

**Fact sheet: Homeless lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) youth in Boston, Mass.**

- 1) **How many homeless youth in Boston? Statewide?**
  - a) **Boston:** Over 750 18-25 year olds engaged with emergency shelter providers in 2002, the last year for which data are publicly available (Source: John W. McCormack Graduate School of Policy Studies' Center for Social Policy, University of Massachusetts, Boston.)
    - i) Data for homeless youth in Boston under the age of 18 are not available
  - b) **Massachusetts:** Data on the number of homeless youth statewide are not available. According to the National Alliance to End Homelessness, 14,730 people (adults and children) in Massachusetts were homeless in 2005
- 2) **How many homeless youth in Boston may identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBT)?**
  - a) We estimate that from 150 to 300 youth engaged with emergency shelter providers in Boston are LGBT.
  - b) This calculation is based on research that demonstrates that 20-40 percent of all homeless youth identify LGBT.
- 3) **What are the government agencies in Massachusetts that are charged with assisting homeless youth?**
  - a) The Executive Office of the State Department of Health and Human Services
  - b) The State Department of Social Services (DSS) works specifically with LGBT homeless youth
  - c) The State Department of Youth Services is also involved in various aspects of work with all homeless and runaway youth, including those who may be LGBT.
- 4) **What has the city/state done to address needs of homeless LGBT youth?**
  - a) Limited, city-supported training has occurred at shelters around the city of Boston conducted by Michael Soo Hoo, LGBT Health Program Manager for the Boston Public Health Commission.
    - i) Inquiries to the City of Boston communications department (Director: Tom Lyons) 617-534-2821.
  - b) **2,000 DSS staff (statewide) participated in LGBT awareness training conducted by Waltham House, a homeless LGBT youth services provider in Waltham, Mass. More information on Waltham house and this training program is available on pp. 139-151 of the report.**
- 5) **Contact information for a Boston service provider with focus and expertise on LGBT homeless youth:**

Colby Berger, Ed.M.  
GLBT Training Manager  
The Home for Little Wanderers  
780 American Legion Highway

Media contact: Roberta Sklar, Director of Communications, 646.358.1465

Roslindale, MA 02131  
617.469.8581  
Fax: 617.469.8560  
cberger@thehome.org

Colby Berger of Waltham House, a program of the Home for Little Wanderers, contributed a chapter to our study, which focuses on a statewide training initiative for DSS staff on LGBT awareness.

6) **Contact information for public agencies or key person's office:**

a) **City Hall (Boston) has an LGBT liaison:** Karen Fried (housed in the Neighborhood Services office) 617-635-3485

b) Executive Office of Health and Human Services:

One Ashburton Place 11<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Boston, MA 02108  
617-573-1600

c) **Office of Children, Youth and Family Services:** John Wagner, Assistant Secretary and Commissioner, of the Department of Transitional Assistance

600 Washington St.,  
Boston, MA 02111  
617-348-8400

d) **Department of Social Services:** Harry Spence, Commissioner

24 Farnsworth St.  
Boston, MA 02210  
Tel. 617-748-2000

e) **Department of Youth Services:** Jane E. Tewksbury, Commissioner

27 Wormwood St.  
Boston, MA 02210  
617-727-7575

f) **City of Boston Emergency Shelter Commission**

Room 716  
1 City Hall Plaza  
Boston, MA 02201  
617.635.4507