

# Utilizing a Harm Reduction Approach in Housing, Education, and Employment Services

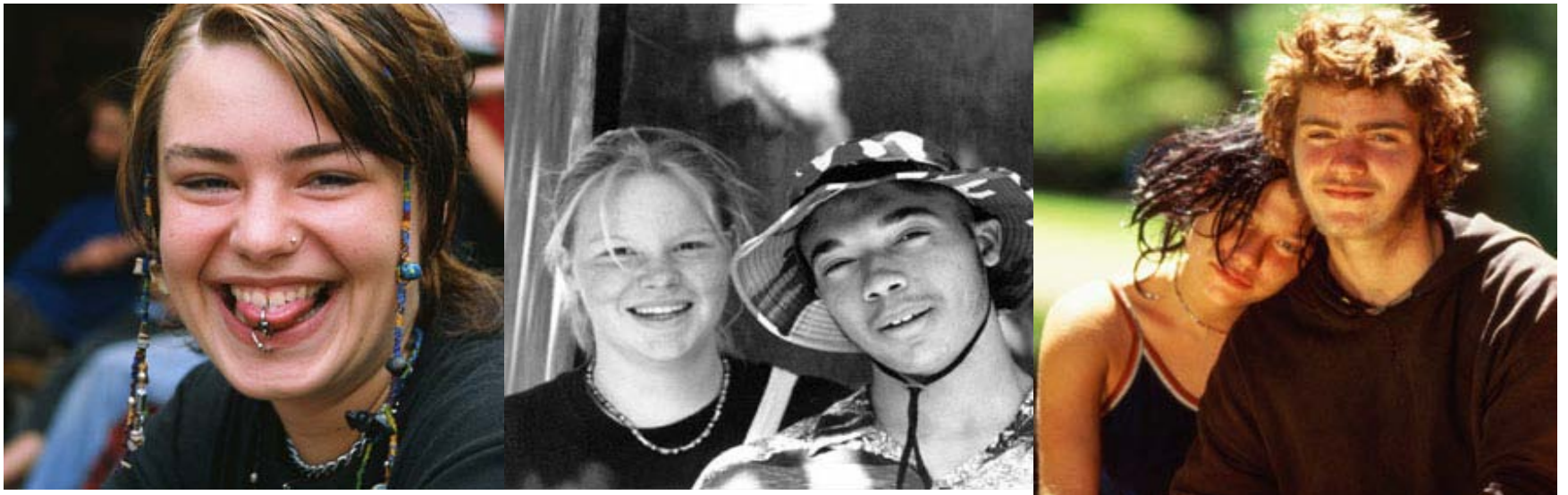
National Pathways to Adulthood  
August 7-9, 2013



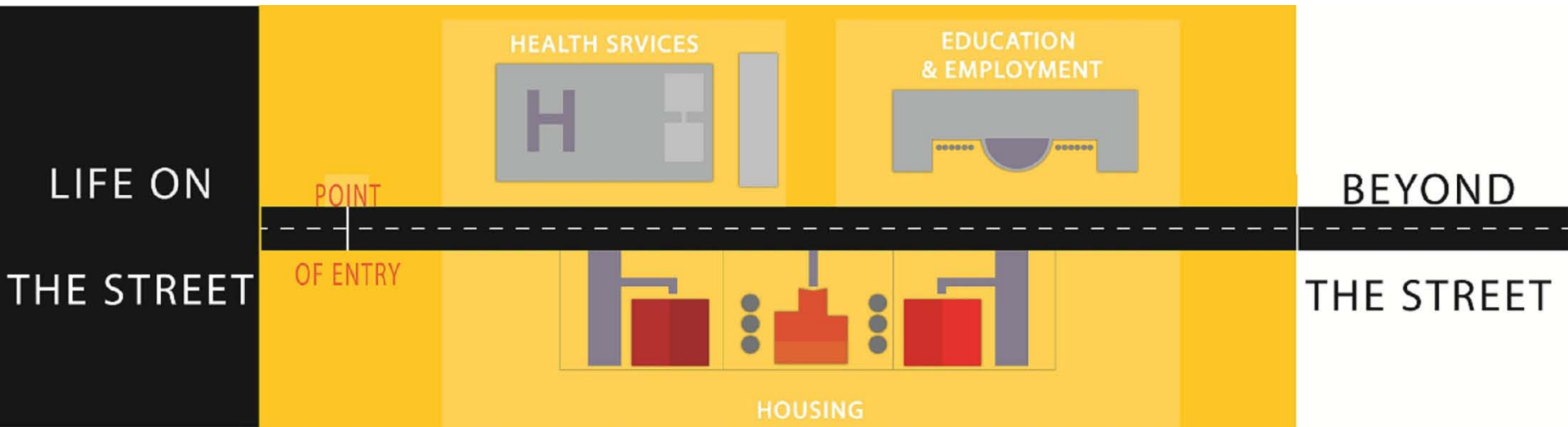
YOUTH SERVICES

# Larkin Street Mission Statement

The mission of Larkin Street Youth Services is to create a continuum of services that inspires youth to move beyond the street. We will nurture potential, promote dignity, and support bold steps by all.



