

Innovative Approaches to Address Housing Needs: What Pediatricians and Hospital Systems Can Do

American Academy of Pediatrics
DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN®



CHILDREN'S
HOSPITAL
ASSOCIATION

October 30, 2023



Innovative Approaches to Address Housing Needs

Creating Safe, Affordable, Quality Housing Through Building for Health

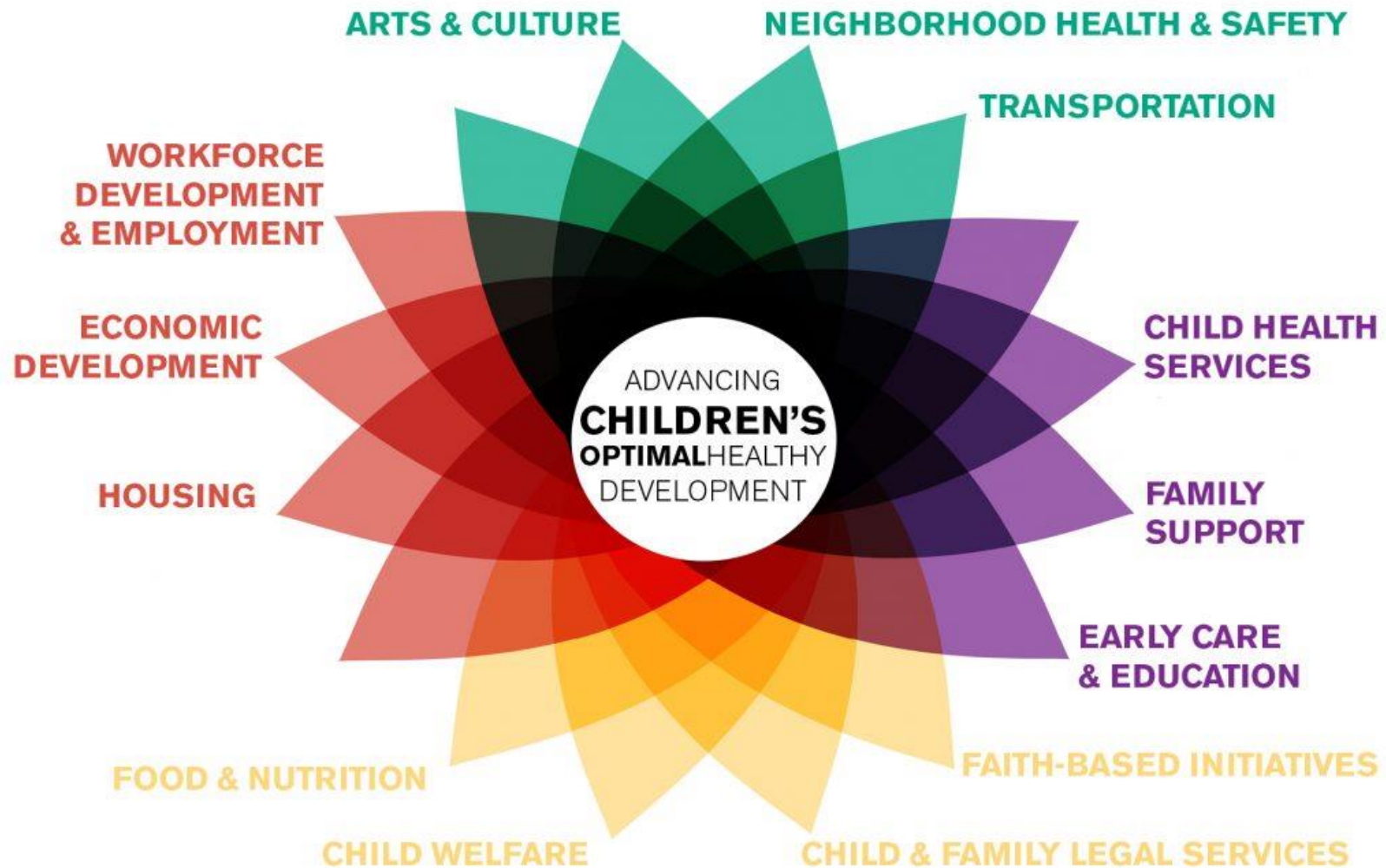
A presentation for
Children's Hospital Association
October 30, 2023



- Funding
 - Generous support of Connecticut Children's
 - HUD Office of Lead Hazard Control & Healthy Homes
 - Connecticut State Dept. of Housing
- Objectives
 - Learn about the Healthy Homes Process
 - Comprehend the Building for Health Initiative
 - Understand how your office/practice can adopt a healthy homes approach to patients

Office for Community Child Health





What if our goal for child health services is not 'merely' to treat or even prevent childhood diseases and disorders, but is also to promote children's optimal healthy development?

