

DOROTHY STONEMAN

YOUTHBUILD USA PRESIDENT

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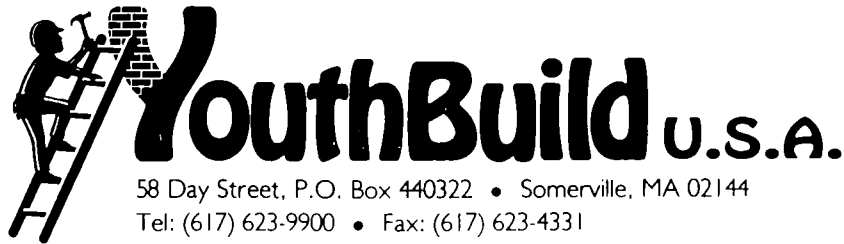
More Details on YouthBuild programs:

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REASONS YOUTHBUILD SHOULD BE EXPANDED

Summary:

This paper argues that YouthBuild should be expanded for the following reasons:

Program design: It is uniquely comprehensive and on target for low income disconnected youth; it was developed organically over a 19 year period at the community level.

Population: YouthBuild is reaching the so-called hardest to serve disconnected minority males more consistently than any other program.

Impact: 67% of enrollees complete the program; 84% of these are placed in college or jobs with wages above \$7/hr. 38% complete their GED or diploma while in the program.

Significance: the nation's ability to re-connect unemployed and undereducated young adults is critical to crime prevention, workforce development, race relations, child support, welfare-to-work, and survival in the competitive international economy.

Replication System: the partnership between HUD and YouthBuild USA provides a non-political, non-bureaucratic system for selecting, inspiring, training, and assisting all local YouthBuild programs, and for attracting talented entrepreneurial leadership at the local level.

Accountability: YouthBuild USA has produced a workable system of accountability to performance standards through data collection and rigorous program audits.

Cross-system collaboration: at the grassroots level, YouthBuild programs are successfully linking with school-to-work, AmeriCorps, public schools, criminal justice systems, and state welfare-to-work policies, because all are related.

Momentum, Cohesion, and Integrity: This movement is fresh; it is internally cohesive, multi-racial, non-corrupt, and committed; it hasn't stagnated or plateaued yet.

Political appeal: the idea of unemployed young adults rebuilding their communities while going back to school has universal popular appeal, bi-partisan support in Congress, a record of media successes, business and union support.

- Purpose:** To unleash the positive energy of unemployed young adults to rebuild their communities and their own lives with a commitment to work, education, responsibility, and family.
- Program:** Unemployed young people ages 16 to 24 acquire construction skills, complete a high school education, and receive leadership training while rehabilitating or constructing new housing for low income and homeless people in their communities. Participants spend alternate weeks on the job site and in school. The program promotes involvement in a positive peer group and in the community.
- Locations:** There are 145 operating YouthBuild programs in 43 states.
- Success Rate:** In YouthBuild programs affiliated with YouthBuild USA in 1997-1998, an average of 60% of the students remained for the full length of the program, which averages 11 months, and 85% of those completing the program were placed in college or jobs averaging \$7.53/hr.
- Participants:** In 1999, YouthBuild programs involved 5,500 African-American, white, Native American, Latino, and Asian young adults, roughly 70% young men, 90% from very low-income families, and 47% parents.
- Housing:** Since 1993, over 7000 units of low-income housing have been built or reconstructed by YouthBuild students.
- Organization:** Community-based, independent organizations operate local YouthBuild programs that are kept small to create a supportive mini-community for the students. YouthBuild USA is the non-profit agency that serves as national intermediary and support center for YouthBuild programs nationwide. A network of 600 organizations in 49 states advocates for YouthBuild programs through the YouthBuild Coalition.
- Funding:** Each YouthBuild program procures its own funding. Generally, each receives a mix of government -- federal, state and local -- and private support. Under the Housing and Community Development Act of 1992, "Hope for Youth: Youthbuild", the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development has awarded grants and contracts totaling \$235.5 million for fiscal years 1993 through 1999. In addition, in 32 programs, the participants earn part-time AmeriCorps educational grants for tuition to college or technical school; some of these programs are partly funded by the Corporation for National Service.
- Costs:** The average cost per participant is about \$20,000 a year, including stipends. This is less than the military, prisons, boot camps, job corps, or many colleges -- the other full-time options for unemployed young adults.
- History:** Dorothy Stoneman and a group of colleagues and youth started the first YouthBuild program in East Harlem in 1978. Stoneman is now President of YouthBuild USA and a recipient in 1996 of the prestigious MacArthur Fellowship. By the early 1990's the program had been replicated across the country in 11 cities. YouthBuild USA was founded in 1990 to coordinate the expanding network. It has received major private support from The Ford Foundation, Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, DeWitt Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund, Annie E. Casey Foundation, Lilly Endowment Inc., The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, The Kellogg Foundation, Rockefeller Foundation, James Irvine Foundation, and The Home Depot. It has received major public grants from HUD, DOL, and the Corporation for National Service.

