



# San Francisco's Most Vulnerable Young Adults Need You Now.



## Who IS AT RISK?

TAY, or transitional age youth, are youth and young adults aged 16–24 who are disconnected and marginalized. In San Francisco, 5,000–8,000 transitional age youth are homeless, underemployed, and isolated from positive communities and opportunities. They often experience systemic barriers and bureaucracy. Evidence shows that these highly vulnerable populations are least likely to successfully transition to adulthood and self-sufficiency.

## What IS TAYSF?

In 2006, in response to urgent calls by youth advocates, former mayor Gavin Newsom named a 36-member task force comprised of the City's advocates, providers, and funders. The task force was charged with identifying policy and practice reform that would serve young people into self-sufficiency, not just until their 18th birthdays. The group developed 16 comprehensive recommendations to improve the outcomes for disconnected youth and young adults. In 2008, TAYSF, the Transitional Age Youth Initiative, was created to sustain these high-priority recommendations beyond the life of the task force and to implement and enhance them.



## HOW CAN YOU HELP?

Like all young people, vulnerable young adults need developmentally and culturally appropriate support to become successful adults. Young people need wellness and health services, education and employment, and safe and stable housing to create a foundation on which to grow. Young people who lack one or more of these pillars to self-sufficiency face extreme challenges in trying to overcome homelessness, substance abuse, criminal activity, and premature parenthood.

# Make disconnected transitional age youth a priority

## 1 MAKE TRANSITIONAL AGE YOUTH A STATED PRIORITY.

**GOAL:** The mayor must declare it a City priority to ensure that disconnected youth transition to thriving adulthood.

Although several municipal departments have prioritized transitional age youth in their policies and funding, we lack a city-wide statement of the importance of this unique population. We will work with the mayor and City agencies to develop a formal declaration that highlights the special needs of transitional age youth.

**KEY PARTNERS:** Mayor's Office · Office of Economic and Workforce Development · Department of Children, Youth & Their Families · Mayor's Office of Housing · Human Services Agency · Department of Public Health · Adult Probation Department · Juvenile Probation Department

## 2 INVOLVE DISCONNECTED YOUTH IN MUNICIPAL DECISION MAKING.

**GOAL:** The mayor must issue an executive order requiring that City departments serving transitional age youth include those youth in high-level decision making.

While several departments have made initial investments in seeking leadership from transitional age youth, all City departments must develop effective strategies to engage disconnected youth and young adults in decision making. We will help departments find ways to engage this population and harness their decision-making power.

**KEY DEPARTMENTS:** Mayor's Office · Office of Economic and Workforce Development · Department of Children, Youth & Their Families · Mayor's Office of Housing · Human Services Agency · Department of Public Health · Adult Probation Department · Juvenile Probation Department

# Partner to uplift San Francisco's disconnected youth and young adults.

5,700 youth are homeless

6,000 18- to 24-year-olds lack a high school diploma

5,500 16- to 24-year-olds are completely uninsured

7,000 18- to 24-year-olds neither work nor go to school



Data from: Larkin Street Youth Programs Youth Homelessness in SF: 2010 Report on Incidence and Needs; American Community Survey, 2009; and California Health Interview Survey, 2007.

# Enhance service coordination

## 3 CREATE A HIGH-LEVEL BODY DEDICATED TO DISCONNECTED YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS.

**GOAL:** The mayor should work with San Francisco Unified School District and City College of San Francisco to create an interagency council focused on the unique needs of transitional age youth.

Despite concerted efforts to align with other vulnerable populations, City leadership has failed to sustain a focus on our vulnerable youth and young adults. Absent a functioning interagency council, we will continue to work with key partners to strengthen the current TAY SF Steering Committee, diversify its membership, set aggressive goals, and develop strategies to raise its visibility and impact.

**KEY PARTNERS:** Mayor's Office · Office of Economic and Workforce Development · Department of Children, Youth & Their Families · Mayor's Office of Housing · Human Services Agency · Department of Public Health · Adult Probation Department · Juvenile Probation Department · San Francisco Unified School District · San Francisco City College · community-based programs

## 4 IMPROVE AND EXPAND EDUCATION OPTIONS FOR TRANSITIONAL AGE YOUTH.

**GOAL:** City agencies must partner to promote access to effective options that prepare transitional age youth for college and career.

