



Our Vision:
A society
that treasures
the safety,
well-being and
self-worth of
every child.

60

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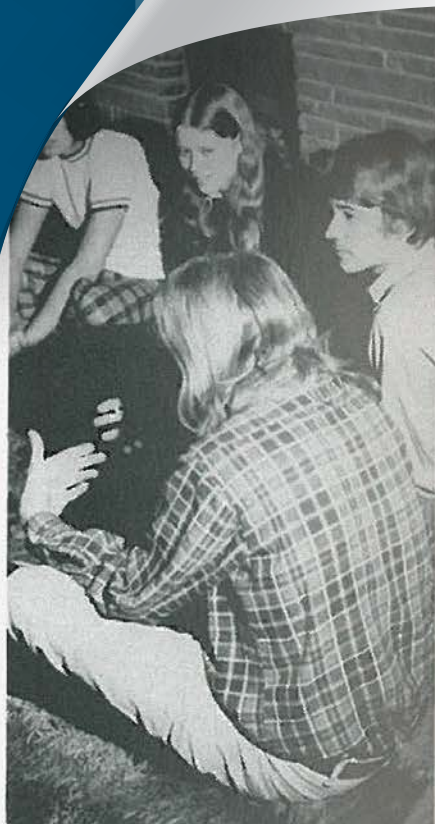
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Dear Friends,

As we celebrate a historic 60 years of youth services, it is humbling to reflect on the lessons learned from our past and from the individuals who shaped it, in order to appropriately and uniquely adapt to the critical needs of our youth, families, and Chicagoland communities. As we push ourselves into the next sixty years, we applaud the diversity and multiplicity of our strengths.

During this fiscal year, YOS ushered in a new Executive Director, only its fourth ever, while saying goodbye to YOS-veteran Rick Velasquez. YOS has expanded to a total of seven community sites and works inside of four youth facilities across the state of Illinois. We lean on social service experts to guide innovative and collaborative endeavors, while training our 100+ professional staff to drive dynamic community change and youth development. Homelessness, trauma, drug addiction, and emotional and behavioral difficulties are not new obstacles, but they are now exacerbated by social-economic inequities, increased drug and alcohol potency, and inaccessibility to resources and affordable health care. Faced with a unique set of circumstances, our clients propel us to adapt a more robust service array, ensuring we live by our mission as a comprehensive youth service agency.

More than ever, this year has been an opportunity to look forward while simultaneously taking a trip down memory lane. In fiscal year 2019, we were able to serve over 3,377 youth across our agency. Our success is not only visible in our program outcomes and fiscal sustainability, but in the ever-so meaningful micro changes that we see as our youth grow into healthy, happy people.

Jamie Noto
Executive Director

Karl Stark
Board Chair

New Leadership, Same Values

After 20 impactful years as Chief Executive Officer of Youth Outreach Services, Rick Velazquez stepped down from his leadership role. Rick began his life-changing work at YOS in 1975 as an outreach worker, where he served many youth through mentorship. Throughout the years, Rick climbed the ranks where his extensive knowledge and fieldwork helped steer YOS into a direction of more effective and impactful programs rooted in public policy reform. From direct service, management, and then finally executive director in 1999, Rick helped advance the field of adolescent substance abuse treatment, brought about effective community-based intervention strategies, and delivered culturally responsive child welfare services. YOS staff celebrated Rick during an all-staff retreat in June 2019, and later he was honored at a retirement party by his friends, family and colleagues in August 2019.

Not skipping a beat, our Board of Directors drove the decision to promote Director of Program Operations, Jamie Noto, to fill the critical role. As of July 1, 2019, Jamie Noto became the organization's first female CEO. Jamie Noto has been an integral asset to the organization for over 30 years. Beginning as an intern in 1986, she then grew from Outreach Worker, to Treatment Counselor, Program Manager, Deputy Director, followed by Director of Program Operations (2001-2019). She has overseen all aspects of our agency. We have no doubt that she will propel YOS into the next 60 years, filled with purposeful change and impact.