# Continuum of Care



Larkin Street's service model combines multiple programs into a comprehensive and integrated system of supports for youth. "Continuum of Care" refers to the full breadth of services offered

# Programs & Services

## **Point of Entry**

Outreach  
Drop In Center  
Haight Street Referral  
Center

## **Health Services**

Medical Clinic  
HIV Specialty Clinic  
Mental Health &  
Substance Use  
HIV Prevention  
Art Program

## **Education & Employment**

Hire Up - Education  
Hire Up - Employment

## **Housing**

Diamond Youth Shelter  
Lark Inn  
The LOFT  
Avenues to  
Independence  
G-House  
Holloway House  
Assisted Care/Aftercare  
Castro Youth Housing  
Initiative  
LEASE  
ROUTZ  
Ellis Street Apartments

# Larkin Street Philosophy

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- Comprehensive continuum of services
- Housing as an intervention
- Provide support services
- Intensive case management
- Youth-focused services
- Focus on life skills
- Harm reduction approach

# Harm Reduction 101

- Past & Now
- Primary Principles
- Relation to Employment Case Management
- Implementation Strategies



# Working Definitions

Harm reduction is a pragmatic approach to reduce the harmful consequences of alcohol and drug use or other high-risk activities by incorporating several strategies that cut across the spectrum from safer use to managed use to abstinence. (Marlett, 2010)

Harm reduction is a set of practical strategies and ideas aimed at reducing negative consequences associated with drug use. Harm Reduction is also a movement for social justice built on a belief in, and respect for, the rights of people who use drugs. (Harm Reduction Coalition, 2012)

*The primary goal of most harm-reduction approaches is to meet individuals 'where they are at' and not to ignore or condemn the harmful behaviors but rather to work with the individual or community to minimize the harmful effects of a given behavior. (Marlett, 2012)*

# Harm Reduction Approach

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- Meets youth “where they’re at”
- The use of theory of change
- The use of motivation
- Non-judgmental and strengths based
- Practical strategies that reduce negative consequences
- Removes barrier to housing



# Harm Reduction and Youth Development

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- Youth develop their goals and plan
- Larkin street service “team model” for case management
- Focuses on gathering information to make decisions
- Focus on consequences
- Allows youth to shape their own identities

