



# FREDERICK COUNTY YOUTH ALONE WITHOUT A HOME

In June 2018, there were 162 “unaccompanied” homeless youth enrolled in Frederick County (MD) Public Schools. These children, many of them age 15-18 and highly vulnerable, are no longer under direct supervision of a parent or legal guardian, and lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence. Homeless youth are disproportionately youth of color and victims of violence, sexual, physical or emotional abuse. They are young people who are on their own at too young of an age.

## HOMELESSNESS HAS SIGNIFICANT, LASTING IMPACTS

Homeless youth struggle with numerous issues because of their age and lack of safe housing. Research and data, including surveys of homeless and formerly homeless youths, indicate that experiencing homelessness can have significant negative impacts on children academically, socially, and emotionally.

### *Homeless students:*

- experience greater school mobility than their non-homeless peers. School mobility can cause interruptions to a child's education and is associated with lower school achievement and increased risk of dropping out of school.
- are at a greater risk of being chronically absent than their non-homeless peers. Chronic absenteeism is associated with lower academic achievement and higher dropout rates.
- face significant gaps in high school graduation rates compared to their peers.

Two-thirds of formerly homeless youths surveyed said that homelessness had a significant impact on their education, making it hard to stay and do well in school.

Over 40 percent of formerly homeless youths surveyed said that they dropped out of school or stopped attending school while they were homeless in middle or high school.

Nearly 60 percent of formerly homeless youths surveyed said that their schools did a fair or poor job of supporting them while they were homeless and that a lot more should be done.

The choices many homeless youth must make in order to survive often are not good for them. Youth on the streets are more likely to be assaulted or coerced by predators, to engage in prostitution, to become pregnant, to not receive needed medical or psychological attention, and to fail to find enough food and shelter to survive.

Homeless youth need youth-specific intervention in a setting safe from the hazards of street life. Age-appropriate shelter and supportive services are critical to protecting the vulnerability of homeless youth.

For these youth, a stable residence with adult supervision is the beginning of addressing larger life-shaping issues.

*Homelessness can have significant negative impacts on youth academically, socially, and emotionally.*



# FREDERICK COUNTY MOVES TOWARDS A SOLUTION

**SHIP of Frederick County** is in the planning stages of creating a **Host Home** program for Frederick County unaccompanied homeless youth. It is our intention to pilot the program in Fall 2019.

**Host Homes**, found throughout North America, are an intervention for youth who are currently experiencing homelessness for a variety of reasons, including but not limited to family conflict, poverty, gender identity and sexual orientation. Providing host home programs are a cost-effective and successful model for preventing youth homelessness in a wide range of cases and situations.

The goal of **SHIP's Host Home** program is to provide a safe supportive environment for the youth so that they can complete their Frederick County Public School education in their home school district. Youth will also receive support and encouragement through life skills training and development, and **SHIP's New Horizons** counseling and navigation program - all furthered by the support of the volunteer host family, the Frederick County Public School environment, and the community-at-large.

*Homeless youth need youth-specific intervention in a setting safe from the hazards of street life.*

Learn more about how you can make a dramatic and lasting difference in a child's life here in Frederick County.



Contact SHIP of Frederick County at (240) 415-8971 or write [Info@ShipFrederick.com](mailto:Info@ShipFrederick.com)