Committed to caring. **Inspiring change.**

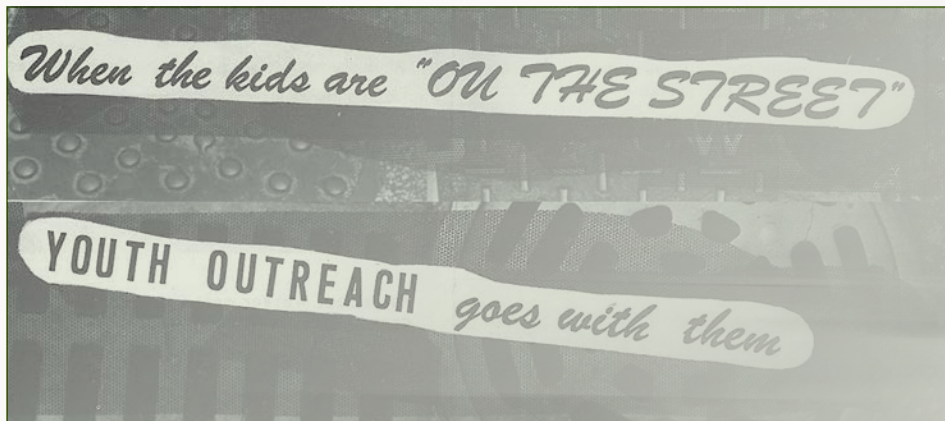
Meaningful Change in 100 Days

In November 2018, in partnership with the U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Rapid Results Institute, five communities within the states of Florida, Maryland, California, Nevada, and Illinois joined the third cohort to launch a 100-Day Challenge to end youth homelessness. Youth Outreach Services was asked to be at the center of this great project, and so, joined the stakeholders' group, called the Alliance to End Homelessness in Suburban Cook County.

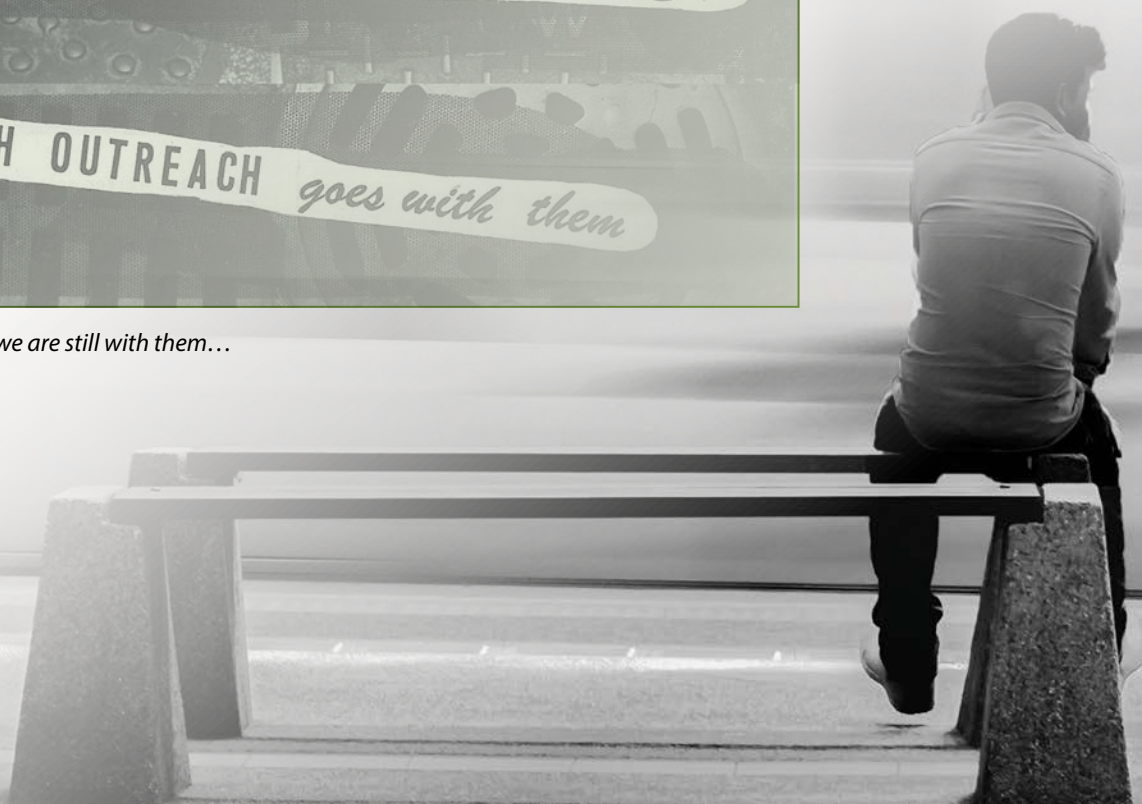
The Alliance's goals were to increase awareness of youth homelessness, eliminate barriers to access housing, and establish a strong network of services for young adults. The 100-day mark created a sense of urgency and provided the opportunity to gather stakeholders to share information and best practices. Keeping young adults' best interest in mind, YOS and partner agencies worked with school districts to train staff on identifying youth experiencing homelessness and for students to self-identify to ultimately increase referrals to services. After 100 days, the Suburban Cook County cohort was able to address the needs of 79 young adults who were transitioned into safe and stable housing. Across all five communities, 520 young adults exited homelessness, as a result of the 100-Day Challenge.