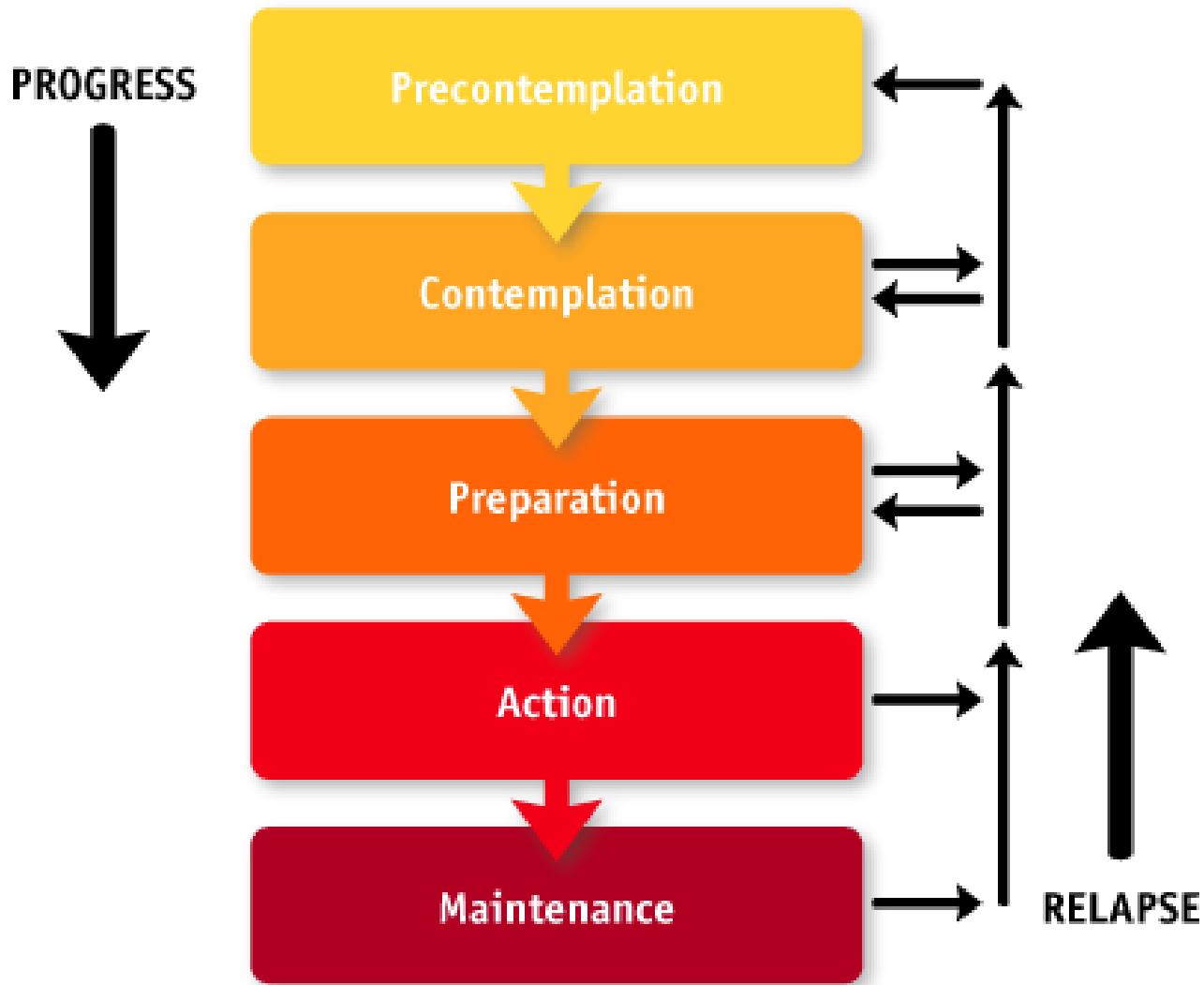
# Harm Reduction and Housing

- Focus on development of independent living skills
- Recognizes the autonomy inherent in independent living
- Prepares youth to make the decisions that are a part of independent living
- Stability of housing provides new options, choices and tools to reduce harm

# Implement Harm Reduction Strategies

- Meet youth where they are
- Assess cultural and linguistic dynamics
- Conduct assessments using Motivational Interviewing
- Partner with youth to identify employment goals
- Create individualized employment workplans to meet the needs and skill-set for each youth
- Cultivate relationship-oriented culture

# Stages of Change



# Motivational Interviewing Principles

- Express Empathy
- Develop Discrepancy between goals, values and behavior
- Avoid Argumentation and direct confrontation
- Roll with Resistance
- Support Self-Efficacy and optimism

