

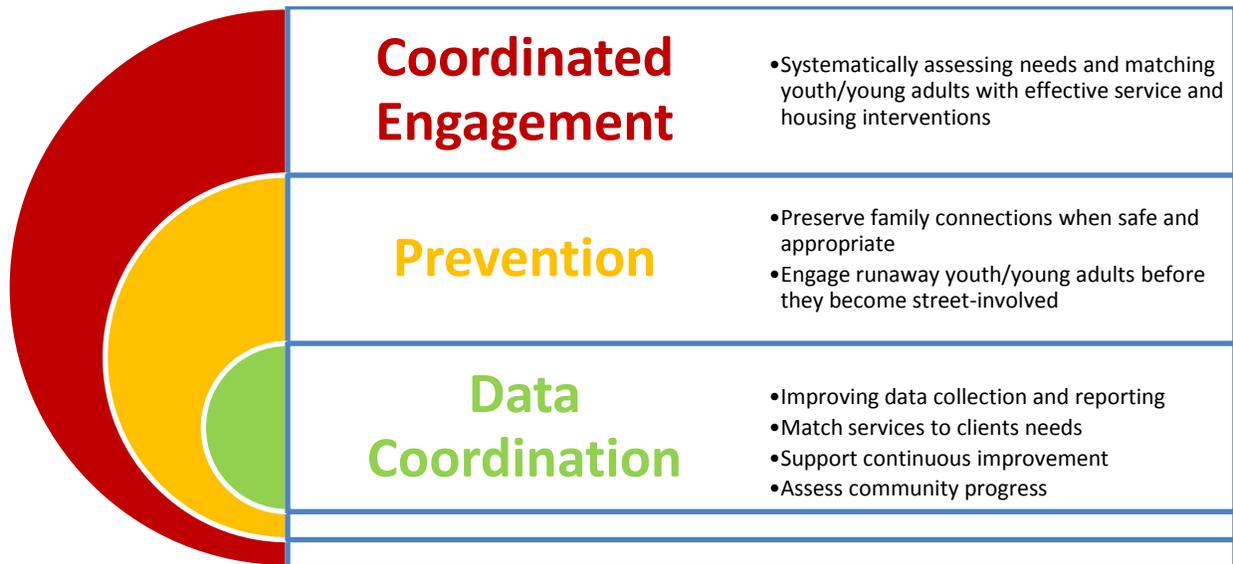
## Youth and Young Adult Homelessness – Priority Action Steps

In 2011, a broad community effort was embarked upon to improve the system serving homeless youth/young adults. Private funders, led by the Raikes Foundation, United Way of King County, and the Medina Foundation, identified three priority strategies, and a Task Force was formed under the auspices of the Committee to End Homelessness of King County to develop an action plan for implementation of the strategies. This plan was supported with resources from the Raikes Foundation, and developed by Building Changes in coordination with United Way of King County.

### Priority Strategies

An extensive community process was held, involving more than 100 stakeholders, including 30 homeless youth/young adults. This process was guided by two groups – the Youth/Young Adult Homelessness Funders Group and the Youth/Young Adult Homelessness Task Force.

These efforts focused on three priority strategies:



These priority strategies will only be successful if connected to an adequate supply of strong, data-driven housing and services programs. These programs are *systems enhancements* that will improve the experience of youth/young adults who become homeless.

At this time, there is momentum in the community for implementing these strategies, and a belief that when implemented they will make a significant difference in our ability to prevent youth/young adults from becoming homeless and serve them effectively when they do become homeless. Significantly, implementation of these priorities will also provide us with the answers to questions we can't currently answer about youth/young adult homelessness– what's the need? What works to address it? Are we making progress?

## Priority Strategies

### 1. COORDINATED ENGAGEMENT

**Equal access to appropriate types of housing and services from multiple points throughout the county** (*Coordinated Engagement strategy*).

### 2. PREVENTION

**2A. Targeted prevention services for families that are experiencing crises to prevent youth/young adults leaving the home and becoming homeless** (*Prevention – Family Connections strategy*).

**2B. Education, outreach, and immediate response when youth/young adults do leave home so they know where to turn to find help and a safe place to stay** (*Prevention – Early Intervention for Runaways strategy*).

### 3. DATA COORDINATION

**A coordinated system for assessing community progress towards goal of ending youth/young adult homelessness while supporting providers to coordinate services, measure outcomes, make adjustments, and improve service delivery** (*Data Coordination strategy*).

These strategies have the potential to provide significant impact by:

- Diverting youth/young adults from becoming homeless
- Decreasing the length of time youth/young adults are homeless
- Decreasing the chance that they will return to homelessness

## What this Plan Does Not Address

This is not a comprehensive plan for addressing youth and young adult homelessness in King County. It also does not signify a new attempt to quantify the number of youth/young adults experiencing homelessness, nor does it attempt to describe the variances in need by region, race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, or otherwise.

A comprehensive, data-driven plan must be developed to provide King County. This plan should utilize data produced as a result of the implementation of the three priority strategies to recommend:

- The scale of housing and services interventions to meet need
- The type of housing and services interventions that are most effective
- The variances in interventions required to address needs of youth/young adults in each region of the county
- The variances in interventions required to address needs of youth/young adults, including LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning) youth, youth of color, immigrant/refugee youth, youth exiting the child welfare system, and youth exiting the juvenile justice system.
- Strategies for integrating service delivery and data collection across systems.