The Promise of Second Chance Homes

"When I see a girl who I know has been beaten and abused—and I see her rocking her baby and singing it a lullaby—I have been a success."

--Carole Haas, Bridgeway, Denver

Second Chance Homes offer stable, nurturing environments for some of society's most fragile families—teen mothers and their babies who have nowhere else to go.

It's not news that teen pregnancies limit the life chances of young mothers and their babies. Teen mothers are less likely to complete high school and more likely to become long-term welfare recipients than women who wait to have children. Their children are more likely to be born premature or of low birth weight than children of older mothers. These children also are much more likely to grow up to become teen parents themselves.

Some teen mothers can depend on their babies' fathers, their own parents, or extended family members for financial and emotional support; these young women stand a chance of beating the odds.

But other teen mothers have no one to turn to—no family to rely on for shelter, basic necessities, or help with raising their children. Among this most vulnerable group, stories of abuse, neglect, substance abuse, poor education, and lack of hope are all too common. These teen mothers often end up on welfare, in the foster care system, in homeless shelters, or on the streets.

A growing number of states and communities have found a way to break the cycle of poverty and abuse for these teen mothers: Second Chance Homes.

Second Chance Homes, set in either large shared single-family homes or clusters of apartments, provide teen mothers with the support they need to become self-sufficient and learn to be good parents. The homes offer access to child care, education, job training, counseling, and advice on parenting and life skills. They provide trained, supportive staff who assist residents in obtaining needed services, caring for their children, and planning for the future. They offer strict, stable, nurturing home environments for girls who have never experienced such environments before. Perhaps most important, they provide safe, stable, nurturing homes for children born to teenage mothers.

Churches and non-profits scattered around the country have been operating group homes for teen mothers for years. Since the passage of federal welfare reform in 1996, a number of states have joined the effort. Using state and federal Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) funds, states are supporting efforts by community-based and faith-based organizations to create more homes for these vulnerable young families.

Massachusetts and New Mexico were among the first states to provide state funding, technical assistance, and oversight to Second Chance Homes. In 1999, statewide Second Chance Homes programs opened in Texas, Rhode Island, and Nevada. Using federal funds from the Department of Housing and Urban Development, many cities—including communities in Maryland, Michigan, Missouri, Connecticut, Oregon, Washington, and Vermont—have opened homes as well.

What Makes Second Chance Homes Different

The Second Chance Homes concept is not simply an idea for another government program. Second Chance Homes are places of refuge for the most vulnerable teen mothers and their children. In addition, they are community-based institutions that build social capital. Young women who live in Second Chance Homes aren't just marking time. They are moving ahead with their lives by finishing school, acquiring job skills, and learning to be good parents.

Second Chance Homes provide an alternative to the environments of violence and hopelessness in which so many teen mothers have grown up. The residents make social connections with community volunteers, social workers, and other young mothers.