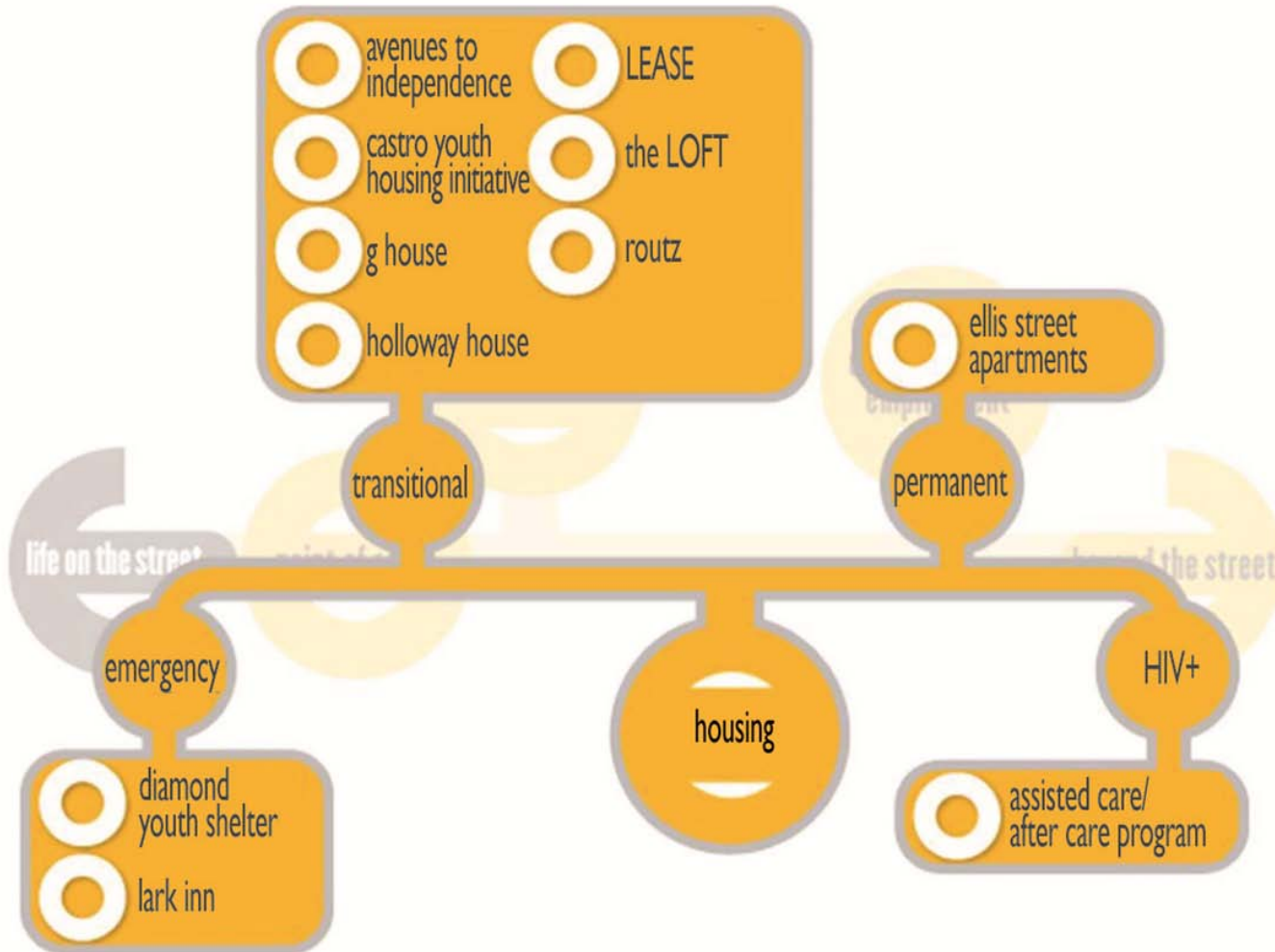


# What Does It Look Like?

From Sobell & Sobell, 2008

- Ask Permission
- Elicit/Evoke Change Talk
- Open-ended Questions
- Reflective Listening
- Normalizing Statements
- Supporting Self-efficacy

# Housing Programs



# Larkin Extended Aftercare for Support Emancipation (LEASE) and Holloway House

- LEASE and Holloway House provides housing and a full continuum of support services to current and former San Francisco foster care youth ages 18-24
- Eligibility:
- Emancipated foster ages 18-24 who have been in the San Francisco Foster Care System at any point between ages 16 and 18 or youth currently in the San Francisco Foster Care System and preparing for emancipation
- Must attend school and/or work (or planning to)



Use Harm Reduction when moving  
youth toward employment

# Wrap around Case Management

## **Key Strategy:**

Motivational Enhancement Strategies used by all parties working with youth as a team (Housing Case manager, Employment and Education counselor, etc.)

## **Larkin Street: From the Field**

Integrate motivational interviewing in the dialogue to develop a collaborative employment plan

# Precontemplation Stage Employment-Youth Force

- **“Youth Force is a Test Run”**
  - ♦ Uniforms
  - ♦ Wages (**immediate paid work**)
  - ♦ Realistic Consequences
  - ♦ Experience for Resumes
  - ♦ Staff serve as Job References
- **Projects include:**
  - Trash pickups
  - Graffiti clean-up
  - Pressure washing
  - Landscaping
  - Light janitorial duties
- **Cross program collaboration**



## Contemplation stage = Employment-Job Readiness Class (JRC)



- Monday – Friday from 9AM-3:30PM
- Clients earn \$200 over 4 weeks
- Interactive curriculum includes employment and life skill development, and strategies to work towards career goals

## Preparation Stage for employment = Retail Success Training

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- 4 weeks of Retail skills for Job readiness in the retail
- Reduce your barriers to employment
- Get connected to a career path
- Earn a weekly educational stipend of \$50.00/week
- Earn a National recognized Certification

# Action stage = Employment-Institute for Hire Learning

- Internship program
  - ♦ 3 months for 20 hours per week for supportive internship
  - ♦ 6 months for a “professional” internship
- Assistance to subsidize vocational/certificate programs
- Range of opportunities to engage interest
- Collaborative partnerships

# Maintenance Stage

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- Job Retention Groups.
- Continued wrap around case management sessions.
- Celibate employment outcomes ( Hired at Job, completes 90 day probation period, receives raise, etc.)

# Cultivate Relationship-Oriented Culture

Case Management is a Welcoming Space  
Partner with Employers. Educate and Advocate.

Failure  $\neq$  Chastise

Graduation is a BIG deal





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