- Paul Dworkin, MD



Hospitals as Housing Partners



“Nearly all hospitals...identified **housing instability, housing affordability, or poor housing conditions** as concerns in their communities or within their patient population.”

More than half of hospitals in our study indicated they had allocated **resources to address the housing needs** of their patients.”

Affordable Housing Investment: A Guide for Nonprofit Hospitals and Health Systems
Urban Institute, Aug 2019

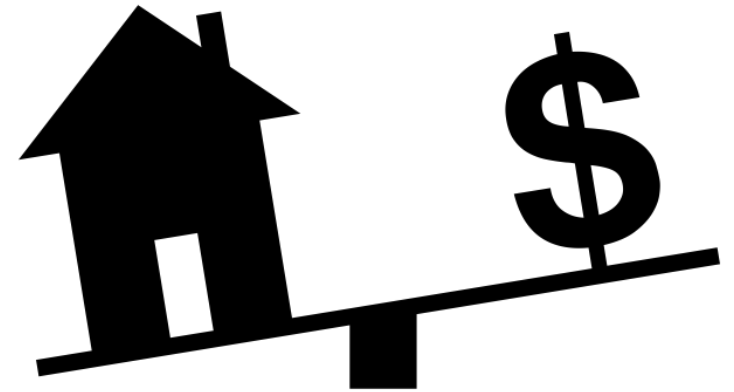
Housing as a Platform for Health



Quality



Stable



Affordable

Core Services:

- Assess for housing-related health risks such as Lead, mold, asbestos, radon, trips/falls
- Develop scope of work - Coordinate contractors
- Resident education, relocation
- Average value of interventions = \$12,000 per home



Social Determinants of Health (SDOH)

- Access to Healthy Stable and Secure Housing can lead to:
 - Improved mental health for children and families
 - Environment for children to thrive socially and academically
 - Better-quality health outcomes for children, specifically less ED visits!
- Lack of Stable and Secure Housing can lead to:
 - Higher symptoms of depression, anxiety, and aggression in children.
 - It can keep families in cycles of poverty.
 - It can lead to poor health outcomes like asthma or high lead levels in children.

Building for Health

ADVANCING

CHILDREN'S
OPTIMAL HEALTHY
DEVELOPMENT

TRANSPORTATION

WORKFORCE
DEVELOPMENT
& EMPLOYMENT

CHILD HEALTH
SERVICES

ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT

FAMILY
SUPPORT

HOUSING

EARLY CARE
& EDUCATION

FOOD & NUTRITION

FAITH-BASED INITIATIVES

Healthy Homes in the Community

Building for Health

- No Wrong Door approach to getting services to families
- Cross-referral with family consent
- Flexible definition of partner organization



- **Pediatric Practice Level Involvement**

- Explore healthy homes questions to ask all patients.
 - Create resource guide for staff, i.e. 211 or Putting on AIRS
- Seek resources from state and local health departments
 - Bring state legislators-municipal leaders into the conversation
- Take the lead, create coalition with other practices
- Replicate existing programs that work!

