

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 in his State of the City Address outlined a directive on  
8 homelessness for San Francisco in the coming year;<sup>1</sup> and

9 WHEREAS, under the Mayor’s leadership, the City launched the new Navigation  
10 Center that provides comprehensive services and programs for the adult homeless  
11 population;<sup>2</sup> and

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13 WHEREAS, while the City’s concern for the adult homeless population is  
14 commendable, it has yet to specifically address the homeless youth of the city this year; and

15 WHEREAS, between 353,000 - 503,000 youth ages 12-24 are homeless on any given  
16 day in the United States;<sup>3</sup> and

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

18 WHEREAS, the city’s, nation’s, and world’s most vulnerable homeless population are  
19 the young people ages 24 and under, with a higher percentage of homeless youth reporting  
20 domestic violence as the cause of their homelessness compared to the adult population;<sup>5</sup>  
21 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> <http://www.sfmayor.org/index.aspx?recordid=807&page=846>

25 <sup>3</sup> Youth Homelessness in San Francisco: 2013 Report On Incidence and Needs, p. 1

<sup>4</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>5</sup> 2013 San Francisco Homeless Unique Youth Count & Survey Comprehensive Report p. 10

1 WHEREAS, 5,000 young people die every year while on the street because of illness,  
2 assault, or suicide;<sup>6</sup> and

3 WHEREAS, states spend approximately \$5.7 billion each year to incarcerate youth for  
4 a non-violent offense, such as homelessness;<sup>7</sup> and

5 WHEREAS, 66 percent of surveyed youth reported they had been harassed by police  
6 or law enforcement;<sup>8</sup> and

7 WHEREAS, homeless youth reported having experienced homelessness a similar  
8 number of times as the adult population despite their young age;<sup>9</sup>

9 WHEREAS, nearly half of the homeless youth surveyed reported they had been  
10 homeless for one year or more;<sup>10</sup> and

11 WHEREAS, one in three youth are approached by an exploiter or recruited by a pimp  
12 within the first 48 hours of being on the street;<sup>11</sup> and

13 WHEREAS, LGBT youth are disproportionately over-represented in the homeless  
14 youth population, with as many as 40% of the nation's homeless youth being LGBT, while  
15 between 5-10% of the overall youth population is LGBT<sup>12</sup>; and

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

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22 <sup>6</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>

23 <sup>7</sup> Bernadine Watson. Dec. 20, 2013. [www.washingtonpost.com](http://www.washingtonpost.com)

24 <sup>8</sup> 2013 San Francisco Homeless Unique Youth Count & Survey Comprehensive Report p.13

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

24 <sup>10</sup> ibid

24 <sup>11</sup> Youth Homelessness in San Francisco: 2013 Report on Incidence and Needs p. 3

25 <sup>12</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>

1 WHEREAS, San Francisco was one of the first cities to begin homeless youth counts,  
2 in 2007, as a separate population from the homeless adult count,<sup>13</sup> and

3 WHEREAS, HUD has only recently recognized that the homeless youth are a unique  
4 population with specific needs, and began counting homeless youth in their Point in Time  
5 count in 2013;<sup>14</sup> and

6 WHEREAS, 1,902 homeless children and transitional age youth (TAY) were counted in  
7 San Francisco's 2013 Point-in-Time count, accounting for more than one-fourth of all  
8 homeless individuals counted;<sup>15</sup> and

9 WHEREAS, the San Francisco Unified School District employs a broader  
10 definition of homelessness that includes youth living in shelters, single room occupancy  
11 hotels, transitional housing, the streets, cars, doubled up, and other inadequate  
12 accommodations in their own recordkeeping;<sup>16</sup> and

13 WHEREAS, SFUSD estimates that there were 2,357 homeless school-aged youth  
14 enrolled in the district on January 24<sup>th</sup> 2013, up from 2,200 in January 2011;<sup>17</sup> and