Second Chance Homes also build relationships between communities and teen mothers. Members of church groups invite the young families into their homes for Sunday dinner. Local businesses offer part-time and summer jobs. Through these interactions, teen mothers learn to deal with a world beyond the neighborhoods in which they grew up. In making these new connections, they expand their own life options—and those of their children.

Early Signs of Success

State-run Second Chance Home programs are still fairly new, but already there are signs of success. In New Mexico, less than 1 percent of Second Chance Home residents have become pregnant again while living in the homes.ⁱ And in Massachusetts, more than half the teens who have left the program have made measurable progress in school, have learned to manage a personal budget, have brought their children's immunizations up to date, have learned appropriate parenting techniques, and know how to avoid repeat pregnancies.ⁱⁱ

Current Second Chance Home Interest

Recently, three factors have created a resurgence of interest in Second Chance Homes. First, as welfare caseloads decrease, states are paying more attention to the needs of young women still in the system and recognizing their need for secure and stable housing. Second, states now have welfare surpluses and are examining options, such as Second Chance Homes, which seemed too expensive at the outset of welfare reform.

And third, Republicans and Democrats alike have been hearing about the idea. President Clinton requested \$25 million to fund Second Chance Homes as part of his 2001 budget request. Governor George W. Bush has made Second Chance Homes one of the pillars of his "compassionate conservatism." In addition, Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan introduced Second Chance Homes legislation last year. His "Enhancing Family Life Act" calls for \$45 million a year to create new homes or expand the capacity of existing homes. This proposed legislation could help Second Chance Homes by attracting states and communities to try the idea by providing seed money.

How Government-Sponsored Second Chance Homes Work: A Quick Overview

	Detroit, Michigan	Massachusetts	Nevada	New Mexico	Rhode Island	Texas
Number of homes	5	21	2	9	6	1 (3 other sites ensure teens have residential care, but do not provide it themselves)
State appropriation	\$616,000 match (over three years) from city govt. and state housing board	\$5.3 million in TANF block grant funds	\$120,000 in TANF block grant funds	\$517,000 in state funds; legislature may raise this by \$500,000 in 2000	\$580,000 in TANF and state maintenance-of-effort funds	\$1.6 million in TANF block grant funds
Other funding sources	\$2.8 million HUD grant (over three years)	State child care funds, food stamps, Medicaid; teens pay 20 percent of TANF grant as rent; foster care funding for teens in state custody	None	Teens pay program fees; local govts. and non-profits provide most resources for programs	HUD transitional housing funds; teens pay 30 percent of TANF grant as rent	Federal child care & Welfare-to-Work block grants, Medicaid, food stamps, WIC; teens pay part of TANF grants as rent
Number of slots available for teen families	57	120 for TANF teens; additional 16 for foster care teens	11	75	15	2, plus 5 in a transitional home with 90-day time limit
Number of teens served since program started	70 since Jan. 1998	610 since December 1995	7 since July 1999	800-1,000 since 1990	7 since May 1999	5 in residential program, 281 in non-residential support services
Which agency administers program?	Wayne County Family Independence Agency	State Department of Social Services, in consultation with Department of Transitional Assistance	State Division of Welfare	State Children, Youth & Family Department Teen Parent Services program	State Department of Human Services contracts out to a non-profit	State Department of Protective and Regulatory Services