Despite several new and augmented programs, more high-quality training and education options are needed—especially for young adults with low basic skills who, without eighth-grade reading proficiency, are ineligible for many existing programs. We must build and sustain high-quality alternative pathways that engage and educate transitional age youth.

**KEY PARTNERS:** Mayor's Office · Office of Economic and Workforce Development · Department of Children, Youth & Their Families · Mayor's Office of Housing · Human Services Agency · Department of Public Health · Adult Probation Department · Juvenile Probation Department · San Francisco Unified School District · San Francisco City College · community-based programs

## 5 REINVIGORATE COORDINATED WORKFORCE SERVICES.

**GOAL:** The Workforce Investment Board Youth Council must be revitalized to coordinate funding and policy for youth workforce development.

Although this federally mandated body of government, employer, and community representatives was reconstituted in 2009, its initial success has been insufficient to serve the needs of underemployed and unemployed young adults. All relevant departments must come to the table with increased authority to build a strong coordinated youth workforce system.

**KEY PARTNERS:** Office of Economic and Workforce Development · Mayor's Office · Department of Children, Youth & Their Families · Mayor's Office of Housing · Human Services Agency · Department of Public Health · Adult Probation Department · Juvenile Probation Department · San Francisco Unified School District · San Francisco City College · employers · community-based programs

*Integrated employment and education programs offer a "hook" for youth to look beyond their immediate needs and invest in their future.*

## 6 USE DATA AND RESEARCH TO BUILD PROGRAMS FOR TRANSITIONAL AGE YOUTH.

**GOAL:** The City must develop an integrated information system and require all City departments to collect and report data on transitional age youth.

Despite significant challenges in gathering and analyzing information, we must continue collecting department- and program-level data that drive decision making and improve on-the-ground services for transitional age youth. We must continue to capture data on which to build and sustain high-quality programs that serve these youth into adulthood.

**KEY PARTNERS:** Controller's Office, Mayor's Office · Office of Economic and Workforce Development · Department of Children, Youth & Their Families · Mayor's Office of Housing · Human Services Agency · Department of Public Health · Adult Probation Department · Juvenile Probation Department · San Francisco Unified School District · San Francisco City College · community-based programs



# Improve quality of service delivery

## 7 DEVELOP QUALITY STANDARDS FOR PROGRAMS SERVING DISCONNECTED TRANSITIONAL AGE YOUTH.

**GOAL:** The City must draw on evidence-based research and best practices to develop minimum-quality standards that all City-funded programs are required to meet.

Although several departments have implemented quality-standard measures in their individual contracts, we lack citywide measures and support for building a coordinated, comprehensive system of care. We will work to improve capacity building that delivers high-quality programs to disconnected youth and young adults.

**KEY PARTNERS:** Mayor's Office · Office of Economic and Workforce Development · Department of Children, Youth & Their Families · Mayor's Office of Housing · Human Services Agency · Department of Public Health · Adult Probation Department · Juvenile Probation Department · San Francisco Unified School District · San Francisco City College · community-based programs

## 8 CREATE INDIVIDUALIZED PLANS FOR DISCONNECTED YOUTH TRANSITIONING TO ADULTHOOD.

**GOAL:** The City must ensure that all youth involved in public systems receive high-quality, individualized transition support designed around their needs and aspirations.

Several departments provide basic planning for youth, but there are very few examples of consistent, client-centered, and comprehensive services for youth transitioning into adulthood. By working with key agencies and system-involved youth, we are developing recommendations to improve coordinated transition planning.

**KEY PARTNERS:** Human Services Agency · Office of Economic and Workforce Development · Department of Children, Youth & Their Families · Mayor's Office of Housing · Human Services Agency · Department of Public Health · Adult Probation Department · Juvenile Probation Department · San Francisco Unified School District · San Francisco City College · community-based programs

*"Aging out" of public systems is a precarious and often perilous experience for young adults.*

Although some individual efforts do reach transitional age youth, there are few access points that advertise or refer youth to multiple services and program models. By working with existing programs, we are developing proactive and innovative strategies to reach transitional age youth and present them with available options.

**KEY PARTNERS:** Office of Economic and Workforce Development · Department of Children, Youth & Their Families · Mayor's Office of Housing · Human Services Agency · Department of Public Health · Adult Probation Department · Juvenile Probation Department · San Francisco Unified School District · San Francisco City College · community-based programs

## 9 IMPROVE AWARENESS OF ACCESS TO SERVICES.

**GOAL:** The City must improve outreach and awareness efforts that connect transitional age youth with the services available to them.

