



northwest  
youth services



# Whatcom County Census

Race and Hispanic Origin	
<i>i</i> White alone, percent	⚠ 82.1%
<i>i</i> Black or African American alone, percent (a)	⚠ 1.6%
<i>i</i> American Indian and Alaska Native alone, percent (a)	⚠ 0.9%
<i>i</i> Asian alone, percent (a)	⚠ 5.9%
<i>i</i> Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone, percent (a)	⚠ 0.2%
<i>i</i> Two or More Races, percent	⚠ 5.8%
<i>i</i> Hispanic or Latino, percent (b)	⚠ 9.6%

# 2022 Whatcom County Annual Report on Homelessness by Race

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Hispanic/Latino 13%

White 65%

American Indian or Alaska Native 7%

Missing data 16%

Multi-racial 7%

Black 3%

Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander 1%

Asian 1%

# Employment Services

Barry MacHale  
Education and Employment Coordinator



What is the service and who does it serve?

The NWYS Employment & Education (E&E) service provides direct, low-barrier, trauma-informed employment and education support for youth aged 13-24 who are either actively homeless or belong to marginalized communities.

Marginalized communities include: Black, Indigenous, and People of Color; those with previous histories of homelessness; those experiencing behavioral or mental health concerns; those with conviction histories; those with physical or intellectual disability; and those who identify as LGBTQIA+, among other groups.

In addition to providing direct services, NWYS E&E functions through referrals as a “bridge” to age-unrestricted community employment and education resources that youth often do not initially engage with on their own.





# Why is it needed in the community?

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This service is needed because there are hundreds of homeless or marginalized youth in Whatcom County who face serious barriers to accessing education/training, employment, and the means to independently meet their basic needs.



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In addition to developing self-advocacy skills, marginalized and homeless youth often have negative experiences with or perceptions of institutions and as a result might not independently access community employment and education resources; in these cases NWYS can act as a trusted connection.



# How was the need for this service determined?

Most adults support their housing with wages. Most youth participating in or applying for NWYS housing services require increasing levels of contribution towards their housing depending on the type of support.

NWYS has consistently observed that youth accessing housing also required support with accessing education and employment.



Youth who are experiencing homelessness and/or serious barriers to employment and education are not (fully) building the foundations for an independent and thriving future life.

They are more likely to accrue life experiences that predispose them to long-term chronic homelessness and associated outcomes. Early intervention is best practice.

# What are some of the critical issues emerging?



# How are the E&E Services helping the community with the emerging issues?

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The Employment and Education service works with youth living in Whatcom County to access employment and education, both of which are strongly correlated with stable, healthy lives. Whatcom County communities all have a strong interest in preventing life trajectories that lead to long-term chronic homelessness and the associated impacts upon individuals, families, and communities at large -- as evident by our county approved CHIP.



- For the years 2019-2022, total number of youth engaged with education and employment services was: 244
- An average of 32% of youth engaged with services are BIPOC; 98% are below 30% AMI
- An average of 93% of youth engage in employment activities

A photograph of a rainbow arching over a residential building at sunset. The sky is a mix of purple, pink, and orange. The building is a multi-story structure with several windows and chimneys. The overall mood is hopeful and serene.

# OUTCOMES



- An average of 28% of youth engage in education activities
- An average of 37% of youth gained employment
- 38 total youth participated in Youth Jobs community-based paid job training

A photograph of a rainbow arching over a residential building at sunset. The sky is a mix of purple, pink, and orange. The building is a multi-story structure with several windows and chimneys. The overall scene is serene and hopeful.

# OUTCOMES

- 10 community partners participated in Youth Jobs paid job training, including: Allied Arts, Animals as Natural Therapy, Appliance Depot, Brandywine Kitchen, Habitat for Humanity, Make.Shift, Ragfinery, RE Store, and Sylvia Center for the Arts.

A photograph of a rainbow arching over a residential building at sunset. The sky is a mix of purple, pink, and orange. The building is a multi-story structure with several windows and chimneys. The overall mood is peaceful and hopeful.

# OUTCOMES



# Total Funding & all Funders

Whatcom County: \$25,900

City of Bellingham: \$25,900

Capital One: \$12,600





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*Transformative Approach*

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It is there in that space of collective despair that one's creativity, one's imagination is at risk, there that one's mind is fully colonized, there that the freedom one longs for is lost.

--bell hooks

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## A Healing Centered Model of Care

AIMS TO AFFIRM AND EMPOWER YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS HARMED BY MULTIPLE INTERSECTING SYSTEMS THROUGH THE PROVISION OF THERAPEUTIC ART-BASED PROGRAMS, SYSTEM NAVIGATION, AND CASE MANAGEMENT GROUNDED IN HEALING CENTERED ENGAGEMENT

THESE INTERVENTIONS ARE KEY IN SUPPORTING YOUNG FOLKS TO CONNECT THEIR EXPERIENCE OF HARM TO LARGER SOCIAL AND INSTITUTIONAL SYSTEMS, RATHER THAN CHARACTER AND CULTURAL SHORTCOMINGS.

HCE'S COMPREHENSIVE AND INTEGRATED WRAP-AROUND PROGRAM IS GROUNDED IN SHAWN GINWRIGHTS' FRAMEWORK FOR RADICAL HEALING, ENCOMPASSING FIVE MAJOR ELEMENTS: CULTURE, AGENCY, RELATIONSHIPS, MEANING, AND ACHIEVEMENT



# Connect

Community engagement at Northwest Youth Services aims to elevate individuals with the goals that they set: guiding individuals through systems navigation, barriers, and access to community resources that can in turn help young folks meet their needs and passions.





# A Healing Centered Model of Care



## Direct Cash Transfers

A cash transfer is typically defined as “a direct transfer payment of money to an eligible person” (O’Sullivan & Sheffrin, 2003). Because a cash transfer is a payment of money directly to a person, it is different from indirect and nonfungible forms of assistance (for example, vouchers; coupons; restricted scholarships; payments made directly to others, such as landlords; in-kind goods, services, or housing).

# A Healing Centered Model of Care



## Direct Cash Transfers

Cash transfers designed for racial justice and social inclusion can provide an empowering solution to BIPOC and LGBTQ+ youth that enables them to make decisions and pursue solutions in alignment with their own goals and needs.

Overall impacts: If implemented effectively, DCT could prevent people from falling into homelessness or give individuals who are experiencing homelessness the economic boost they need to secure housing and exit homelessness.

# A Healing Centered Model of Care



## Social Enterprise Intervention

A service offering vocational and small business training and clinical services referrals to homeless young adults.

Impacts: Improved life satisfaction, family contact, peer support, and depressive symptoms; improvement in length of staying employed outcomes. Reduced living in a shelter.

# A Healing Centered Model of Care



## Individual Placement Support (IPS)

Individualized and long-term support through integrated vocational and clinical services, adapted for homeless young adults.

Impacts: Studies showed an increased rate of life time employment. Improved some aspects of social emotional well-being. Reduced living in a shelter.

"The best way to make dreams come true is to wake up." --Mae C. Jemison



Thank You!!