

1 [Declaring 2015 the Year of Recognizing Homeless Youth]

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3 **Resolution urging the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors to declare 2015 the Year of**  
4 **Recognizing Homeless Youth and calling on the City to prioritize the provision of**  
5 **housing, employment training, and services for the homeless youth population.**  
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7 WHEREAS, Mayor Edwin Lee outlined a directive on homelessness for this upcoming  
8 year but has yet to specifically addressed the homeless youth of the city;<sup>1</sup> and

9 WHEREAS, between 353,000 - 503,000 youth ages 12-24 are homeless on any given  
10 day in the United States;<sup>2</sup> and

11 WHEREAS, only about 4,000 youth shelter beds are available across the country<sup>3</sup>; and

12 WHEREAS, the city's, nation's, and world's most vulnerable homeless population are  
13 the young people ages 24 and under, with a higher percentage of homeless youth reporting  
14 domestic violence as the cause of their homelessness compared to the adult population;<sup>4</sup>  
15 and;

16 WHEREAS, 5,000 young people die every year while on the street because of illness,  
17 assault, or suicide;<sup>5</sup> and

18 WHEREAS, states spend approximately \$5.7 billion each year to incarcerate youth for  
19 a non-violent offense, such as homelessness;<sup>6</sup> and  
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23 <sup>1</sup> <http://www.sfmayor.org/index.aspx?page=846&recordid=787&returnURL=%2Findex.aspx>

24 <sup>2</sup> Youth Homelessness in San Francisco: 2013 Report On Incidence and Needs, p. 1

25 <sup>3</sup> "National Campaign for Youth Shelter seeks Housing for homeless LGBT youth." GLAAD. <http://www.glaad.org/blog/national-campaign-youth-shelter-seeks-housing-homeless-lgbt-youth>

<sup>4</sup> 2013 San Francisco Homeless Unique Youth Count & Survey Comprehensive Report p. 10

<sup>5</sup> "Streetwork: Homeless Youth Facts." Safe Horizon. <http://www.safehorizon.org/index/what-we-do-2/helping-youth-14/streetwork-homeless-youth-facts-220.html>

<sup>6</sup> Bernadine Watson. Dec. 20, 2013. [www.washingtonpost.com](http://www.washingtonpost.com)

1 WHEREAS, 66 percent of surveyed youth reported they had been harassed by police  
2 or law enforcement;<sup>7</sup> and

3 WHEREAS, homeless youth reported having experienced homelessness a similar  
4 number of times as the adult population despite their young age;<sup>8</sup>

5 WHEREAS, nearly half of the homeless youth surveyed reported they had been  
6 homeless for one year or more;<sup>9</sup> and

7 WHEREAS, one in three youth are approached by an exploiter or recruited by a pimp  
8 within the first 48 hours of being on the street;<sup>10</sup> and

9 WHEREAS, LGBT youth are disproportionately over-represented in the homeless  
10 youth population, with as many as 40% of the nation's homeless youth being LGBT, while  
11 between 5-10% of the overall youth population is LGBT<sup>11</sup>; and

12 WHEREAS, the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)  
13 has required public agencies and service providers to conduct a Point in Time count of the  
14 homeless population in their cities during one of the last ten days of January every odd-  
15 numbered year since 2005; and

16 WHEREAS, HUD has only recently recognized that the homeless youth are a unique  
17 population with specific needs, and began counting homeless youth in their Point in Time  
18 count in 2013;<sup>12</sup> and

19 WHEREAS, 1,902 homeless children and transitional age youth (TAY) were counted in  
20 San Francisco's 2013 Point-in-Time count, accounting for more than one-fourth of all  
21 homeless individuals counted;<sup>13</sup> and

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<sup>7</sup> 2013 San Francisco Homeless Unique Youth Count & Survey Comprehensive Report p.13

23 <sup>8</sup> 2013 San Francisco Homeless Unique Youth Count & Survey Comprehensive Report p.9

24 <sup>9</sup> *ibid*

25 <sup>10</sup> Youth Homelessness in San Francisco: 2013 Report on Incidence and Needs p. 3

<sup>11</sup> "National Campaign for Youth Shelter seeks Housing for homeless LGBT youth." GLAAD. <http://www.glaad.org/blog/national-campaign-youth-shelter-seeks-housing-homeless-lgbt-youth>