# Increase system capacity

## 10 CREATE ACCESS POINTS THAT CONNECT DISCONNECTED YOUTH TO SERVICES.

**GOAL:** The City must develop four comprehensive, neighborhood-based, multiservice centers that support the short- and long-term goals of disconnected youth.

In addition to co-location and other methods of bundling services to transitional age disconnected youth, the City and its funded programs must build real partnerships that result in a seamless and coordinated spectrum of service. By working with our nonprofit and funding agencies, we are formalizing partnerships that support young adults' access to services.

**KEY PARTNERS:** Office of Economic and Workforce Development · Department of Children, Youth & Their Families · Mayor's Office of Housing · Human Services Agency · Department of Public Health · Adult Probation Department · Juvenile Probation Department · San Francisco Unified School District · San Francisco City College · community-based programs

## 11 INCREASE ACCESS TO GOOD JOBS THAT LEAD TO BETTER JOBS.

**GOAL:** The City must improve access to high-quality training and paid employment opportunities for disconnected transitional age youth.

Although the Youth Council has improved coordination of workforce and training options, we must significantly increase program and system investment to move youth out of poverty and into self-sufficiency. We will continue to work with relevant departments to sustain workforce investments and augment planning and funding efforts as they arise.

**KEY PARTNERS:** Office of Economic and Workforce Development · Mayor's Office · Department of Children, Youth & Their Families · Mayor's Office of Housing · Human Services Agency · Department of Public Health · Adult Probation Department · Juvenile Probation Department · San Francisco Unified School District · San Francisco City College · community-based programs

*Young adults are the most uninsured subpopulation in San Francisco.*

## 13 DEVELOP RESIDENTIAL TREATMENT FOR YOUNG ADULTS STRUGGLING WITH SUBSTANCE USE AND MENTAL HEALTH.

**GOAL:** The Department of Public Health must develop the first-ever residential treatment program for transitional age youth facing significant drug and mental health issues.

Although capacity building, networking, and program-development standards have been developed for current residential treatment programs, this is only a first step. We continue to work with the Department of Public Health with the ultimate goal of creating an independent program specifically for transitional age youth in the next three years.

**KEY PARTNERS:** Department of Public Health · Human Services Agency · Adult Probation Department · Juvenile Probation Department · Department of Children, Youth & Their Families · Mental Health Association of San Francisco · Adolescent Health Working Group · community-based programs

## 15 INCREASE ACCESS TO CLINICAL CARE FOR TRANSITIONAL AGE YOUTH.

**GOAL:** The mayor should direct the Department of Public Health to expand primary-care services to all seven youth clinic sites in southeast San Francisco.

Expanded clinic hours, provision of primary care and behavioral health services, and establishment of two youth clinics that connect with school-based Wellness Centers have improved healthcare for young adults in this neighborhood. A pilot project will begin delivering interventions in 2011 and, following its anticipated success, should be extended to all youth clinics in the neighborhood.

**KEY PARTNERS:** Department of Public Health · Human Services Agency · Adult Probation Department · Juvenile Probation Department · Department of Children, Youth & Their Families · Adolescent Health Working Group · community-based programs

## 12 PROVIDE SAFE AND STABLE HOUSING FOR TRANSITIONAL AGE YOUTH.

**GOAL:** The mayor must charge his Office of Housing, the Human Services Agency, and the Department of Public Health with expanding housing for homeless and marginally housed transitional age youth.

We admire the concerted effort led by the Mayor's Office of Housing to create housing for young adults. Each project offers unique challenges, but we have made significant infrastructural progress in making safe, affordable housing a reality. To maintain this momentum, all departments must consider how they can contribute to the services and subsidies necessary to make these projects viable.

**KEY PARTNERS:** Mayor's Office of Housing · Office of Economic and Workforce Development · Department of Children, Youth & Their Families · Human Services Agency · Department of Public Health · Adult Probation Department · Juvenile Probation Department

## 14 IMPROVE ACCESS TO HEALTH INSURANCE COVERAGE.

**GOAL:** The City must promote universal health insurance through age 24.

Significant cuts to local programs have widened the gulf between quality healthcare and the young adults who need it most. The federal Health Care Reform Bill holds promising developments, but we must make a focused effort to increase coverage among disconnected young adults. Working with clinics, we must find ways to reach young people, reduce costs, and cut red tape.

