THE BRIDGE-TRANSITIONAL LIVING GRANT
SEMI-ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

GRANT AWARD NUMBER: 04CX0647/02

PROJECT TITLE: Runaway and Homeless Youth

GRANTEE NAME: Anchorage Children's Home

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PROJECT BEGIN DATE: October 1, 2007

PROJECT END DATE: September 31, 2012

PERIOD COVERED BY REPORT: (CHECK ONE)

Year 1: First 6 months	( )
Year 1: Second 6 months	( )
Year 2: First 6 months	( )
Year 2: Second 6 months	( )
Year 3: First 6 months	( )
Year 3: Second 6 months	(X)
Year 4: First 6 month	( )
Year 4: Second 6 months	( )
Year 5: First 6 month	( )
Year 5: Second 6 months	( )
Final	( )

PRINCIPAL CONTACT: Lindsey Berling

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DATE OF REPORT: 10/15/2010

Outcomes

1. Projected – 300 contacts per year resulting in 40 referrals per year.
Actual – 252 contacts made in the community of which 17 referrals have resulted since April 1, 2010. The Program Manager is consistently participating in and has presented to many different coalitions, clubs and groups since April, 2010 as noted in Netmis. These contacts were made aware of The Bridge Transitional Living Program and were provided with applications and handbooks to disseminate to prospective residents.

2. Projected – 18 intakes per year who receive eligibility determination within 72 hours of receipt of application or contact.
Actual- 17 referrals were made to The Bridge Transitional Living Program since April 2010 and 17 referrals initiated within 72 hours of receipt of application.
Of the 17 referrals who completed application, two did not qualify for services, 2 were interviewed and declined admission; four youth found other housing out of state or with relatives, 3 never responded to attempts to interview, 1 youth is currently on the waiting list for admission and 6 were admitted into the residential program from April 2010 to September 30, 2010. Overall, 10 youth were served in the residential program from April 2010 to September 30, 2010.

3. Projected 100% of residents admitted to The Bridge Transitional Living Program will be provided with stable, safe living accommodations while in the program.
Actual - 100% of youth (10) admitted to The Bridge Transitional Living Program have been provided with a stable and safe living environment.
The Bridge Transitional Living Program has provided each resident with a secure apartment. Each resident has a shared apartment with one other resident. Each apartment is furnished with living room and dining furniture, a bed with new linens, dresser and desk for their convenience. All residents have their own kitchen, living and study area. The apartments also have video surveillance systems around the perimeter and common areas to ensure security and safety.

4. Projected: 34 homeless youth (18 in residential and 16 non-residential) will receive basic life skills training and obtainment of vital documentation.
Actual: 10 of 10 residential participants and 0 non-residential participants receive basic life skills training and progress toward obtaining vital documentation.
One hundred percent of the residents admitted to the program participate in life skills training through the Moving Out and Making It curriculum at least twice per week, however it is offered daily. Residents are asked to complete one of the 14 books in the Moving Out and Making It series per week. This pace allows residents to have time to implement all skills learned and revisit any areas of weakness prior to consideration for discharge. Residents also participate in and plan leisure time activities, transportation needs and identifying/obtaining vital documentation such as birth certificates, identification cards and social security cards. Participation in the above activities is ongoing throughout the participant's residential stay in The Bridge Transitional Living Program and will continue in a non-residential capacity as it relates to the participant's situation

5. Projected: 34 homeless youth (18 in residential and 16 non-residential) will participate in interpersonal skill building prior to discharge.
Actual: 10 of 10 residential participants and 0 non-residential participants participate in interpersonal skill building.
Participants continue to learn to build interpersonal skills through open communication with Resident Advisors, Program Manager and Case Manager. Staff model appropriate behavior and decision making process to youth as well as assisting them in the decision making process as youth face life challenges. The youth participate in Resident Committee Meetings where in they have the ability to speak to the Program Manager, Case Manager and Staff freely about concerns, rules and daily operation of the home. The youth actively participate in setting the rules for the program and develop this with staff. The youth also partner with staff to create schedules for weekly outings, weekly group meals for all residents as well as chores schedules and use of the laundry facilities. This allows youth to develop a sense of community

and choice in how their environment operates. Cooperation with other youth and consideration of their needs is also in the forefront of how the youth work together not only with other youth, but staff as well.

6. Projected: 34 homeless youth (18 in residential and 16 non-residential) will receive an educational/vocational assessment and be provided with opportunity to pursue their interest.
Actual: 9 of 10 residents and 0 non-residential participants have scheduled/participated in VISION screening to determine areas of interest.
Ninety (90) percent of residential clients have received career interest screening called the VISION screening and results were discussed with them. The remaining ten (10) percent that did not receive screenings were due to the youth missing the scheduled appointment and subsequently having the appointment rescheduled at a later time.

7. Projected: 34 homeless youth (18 in residential and 16 non-residential) will participate in job preparation and become employed prior to discharge.
Actual: 6 of 10 residents and 0 non-residential participants have obtained employment.
Sixty (60) percent of residents have secured employment during this last six month period. Youth employment in the previous year was at forty six (46) percent and fifty three (53) percent which is lower than the recent statistics. Youth employment continues to increase at a slow rate, but nonetheless increase.

