



LOYC

Legal Counsel for  
Youth and Children

*Practical strategies for providers*

## How To Engage a Lawyer and Advocate for Your Clients' Rights



# INTRODUCTIONS

## Shaun Frazier

- Director of Homeless Services, Y Social Impact Center

## Kelly Russo

- Director, American Bar Association Commission on Homelessness and Poverty, Homeless Youth Legal Network

## Rhea Yo

- Youth Homelessness Program Supervisor, Legal Counsel for Youth and Children



Introduce yourselves in the chat box

1. Name and pronouns
2. Organization and role
3. Have you worked with lawyers before?

LCYC

Legal Counsel for  
Youth and Children



# SESSION OBJECTIVES

1. Identify legal barriers and legal rights for young people and learn when and how to engage a lawyer.
2. Learn from a youth service provider and direct legal service provider the benefits of engaging lawyers in wrap-around supportive services and the steps necessary to build these multi-system collaborations in your community.
3. Learn the impact of the ABA Homeless Youth Legal Network (HYLN), as well as how to join HYLN and share in the tools continuing to be built by HYLN.





# MOST COMMON LEGAL ISSUES?

Using the chat box: What are  
the legal issues youth face?



# Most Common Legal Issues

## Safety

- Do you feel unsafe at home?
- Are you afraid someone is going to hurt you?
- Is someone harassing, stalking, or threatening you?
- Is CPS involved with your family?

## Custody

- Do you have children and need help with custody?
- Custody issues for minors, discussed in next slide

## Debts, Fees, Fines

- Do you have unpaid court fines?
- Do you owe money to a hospital?
- Do you have tickets you can't pay?

## Housing

- Did you get an eviction notice or other notice from your landlord?
- Is your landlord not repairing your home? Are the conditions unsafe?
- Do you have an eviction record or outstanding rental debt?

## Identity

- Do you want to change your name/gender marker?
- Do you need to get your identifying documents?
- Do you think someone used name your social security number without your permission?

# Most Common Legal Issues

## Immigration

- Does your family have a safety plan if someone gets arrested by ICE?
- Have you ever had a removal or deportation order?
- Are you undocumented and want to know your immigration options?

## Benefits

- Do you have a disability, and it keeps you from being able to meet your basic needs?
- Did you apply for benefits, but you were unfairly denied?

## Criminal Issues

- Do you think you have a warrant?
- Do you want to seal your records?
- Do you have fines from a criminal case you can't pay?
- Were you denied housing or employment due to criminal history?

## Employment

- Are you recently unemployed? Were you unfairly fired?
- Does your employer owe you money?
- Were you harassed or discriminated against at work?
- Do you have a disability that affects your work?





## Legal Issues for Minors

---

Safety

---

Custody

---

Education

---

Access to Benefits

---

Decision-making  
(health and housing)

# WHAT CAN LAWYERS DO?

## Empower young people by providing access to justice

- Have confidential conversations with young people about their options without the fear of mandated reporting.
- Advocate for young people with schools, housing providers, medical providers, probation officers, etc. without going to court.
- Represent young people in court for eviction defense, protection orders, reducing court fees/fines, etc.
- Organize a “Know Your Rights” session at a shelter, church, or youth gathering place so that young people are educated about their rights.
- Organize a legal clinic for young people so that their records can be sealed or expunged or for name/gender marker changes.





A background image showing three young people (two women and one man) jumping joyfully in a snowy outdoor setting. They are all smiling and have their arms raised. The scene is captured in a slightly desaturated, high-contrast style. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

# BENEFITS OF ENGAGING A LAWYER perspective of a provider

- Clinical benefit: Increases Youth Agency. Attorneys must follow youth client's direction and goals
- Youth and Provider access to legal expertise
- More effective case management in navigating systems
- Expands the number of wrap-around services, and provides more case manager bandwidth
- Allows providers to focus on other issues, including family reconciliation



# YET Youth Engagement Team

## FOR PREVENTING HOMELESSNESS

### PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The YET program offers youth centered housing intervention, family reunification and supportive services. YET is a multi-systems team of therapy, case management, and legal professionals who use a wrap-around approach to serve youth experiencing a housing crisis.

