



Youth REACH MD Youth Count 2020

Recommended Methods: A CoC Checklist

Preparing

- Review your CoC's data and count debriefs from previous years to identify key areas of focus or strategies to employ
- Review materials available on youthreachmd.com
- Attend all steering committee meetings, regional planning calls, and webinars

Building a Team

- Recruit a minimum of 3 Youth Ambassadors to your leadership team and involve them as early and as much as possible, including having them:
 - Identify locations to post flyers and/or administer surveys
 - Map routes for survey administration
 - Develop scripts to use when approaching youth to survey
 - Administer surveys
 - Develop marketing strategies
 - Help train volunteers
 - Plan magnet events
 - Select survey participation incentives
 - Act as program ambassadors
 - Promote the count in their communities and on social media
- Compensate Youth Ambassadors (aim for \$15/hour or comparable amount)

Building a Team (continued)

- Engage a wide variety of partners (aim for at least 10 of the following):
 - Public schools (start with McKinney Vento Liaisons – they receive info from Valerie at MSDE about YRMD)
 - Colleges, universities, and technical schools (financial aid staff especially)
 - Hospitals
 - Advocacy organizations and legal service providers
 - Religious institutions
 - Soup kitchens/food pantries
 - Police departments and emergency services
 - Community Centers
 - Homeless service providers
 - Community Coalitions
 - Local Management Board
 - Local government agencies (social services, juvenile services, health department, parks and rec, etc.)
 - Local businesses
 - Libraries
 - LGBTQ- and immigrant-serving organizations
 - American Job Centers/local workforce boards
 - Other direct service providers (mental health, substance use, etc.)
- Identify champions and convene a cross-sector leadership group

Planning

- Hold planning meetings at least monthly starting at least 6 months prior to the count
- Complete the YRMD Readiness Assessment
 - SWOT Analysis: Where are we currently and where can we grow?
 - Partnership Mapping: Who can help us?
 - Hexagon Tool: What strategies should we use?
- Create an action plan for implementation of your selected count strategies
- Plan to use a mix of all of the following count strategies:
 - Site/service-based
 - School-based
 - Street outreach

Getting the Word Out

- Develop a marketing plan that begins 6 weeks before the count and uses social media, local news stations, flyers/posters, and radio (see marketing toolkit)
- Place flyers/posters at a variety of locations (at least 8 of the following):
 - Local businesses
 - Libraries
 - Local government buildings/offices
 - Police/fire departments
 - Community events/fairs/festivals
 - Service providers (homeless service providers and others)
 - Youth-identified hotspots (e.g. malls, community centers, parks, clubs, laundry mats, fast food restaurants)
 - Colleges, universities, and vocational schools
 - Places of worship
 - Bus stops and other transportation hubs
 - Public schools
 - Hotels/motels
 - Storage facilities
 - Methadone clinics

Readying Volunteers

- Recruit volunteers who are peers, near peers, or work with youth
- Train volunteers and partner organizations using the survey guide and video as well as those with local expertise in street outreach and/or youth engagement. Include strategies on how to protect youth privacy and ask about sensitive topics.
- Ensure surveyors are able to connect youth with services or supports they may need

Surveying Methods & Strategies

- Survey at multiple types of locations (at least 4 of the following):
 - Public schools (focus on high schools)
 - Libraries
 - Youth-identified hotspots (e.g. malls, community centers, parks, clubs, laundry mats, fast food restaurants)
 - Colleges, universities, and vocational schools
 - Soup kitchens/food pantries
 - Homeless service providers
 - Other service providers
 - LGBTQ service providers
 - Methadone clinics
 - Encampments
 - Local government offices (social services, health department, etc.)
 - Nightlife locations
 - Religious institutions
 - Use paper and online survey methods
 - Provide a survey incentive of at least a \$10-15 gift card available for a variety of retailers
 - Ask youth who else you should talk to or where else you should go at the conclusion of the survey
- ## Wrap Up
- Debrief and complete debrief questionnaire as a group