8. Projected: 34 homeless youth (18 in residential and 16 non-residential) will participate in an evaluation for mental/behavioral health and follow through with appropriate referrals.
Actual: 10 of 10 residents and 0 non-residential participants have been screened with this first 72 hours of admission for mental health issues.
One hundred percent of residents admitted to the program were administered a lethality assessment to determine any immediate mental health issues that would need to be addressed. All participants admitted into the program who has admitted to a history of mental illness or current needs for counseling are offered voluntary counseling services through the Life Management Center and Anchorage Family Counseling.

9. Projected: 34 homeless youth (18 in residential and 16 non-residential) will receive medical and dental screening for physical needs.
Actual: 6 of the 10 residents have received dental services and 10 of the 10 residents received physical screenings.
One hundred percent of residents have received physical exams while in the program. Sixty (60) percent of youth have received dental cleanings and follow-up appointments. Of the four (4) youth who did not receive dental services, one (1) declined any dental services and two (2) were not in the program past 30 days so that an appointment could be scheduled and one (1) was on a waiting list for the local free dental clinic through our local dental school. Anchorage has within the last six months secured a partnership agreement with a local dental clinic that will provide free dental services to any youth who has been in the program over 30 days.

10. Projected: 34 homeless youth (18 in residential and 16 non-residential) will participate in a personal needs assessment and the development and implementation of an individual transition plan.
Actual: 8 of 10 residents and 0 non-residential participants have completed their personal needs assessment and have participated in the development and implementation of an individual transition plan.
Eighty (80) percent of residents participated in assessment of self and development/implementation of their case plan within their first 30 days of admission. The remaining twenty (20) percent of youth were in the program less than 30 days wherein there was not adequate time to fully develop a working plan with the youth. However, staff informally works with the youth on life skills, job attainment and school plans during those first thirty days of admittance until a formal plan addressing all youth needs can be developed.

11. Projected: 34 homeless youth (18 in residential and 16 non-residential) will participate in a personal needs assessment and receive applicable referrals for services prior to discharge.
Actual: 10 of 10 residents and 0 non-residential participants have participated in a personal needs assessment and have received referrals to educational resources.
One Hundred percent of the residents have been referred to educational support services through the local community college or through the help of the McKinney Vento Liaison. Ongoing assessments of services for each resident are considered daily. All youth who have discharged from the residential program and received non-residential case management have aftercare/discharge plans that encourage the youth to continue pursuing academic opportunities.

12. Projected: 16 homeless youth will participate in aftercare services.
Actual: 0 of 4 youth participated in aftercare services.
One (1) youth voluntarily left the program and three (3) youth were ejected from the program between April 2010 and September 2010. All youth were offered continued case management services, however each denied the service. The three youth that were ejected from the program were due to a violent/assaultive episode involving the police, theft of property and bringing contraband into the facility. The youth who voluntarily left the program did so because the youth did not want to adhere to the program rules.

13. Projected – 300 contacts per year to encourage awareness and sensitivity to the particular needs of homeless youth who are members of ethnic, racial and sexual minority groups and/or who are street youth.
Actual – 252 contacts made in the community since April 2010.

The Program Manager is currently participating and has presented to the Hunger and Homeless Coalition, Hunger and Homeless Coalition Board of Directors, The Interagency Council on a monthly basis, New Bethel Missionary Baptist Church which serves predominantly minority populations and The Gang Reduction Task Force. Each local meeting has afforded the Program Manager the opportunity to speak about the program, requirements and what the program has to offer our youth. The Program manager keeps a database of local provider contacts and emails Bi-weekly updates to all community partners, volunteers and previous residents regarding the openings in the program and how a youth can be referred to The Bridge: Transitional Living Program.
The Program Manager continues to participate in the Statewide Council on Homelessness. This council continues to be active in working with legislators to address the needs of our state in relation to the homeless population. The council has monthly conference calls and quarterly meetings throughout the state on a quarterly basis. The Program Manager has been asked to serve on a Children's Services Committee through the Statewide Coalition and has accepted. This committee will address service improvement to homeless children through the educational and financial assistance systems.

14. Projected: 34 total records (18 in residential and 16 non-residential) will be maintained for youth served in accordance with national accreditation and state standards for youth serving programs.
Actual: 15 of 15 records are currently being maintained in accordance with accreditation and state standards.
Resident records are held in strictest confidence and are inclusive of requirements held by the Florida Department of Children and Families, Florida Administrative Code and Florida Statute. They are also held in accordance with Council on Accreditation standards for independent living programs. Each file is reviewed quarterly and has been found to be in compliance.

15, Projected: Data from 18 residential and 16 non-residential aftercare records will be submitted through RHYMIS; 2 semi-annual reports and one annual report will be submitted in a timely manner and appropriate format.
Actual: The sixth semi-annual report is submitted timely and 10 of 10 records on each resident were entered into NETMIS system within 72 hours of intake.