### PROGRAM OFFERS

- › Housing Navigation
- › Civil Legal Aid
- › Case Management
- › Emotional Support Services
- › Wrap Around Approach
- › Family Reunification

### QUALIFICATIONS

- › Youth, 12-17 years
- › Unhoused, or at risk of experiencing homelessness
- › Resides in King County

### APPLICATION PROCESS

- › Provider referral only
- › Call intake line: 206 413 5506
- › Email: yet@seattlemca.org

### REFERRALS FROM

- › Public Schools
- › CEA
- › Juvenile Justice
- › Behavioral Health
- › Children's Administration
- › Unaccompanied Youth Providers



### Three Agencies

- Y Social Impact Center
- Friends of Youth
- Legal Counsel for Youth and Children

### Three multi-disciplinary providers

- Licensed mental health therapist
- Housing navigator
- Attorney



## What is YHDP and origins of the Youth Engagement Team Program Model

Community Stakeholder and Youth input



Joint Committee and Youth Action Board



Equity and Disproportionality Goals



Wraparound Approach



Systems involved







# Desired Program Outcomes

Exits to Safe and Stable Housing: Family Reunification, Host Homes, Transitional Living, other Creative or Legal Solutions

Social and Emotional Well Being Improves (Self Sufficiency Matrix)

Increased Permanent Connections (Wraparound/MDT Model)

Equity: LGBTQ and youth of color achieve program outcomes at same rates as overall population