The work to end youth homelessness has not stopped there. This challenge established a momentum to keep moving forward. The Alliance to End Homelessness in Suburban Cook County was awarded a two-year Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program grant (YHDP) from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. As a selected YHDP community, suburban Cook County was granted \$6,078,027 to create and implement a comprehensive plan. YOS is thrilled to announce that, through our newly-formed partnership called, BRIDGE FOR YOUTH, with agencies including Housing Forward, New Moms, Beds Plus Care, and the African American Christian Foundation, we were awarded to serve the west region.

1 in 10
young people
and
1 in 30
adolescents
experience
homelessness
at some
point during
the year
in the US



60 years later, we are still with them...



Going Back to Our Roots

1959

2020

Youth Outreach Services now has a staff of over 100 and provides over 20 community programs and evidence-based interventions to over 4,000 youth each year. Recently, our staff noticed that many of our clients had needs left unaddressed, outside of the scope of therapeutic treatment, such as mentoring, building life-skills, and partaking in pro-social activities. In early 2019, YOS recognized the need to return to its original roots and implemented a new outreach program. Outreach Workers began by offering drop-in centers, where youth could stop by after school to do homework, hang out with friends, play games, or talk to our staff. At YOS, **“we provide a holistic approach, and we let a kid be a kid,”** says outreach counselor, Adriana Fuentes. Staff also go into schools and meet youth in the community wherever they feel comfortable.

As more kids began showing up, staff listened to their requests. YOS now offers movie nights, video game nights, an art therapy group, a LGBTQ+ group, and even virtual hangouts. Staff plan monthly outings to allow our clients from different neighborhoods to, “get together in a safe environment to, not only forget their struggles, but to also help youth build positive social skills,” explains outreach counselor, Xavier Martillo. Amidst these activities, staff talk to youth about an array of issues such as decision-making skills, anger management, conflict resolution, job readiness, healthy relationships, and mental health.



Youth Outreach Services began, in its infancy, as an outreach program for youth on Chicago's Northwest side. Reverend Stan Davis of Galewood's United Church of Christ, while in his first year at Bethany Theological Seminary, started a youth ministry. It initially drew in troubled youth who were a part of the Falcons street gang. Once fully employed by the church, Stan was able to grow the program. Spending more time talking to high school dropouts or visiting gang hangouts, Stan learned of some of the root causes of youth delinquencies. Lack of a sense of community, boredom, disengagement, and lack of jobs led to destructiveness, petty stealing, and loitering.