Trends

In the last six months, The Bridge has seen an increase in non-qualifying referrals, referrals for youth who quickly secure other living arrangements with relatives and referrals from youth who do not respond to attempts to interview youth for placement. The Bridge has made every attempt to engage the youth who apply and maintain their applications if in the future they do seek services.

In the last six months, The Bridge has had an increase in lesbian and gay youth in the residential program. Neither of the youth was connected to community support as the area does not currently have many support groups for LGBTQ youth. The local community college does have a very active LGBTQ program for enrolled students, however the youth The Bridge served this past month were not enrolled in college, therefore the group was unable to serve them. The lack of resources in the catchment area has provided challenges for connecting LGBTQ youth with others who may be positive role models and support for the youth. The Program Manager will continue to seek programs or support groups that may be helpful for youth who are not college age or are not enrolled at the local college.

There are has also been an increase in applications from youth who were previously served in the program and did not complete successfully. Five applications were received from four different youth (1 duplicated) who left the program either voluntarily or were ejected prior to completion. Each of the youth who reapplied has kept in contact with at least one staff member either telephonically or through social networking on The Bridge: Transitional Living MySpace page since their departure from the program. Of the 4 applicants, one is currently enrolled in the residential program and one is on the waitlist. One youth did not follow through with interviewing and her application was closed, however the youth still keeps in contact with the Case Manager and is encouraged to reapply. The final applicant currently is out of state and is trying to work with The Bridge to get back to the area and interview for the program.

Youth Population Dynamics

From April to March 2010, the program has served six (6) males and (4) females. Five (5) of the youth have been of Caucasian descent while four (4) youth are of African American descent and one (1) youth is biracial (Caucasian and African American). The program has also served two (2) youth who identify themselves as gay and lesbian and both were of African American descent. The Bridge has also received 5 applications from 4 different youth that have reapplied to enter the program for a second time. Each youth that has reapplied left the program voluntarily prior to completion or was ejected from the program.

Best Practices

Giving our youth new ways to learn practical skills has an ongoing effort in The Bridge program over the last six month period. Through staff meetings and resident meetings with youth it has been identified that youth need additional training on basic apartment maintenance/repair, basic automotive maintenance as well as local transportation training. With those three identified areas of need, The Bridge has implemented a weekly maintenance training with youth that identifies cost saving ways to repair broken/non-working items around the household as well as vehicle maintenance. Each week a new topic is introduced by our Assistant Maintenance Manager. The Assistant Maintenance Manager takes a hands-on approach with the youth ensuring they have a clear understanding of the issue and are able to demonstrate that which has been taught. The youth also assist our staff Resident Advisors with weekly vehicle maintenance in the same manner which helps the youth to have a clear understanding of the general maintenance that should be done on their own vehicles to ensure cost saving repairs in the future.

Anchorage Children's Home has also partnered with Chautauqua Learn and Serve, a local school that provides hands on training with the local trolley system. Chautauqua has developed coloring books that highlight routes to important local resources such as the Department of Children and Families, Health Department, Social Security Office and court house. These books were provided to our youth to ensure they had a good reference tool, but were also utilized in a ride along training with the youth in the program. Chautauqua has committed to doing this with any youth in the program and will be provided on a quarterly basis.

Community support has been excellent over the past six months with repainting and landscaping the apartments. Two different groups provided numerous volunteers, time and supplies to the program wherein they completely landscaped the flower bed areas in front of the apartments and also painted the inside of all three apartments. The refinished look has inspired the youth in the program to take a more active responsibility in their own apartment maintenance on the inside as well as the outside.

The Bridge has had three noteworthy accomplishments during the past six months. One resident of the program was awarded employee of the month for June 2010. The particular youth is known for looking into more efficient processes and was able to relate this to his employment and was awarded for this. Another resident was selected by Gulf Coast Community College to participate as a hearing officer for their internal academic court. The resident reported that she truly enjoyed the process and felt honored to have been selected by the College Administration to participate in this process. Finally, The Bridge program was selected to present at the National Pathways to Adulthood Conference in Chicago this past August. The presentation was a detailed look at how the staff and residents of The Bridge program build relationships that are successful and long lasting from the prospective of the Program Manager, Case Manager and a former youth. All presented at the conference and received high ratings from the participants.

Barriers

Employment is the one barrier that has consistently impacted youth in the program. In the past six months, some youth have been able to secure seasonal employment due to the increased need in the food and retail industry, however the positions have limitations on hours per week and often do not provide the youth with more than 10-15 hours per week, which decreases as the season has come to an end. The Bridge staff has been encouraging youth to maintain these employment opportunities, but to also continue to look for employment opportunities that will be able to sustain them year round.

Training and Technical Assistance Needs
No training or technical assistance is needed at this time.

Requests for contact
If there is further information you would like to be reported or if you have suggestions or comments, please email or call Lindsey Berling (850) 249-0433 email lberling@anchoragechildrenshome.org