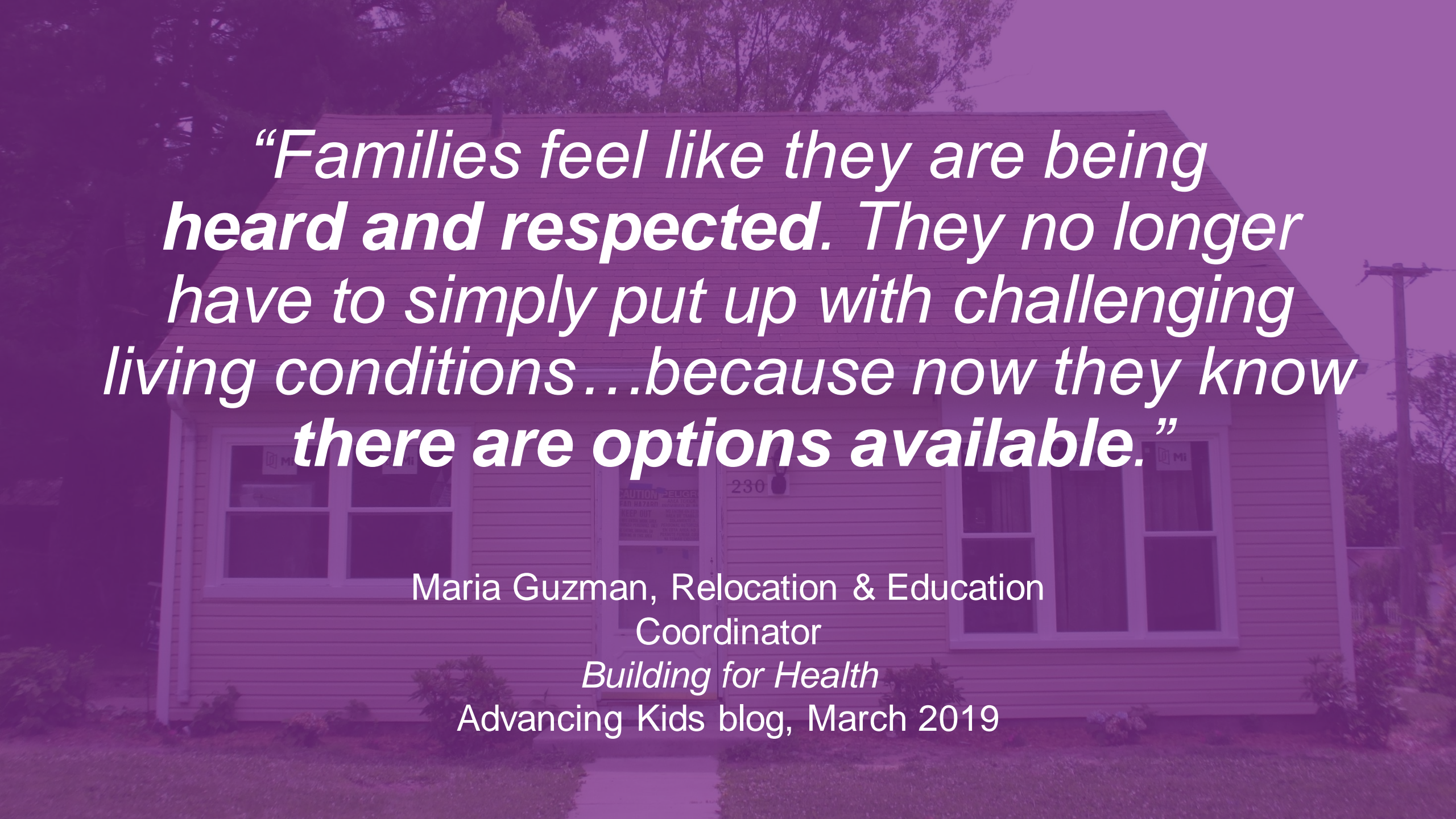


Bringing Healthy Homes Into Your World

Institutional Level Involvement

- Act as the hub for program design, coalition building
- Think broadly about partners
 - Local housing programs (LISC Chapter, HUD)
 - Legal aid, Medical Legal Partnership
 - Home visiting programs
- Create community programs center





*“Families feel like they are being
heard and respected. They no longer
have to simply put up with challenging
living conditions...because now they know
there are options available.”*

Maria Guzman, Relocation & Education
Coordinator

Building for Health

Advancing Kids blog, March 2019

Healthy Homes in Action



<https://youtu.be/o3r356jTTfw>

THANK YOU!

- Chris Corcoran
 - ccorcoran@connecticutchildrens.org
- Healthy Homes Program:
 - www.connecticutchildrens.org/healthyhomes



Youth and Families Experiencing Homelessness: What can children's hospitals do?

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Adolescent and Young Adult Health | Hennepin Healthcare
Medical Director | The Bridge for Youth

Acknowledgements:

- Emma M. Hartswick, BA, and Aura M. Obando, MD, Opportunity Starts at Home
- American Academy of Pediatrics
- Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Systems 4 Action





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Learning Objectives

1. Review the unique and diverse health needs of youth and families experiencing homelessness.
2. Identify 3 strategies for interdisciplinary children's health professionals to support youth and families experiencing housing instability and homelessness.

A Brief Introduction and Reflection

What words or images come to mind when you think of youth and families experiencing homelessness?



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1 in 30 children & teens
1 in 10 young adults
Experience homelessness
annually in the US.