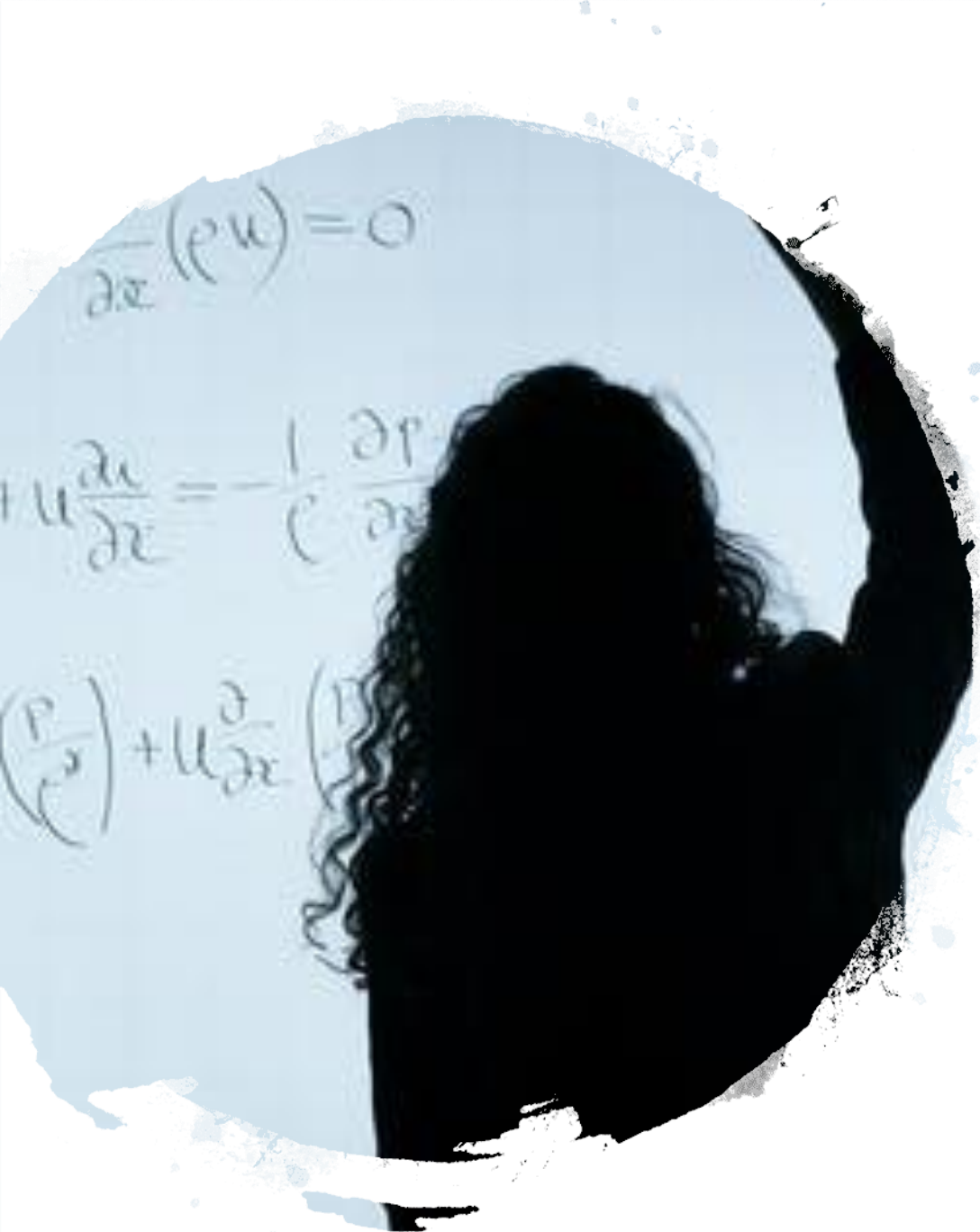
Improved Partnership with Child Welfare

Outreach and Accessibility to Systems Involved Youth

Increased Legal Support for Safety

Increased Legal Support for Education





## Data and Outcomes

### What do we know so far?

#### LCYC

Total Enrolled: 152

Returning to homelessness: 3

Host Homes: 1

Foster care: 2

Transitional Living Programs: 6

Lost Contact: 31

Reunified with Family: 43

Moved in with friends: 13

Rental by client: 6

#### YMCA

Total Enrolled: 78

Returning to homelessness: 1

Host Homes: 6

Foster Care: 3

Transitional Living Programs: 2

Lost Contact: 3

Reunified with Family: 32

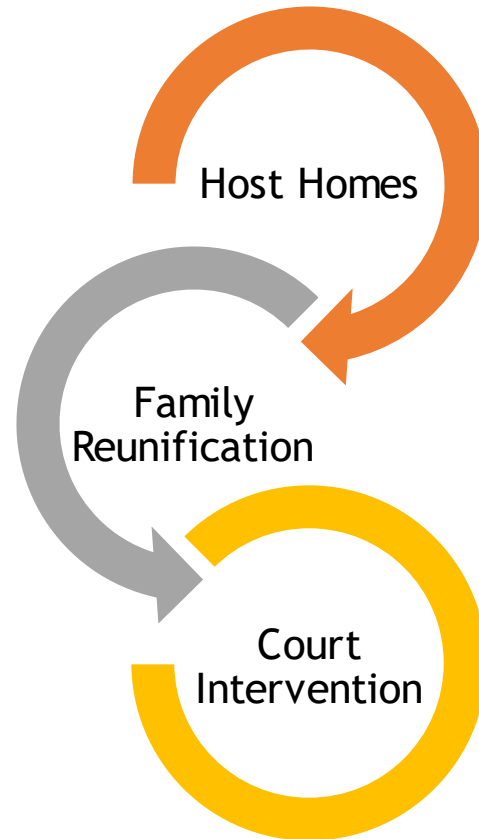
Moved in with friends:

Rental by client: 20



# Opportunities and Challenges

---



What has  
worked?

What are  
the  
barriers?





