



Covenant House

Youth Programs & Activities: July 2016-June 2017

The past year presented new challenges and exciting opportunities for our Covenant House family. Above all, it was a year filled with love, joy, and lots of successes. We are blessed by the support of our friends, donors, and volunteers.

Our average daily census climbed to **159** youth and children, the highest of any Covenant House in the nation except New York. No matter how full we are, *there is always room for one more.*

Our young people are among the most damaged in our community. Most have experienced years of **abuse, violence, and trauma.** Underneath their outer shells, they are like any other group of kids... with the same hopes and dreams.

Thanks to you, they are receiving the loving care and support they need in their journey from homelessness to healing to hope-filled independence.

"Blessed are those who shepherd the weak through the valley of the darkness, for they are truly their brother's keeper and the finder of lost children."

Ezekiel 25:17

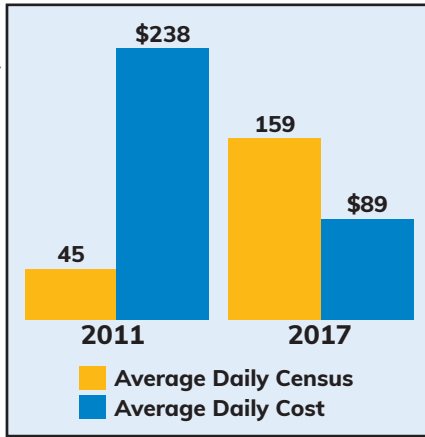


We take seriously our role as a **safe space** for young people who often have nowhere else to turn. We are **never full** and **always open**. *If not us... who? If not now... when?*

We provided comprehensive services to 742 youth last year.

We expanded the number of **off-site independent apartments**

available for individuals and families, including graduates of our *Rights of Passage* transitional living program. We provided another **297 youth** in the community with **outreach services and aftercare** including food, water, and hygiene packets. We also provided **supportive housing** for our chronically mentally ill youth.



60% of our young people come from New Orleans, 25% from elsewhere around Louisiana, and 15% from across the country.

Highlights

- **Crisis Care** – 405 youth and children took refuge from the streets and abusive homes, receiving food, clothing, shelter, case management, and counseling. We helped 47% of the youth in our 24/7 Emergency Crisis Center find stable housing, including family reunification whenever possible.
- **Rights of Passage (ROP)** – 75 young men, women, and families resided on campus as they worked, saved, continued their education, and learned new life skills. 90% of ROP graduates secured a job and stable housing, our highest success rate in the program’s history.
- **Health Services** – 2,078 residents and community youth benefited from onsite adolescent and pediatric healthcare, provided in partnership with Tulane Medical School.

- **Behavioral Health** – 95% of our youth received mental and behavioral health services from our licensed counselors and a Tulane psychologist; 90% showed improved functioning in jobs, school, and interpersonal relations.
- **Employment and Job Training** – 215 youth were served in our employment programs. 82% found work or entered job training programs like Café Reconcile, Liberty’s Kitchen, JOB1, and our own White Dove Landscaping. We also teach our youth job search & retention skills and have volunteers who conduct mock interviews.
- **Education** – 27 youth enrolled in GED programs like Youth Empowerment Project; 10 more enrolled in college.
- **Human Trafficking** – We formed the *Greater New Orleans Human Trafficking Task Force* and helped pass anti-trafficking legislation, major steps to protect and safeguard young victims and survivors.
- **Return Home** – 160 youth were provided with bus tickets across the country to reunite with family or relatives who were able to offer a stable and safe living environment.

Continuum of Care



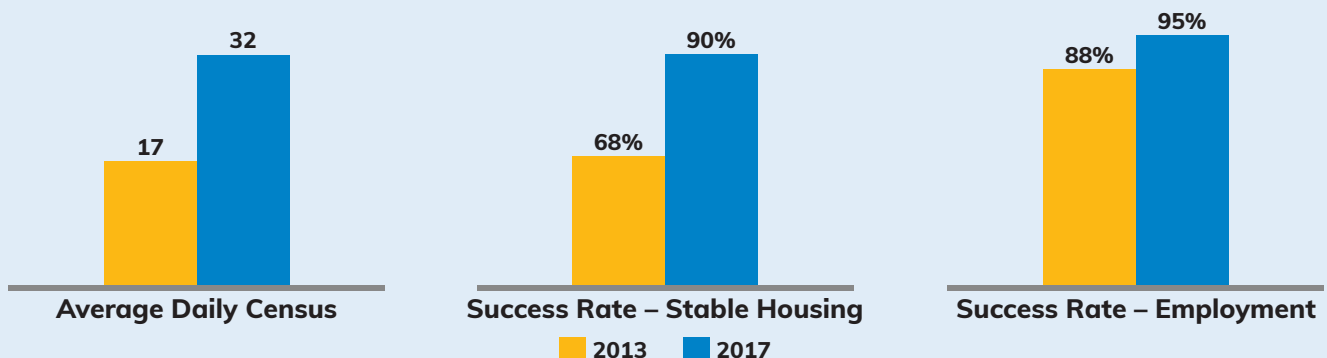
Covenant House offers our youth so much more than just “the essentials” of **food, clothing, and shelter**. They also need **physical & behavioral health-care, individual & family counseling, social & legal services, job training & placement, educational assistance, and everyday life skills**.

With 85% of our young people suffering from **profound trauma and post-traumatic stress disorder**, we know we must do more. Our staff is trained on the latest models of **trauma-informed care and positive youth development**.