To meet the needs, YOS, formerly known as Northwest Youth Outreach (NYO), offered a wide range of counseling, education, recreational, medical, and legal services. Outreach Counselors did not just sit behind desks waiting for referrals. Outreach begins by meeting young people where they gather – in the streets, in snack shops, pool halls, parks, schools, or possibly even at hospital emergency rooms or gang headquarters. **“If they will not come to [church], we must go to them, where they are, as they are, to witness clearly to God's love for them.”**

Funded by Irving Park's YMCA of Metropolitan Chicago in 1964, in partnership with the Church of the Brethren, and the United Church of Christ, NYO continued to expand to meet the needs of youth. Twenty years in, the agency grew to about 40 full-time staff and 12 volunteer professionals. Services expanded to include drug and alcohol abuse counseling and crisis intervention services for families involved with local police. Four separate outreach teams were developed to reach across many city and suburban communities.

Crisis teams learned to specialize in family counseling, paramedical procedures in response to overdoses, runaway youth and foster care. Prevention efforts, through community education, also encouraged parents to prevent adolescent problems. Staff developed workshops with local groups and consulted with medical personnel, teachers, and social workers. As one former NYO staff member stated, **“Our greatest resource is that we like kids and are ready to help them if we can.”** As the faces and the needs of the community continued changed, so did we. In 1984, the organization established itself as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and changed its name to Youth Outreach Services.



Lives Impacted

Our Geographic Coverage Area is Changing

Counseling
640 Child Welfare
Prevention **32**

Juvenile Justice
2,279
426

40 Suburban
Towns
23 Chicago
Neighborhoods

Lake Michigan

Pilsen

Although our Pilsen office opened in August of 2018, YOS counselors have been providing services to youth in the Little Village/Pilsen area since 2015. Valued partnerships and referrals from organizations such as Mujeres Latinas en Acción and schools such as Little Village High School made it apparent that the need for YOS's comprehensive services was urgent. Our small but mighty treatment and outreach counselors are available at this location at 1942 S. Halsted Street, to provide individual and group activities as well as mentorship activities and parent support groups.

LaGrange

After completing a community scan, YOS learned that only three agencies provide adolescent mental health and substance use services in the Lyons Township suburban area, causing a shortage of services in some communities. Prior to opening our Lyons Township location, YOS staff would make the commute from our Melrose Park office and work out of places such as the Summit Library, the Summit Park District, or within Argo High School. After seeing the need for our services and being welcomed in by other providers, YOS officially expanded our coverage area in September of 2019, by renting space from the First Congregational Church of LaGrange. We continue to build community relationships, such as with the Community Memorial Foundation, and to serve youth through both our counseling and prevention programs.

