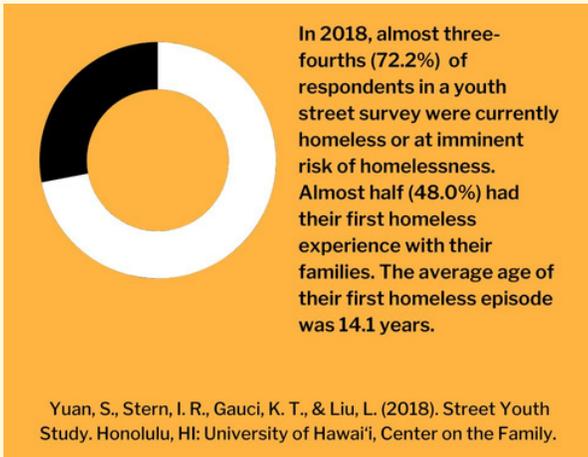


**AUGUST 26, 2022**

# Opportunity Youth Action Hawai'i Policy Initiative

## 2022: WHERE ARE WE NOW?



Comparing data from the 2018 Street Youth Study, and the 2022 Point in Time Count. Partners in Care was able to document 545 homeless youth, With a majority of youth (86%) considered as sheltered. Although these studies are not completely similar, Partners in Care noted an increase in sheltered children based off of the efforts to house families with youth over the previous 2 years. The Opportunity Youth Action Hawai'i Hui is exploring a potential 2023 policy priority which would be to eliminate a statutory sunset date on the state's youth-right-to-housing law.

1. Partners in Care Oahu Continuum of Care, 2022 Point in Time Count Comprehensive Report, July 6th 2022

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## WHY DOES OYAH HAVE A POLICY INITIATIVE?

By Melissa Pavlicek, *volunteer advisor*

There are as many ways to make a difference in the life of an Opportunity Youth as there are individuals and organizations. The Opportunity Youth Action Hawai'i Hui member organizations already cover a broad swath of mental health programs, human services, homelessness services, and Native Hawaiian-focused programs. The individuals who lead these organizations realized that establishing statewide support and prioritizing youth in and out of the justice system required the development of strong legislative and executive branch policies. The OYAH Policy Initiative was born in 2021 with then-law student Harley Broyles and University of Hawai'i undergraduate Leah Delos Santos initially reviewing and researching legislative initiatives before the 2022 Hawai'i legislature convened. Since then, hundreds of bills have been monitored, testimony has been presented at the state capitol, and numerous good bills have been passed while bills that would have created harmful policies were defeated. The sight of renowned artist Solomon Enos demonstrated another way to support Opportunity Youth: by leading the painting of a mural above. Whether it is through services, art, or advocacy, there are many ways to contribute to the OYAH Hui. See [www.oyahpolicy.com](http://www.oyahpolicy.com)