Staying on the street,
roughsleeping

Cars, encampments,
campgrounds, hotels

Running away or being
thrown out

Staying in shelter

Doubling up, Couch-
surfing

Bassuk EL, DeCandia CJ, Beach CA, Berman F. The National Center on Family Homelessness at American Institutes for Research; 2014.

Morton MH, Dworsky A, Samuels GM. *Missed Opportunities: Youth Homelessness in America. National Estimates*. Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago; 2017.

Data and Statistics on Homelessness – National Center for Homeless Education. Accessed July 19, 2022. <https://nche.ed.gov/data-and-stats/>

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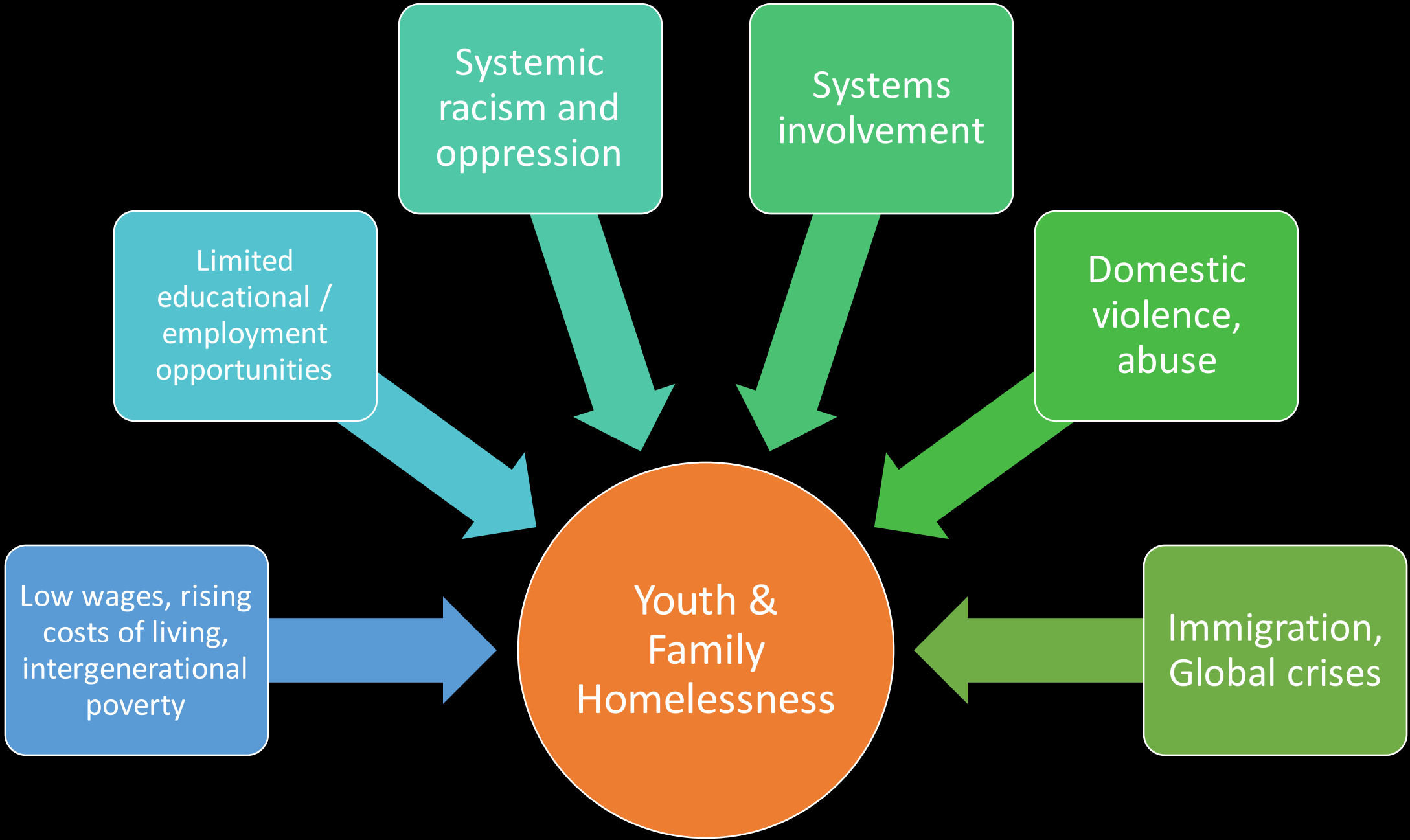
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Youth Experiencing
Homelessness
(ages 12-24,
unaccompanied)
[YEHL]

