

PANEL QUESTIONS - YOUTH

Can each of you briefly describe your experience of homelessness? At what age did you first experience homelessness, how long did you experience homelessness, and did you experience homelessness on your own, with your family, or both?

When young people are staying with others temporarily or are living in motels or hotels, we refer to this as “hidden homelessness,” because it regularly goes unnoticed and young people often feel invisible. We know, however, that often young people in these environments are as vulnerable if not sometimes more vulnerable than those staying in shelters or in their cars. Can you all speak to your experiences staying with others temporarily or in motels and hotels and the unique vulnerabilities you experienced in these environments? Examples: Exposure to violence, substance use, abuse, walking on egg-shells not knowing when you’ll be asked to leave, no staff or providers to offer protection, etc.

Why is education important to you?

Did your school know that you were experiencing homelessness? Did you know who your liaison was and did they support you?

What made navigating getting to and succeeding in school difficult?

What supports made navigating and succeeding in school easier? Examples: Transportation, free and reduced lunch, school supplies, supportive staff, flexibility on deadlines/attendance, mental health support, etc)

Were there any other school staff that were helpful to you? What did they do that was the most helpful? Examples: teachers, guidance counselors, librarians, bus drivers, etc.

What would you say to a liaison that is doing their best each day to support students experiencing homelessness?

What is the one thing you want attendees to walk away with from today’s panel?