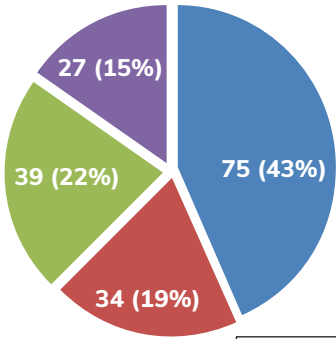
Along with our partners at Tulane Medical, we offer professional counseling and services to help them **heal and recover**.

Guiding it all? *Unconditional love* and *absolute respect*.

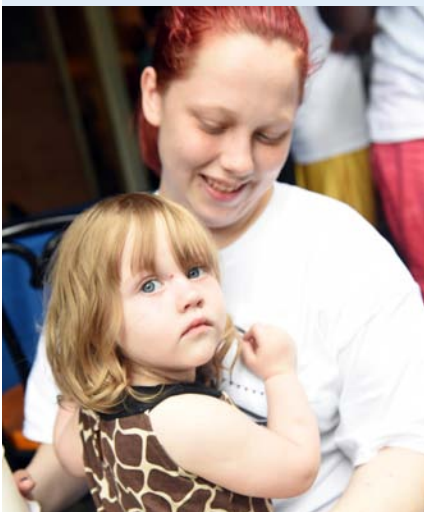
At a Glance: Rights of Passage: A “University for Street Kids”



**Point in Time:
August 24, 2017**



- Crisis Center
 - Rights of Passage
 - Supportive Housing Apts
 - Independent Living Apts
- Total: 175 youth & children



Meet Aaliyah

Aaliyah's story is sobering and tragic. Her family, the foster care and child welfare systems, and the legal and criminal justice systems ALL failed this beautiful young woman. Despite everything Aaliyah has been through these past twelve years, she is not bitter. Instead, she's focused on turning her life around.



Aaliyah's life of suffering began at the age of 9. Her mom developed a drug problem and began dating a man who raped her.

"I didn't tell anyone because he threatened to leave and take away our only income"

Child Protective Services removed Aaliyah from her mother, whose cocaine use had spun out of control, leading to deplorable living conditions. Aaliyah rebelled in foster care under the authority of people she felt only wanted the government check. Running away from foster care, Aaliyah was left to fend for herself on the streets.

"The first time I actually took money for sex was when I was 16. He had been raping me for years... why not take the \$200?"

Aaliyah left for Texas at 19 and found work as a stripper. A fellow dancer told her about a Houston club where she could earn more money. The man in charge turned out to be a pimp (all too common in the world of strip clubs). He brought her to New Orleans where she was required to earn \$500 a night during the week and \$1,000 for weekend nights.

"If I failed to earn his money, he would beat me with a belt or stripper pole"

Aaliyah arranged her "dates" on Backpage, an online ad service for adult postings. Also working the site was an FBI agent who agreed to exchange money for sex with Aaliyah. The agent was part of a sting operation, and Aaliyah was immediately arrested.

"I was 17 when I found out I was HIV positive."

Being HIV positive is a by-product of the life Aaliyah was forced to lead. On the night of her arrest, Aaliyah had a full box of condoms on her - but her belongings were never searched before she was arrested. Charged with "attempted exposure to the HIV virus," she was forced to register as a sex offender for the next 15 years - or go to jail.

"I prayed a lot."

As a young girl, Aaliyah's grandmother taught her to pray every day, and she has continued to do so through the years. "There could be a man on top of me, and I would still pray. Because you never knew if he would snap, or choke me out, or try and rob me, or kill me."

Update

With the help of Covenant House, the sex offender charge against Aaliyah has been dropped. (Imagine trying to apply for a job or find a decent apartment with the words "sex offender" stamped in scarlet letters on your license?)

She is now getting her life back on track and receiving ongoing counseling. She has a new job and is considering going back to school. Aaliyah knows the "road back" will have many challenges, but she has hope... and faith.

Please pray for Aaliyah - and all our beautiful young people.



Thank You

We can never say it enough. Without you, Covenant House would not exist. **79%** of our budget comes from private gifts.

We work very hard to be good stewards of your generosity. In the past six years, we have reduced our *average daily cost* from \$238 to **\$89** – while greatly expanding and enhancing our programs and services.

Please know of our prayers of gratitude for all you do for our Covenant House family.



Sleep Out: 11-16-17

Last November, over 160 business and civic leaders spent a night on the street for our 5th annual *Sleep Out*, showing their solidarity - and raising more than \$450,000 - for our kids.

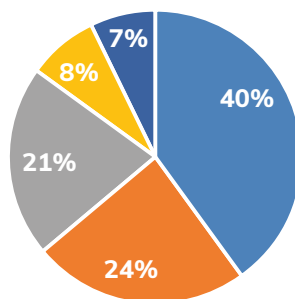
Our goal this year is to raise **\$470,000** and recruit **170 sleepers** (one for every youth and child in our care).

Please contact Rich at **504-584-1141** or rarnold@covenanthouse.org to register – or visit our event website below: <http://neworleans.thesleepout.org>.



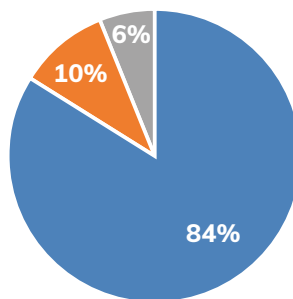
4 STAR-RATED (out of 4) by Charity Navigator

INCOME



- Individuals
- Corps/Foundation
- Government
- Special Events
- Other

EXPENSES



- Programs/Services
- Administrative
- Fundraising

Note: excludes depreciation & in-kind services

FY17 (\$5,163,785)

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