Families
Experiencing
Homelessness
(parents with
minor-aged
children)
[FEHL]





*“Health begins
where we live, learn,
work and play.”*

Health Risks Associated with Homelessness

Violence, injury, abuse

Unmet basic needs (food, housing)

Chronic untreated medical conditions

Mental health risk, suicide

Substance use

Sexual health risk: STIs, pregnancy

Barriers to care



Health Risks Associated with
homelessness
exploitation
incarceration
foster care
Marginalization & Trauma

Violence, injury, abuse

Unmet basic needs (food, housing)

Chronic untreated medical conditions

Mental health risk, suicide

Substance use

Sexual health risk: STIs, pregnancy

Barriers to care



Photo by [Greg Nunes](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Resilience





Photo by [Muhammad Haikal Sjukri](#) on [Unsplash](#)

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Strategy 1: Identify youth who are at risk of or experiencing homelessness.

17-year-old non-binary adolescent (pronouns: they/them) coming in asking to be “tested for everything”.

Considering the diverse experiences and drivers of youth homelessness, how might you assess housing status?

Respond in the chat.

How to ask: Some specific questions

Running away:

- Have you ever seriously thought about running away from home?
- Have you ever run away?

Housing instability:

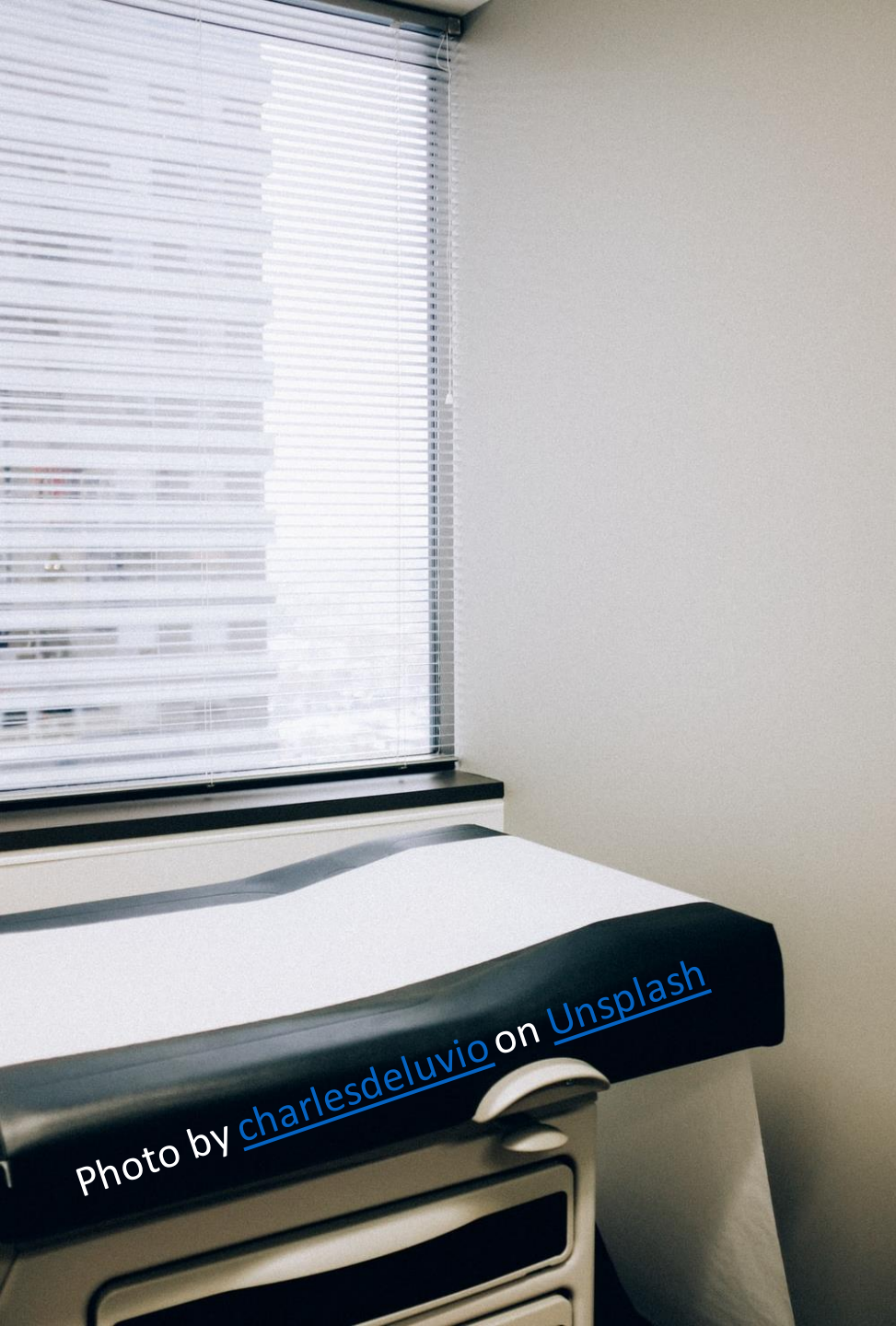
- Have you ever worried about money, a place to live, food or clothing?
- During the last 12 months, was there a time when you or your family were not able to pay the mortgage or rent on time?