	Detroit, Michigan	Massachusetts	Nevada	New Mexico	Rhode Island	Texas
Who is eligible?	TANF-eligible teen parents under 19	Teen parents on TANF; some homes also serve teen parents in foster care	Teen parents on TANF; one home also serves teen parents in foster care	Any teen parent in need of assistance; most receive TANF or SSI	TANF-eligible teen parents under age 18 1/2	Teen parents under age 18 on TANF
Who handles assessment/referral?	Family Independence Agency	Dept. of Transitional Assistance refers to Dept. of Social Services for assessment	State Division of Welfare	Local social services & public health agencies, schools, juvenile justice system	State-funded non-profit: the Adolescent Self-Sufficiency Collaborative	Local social services agencies
Does state take custody of teens?	No—teens under 18 must have parental consent to enter program	No in most cases—parental notification is required	No in most cases	No	No—teens must have parental consent to enter program	No
How long do teens stay?	2-year maximum	Average stay is 6 months; teens can stay until age 20	Up to age 18	Up to age 22 if teens are in school	Up to age 18 1/2	Up to age 18
Structure of homes	Range from group home with 24-hour supervision, to shared apartments for older teens	Group homes or shared apartments with on-site supervisor in her own apartment.	One is a group home with live-in house parent; one has shared apartments with day staff only	Range from group homes, to semi-independent living, to shared apartments with no on-site staff	Three levels: group home with 24-hour staff, shared apartments with 16-hour staff, transitional living with 8-hour staff	Group home. Two family foster care placements and transitional group home also available

Second Chance Homes in the News

Here's a sampling of what public leaders and the media are saying about Second Chance Homes:

"We should do more to help Americans help each other. First, we should help faith-based organizations to do more to fight poverty and drug abuse, and help people get back on the right track, with initiatives like Second Chance Homes that do so much to help unwed teen mothers."

--President Bill Clinton

State of the Union address, January 27, 2000

"I'll tell you an interesting idea. We want to fund group homes for unwed teenage mothers to take mother and child out of the environments in which they live. We're going to call them 'Second Chance Homes' to give these young girls a second chance to realize there's a better way than having babies out of wedlock, for example. Help them get educated."

--Texas Governor George W. Bush, C-SPAN, January 30, 1999.

"(Texas Governor George W.) Bush, who has long described himself as a 'compassionate conservative,' also called for 'increased child care funding for low-income mothers, transitional benefits to help those moving from welfare to work, and second-chance homes to help unwed teenage mothers nurture their children in a safe and structured environment.'"

--"Bush's Plan for Texas May Be 2000 Prelude." *New York Times*, January 28, 1999

"The Enhancing Family Life Act of 1999 contains four key elements, all of which are related to families. First, it supports 'second chance' maternity homes for unwed teenage mothers. These are group homes where young women would live with their children under strict adult supervisor and have the support necessary to become productive members of society. The bill provides \$45 million a year to create such homes or expand existing ones."

--Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, "The Enhancing Family Life Act of 1999." January 19, 1999.

"Although not a cure-all, these homes create considerable advantages. Residents develop better parenting skills. Mothers pick up nutrition tips. Participants get trained for jobs and finish their educations. Children receive staff attention. Social Policy Action Network director Kate Sylvester points out even more advantages. She claims that teenage residents often delay having second children. And group home staffs guide young parents away from abusing their children, helping them learn new behavior."

--"Welfare to Work: Second-Chance Homes Help Break Cycle." *Dallas Morning News*, January 12, 1998.

"Backers say they believe that the homes offer more hope than the alternative, simply giving a young mother cash and food stamps without strings or supervision. Indeed, the homes have aroused little opposition, aside from their expense, among welfare critics on the left or right."

--"Home for Teen-Age Mothers Tries to Break Welfare Cycle." *New York Times*, October 31, 1996.

"For about five years, New Mexico has been tackling one of the most intractable problems in America: teen pregnancy. It has set up homes where young women can live with their babies and learn how to be mothers, where they are safe from boyfriends or parents or gangs. Lives have been changed, one at a time. Of the 69 young women in these homes last year, not one became pregnant again."

--"Teenage Moms Get 2nd Chance." *St. Petersburg Times*, August 5, 1996.

"While the idea of second-chance homes is not new, Sylvester's salesmanship has helped push it to center stage. In addition to Clinton's support, it has bipartisan backing from influential Democratic senators including Connecticut's Joseph Lieberman, New York's Daniel Patrick Moynihan, North Dakota's Kent Conrad, plus Republicans Dole and Phill Gramm. New Jersey, Massachusetts, Maryland, and Iowa have all passed legislation to create or study second-chance homes."

