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CONNECTED YOUTH INITIATIVE



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CONNECTED YOUTH INITIATIVE



Cultivating the good life for **all** of our children.

How did we get here?

2007:

Project Everlast
created

2009:

Supportive
Services for Rural
Homeless Youth
Initiative
implemented

2015:

**Connected
Youth Initiative**

*(combination of the two
models & expanded
services and population)*



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Nebraska's Connected Youth Initiative (CYI)

Evidence-based **services** for unconnected youth and statewide **systems support** to strengthen Nebraska's system for youth and young adults.

CYI uses collective impact to create systems change and serve young people through the following core components:

1. **Central Navigation**
2. **Support Services Funding**
3. **Youth Leadership** (*e.g., Project Everlast*)
4. **Coaching** (*e.g., voluntary case management*)
5. **Opportunity Passport™ and Financial Education**
6. **System Support** (*e.g., funding, training, advocacy, technical assistance*)

Guiding Principles:

- ✓ Collective Impact
- ✓ Youth Voice
- ✓ 2Gen
- ✓ Race, Equity, Inclusion

Theory of Change: *What is the goal?*

At the individual level: Nebraska's young people increase their protective factors so that they have the relationships, resources, and equitable opportunities for themselves and their child(ren) to thrive.

At the population level: Nebraska policy makers, state agencies, community leaders, practitioners, and young people co-create and strengthen an older youth system that values and actively supports prevention and upward mobility for all young people.



CONNECTED YOUTH INITIATIVE
INVESTMENT

PUBLIC
\$2,724,000

PRIVATE
\$5,700,200

**TOTAL ANNUAL INVESTMENT
TO SERVE OLDER YOUTH
IN NEBRASKA**
\$8,400,000

Who are unconnected youth and young adults?

Young people, aged 14 to 26, without permanent family connections;
and

Have any of the following lived/system experience:

- Child Welfare / Foster Care
- Juvenile Justice / Probation
- Are homeless or near homeless (e.g., “coach surfing”) or at-risk of homelessness
- Runaway
- Are pregnant and/or parenting
- Survivors of human trafficking/exploitation or at-risk of being trafficked/exploited



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Why CYI? *We know it works!*

CYI completed a 4-year rigorous evaluation study in June 2020. The impact study design and findings met ***moderate*** evidence standards set by Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS).

Young people that participate in CYI have:



3.8x greater odds of having a **safe & stable living situation**



1.8x greater odds of having **enough funds for expenses**
4x greater odds of having a **savings account**



Estimated **13% improvement in perceived hope**



Up to **71% lower odds** of multiple **ER visits**

EVIDENCE BASED



CYI Services Available for Young People in Nebraska

Central Navigation: coordinated approach that ensures young people have access to services to avoid duplication of efforts and maintain connection to community

Support Services Funding: emergency funding accessible to young people via central navigation, to address basic and emergency needs (*e.g., rent, utilities, technology, food, transportation, education, etc.*)

Youth Leadership: empowering opportunities for leadership and advocacy which is community-led and youth-driven (*Project Everlast & other area Youth Chapters*)

Opportunity Passport™: coaching program (*offered by Jim Casey*) that promotes financial literacy, credit repair, wealth creation, and asset-building. (*e.g., car purchase, education, mortgage, credit reduction*)

Coaching: voluntary case management services, not tied to any specific program, that provide goal-orientated, youth-driven 1:1 support to help young people set goals, access services, and enhance their protective and promotive factors. **CYI Coaching is the service delivery for the following:**

- Nebraska Chafee and ETV programs
- LEAP postsecondary ed and training pathways → on- and off-campus support
- 2Gen support for pregnant and parenting youth
- Opportunity Passport program
- Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project (YHDP)
- Foster Youth to Independence (FYI) vouchers
- Improving Outcomes for Youth Survivors of Human Trafficking / PAVE screening tool

CYI & Community Response

CYI is a part of Nebraska's Community Response System.

Community Wellbeing Collaboratives have **Central Navigators** across the state to help children, youth, and families get connected to services → **Including services for youth and young adults!**