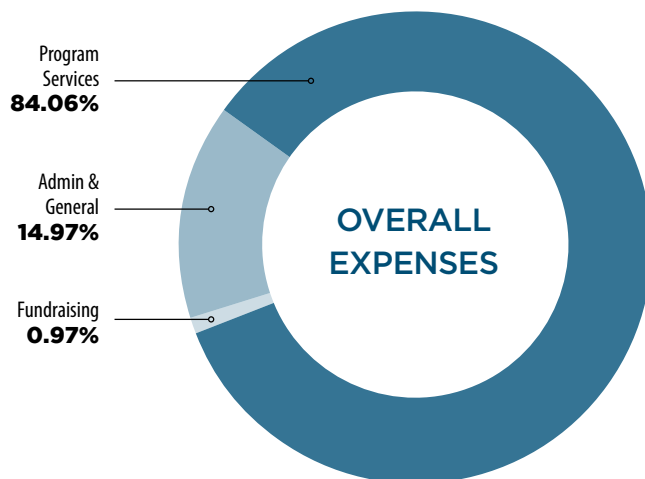
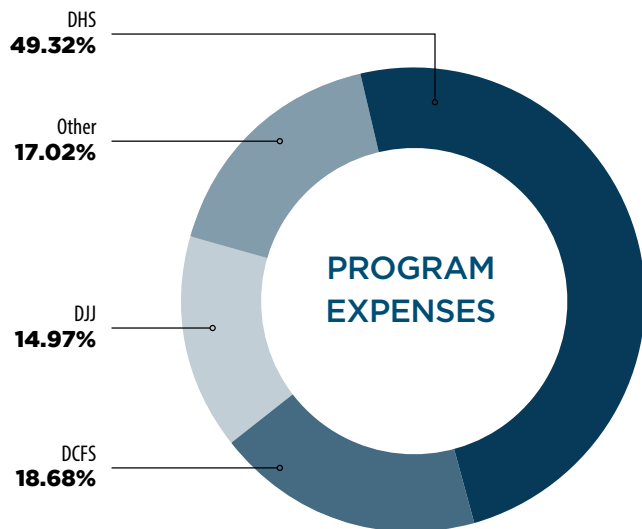
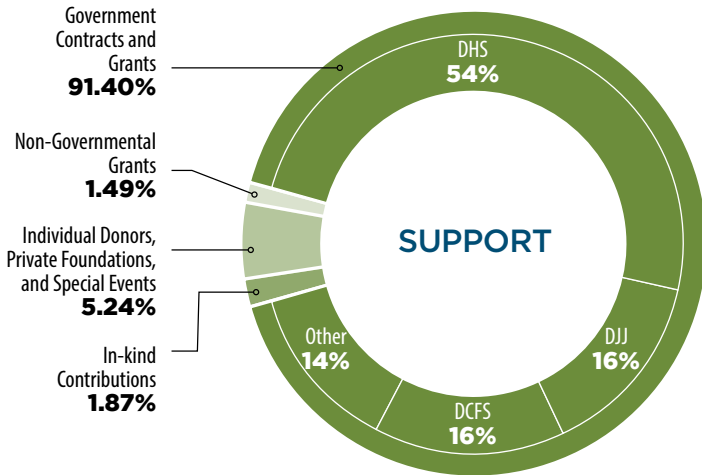
Oak Park and Bellwood

Our Transitional Living Program (TLP) for Department of Children and Family Services' (DCFS) wards and homeless youth has ebbed and flowed since the early 1990s, yet we've always strived to create safe and stable housing options for youth in care. Two notable events occurred recently. YOS's TLP for girls in the Oak Park community closed its doors due to low client numbers, in summer 2019. Also, unfortunately, the harsh "polar vortex" winter of 2018-19 resulted in water damage to the TLP for boys in Bellwood, due to frozen pipes. In both circumstances, staff responded swiftly and efficiently, providing youth with alternative placements. Once extensive renovations and furniture replacements were completed, the Bellwood building returned to full operation since the summer of 2019.

FY'19 Financials

Published January 20, 1966 in *The Messenger*

Stan Davis, second from right, works with youth on the edge of Chicago as a detached worker related to the YMCA and supported by the Church of the Brethren and the United Church of Christ.



OVERALL REVENUE





OUR PARTNERS AND FRIENDS

We are collecting feedback from our donors. The information that you give us will help to enhance opportunities that fit your needs to better engage with YOS. Please take a few minutes to complete this survey online by November 30, 2020 at: www.surveymonkey.com/r/YOSdonorsurvey

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www.yos.org
Committed to caring. **Inspiring change.**



**WE'RE
IN THIS
TOGETHER**

Together, we can empower Chicagoland youth to reach their full potential and achieve their dreams.

GIVE the gift of a new beginning for Chicagoland youth and donate to our services at yos.org/donate or check out YOS's Agency Wish List on Amazon.

JOIN our board of directors and tap into your talents and passions by collaborating with other like-minded professionals. Find out more at yos.org/about/board-directors.

CELEBRATE with us at upcoming events and fundraisers. yos.org/get-involved/events.

VOLUNTEER and share your time or expertise. Individuals and groups can positively impact the lives of our youth clients. Check out yos.org/get-involved/volunteer.

FOSTER a youth by opening your heart and your home. Change a teen's future by becoming a foster parent. Learn more at yos.org/get-involved/become-foster-parent.

LIKE us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to stay up to date on our life-changing work.

FOLLOW new developments by reading our blog at yos.org/newsroom/news.

WORK with us. Check out job opportunities for passionate, caring individuals looking to make a difference, at yos.org/careers.

For more ways to get involved, reach us at philanthropy@yos.org or call us at **773-777-7112**.