--"Below the Beltway," *The American Prospect*, July/August 1996.

"Kathleen Sylvester has proposed a system of government funded, privately run 'second chance homes' where pregnant teens could be protected from predators, give something like the structure and support of a permanent home, taught motherhood and morality...but even if welfare reform does eventually pass, a stray 'second-chance home' here or there isn't going to put much of a dent in this disgraceful situation, nor will it provide much evidence about the effectiveness of removing these children from dysfunctional families. Someone—some small state or big city—has to propose an intensive experiment with the idea."

--Joe Klein, "The Predator Problem." *Newsweek*, April 29, 1996

"Sylvester's proposal embodies precisely the spirit a New Progressive project needs to embrace. It accepts the seriousness of moral concerns and does not pretend that the problems confronting young children are only economic. It accepts the need for innovation. At the same time, it embraces government's responsibility to assist those who need help and who would be unlikely to find it if government did not act."

--E.J. Dionne, Jr. *They Only Look Dead: Why Progressives Will Dominate the Next Political Era*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996.

ⁱ K. Sylvester and K. Reich. *Second Chance Homes: Advice for the States*. (Washington, DC: Social Policy Action Network, 1999.)

ⁱⁱ Massachusetts Department of Social Services and Department of Transitional Assistance. *Teen Living Program Network FY 97 Monitoring Report*, April 1998

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Services that homes deliver	Safe and stable housing, supervision, food, clothing, parenting/life skills classes, recreation	Safe and stable housing, counseling, case management, 24-hour supervision, parenting/life skills classes, recreation, access to transportation, family planning, some programs have GED/child care on site	Safe and stable housing, supervision, food	Safe and stable housing, supervision, case management, family planning services	Supervision, case management, money management, transitional services, family planning, child support enforcement	Safe and stable housing if needed, case management, counseling, mentoring, parenting skills, child care, school-to-work services, transportation
Services that outside providers deliver	Counseling, education and job training, child care	Education, child care, help finding permanent housing	Parenting/life skills classes, counseling, support groups	Education, job training, health care, counseling, life skills training, child care	Education/GED	Programs can use outside providers for any or all of above services
Specialized homes	One home for pregnant mothers and young infants; one home for older teen parents	One secure site operating, and one planned, for domestic violence victims	None	None, but the state may place abuse victims in a different part of state	None	None
Emergency Placement	Available in a separate faith-based program	10 beds reserved for emergencies; teens can enter program with 3 hours notice	Not available	Available	Placements can be made within two days	Not available

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Government's Role in Program	Program design, assessment, case management, cash assistance (TANF), child care, subsidized housing when teens leave	Program design, assessment, cash assistance (TANF), contracting & billing, training, parenting curriculum, case management, child care	Program design, assessment, cash assistance (TANF), contracting & billing, case management through 12-member interagency team	Staff salaries and benefits, training, program supplies, technical assistance, program evaluation, cash assistance (TANF)	Program design, assistance with assessment and referral, cash assistance (TANF)	Program design, training, assistance with referral, cash assistance (TANF)
Nature of Community Involvement	Non-profits joined county in applying for HUD funds and operate all homes	Non-profit contractors operate all homes	Non-profit contractors operate all homes	Non-profits operate all homes, with each home governed by a Community Advisory Board	Five regional Adolescent Self-Sufficiency Collaboratives provide all services	Programs collaborate with other service providers in community
Helpful Hints	Full staffing and services should be more important than the number of teens served.	More funding needed for semi-independent living for those who have left	Don't dictate everything in the RFP—let providers create the program	Communities should design and run the programs; the state should provide only funding and technical support	Get everyone at the table when designing the program: non-profits, state agencies, courts	Teens need to understand the TANF eligibility rules, or else they won't participate

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