Housing &
Transportation

Mental Health
Services

Childcare

Coaching

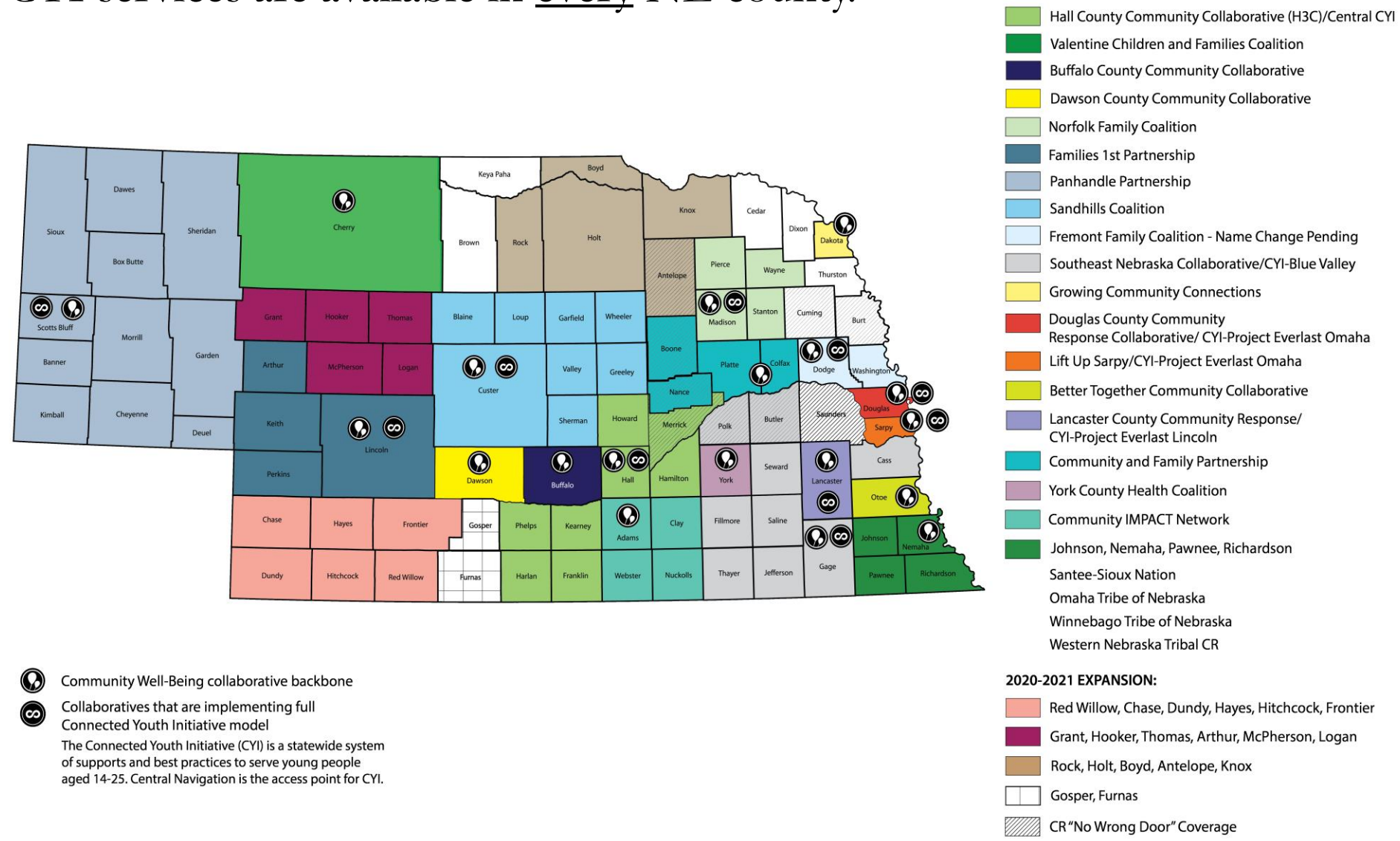
Emergency
Funds

College Prep &
Scholarships

Employment
& Career
Exploration

Did you Know?

Central Navigation serves nearly every NE county.
 CYI services are available in every NE county.



How do young people access CYI services?

Lose your job? Hard time paying rent?
No family support?

Local help is a text away.



Text HELP to 402-226-5842

NEHELPCHAT

Lose your job? Hard time paying rent?
No family support?

Local help is a text away.

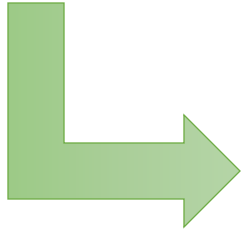


Text HELP to 308-280-8383

NEHELPCHAT

Other ways young people to connect

Young person (or their adult supporter) completes a Participant Information Form: https://www.projecteverlast.org/referral_form.html



Central Navigator in their area then connects young person to providers/partners for services.

Central Navigation is the access point for CYI services.

Young people are referred or self-refer to Central Plains Center for Services, their local Central Navigator, or any CYI provider (*no wrong door*)

DHHS (*or other system partners*) refers directly to Central Navigation or to Central Plains Center for Services



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Policy & Practice Change: *Systems Impact*

State & National Work Groups:

older youth system partners participate in various state and national work groups:

- Bring Up Nebraska / Thriving Families Priority Work Groups
- Fostering Achievement in Nebraska
- Financial Education & Poverty Prevention Work Group
- Youth Leadership Advisory Committee
- CYI Statewide Task Force
- Central Navigation Partners
- Nebraska State Trafficking Action Team
- Youth Policy Consortium
- Ongoing evaluation of CYI impact

Training: CYI supports and invests in training and technical assistance for system partners in the following best practices:

- Center for the Study of Social Policy's **Youth Thrive™** and Nebraska's **Families Thrive**
- Consumer Financial Protection Bureau's **Your Money, Your Goals**
- Dr. Kenneth Ginsburg's **Reaching Teens®**
- Jobs for the Future's **Back on Track to College™**
- **Askable Adults Matter®**
- Building **Inclusive Communities**
- **Positive Youth Development**
- **Speaker's Bureau**

State & National Leadership: young people participate in state and national leadership opportunities such as:

- Legislative Days
- CYI Youth Advisory Board
- Caregiver and Youth Citizen Review Panels
- Governor's Youth Advisory Council
- Speaker's Bureau town halls & panels
- Camp Catch-Up
- Youth Policy Consortium – various internships and fellowships
- Various state and national Young Fellows leadership opportunities

Questions?

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www.NebraskaChildren.org

www.BringUpNebraska.org

www.ProjectEverlast.org



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