

LGBTQ+ Safety and Inclusion

WHY COVENANT HOUSE

At Covenant House, our commitment to youth facing homelessness goes way beyond their first moment of crisis. In order to truly help a young person change their life, we know that opening a door is just the initial step in a long journey. We must provide transformational programs that give our youth the tools and support they need to build a future of their own.

PROGRAM DETAILS

When LGBTQ+ youth become homeless, most seek shelter and services from mainstream or non-LGBTQ+ specific agencies. It is critical that Covenant House, the largest provider of services to young people facing homelessness in the Americas, offer LGBTQ+ youth a welcoming, affirming, and safe environment, as well as tailored programs and services which proactively recognize the unique challenges, risks, and traumas faced by these youth.

Not only are LGBTQ+ youth 120% more likely to be homeless, they have a harder time accessing safe housing at every point along the housing continuum, from shelter to permanent housing. With our unique offering of resources, including housing, food, education, workforce development, counseling, and other trauma-informed services created with the goal of positive youth development, Covenant House is a lifeline for LGBTQ+ youth and young adults experiencing homelessness — and we continue to implement new initiatives to support this high-risk community.

IMPACT

We are working towards standardizing safety and inclusion practices for youth who identify as LGBTQ+ at all Covenant House sites. Covenant House is working directly with sites to develop their site-specific policies and facilitate staff completion of all LGBTQ+ training and certification programs.

SERVICES



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covenanthouse.org/program-investment



MEET KAIDEN

When Kaiden decided to tell his family and friends he was transgender, he didn't know how they'd react. But he soon learned how traumatic life can be for a young person who identifies as LGBTQ+.

"When I came out as transgender, I kind of lost all my community around me," he told us. "It was a disaster. ... I ended up homeless for a year."

Fortunately, Kaiden found Covenant House. "I heard about Covenant House, and I called here and they were able to get me in on the same day. I found it comforting to be around people my age, rather than a variety of ages, and I like the fact there's a 'no drug policy' and stuff like that."

While Kaiden was in the welcome center, Miss Carolyn, assistant program manager, talked about the rules and expectations of Covenant House. Kaiden finds the structure to be really helpful because he struggles with commitment and consistency. He feels safe at Covenant House.

A recent study noted that LGBTQ+ youth do not become homeless immediately after coming out to their families, but are more likely to leave their unsafe or unwelcoming homes after the "gradual escalation of tensions and rejection over time."

ABOUT COVENANT HOUSE

Covenant House builds a bridge to hope for young people facing homelessness and survivors of trafficking through unconditional love, absolute respect, and relentless support. Our doors are open 24/7 in 34 cities across six countries and our high-quality programs are designed to empower young people to rise and overcome adversity, today and in the future.

“ They helped me by not giving up on me and kicking me out because I was struggling with my mental health. They were able to recognize that I just needed some help. They basically saved my life. ”

THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

Since 2014, Covenant House has been in collaboration with True Colors United to help us implement best practices to welcome and serve LGBTQ+ youth and create trainings and policies to reinforce our practice of unconditional love and absolute respect.



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