



Voices from the Street: Homeless Youth Speak Out on State Policy

A DVD on Innovating State Policy for Homeless Youth in California
Presented by the California Research Bureau, New America Media
and the California Council on Youth Relations

POLICY RECOMMENDATION SUMMARY

Trajectories into Homelessness

- Extend the support services created for foster youth in the last decade to the wider transition-aged youth population.

Interactions with Law Enforcement

- Undo the criminalization of homelessness.
- Train police to communicate effectively with young people in crisis on the streets.
- Make it safe for homeless or criminally involved youth to turn to the police for help so they can end the cycle.

Education & Aspirations

- Fully implement the McKinney-Vento Act so homeless students get support to stay in school – such as credit transfer programs and resources such as lockers, showers, and transportation vouchers
- Be aware of the stigma and barriers that discourage homeless youth from asking for help or attending school.

Housing & Services

- Design shelter rules around young people's needs for stability, not institutional needs.
- Ensure services do not mirror the trauma young people experienced in being pushed out of their homes.
- Trusting, long-term relationships between staff and youth are the key to successful programs.
- Young people need more than a place to stay – they need support services and help finding permanent housing.

To request a copy of the DVD or find more information about the California Homeless Youth Project visit <http://cahomelessyouth.library.ca.gov/>