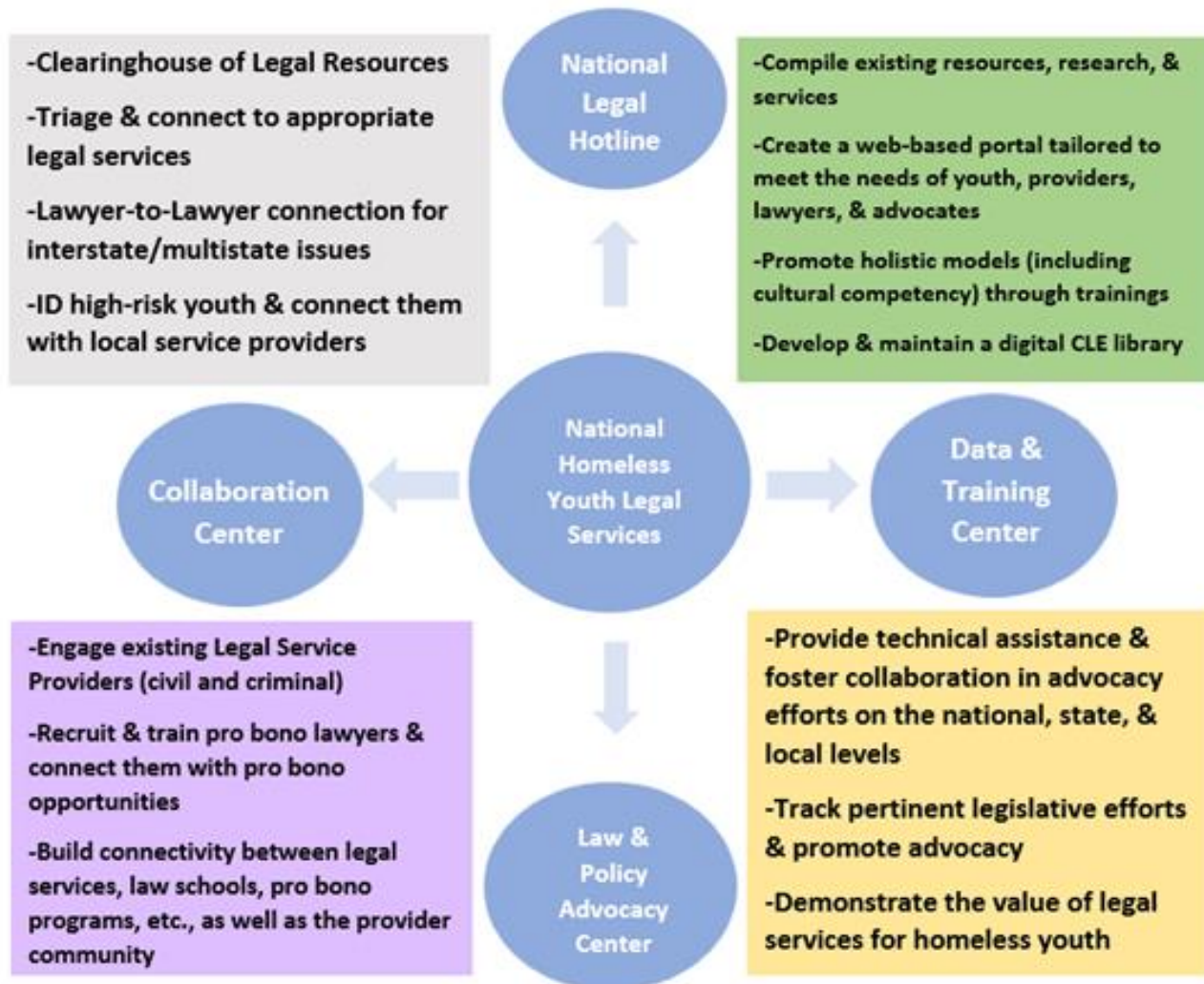
**GREAT!  
NOW...HOW CAN I ENGAGE  
A LAWYER?**

- How have you engaged a lawyer?
- Share your experience in the chat box!



# WHERE TO FIND A LAWYER

- **Directory of Legal Services:** [ambar.org/HYLN](http://ambar.org/HYLN)
- Criminal - Public Defender
- Civil Legal Services/Legal Aid - [lsc.gov](http://lsc.gov)
- Bar Associations: ABA, State and Local - [FindLegalHelp.org](http://FindLegalHelp.org)
- Law School Clinical Programs
- Law Firm Pro Bono Programs
- Courts
- Other Service Providers
- Policy Advocates/National Campaigns



The American Bar Association Homeless Youth Legal Network was established to increase legal services for youth and young adults experiencing homelessness and to remove administrative, civil and criminal legal barriers—as well as systemic policy barriers—to housing, education, employment, benefits, treatment and services.

HYLN serves a catalyst and convener to address the *legal* issues of homeless youth and improve outcomes for those transitioning from the child welfare system and exiting the juvenile justice system. The ABA invites federal partners and national, state and local organizations to join the effort.



**For more information and to get involved, please contact:**  
 Kelly Russo  
 Director, ABA Commission on Homelessness and Poverty  
 (202) 662-1699  
[kelly.russo@americanbar.org](mailto:kelly.russo@americanbar.org)





# HYLN RESOURCES

Visit [ambar.org/HYLN](https://www.ambar.org/HYLN) for:

- National directory of legal service providers
- Federal advocacy and model state statutes
- Technical assistance to communities and stakeholders
- Model legal services programs and data
- Webinars, reports, articles, toolkits and more!



# HYLN COMMUNITY ROUNDTABLES

- **What?** Community-led roundtables across the country to facilitate network-, strategy-, and information-building to increase local homeless youths' access to legal resources related to education, the justice system, and more.
- **Where?** Las Vegas, Tampa, DC, Denver, Detroit, Northern VA...more to come!
- **Who joins?** Stakeholders from homeless youth service providers (including health and mental health), city/county agencies and systems (including juvenile justice and the school system), the legal community (local legal aid providers, local and state bar associations, pro bono attorneys), funders, and other local advocates or government officials.
- **Outcomes?** Depending on the particular community's needs:
  - Legal referral directories, new partnerships, state legislative advocacy, toolkits and additional resources, etc.

