

***Email/phone script: Why I care about youth & young adult homelessness.***

*Instructions: copy and paste the text below into the body of an email or use it as a phone script. Remember to update the red text with your information and insights.*

*We recommend* ***sending emails one at a time*** *to the following elected officials:* ***Milwaukee Mayor, Milwaukee County Executive, U.S. Senators, U.S. Representatives, State Senators*** *and* ***State Representatives****.* [*Click here to find your legislators.*](https://www.usa.gov/elected-officials)

Hello,

My name is (Insert first and last name) and I am a resident of (share your home neighborhood, city and/or state). I am writing to introduce myself and let you know how much I care about youth and young adult homelessness in my community.

Young people experience homelessness in alarming numbers. Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago estimates that 4.2 million youth aged 13-24 experience homelessness each year in the US. In Milwaukee County, an estimated nearly 12,000 youth and young adults aged 10-24 experience homelessness annually. BIPOC and LGBTQ+ young people disproportionately experience homelessness. Research shows that unhoused young people have lifelong high rates of mental illness, suicide attempts and substance abuse. Plus, the likelihood of continued homelessness throughout adulthood.

Despite this prevalence, youth and young adult homelessness is undercounted, misunderstood and overlooked by government, funders and community leaders. Part of the reason for this is the invisibility of youth homelessness; because of their intense vulnerability, young people work hard to appear stable. While some do sleep on the street, many young people go from place to place, are forced to trade sex for a place to stay, sleep in their car or sleep in abandoned buildings.

How do we end youth and young adult homelessness? We provide housing and support to help young people sustain that housing. Then, we work upstream to prevent homelessness before it happens. Currently, there are not enough resources to go around, and our community’s young people are feeling the negative effects.

By addressing the housing needs of young people, we will shorten the lifecycle of homelessness, which often results in a lifelong need for resources that stretches across generations.

I care about youth and young adult homelessness because (insert your reasons here). You will hear from me throughout the year as opportunities come up at the legislative level for you to act.

Together, we can make a difference. Together, we have the power to end a lifetime of homelessness for all young people.

Sincerely,

(Your name)