

The Source Emergency Youth Shelter

Our Runaway and Homeless Youth (RHY) program is a federally recognized and state licensed Homeless Youth Shelter. Overnight shelter is available from 5:00pm - 8:00am (M-F) and 5:00pm – 12:00pm (Sat-Sun) for up to 16 youth between the ages of 12-21 for up to 21 days. We are unable to allow young people that are part of Department of Human Services. The goal of this program is to reduce youth homelessness with a continuum of care that moves youth from the streets or in the shelter towards stable, long-term housing and/or family reunification. The Source is the only licensed homeless youth shelter along the front range of Colorado, from north Denver to the Wyoming border. Without our services, young people experiencing homelessness in our community would simply have nowhere else to go.

In our shelter, more than 78% of the youth are from CO and more than 70% come from the Denver Metro area. 58% identify as male, 30% female, and 9% transgender/non-binary. 27% of youth served identified as LGBTQ+. Youth in our programs tend to be more racially and ethnically diverse than the surrounding Boulder area community. In 2018, 20% of youth served identified as Hispanic or Latinx, 8% African American or Black, 2% Native American, 2% Asian and 6% of youth from multiple racial or ethnic backgrounds. Prior to coming to our shelter program, 50% of the youth reported living on the streets, literally homeless. Many have experienced violence in their homes have been victims of or witness to domestic violence and family breakup: 100% of the youth we serve are trauma survivors, having experienced neglect, abuse, or victimization.

Youth in our programs receive a combination of the following core services: safety and supervision in a home-like setting, access to basic needs and overnight shelter, case management and an individualized service plan, family mediation and counseling, crisis management, psycho-educational and psycho-social life-skills groups, independent living skill development, positive adult role models, participation in education and recreational activities, substance abuse support, career counseling, equine therapy, after-care coaching, community integration and referral facilitation to: medical, dental and mental health, education, supported employment, legal, health insurance, county services and housing.

The facility is 10 blocks north of downtown, where most street youth congregate, 12 blocks from Boulder's primary bus terminal, and on the route of two major bus lines that run from downtown to the shelter and drop-in center. We have a publically available landline and a cell phone that are staffed 24 hours/day, 7 days/week available for youth accessing shelter, and transportation is available to shelter as needed. Depending on the situation, staff may also link a young person with law enforcement, anti-trafficking resources, or other community organizations if needed. Attention Homes' shelter is licensed by the State of Colorado as a Homeless Youth Shelter (License # 1615850). The shelter is supervised by staff 24 hours/day, 7 days/week, and offers a youth friendly environment with developmentally appropriate services, including intake, screening and assessments, case management, education, employment support, counseling, life-skills development, and other services. There are low barriers to entry for youth when accessing our shelter other than age limit criteria and that a youth is not actively suicidal or in need of immediate and acute substance abuse, medical, or mental health emergency services.

Safe housing for victims of trafficking is addressed at our emergency shelter, and youth are also provided options through collaboration with the Laboratory to Combat Human Trafficking

(LCHT), Colorado Network to End Human Trafficking (CoNEHT), and other service providers in the DMA. SPAN has a domestic violence shelter in Boulder that is highly secure and at a confidential location. If a victim of trafficking or exploitation wants safe housing outside of AH, our staff provide a referral and a warm-hand off to SPAN.

We work to ensure that youth in our programs have access to and obtain vital documents (birth certificate, social security card, driver's license or other identification card, medical records, credit and rental history), and any additional paperwork before they exit our programming. In addition to our comprehensive services provided in our shelter, we provide follow-up care visits, on-going case management, counseling and family mediation, and independent living support, in order to maintain open and active communication with youth, ensuring that they have permanent connections and are able to move towards self-sufficiency. Youth exiting our programs are given the support and structures they need to maintain health, well-being and safety, opportunities for education and employment pathways, permanent connections, life-skills and self-sufficiency. Staff make sure clients know they can contact AH for assistance or access services at any time. We continue to assess progress for at least three months, but most importantly, we provide a permanent connection and point of contact for all issues that a young person may face as they transition into independent living and successful adulthood.