Centrepoint Soho

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Organisation | Centrepoint Soho |
| Name | Gaia Marcus |
| Email |  |
| City | London |
| Focus | Youth homelessness |
| Mission Statement | Centrepoint’s vision is to end youth homelessness. We work to fulfil this vision by supporting young people into a home and a job.  We will know that our mission has been successfully achieved when every young person in the country is able to access suitable accommodation, as well as appropriate training, education and employment.  In practice, this will mean that early intervention services are in place to pick up young people at risk of homelessness at an early stage so they can be supported to remain in their accommodation or move into alternative accommodation in a planned way. This will require sufficient provision of both emergency and longer-term housing.  It will also require all young people, particularly those who are currently furthest from the labour market, to be able to access good quality advice and support to develop the skills they need to move into sustainable employment. |
| Organisation’s programs | Centrepoint provides holistic support to homeless young people to address the full breadth of their needs. We operate a wide range of housing services, from emergency hostels to longer-term independent units so there is an option suitable for every individual and young people can move between different forms of accommodation as they progress out of homelessness.  To help young people find work, our jobs and skills team offers a variety of programmes, from functional skills to employability programmes that offer young people work placements with our corporate supporters. To help prevent young people becoming homeless in the first place, we also offer family mediation services in a number of areas to help young people rebuild their relationships with their families.  We also work collaboratively with other youth homelessness organisations across the country to spread good practice and help ensure that young people are able to access the support they need, wherever they live.  In addition, our policy team works to influence government policy to the benefit of homeless young people, and to tackle structural factors which contribute to youth homelessness. |
| Organisation’s Challenges | One of the biggest challenges facing the youth homelessness sector is the big reduction in funding for frontline services that has been seen in recent years. Local authority budgets have been significantly cut, which in turn has limited the pot they have to commission frontline services for homeless young people.  Poor understanding and data regarding the true and scale nature of youth homelessness, as well as which interventions are most effective, has hampered limited our ability to secure greater funding for the sector.  Many aspects of welfare reform have also negatively impacted on homeless young people. For example, reductions in housing benefit rates in the private rented sector combined with increased competition in this sector, have made it much harder for young people to find affordable accommodation to move on to when they are ready to leave hostels.  Young people often have very poor financial capability when they become homeless. This can mean that they struggle to manage their benefit claims and keep up with their rent payments when in our services. This means that many build up significant arrears, which has a significant impact on our finances and ability to invest in new support services. |
| Project description | **Idea 1:** Better understanding of the total scale of youth homelessness - this would use work the databank team has done to date.  More on the Databank: Centrepoint is creating the UK's first Youth Homelessness Databank - an open data resource for the UK. Currently, no one is collating, aggregating, tracking or evaluating how charities work with young people experiencing homelessness. With better knowledge we – charity, registered social landlord, local authority and government - can influence better outcomes for young people experiencing homelessness.  It would be great to explore (a) what analyses are feasible with the data that we do have access to; and (b) what analyses would be feasible with the data that we don’t have, but could have. The outline of the Youth Homelessness Databank and the different data sources are outlined in the document that we sent out to companies as part of the tender process (see attached).  This would be to gain a better understanding of the scale of youth homelessness, the current reporting and data collection conducted around the UK, the possible risk factors for youth homelessness and to try to understand what happens to young people experiencing or at risk of homelessness. We have illustrated the journey of a young person through the housing services, showing what data are collected and where it is reported to (see attached diagram). We would like to be able to fill in some of the gaps in understanding.  **Idea 2:** Analysis into what drives Centrepoint rent arrears, using internal data.  **Option to use external data:** If DataKind were able to help us gain access to the DCLG Troubled Families programme’s data, and if the data suitably structured, we would like to investigate how risk factors in the Troubled Families programme such as ‘children at the edge of care’ and ‘at risk of eviction’ correlate with other problems that families face such as unemployment, offending history, debt etc.  If it’s possible to link these statistics to demographic factors, it would also be useful to investigate which types of families are most likely to present with these risk factors. Citizens Advice data: drill down further into their data on young people facing homelessness Investigating if it is possible to link Housing Benefit caseload data with other government datasets to find out more about the young people who would potentially be subject to the Housing Benefit cut. It would probably involve DWP giving you case level data and some identifying characteristics to help link to other datasets, which I’m sure they wouldn’t want to do, but if we can think of a way around this it would be very useful! |
| What do you hope to achieve or learn from this project? |  |
| What data have you collected for this project? |  |
| Aside from the data in the previous question, what data sources do you have available to you? |  |
| How will you know this project has been a success? |  |
| List any other members of your charity or organisation who would be interested in this |  |
|  |  |