



Minnesota Host Home Network

We're listening to youth!



No need to wait until November 17!

Why not schedule your Give to the Max day donation to the Minnesota Host Home Network right now? We're in the middle of lots of exciting work, but we need your help to bring it...home. Our goal is to raise \$2,000. Your donation can truly make a difference!



Host Home Mom Sighting!



Where's she been? Host Home Mom was last seen at the Common Ground Meditation Center Music Festival. That's her above as she's being introduced to festival goers by Common Ground Board

When young people can't live at home, they often turn to their personal networks, finding a place to stay with extended family or the parents of friends. Through The Interview Project (TIP), we're taking time to listen to these enterprising young people to learn how we might help stabilize these informal hosting arrangements. We've now conducted eight in-depth youth interviews in the Twin Cities and Greater Minnesota.

One of the most striking things we're hearing is how important the relationship itself is with the host. Though the arrangement may start out as simply a place to bunk, its real significance can grow beyond that.

Here's a quote from an 18-year-old we'll call "Annie":

I was barely there for a couple months and all of a sudden I'm, like, in the family. They're asking me if I wanted to do things, and so I think the big thing was—I get goose bumps just thinking about it—that they were including me in the family right away...like, I had a family. I felt they just welcomed me with open arms.

Chair Stacy McClendon.

She loved being able to tell folks all about her experience hosting an amazing young woman who earned her GED while living with Host Home Mom.

She'd also like to express her gratitude to the Common Ground community for the generous donation of \$1972 to the Minnesota Host Home Network!

Host Home Mom is always available to share her hosting story. Please like her on [Facebook!](#)

A SHOUT-OUT!



A big thanks to the Catharine C. Reid Fund of Headwaters Foundation for Justice for a \$1,000 donation!

As Catharine notes, "Youth experiencing homelessness are often invisible." But by donating to the Minnesota Host Home Network, Catharine says, "I'm acknowledging that I do see these young people and that they deserve our care and attention."

More thanks...

- To our nonprofit partners, The Link, Open Doors for Youth, and YouthLink, for connecting us with youth to

That feeling of connection and belonging makes a profound difference!

Permanent Connections Matter!

It makes intuitive sense: people are inherently social creatures, so youth who are experiencing homelessness would need connections with caring adults in order to thrive. And, indeed, the [Federal Framework to End Youth Homelessness](#) identifies "Permanent Connections" as one of four core outcomes, along with Stable Housing, Education/Employment, and Social-emotional Well-being.

But how to facilitate "permanent connections" turns out to be even more challenging than providing housing, jobs, connections to school, or mental health counseling.

To help us think about how best to help youth get connected,



we're lucky to be working with University of St. Thomas social work professor Ande Nesmith. In October, at the Minnesota Host Home Network's session at the Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless Conference in Rochester, she explained some of her previous research with youth who were aging out of foster care (which we think has promising applications for youth experiencing homelessness).

Here's what Ande had to say:

What we asked was: What would happen if a young person who doesn't have the

familial connections that other kids might be able to depend on, if you could get that young person to have one adult who has some life experience who says, "Yeah, I'm willing to be committed to you for the long haul"?

We found that the kids in foster care turned first to foster parents or social workers, which are very formal relationships, but that was all they had. What made the difference was getting the youth to think outside the box—outside of those formal relationships—about who else in their life might be willing to step forward: their friends' parents turned out to be huge but also coaches and extended relatives.

*So in our study, the social workers had to work on getting the youth to tell these other adults that they needed help. But it turned out that once the youth voiced it, **those adults stepped forward.** The adults hadn't always known because there's a lot of shame and secret keeping.*

What we found was that this one relationship had a multiplier effect. That adult often helped the youth get connected to other

interview for The Interview Project
- To Bush/Headwaters for a Community Innovation Grant and the Greater Minnesota Housing Fund for underwriting The Interview Project
- To the Charlson Foundation and our individual donors for general operating support

Help us continue our vital work!

Donations made to the Minnesota Host Home Network are fully tax-deductible: the Network has nonprofit 501(c)3 status through the fiscal sponsorship of MAP for Nonprofits.

Please consider donating online through GiveMN.org. Or kindly make checks payable to “MAP for Nonprofits” with “Minnesota Host Home Network” in the memo line and mail to:

MAP for Nonprofits
2314 University Ave W, #28
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*people through family events and things like that. So **it started with one relationship, but it got bigger.***

*And the result was that **these youth were more likely to be employed.** When I sat down and talked with these young people who had never really had a job before and had all these struggles with relationships, the minute they got into a conflict with their boss, they're like “I'm out of here.” But now they had an adult who said, “Okay...deep breaths...here's how you keep a job...you got to live with some stuff that you don't like.” In other words, they had accessible adults who could talk them through it. (It's likely that due to the formality of the relationship, social workers will be less accessible. Plus, youth often lose their social worker connection as they age out.)*

*These young people were also **more likely to get a high school degree or GED** because one of the things that adults who have had some life experience will say is, “Are you working on your homework? Are you getting that degree?”*

*And they started having **better relationships and less risky sexual behavior**, in part they didn't have to turn to survival sex but also because they were starting to get some **role modeling of more healthy relationships.** And all of that is above and beyond the basic independent living skills that young people who are aging out of foster care typically get.*

Nesmith, A. & Christophersen, K. (2014). Smoothing the Transition to Adulthood: Creating Ongoing Supportive Relationships among Foster Youth. Children and Youth Services Review, 37, 1-8. DOI:10.1016/j.childyouth.2013.11.028

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