# MODEL PROGRAMS



- Arizona Legal Women and Youth Services (ALWAYS), Arizona, [Alwaysaz.org](http://Alwaysaz.org)
- Bay Area Legal Aid, California, [Baylegal.org](http://Baylegal.org)
- Community Legal Services of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, [Clsphila.org](http://Clsphila.org)
- Family & Youth Law Center at Capital Univ. School of Law, Ohio, [Familyyouthlaw.org](http://Familyyouthlaw.org)
- Homeless Persons Representation Project Homeless Youth Initiative, Maryland, [Hprplaw.org](http://Hprplaw.org)
- Homeless Youth Legal Clinic, Utah, <https://www.voaut.org/homeless-teen-services>
- Center for Children's Advocacy, Connecticut, [Cca-ct.org](http://Cca-ct.org)
- Legal Counsel for Youth and Children (LCYC), Washington, [www.lcycwa.org](http://www.lcycwa.org)
- Mid-Minnesota Legal Aid, Youth Law Project, Minnesota, [Mylegalaid.org](http://Mylegalaid.org)
- Pegasus Legal Services for Children, New Mexico, [Pegasuslaw.org/youth-law-project](http://Pegasuslaw.org/youth-law-project)
- The Door, New York, [door.org](http://door.org)
- Urban Justice, Peter Cicchino Youth Project, New York, [Pcyp.urbanjustice.org](http://Pcyp.urbanjustice.org)



# ENGAGE WITH HYLN

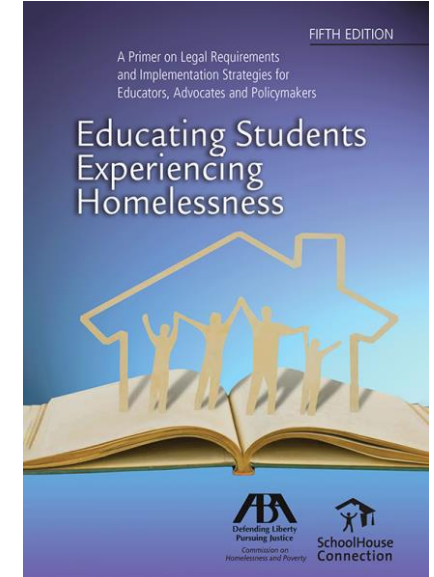


- Visit our website: [ambar.org/HYLN](http://ambar.org/HYLN)
- Follow us on Twitter: [@ABAHYLN](https://twitter.com/ABAHYLN); and Facebook [www.facebook.com/ABAHYLN](https://www.facebook.com/ABAHYLN)
- Join our listserv of over 450 advocates across the country by e-mailing [hyn@americanbar.org](mailto:hyn@americanbar.org)
- Request free technical assistance: [Kelly.Russo@americanbar.org](mailto:Kelly.Russo@americanbar.org)

# MORE RESOURCES



- **Educating Students Experiencing Homelessness (5<sup>th</sup> Ed.),** ABA Commission on Homelessness & Poverty, SchoolHouse Connection, [ambar.org/ESEH](http://ambar.org/ESEH)
- **Homeless Youth Handbooks,** A Pro Bono Project of Baker McKenzie, [homelessyouth.org](http://homelessyouth.org)
  - California, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, Texas, Washington, Washington DC
- **Homeless and Runaway Youth in the Juvenile Justice System,** Coalition for Juvenile Justice, NN4Y, [http://www.juvjustice.org/sites/default/files/resource-files/Homeless%20and%20Runaway%20Youth\\_0.pdf](http://www.juvjustice.org/sites/default/files/resource-files/Homeless%20and%20Runaway%20Youth_0.pdf)
- **Resolution Addressing the Needs of Homeless Youth & Families in Juvenile & Family Courts,** NCJFCJ, [https://www.ncjfcj.org/sites/default/files/Fnl\\_Adopted%20Homelessness%20Resolution\\_7-2017.pdf](https://www.ncjfcj.org/sites/default/files/Fnl_Adopted%20Homelessness%20Resolution_7-2017.pdf)
- **Voices of Youth Count, Missed Opportunities: Youth Homelessness in America,** Chapin Hall, Univ. of Chicago, <http://voicesofyouthcount.org/brief/national-estimates-of-youth-homelessness/>



LOYC

Legal Counsel for  
Youth and Children



QUESTIONS?