Assessing exploitation:

- Have you ever traded sex for money, a place to live, food or clothing?

Situations that
might prompt
housing
questions...

- Skin concerns, wounds
- Lice, scabies
- Injuries, trauma
- Mental health concerns
- Sexual health concerns (STIs, pregnancy)
- History of family conflict and abuse
- History of running away
- Populations at risk: LGBTQ+ youth, foster care, out-of-home placement, incarceration
- Financial strain



Strategy 2: Provide youth- and family-centered, culturally responsive and affirming care.

17-year-old non-binary adolescent coming in asking to be “tested for everything”

Have run away from home 3x in past 3 months after “fights” with mom (verbal and physical).

Mainly stayed with friends, but continued to attend school and work

What does optimal youth- and family-friendly healthcare look like?

Center youth and families.

Letting the young person or family drive is the crux of motivational interviewing.



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Affirm and support
diverse and
intersecting
identities.



Photo by [Gabriel Brito](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Apply a
trauma-
informed
approach.

Supporting and
fostering
resilience

Building trusting
relationships

Promoting
psychological and
physical safety

Avoiding re-
traumatization

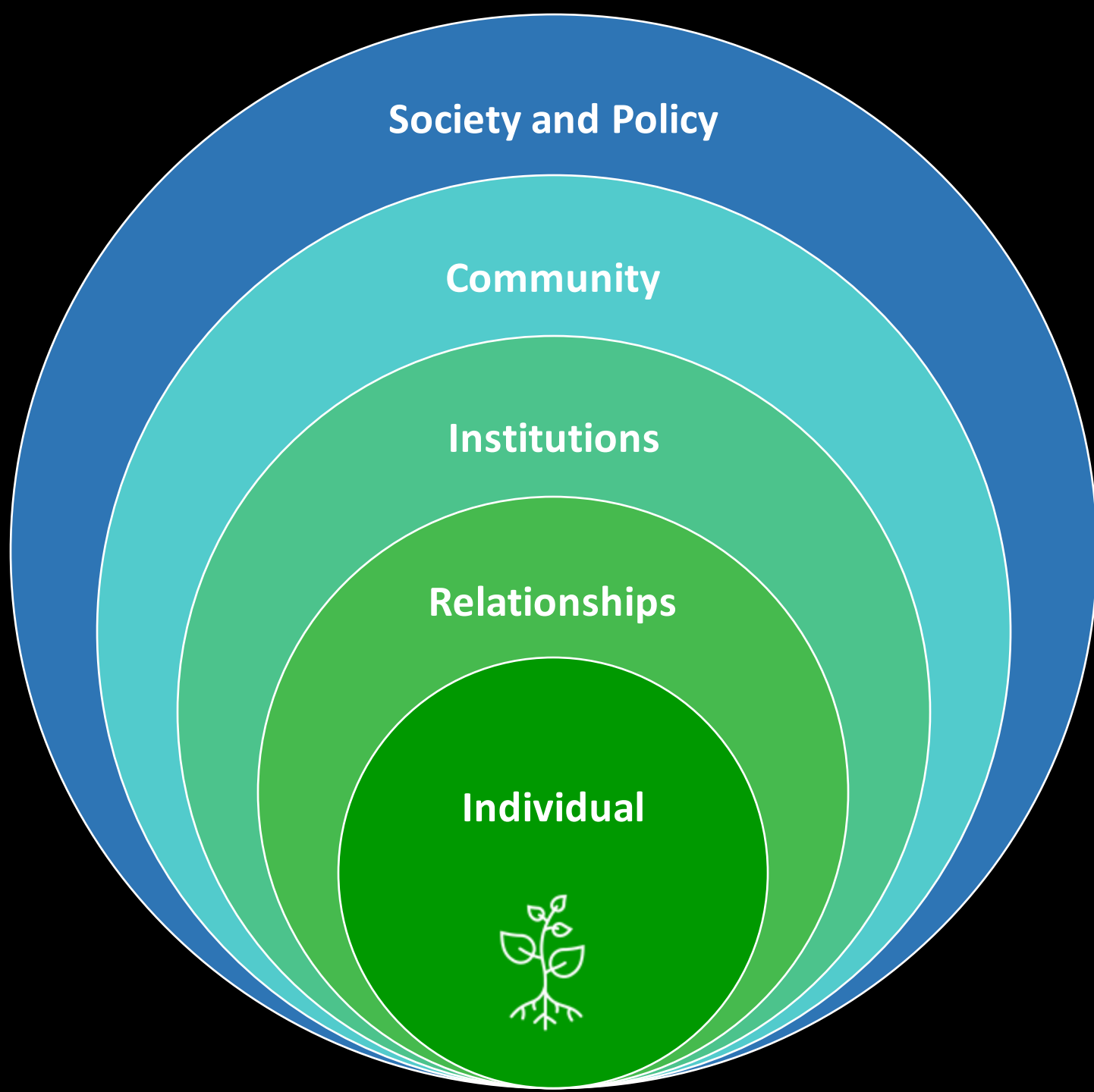
Centering
collaboration

Promoting agency

Affirms identities

Acknowledges
intersectionality

Recognize and address the socio-ecological drivers of health.



Assess and leverage protective factors to bolster resilience.

Individual strengths, goals

Family connections

School connections

Access to housing/shelter resources

Community connections

Employment

Identification, vital records

Healthcare connections and insurance information

Mitigate risk &
safety plan.

Acute and chronic health needs

Trauma, violence, injuries

Mental health support and suicide risk

Substance use

Sexual and reproductive health

Legal resources

Safety planning: What if?

For youth: Psychosocial Assessments



Our goal:
The most therapeutic
history, not the most
thorough

Example Psychosocial Assessment: SSHADESS

Strengths

- Likes, identities, sources of pride, dreams, describing self

School

- Enjoy most/least, grades, sources of support at school, school safety

Home

- Family, supports, housing stability, homelessness

Activities

- Friends, clubs, enjoyable movement

Drugs / Substances

- Peer use, T/E/D, experiences, triggers, safety, harm reduction

Emotions / Eating

- Feeling stressed, mood, sleep, eating, food access, self-harm

Sexuality

- Gender, sexuality, relationships, sexual activity, reproductive life plan, STIs