15 WHEREAS, according to the 2013 Homeless Point-in-Time Count Survey, 21 percent  
16 of homeless youth reported they had traded sex, drugs, or both for a place to sleep; one in  
17 ten homeless youth reported they had been the victim of sexual exploitation; more than one  
18 in four homeless youth have been physically attacked or assaulted; and nearly half of youth  
19 respondents reported they had been robbed or burglarized;<sup>18</sup> and

20 WHEREAS, nearly one in five youth surveyed reported using methamphetamines and  
21 one in ten reported using heroin;<sup>19</sup> and

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23 <sup>13</sup> San Francisco 2007 Homeless Youth Count < <http://www.sfhsa.org/asset/ReportsDataResources/Homeless2007CountReportFinal.pdf>>

24 <sup>14</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

25 <sup>15</sup> 2013 San Francisco Homeless Unique Youth Count & Survey Comprehensive Report p.5

<sup>16</sup> 2013 San Francisco Homeless Unique Youth Count & Survey Comprehensive Report p.28

<sup>17</sup> 2013 San Francisco Homeless Unique Youth Count & Survey Comprehensive Report p.28

<sup>18</sup> 2013 San Francisco Homeless Unique Youth Count & Survey Comprehensive Report p.12

<sup>19</sup> 2013 San Francisco Homeless Unique Youth Count & Survey Comprehensive Report p.14

1 WHEREAS, a significant portion of the homeless youth population struggle with mental  
2 health and substance abuse, as 41% report their mental health was “fair” or “poor” and 23%  
3 report substance abuse as the primary cause of their homelessness;<sup>20</sup> and

4 WHEREAS, homeless youth are in need of job and education support with 71% of  
5 homeless youth being unemployed at the time of the survey, 25% not having completed high  
6 school or obtained a GED, and 72% of homeless youth respondents wanting to further their  
7 education;<sup>21</sup> and

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

11 WHEREAS, Larkin Street provided services to 3,450 youth between July 2012 and  
12 July 2013,<sup>22</sup> suggesting the inaccurate representation of the 2013 Point-In-Time Count (which  
13 found 1,902 homeless children and TAY); and

14 WHEREAS, over one third of Larkin Street youth have spent time in jail, and the odds  
15 of becoming homeless within a year of release from incarceration is 1 in 11;<sup>23</sup> and

16 WHEREAS, approximately two-thirds of Larkin Street youth report at intake  
17 experiencing a serious mental health issue within the past 30 days;<sup>24</sup> and

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

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24 <sup>20</sup> 2013 San Francisco Homeless Unique Youth Count & Survey Comprehensive Report p.14

<sup>21</sup> 2013 San Francisco Homeless Unique Youth Count & Survey Comprehensive Report p.9, 16

<sup>22</sup> ibid

<sup>23</sup> 2013 San Francisco Homeless Unique Youth Count & Survey Comprehensive Report p.2

<sup>24</sup> Youth Homelessness in San Francisco: 2013 Report on Incidence and Needs p. 5

1           WHEREAS, when these common needs are addressed, these at-risk youth take the  
2 lead and serve as policy advisors, youth commissioners, community advocates, and graduate  
3 from intensive training programs like Year Up;<sup>25</sup> and

4           WHEREAS, Congress and the Obama Administration set a federal goal of ending  
5 homelessness for youth, children, and families by 2020;<sup>26</sup> and

6           WHEREAS, ending youth homelessness in San Francisco is a strategic step towards  
7 San Francisco's 10-Year Plan to Abolish Chronic Homelessness; now, therefore, be it

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

12           FURTHER RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Youth Commission and the Youth  
13 Advisory Board of urge the mayor and the Board of Supervisors to complete the 2015 TAY  
14 Housing Plan, and establish a new TAY Housing Plan after the TAY Housing Assessment is  
15 completed the summer of 2015; and

16           FURTHER RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Youth Commission and the Youth  
17 Advisory Board urge the Mayor and the Board of Supervisors to set aside funding in the  
18 2015-16 budget for additional TAY housing, on-site counseling services, education and job  
19 placement for homeless youth.

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<sup>25</sup> Year Up <<http://www.yearup.org/>>

<sup>26</sup> [http://usich.gov/opening\\_doors/](http://usich.gov/opening_doors/)