

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 housing,**
5 **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;¹ and

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

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

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

16 WHEREAS, only about 4,000 youth shelter beds are available across the country⁴; and

17 WHEREAS, the city’s, nation’s, and world’s most vulnerable homeless population are the
18 young people ages 24 and under, with a higher percentage of homeless youth reporting domestic
19 violence as the cause of their homelessness compared to the adult population;⁵ and;

20 WHEREAS, 5,000 young people die every year while on the street because of illness, assault,
21 or suicide;⁶ and

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¹ <http://www.sfmayor.org/index.aspx?page=846&recordid=787&returnURL=%2Findex.aspx>

23 ² <http://www.sfmayor.org/index.aspx?recordid=807&page=846>

24 ³ Youth Homelessness in San Francisco: 2013 Report On Incidence and Needs, p. 1

25 ⁴ “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>

⁵ 2013 San Francisco Homeless Unique Youth Count & Survey Comprehensive Report p. 10

⁶ “Streetwork: Homeless Youth Facts.” Safe Horizon. <http://www.safehorizon.org/index/what-we-do-2/helping-youth-14/streetwork-homeless-youth-facts-220.html>

1 WHEREAS, states spend approximately \$5.7 billion each year to incarcerate youth for a non-
2 violent offense, such as homelessness;⁷ and

3 WHEREAS, 66 percent of surveyed youth reported they had been harassed by police or law
4 enforcement;⁸ and

5 WHEREAS, homeless youth reported having experienced homelessness a similar number of
6 times as the adult population despite their young age;⁹

7 WHEREAS, nearly half of the homeless youth surveyed reported they had been homeless for
8 one year or more;¹⁰ and

9 WHEREAS, one in three youth are approached by an exploiter or recruited by a pimp within the
10 first 48 hours of being on the street;¹¹ and

11 WHEREAS, LGBT youth are disproportionately represented in the homeless youth population,
12 with as many as 40% of the nation's homeless youth being LGBT, while between 5-10% of the overall
13 youth population is LGBT¹²; and

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

18 WHEREAS, San Francisco was one of the first cities to begin homeless youth counts, in 2007,
19 as a separate population from the homeless adult count,¹³ and

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⁷ Bernadine Watson. Dec. 20, 2013. www.washingtonpost.com

23 ⁸ 2013 San Francisco Homeless Unique Youth Count & Survey Comprehensive Report p.13

24 ⁹ 2013 San Francisco Homeless Unique Youth Count & Survey Comprehensive Report p.9

25 ¹⁰ ibid

¹¹ Youth Homelessness in San Francisco: 2013 Report on Incidence and Needs p. 3

¹² "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>

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

1 WHEREAS, HUD has only recently recognized that the homeless youth are a unique
2 population with specific needs, and began counting homeless youth in their Point in Time count in
3 2013;¹⁴ and

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

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

11 WHEREAS, SFUSD estimates that there were 2,357 homeless school-aged youth enrolled in
12 the district on January 24th 2013, up from 2,200 in January 2011;¹⁷ and

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

18 WHEREAS, nearly one in five youth surveyed reported using methamphetamines and one in
19 ten reported using heroin;¹⁹ and

20 WHEREAS, a significant portion of the homeless youth population struggle with mental health
21 and substance abuse, as 41% report their mental health was "fair" or "poor" and 23% report substance
22 abuse as the primary cause of their homelessness;²⁰ and

23 ¹⁴ http://cahomelessyouth.library.ca.gov/docs/pdf/Hidden-in-Plain-Sight_FullReportFINAL.pdf p. 6-7

24 ¹⁵ 2013 San Francisco Homeless Unique Youth Count & Survey Comprehensive Report p.5

25 ¹⁶ 2013 San Francisco Homeless Unique Youth Count & Survey Comprehensive Report p.28

¹⁷ 2013 San Francisco Homeless Unique Youth Count & Survey Comprehensive Report p.28

¹⁸ 2013 San Francisco Homeless Unique Youth Count & Survey Comprehensive Report p.12

¹⁹ 2013 San Francisco Homeless Unique Youth Count & Survey Comprehensive Report p.14

1 WHEREAS, homeless youth are in need of job and education support with 71% of homeless
2 youth being unemployed at the time of the survey, 25% not having completed high school or obtained
3 a GED, and 72% of homeless youth respondents wanting to further their education;²¹ and

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

7 WHEREAS, Larkin Street provided services to 3,450 youth between July 2012 and July 2013,²²
8 which is a greater number than the 2013 Point-In-Time Count (which found 1,902 homeless children
9 and TAY); and

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

12 WHEREAS, approximately two-thirds of Larkin Street youth report at intake experiencing a
13 serious mental health issue within the past 30 days;²⁴ and

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

17 WHEREAS, when these common needs are addressed, these at-risk youth take the lead and
18 serve as policy advisors, youth commissioners, community advocates, and graduate from intensive
19 training programs like Year Up;²⁵ and

20 WHEREAS, Congress and the Obama Administration set a federal goal of ending
21 homelessness for youth, children, and families by 2020;²⁶ and

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23 ²⁰ 2013 San Francisco Homeless Unique Youth Count & Survey Comprehensive Report p.14

24 ²¹ 2013 San Francisco Homeless Unique Youth Count & Survey Comprehensive Report p.9, 16

25 ²² ibid

26 ²³ 2013 San Francisco Homeless Unique Youth Count & Survey Comprehensive Report p.2

27 ²⁴ Youth Homelessness in San Francisco: 2013 Report on Incidence and Needs p. 5

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


29 ²⁶ http://usich.gov/opening_doors/

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

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

7 FURTHER RESOLVED, That the San Francisco Youth Commission and the LSYS Youth
8 Advisory Board of urge the mayor and the Board of Supervisors to complete the 2015 TAY Housing
9 Plan, and establish a new TAY Housing goal after the TAY Housing Assessment is completed during
10 the summer of 2015; and

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

20 2014-2015 Youth Commission Chair

21 Adopted by Youth Commission April 20, 2015
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