additional resources, etc.

MODEL PROGRAMS

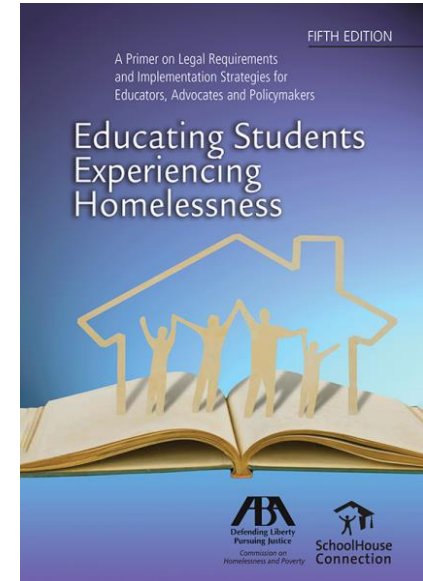
- **Arizona Legal Women and Youth Services (ALWAYS)**, Arizona, Alwaysaz.org
- **Bay Area Legal Aid**, California, Baylegal.org
- **Community Legal Services of Philadelphia**, Pennsylvania, Clsphila.org
- **Family & Youth Law Center at Capital Univ. School of Law**, Ohio, Familyyouthlaw.org
- **Homeless Persons Representation Project Homeless Youth Initiative**, Maryland, Hprplaw.org
- **Homeless Youth Legal Clinic**, Utah, <https://www.voaut.org/homeless-teen-services>
- **Center for Children's Advocacy**, Connecticut, Cca-ct.org
- **Legal Counsel for Youth and Children (LCYC)**, Washington, Lcycwa.org
- **Mid-Minnesota Legal Aid, Youth Law Project**, Minnesota, Mylegalaid.org
- **Pegasus Legal Services for Children**, New Mexico, Pegasuslaw.org/youth-law-project
- **The Door**, New York, door.org
- **Urban Justice, Peter Cicchino Youth Project**, New York, [Peter Cicchino Youth Project Homepage](http://PeterCicchinoYouthProjectHomepage)

ENGAGE WITH HYLN

- Visit our website: ambar.org/HYLN
- Follow us on Twitter: [@ABAHYLN](https://twitter.com/ABAHYLN); and Facebook www.facebook.com/ABAHYLN
- Join our listserv of over 450 advocates across the country by emailing hyn@americanbar.org
- Request free technical assistance: Kelly.Russo@americanbar.org

MORE RESOURCES

- **Educating Students Experiencing Homelessness (5th Ed.),** ABA Commission on Homelessness & Poverty, SchoolHouse Connection, ambar.org/ESEH
- **Homeless Youth Handbooks,** A Pro Bono Project of Baker McKenzie, homelessyouth.org
 - California, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, Texas, Washington, Washington DC
- **Homeless and Runaway Youth in the Juvenile Justice System,** Coalition for Juvenile Justice, NN4Y, http://www.juvjustice.org/sites/default/files/resource-files/Homeless%20and%20Runaway%20Youth_0.pdf
- **Resolution Addressing the Needs of Homeless Youth & Families in Juvenile & Family Courts,** NCJFCJ, https://www.ncjfcj.org/sites/default/files/Fnl_Adopted%20Homelessness%20Resolution_7-2017.pdf
- **Voices of Youth Count, Missed Opportunities: Youth Homelessness in America,** Chapin Hall, Univ. of Chicago, <http://voicesofyouthcount.org/brief/national-estimates-of-youth-homelessness/>



QUESTIONS?

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For more information on the ABA Homeless Youth Legal Network,
please visit ambar.org/HYLN or email HYLN@americanbar.org