<sup>12</sup> [http://cahomelessyouth.library.ca.gov/docs/pdf/Hidden-in-Plain-Sight\\_FullReportFINAL.pdf](http://cahomelessyouth.library.ca.gov/docs/pdf/Hidden-in-Plain-Sight_FullReportFINAL.pdf) p. 6-7

<sup>13</sup> 2013 San Francisco Homeless Unique Youth Count & Survey Comprehensive Report p.5

1 WHEREAS, according to the 2013 Homeless Point-in-Time Count Survey, 21 percent  
2 of homeless youth reported they had traded sex, drugs, or both for a place to sleep; one in  
3 ten homeless youth reported they had been the victim of sexual exploitation; more than one  
4 in four homeless youth have been physically attacked or assaulted; and nearly half of youth  
5 respondents reported they had been robbed or burglarized;<sup>14</sup> and

6 WHEREAS, nearly one in five youth surveyed reported using methamphetamines and  
7 one in ten reported using heroin;<sup>15</sup> and

8 WHEREAS, a significant portion of the homeless youth population struggle with mental  
9 health and substance abuse, as 41% report their mental health was “fair” or “poor” and 23%  
10 report substance abuse as the primary cause of their homelessness;<sup>16</sup> and

11 WHEREAS, homeless youth are in need of job and education support with 71% of  
12 homeless youth being unemployed at the time of the survey, 25% not having completed high  
13 school or obtained a GED, and 72% of homeless youth respondents wanting to further their  
14 education;<sup>17</sup> and

15 WHEREAS, Larkin Street Youth Services (provider of educational, vocational, and  
16 housing support, among other services, to homeless youth in San Francisco), reestablished  
17 its Youth Advisory Board this year to serve as a voice for homeless youth in the city; and

18 WHEREAS, Larkin Street provided services to 3,450 youth between July 2012 and  
19 July 2013,<sup>18</sup> suggesting the inaccurate representation of the 2013 Point-In-Time Count (which  
20 found 1,902 homeless children and TAY); and

21 WHEREAS, over one third of Larkin Street youth have spent time in jail, and the odds  
22 of becoming homeless within a year of release from incarceration is 1 in 11;<sup>19</sup> and

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24 <sup>14</sup> 2013 San Francisco Homeless Unique Youth Count & Survey Comprehensive Report p.12  
25 <sup>15</sup> 2013 San Francisco Homeless Unique Youth Count & Survey Comprehensive Report p.14  
<sup>16</sup> 2013 San Francisco Homeless Unique Youth Count & Survey Comprehensive Report p.14  
<sup>17</sup> 2013 San Francisco Homeless Unique Youth Count & Survey Comprehensive Report p.9, 16  
<sup>18</sup> ibid  
<sup>19</sup> 2013 San Francisco Homeless Unique Youth Count & Survey Comprehensive Report p.2

1           WHEREAS, approximately two-thirds of Larkin Street youth report at intake  
2 experiencing a serious mental health issue within the past 30 days;<sup>20</sup> and

3           WHEREAS, the homeless youth population is not homogenous and different people  
4 have different needs, but what all homeless youth have in common is the need for shelter,  
5 food, water, and clothing; and

6           WHEREAS, Congress and the Obama Administration set a federal goal of ending  
7 homelessness for youth, children, and families by 2020;<sup>21</sup> and

8           WHEREAS, ending youth homelessness in San Francisco is a strategic outset towards  
9 ending chronic homelessness in the state, and country; now, therefore, be it

10          RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Youth Commission and the Youth Advisory  
11 Board of Larkin Street Youth Services urge the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors to  
12 declare 2015 the Year of Recognizing Homeless Youth, as this year marks the nation being  
13 five years away from its goal of ending youth homelessness; and be it

14          FURTHER RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Youth Commission and the Youth  
15 Advisory Board urges the Mayor and Board of Supervisors to prioritize housing, on-site  
16 counseling services, and education and job placement for homeless youth; and be

17          FURTHER RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Youth Commission and the Youth  
18 Advisory Board urges the Mayor to release an Executive Directive to support the most  
19 vulnerable population of the city's homeless people, our homeless children and youth.

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25 <sup>20</sup> Youth Homelessness in San Francisco: 2013 Report on Incidence and Needs p. 5  
<sup>21</sup> [http://usich.gov/opening\\_doors/](http://usich.gov/opening_doors/)