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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Local non-profit and its partners house 1,000 youth experiencing homelessness

LifeWorks marks housing milestone, highlighting the importance of housing during Mental Health Awareness Month

Austin, TX – LifeWorks and its partners in ending youth homelessness are celebrating an incredible milestone: providing safe, affordable housing to more than 1,000 youth in less than four years.

The movement to End Youth Homelessness launched in October of 2018 after Austin was awarded a Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program grant. Partners including LifeWorks, ECHO, Caritas of Austin, and The SAFE Alliance worked with youth with lived experience in homelessness to construct a series of responsive housing programs and direct service resources for clients meant to shorten the time a client is experiencing homelessness.

LifeWorks clients have higher mortality rates than those in their age group who are safely housed and display higher rates of mental health and substance abuse issues. As Mental Health Awareness Month continues, it is critical to recognize the link between housing and homelessness, as housing is a social determinant of healthcare.

“Nearly 80% of LifeWorks clients have experienced foster care, the juvenile justice system, or both, and come into LifeWorks programs with complex trauma. As the CDC has declared youth mental health a public crisis, the lack of housing can deeply impact health and wellbeing,” LifeWorks CEO Susan McDowell said.

At the height of the pandemic, LifeWorks housed more than 20 youth a month, providing critical resources in a time of worldwide crisis. Our data tells us that there will be 509 youth experiencing homelessness in the city tonight.

Efforts to house youth are ongoing and as the affordability crisis persists, an increased need for additional affordable housing units is imperative on the success of LifeWorks mission to end youth homelessness in Austin. For more information on supporting LifeWorks efforts to end youth homelessness, visit LifeWorksAustin.org.

About LifeWorks

LifeWorks is a fearless advocate for youth and families seeking their path to self-sufficiency. We are committed to innovative problem solving, shared accountability and a relentless focus on achieving real, sustainable, and measurable results for the clients we serve.

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