**KEY PARTNERS:** Department of Public Health · Human Services Agency · Adult Probation Department · Juvenile Probation Department · Department of Children, Youth & Their Families · Adolescent Health Working Group · community-based programs

## 16 EXPAND ACCESS TO SAFE RECREATIONAL AND SOCIAL ACTIVITIES.

**GOAL:** The mayor must direct the Recreation & Parks Department to expand free or low-cost activities that appeal to disconnected youth and young adults.

Expanded open space and activities are critical, but fee structures may price them beyond the reach of most young adults. We must work together to offer resources for safe, low-cost or free fun for our most disconnected young people; study the effect of fee-based services; and recommend ways to keep recreation accessible.

**KEY PARTNERS:** Recreation & Parks Department, San Francisco Youth Commission, Department of Children, Youth & Their Families · community-based organizations

*Young adults with access to safe public spaces are healthier and less prone to destructive behavior.*

*The City is nearly half-way to its five-year goal of 450 new housing units for transitional age youth.*



# Help us build a San Francisco where all young people thrive into adulthood.

Whatever your role or institution, expand your involvement in vital education, outreach, and access programs for transitional age youth in our city.

Join us in the following priorities:



## 1 Build and enhance EDUCATION AND EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES for youth and young adults.

All young people need high-quality education and employment experiences to move their lives forward and become self-sufficient. We are working with community-based providers, San Francisco Unified School District, San Francisco City College, and City agencies to develop and enhance high-quality, sustainable education and employment options that respond to the diverse needs and life challenges of transitional age youth.

### HOW YOU CAN HELP:

- Contribute education-related data
- Get educated about existing options
- Direct resources to expand options



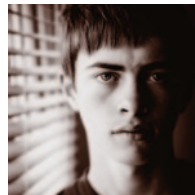
*Home life was hard for Josie. She struggled to stay in school, and after a blow-up with her mom she left home and dropped out in 10th grade. For two years she slept on friends' couches and didn't return to school. Only when Josie connected with a TAY education and employment program did things turn around. She now gets paid to acquire work skills, is enrolled at the onsite school, and is on track to receive her high school diploma. Now 23 and a mother herself, Josie has also reconciled with her mom with the support of counselors in her program.*

## 2 Improve SERVICE COORDINATION for transitional age youth.

We have a portfolio of programs and interventions serving disconnected youth and young adults, but they are disjointed and uncoordinated for both youth and providers. We are working to align current investments to create a coordinated and high-quality system of care for transitional age youth.

### HOW YOU CAN HELP:

- Start a conversation with other agencies about improving service coordination
- Pilot new service-delivery models that provide individualized and comprehensive supports for youth



*When Xavier left the juvenile probation group home at 18, he had nowhere to live. A case-management*

*TAY service provider, advocating with Xavier's social worker and probation officer, connected Xavier to the Transitional Housing Program (THP) for which he was eligible, having been in foster care when he was arrested at 15. Now equipped with stable, subsidized housing and a high school diploma, Xavier is enrolled in community college and just got recruited to join the school's award-winning baseball team.*

## 3 Improve OUTREACH SERVICES for transitional age youth and their allies.

San Francisco has many high-quality and innovative resources for young adults—and yet, many youth and providers are unaware of them. We are working to improve connections between youth and existing programs, including creating a one-stop access-and-awareness web resource and providing innovative outreach on the ground.

### HOW YOU CAN HELP:

- Contribute program information for a TAY resource website
- Identify ways your agency can maximize this resource through its service delivery and contracts



*As the oldest child in a low-income family, Gabe was expected to help his parents and siblings, who struggled to make ends meet. He labored to stay on track in high school while working a job to help support his family. When he stopped showing up for classes, no one noticed. Now 22, Gabe just completed his GED with the support of a program that he learned about through an outreach worker, and dreams of starting his own outreach program for neighborhood youth. He knows that more access points, staffed by strong mentors, would help other youth like him stay on track in school and be inspired to reach their potential.*

San Francisco's youth need you more than ever. Please do your share

to connect San Francisco's most vulnerable young adults to the services and social supports they need.



www.taysf.org  
415.701.5702  
info@taysf.org

facebook.com/taysanfrancisco  
twitter.com/taysfonline