Safety

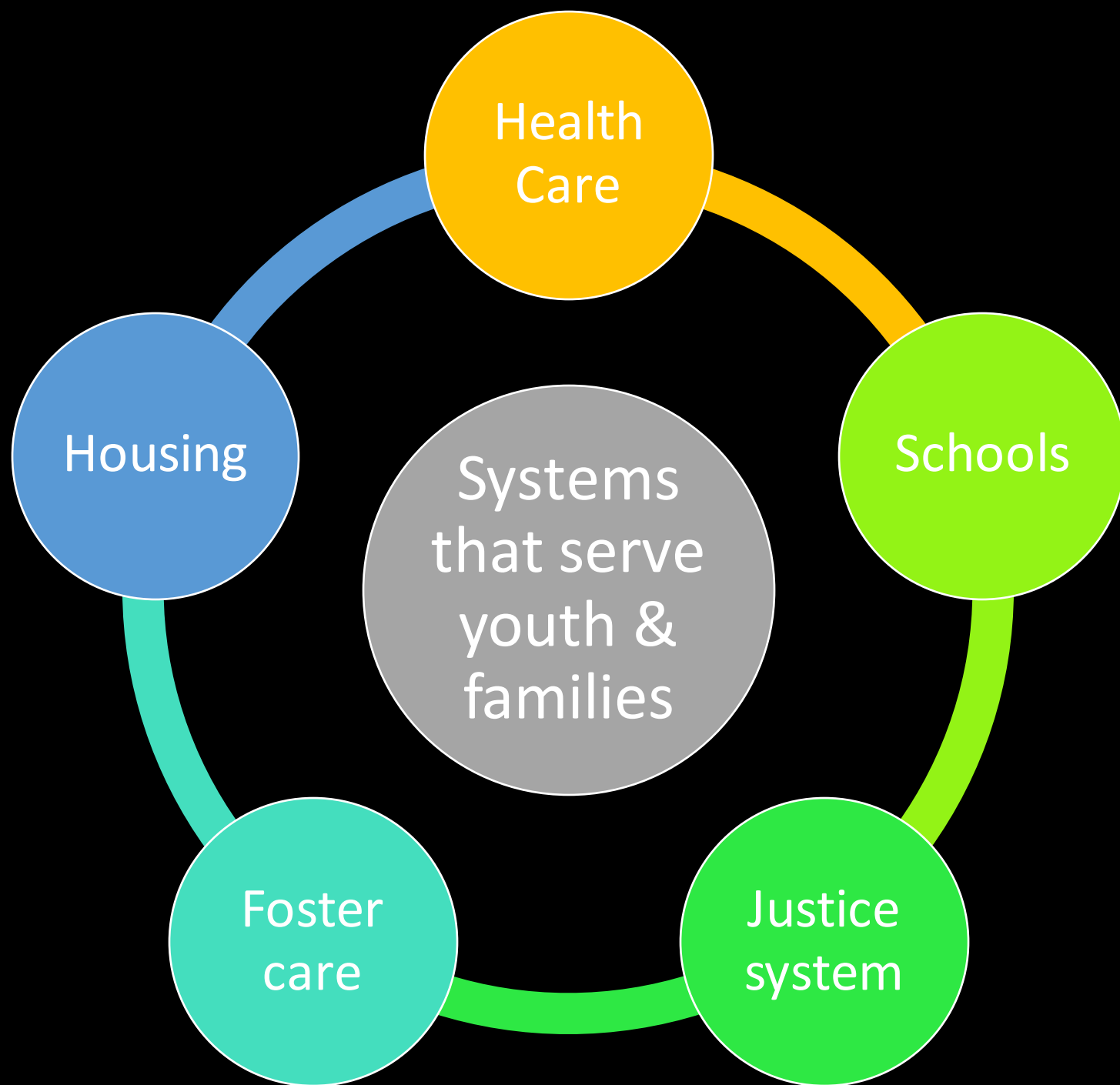
- Violence, seat belts, guns, bullies, IPV, abuse, exploitation




For youth:
Ensure access to
confidential care.

Strategy 3: Work across systems to connect youth and families with basic resources.

- National Runaway Safeline (<https://www.1800runaway.org/>)
- National Safe Place
- School resources, support, McKinney-Vento Homeless Liaisons
- Mental health supports and LGBTQ supports, e.g., Trevor Project
- Food, clothing, shelter
- Local resources and services:
 - Shelters and youth-serving agencies, Ex. MN [Youth Services Network](#), [Adult Shelter Connect](#), [Hennepin Coordinated Entry Homeless Assistance](#)
 - [Healthcare supports for YEH: Runaway Intervention Program, Children's Minnesota](#)



A top-down photograph of a diverse group of people, including men and women of various ethnicities, gathered in a circle. They are all smiling and looking towards the center. Their hands are stacked on top of each other in a large, circular pile. Many of the people are wearing blue wristbands with the word "EMFASIS" printed in white. The background is dark, and the overall atmosphere is one of unity and teamwork.

Effective
systems
work
together.

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Summary: What Clinicians Can Do

1. Identify youth who are at risk of or experiencing homelessness.
2. Provide youth- and family-centered, culturally responsive and affirming care.
3. Work across systems to connect with basic resources.



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Recap: Learning Objectives

1. Review the unique and diverse health needs of youth and families experiencing homelessness.
2. Identify 3 strategies for interdisciplinary children's health professionals to support youth and families experiencing housing instability and homelessness.



Thank you! Questions?

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Opportunity Starts at Home | American Academy of Pediatrics



BONUS SLIDES ON POLICY 😊

Cross-sector approaches that address the complex drivers of homelessness

Multisector measures that can be leveraged to promote opportunity and reduce harm to unstably housed youth

Policies that work to dismantle racial disparities and other systems of oppression





Housing policies that expand access and affordability

Housing voucher programs (especially higher opportunity areas)

Partnership with local/regional planning organizations to incorporate youth needs

Emergency rental assistance and eviction moratoriums in times of crisis

Removal of exclusions from public housing and targeted housing resources where they are most needed



Supporting youth experiencing homelessness

Flexible, responsive and compassionate shelter spaces that prioritize youth autonomy and needs of diverse youth

Housing First and Rapid Rehousing models geared toward youth

Programs that focus on enhancing economic opportunity and ensuring educational stability