



A WAY HOME WASHINGTON

November 2021

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Spokane has become the largest community in the United States to achieve a reduction in youth and young adult homelessness.

Walla Walla has reduced homelessness for young people by 20% in the last six months.

We want to say a special thank you to the many partners and community members across our state who we are grateful for every day. Your passion, dedication, expertise, advocacy, collaboration, systems change, and financial support make this work possible. Even as our work to achieve social justice is of the heart, the day-in and day-out realities can be daunting; this has never been more true than during the COVID-19 pandemic. Yet, not only have you persisted in the face of this unprecedented challenge, you are making incredible progress in achieving our shared vision of ensuring all young people have a safe, stable place to call home.

Our hope is for you to enjoy a Thanksgiving holiday that offers the opportunity to relax and be refreshed.



New COVID-19 Impacts Dashboard

We're excited to share our new dashboard to track the impacts of COVID-19 on young adults in Washington state. Understanding the disparate impacts of the pandemic can help to inform and guide advocates and communities on approaches to meet basic needs and, in turn, to prevent and end homelessness among young people.

"We expected the impacts of COVID-19 on young people experiencing homelessness to be bad, but what we learned was truly eye opening," said Julie Patiño, AWHWA Executive Director. *"Young people fared worse than every other age group in our state, with young people of color being most severely and disproportionately impacted."*

"Too many transgender BIPOC have experienced homelessness. Reflecting upon my own trauma and experiences reminds me that my community is still facing the hardships I've tried to forget, and these are cycles that need to be broken. I want to do whatever it takes for us to thrive — not just survive," stated Leeze Castro, student stability fellow, A Way Home Washington.

The [COVID-19 Impacts Dashboard](#) draws on data collected through the Census Bureau's national public data set called the Household Pulse Survey. This 20-minute online survey is conducted every two weeks, gathering near real-time data on how the coronavirus pandemic is impacting households across the country. Our analysis of this ongoing data set focuses on the impacts to 18-25 year olds in Washington state.

The dashboard was created with the generous support and expertise of Tableau and Keyrus. The dashboard, which is also prominently featured on the Tableau Racial Equity Data Hub, disaggregates data by age, race, and national averages, provides compelling visualization of survey responses about housing and food insecurity, employment, education, and well-being, relative to the pandemic's effect on young adults.

The data show that, across the board, young people are more vulnerable and are having more acute negative experiences than other age groups in Washington state. Findings also show:

MENTAL HEALTH

71% reported being depressed and 82% reported experiencing anxiety

FOOD SECURITY

Only 52% of respondents indicated they were very confident they could afford food

INCOME SECURITY

65-70% of lower income earners (below \$50,000) experienced recent job loss

"We know that many aspects of young people's lives affect their housing security, and vice versa, which is what we wanted to reflect in our dashboard," said Liz Harding Chao, Data & Evaluation Director for A Way Home Washington, who led development of the dashboard. *"The data provides evidence that young people and especially Black young people are having a tough time mentally, financially, and with food, employment, and housing security, especially when compared to other age groups in Washington. Using these data, advocates can work to ensure that young people receive the housing, food and employment resources they need in COVID-19 recovery."*

"I never want a young person to experience what I have lived through. My life journey thus far, my work at AWHWA, and even the challenge of being a student with housing insecurities, has compelled me to pursue a career that will combine authentic advocacy, my personal life experiences, and strategic communication," said Esther Taylor, data consultant, A Way Home Washington.

To learn more about AWHWA's COVID-19 Impacts Dashboard, contact Liz Harding Chao at lharding@awayhomewa.org.

Seattle Seahawks & Tableau Partnership

A Way Home Washington's new partnership with the Seattle Seahawks and Tableau Foundation is helping both to raise visibility and increase understanding about youth and

young adult homelessness and growing our capacity to effectively use personalized, real-time data to identify all the unaccompanied young people who are experiencing homelessness, and quickly provide connections to safe and stable housing.



“A Way Home Washington and the Anchor Communities Initiative are proving that we can not only address the total number of homeless youth and young adults in Washington state, but that data empowers communities to be intentional about addressing the disproportionate number of kids of color who experience homelessness each year,” said Jason Schumacher, Tableau Foundation’s lead on homelessness and housing initiatives. Headquartered in Seattle, Tableau is the world’s leading analytics platform.

“A Way Home Washington’s data-driven approach to preventing and ending youth and young adult homelessness in the state is something that really resonated with us in the Seahawks organization” said Jeff Richards, Vice President of Marketing & Community Engagement for the Seattle Seahawks. *“We know how clearly communicated insights keep our teams moving in the right direction on and off the field. The same is true for community organizations working together to make sure young people have a safe place to call home and the support needed to thrive.”*

As part of the partnership, the Seahawks generously hosted several direct service providers from the Anchor Communities at the Seahawks game on Sunday, November 21. This was a rare opportunity for our partners to come together in person and to simply enjoy themselves. Particularly throughout the pandemic, homeless service providers across the state have worked tirelessly to support young people in need. *“Welcoming the ACI partners to Lumen Field is our way of saying ‘thank you’ to those who have given so much of themselves to help others,”* said Richards.

A Warm Welcome to Our New Staff

We are excited to introduce three new A Way Home Washington staff members! Please help us welcome Cecily Ferguson in Spokane, Hanna Andress in Tacoma, and Jasper Calkins-McQuillen in Olympia. Each brings extensive experience in working with communities and young people with lived experience, along with a deep passion to prevent and end homelessness for youth and young adults across Washington.

Cecily Ferguson *(she/her)* **ACI Coaching & Improvement Manager**



Cecily brings over a decade of experience working alongside young people and communities on advocacy and systems change. Most recently she served as the Spokane Anchor Community Coordinator through the Spokane County United Way where she conducted system mapping for their Coordinated Entry Systems and housing programs, utilized the By-Name List and partnered with the Youth Advisory Board to identify systemic issues and implement housing solutions.

As AWHWA’s ACI Coaching & Improvement Manager, Cecily will provide tailored support to all Anchor Communities to design/redesign their systems using continuous quality improvement. She also will facilitate communities to achieve goals, connect teams with promising practices and expert consultants, and provide technical assistance to grow the capacity of local teams to

advance change efforts. Cecily received her Masters of Social Work from University of Washington and holds a Bachelor of Arts in Sociology, also from University of Washington.

Håna Andress *(she/her)*
Data Solutions Manager



Håna brings a wealth of knowledge and experience in continuous improvement methodology, including teaching it and other data analytics skills. She comes to us from the healthcare sector in Denver where she was most recently building COVID-19 dashboards to support the pandemic response.

Håna will manage the Centralized Diversion Fund infrastructure, update the Anchor Community Initiative dashboards and data submission processes, set up the Tableau Server, and more. She holds a Master of Science from Colorado State University and Bachelor of Arts from the University of Colorado Denver.

Jasper Calkins-McQuillen *(he/him)*
Program Operations Coordinator



Jasper honed his administrative and people skills in public-facing roles in corporate environments, including REI and Starbucks. He brings a passion for working with young people experiencing housing instability and lived experience as an LGBTQ youth in the system. He also brings expertise and a passion for writing and filmmaking.

Jasper will provide administrative support for the Anchor Community Initiative, Data & Evaluation and Training & Engagement teams at AWHWA. This includes scheduling and coordinating meetings and travel arrangements, and tracking and communicating details with a diverse group of partners and the AWHWA team.

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Julie Patiño
Executive Director
A Way Home Washington

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