


Case Management Services for Transgender Youth & Young Adults

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**The Washington, DC
Transgender Needs Assessment Survey**
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Implemented by
Us Helping Us - People Into Living, Inc.
Ron Simmons, Ph.D., Executive Director

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The Washington, DC Transgender Needs Assessment Survey

Demography

Participants	252
Median Age	28 (nearly 80% under age 36)
Gender Identity	Transgender 69 %
Physical Sex at Birth	Male - 75 %, Female - 24%, Intersex - 1%
Race	African-American – 69%, Latina – 22%

The Washington, DC Transgender Needs Assessment Survey

Job Loss due to Discrimination: 15%

Homelessness : 19%

Top Three Immediate Needs of Participants:

Employment - 73%, Housing - 65%, Job Training - 53%

Victims of Crime / Violence : 43%

Sexual Assault: 13%

(MTFs: 12%, FTMs: 18%)

The Washington, DC Transgender Needs Assessment Survey

Substance Abuse Issues 48%
(Sought Substance Abuse Treatment - 51%)
Substance abuse was associated with sex work

Suicidal Ideation 38%
Made suicide attempts 16%

Currently Taking Hormones 35%
(Acquired Hormones on Street - 70 %)

Injection Silicone Use 25% of MTFs

Sex Reassignment Surgery 4%

The Washington, DC Transgender Needs Assessment Survey

Overall HIV Prevalence 25 %

MTFs - **32%**, FTMs - 3.3%

HIV negative – 53 %,

Don't Know - **22 %**

Most commonly reported means of transmission:

Unprotected sex with non-transgendered males

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The Cycle of Marginalization

The gender transition process for African-American transgender women is very different from their caucasian peers –

Coming out means early crossdressing while in middle school or earlier

Peer harassment and violence forces many transgender women to leave secondary school before graduation

Estrangement from birth families can force them to leave home (runaways and thrown-aways)

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The Cycle of Marginalization

With no high school degree or job skills, unemployment is common

Many hang out with older transgender women who offer them guidance

Sex work begins early ! often in the middle teens

Substance abuse is common means of coping with sex work pressures and/or in-group belonging

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The Cycle of Marginalization

Violence on the stroll is widespread and includes the police

In DC, being “walking while crossdressed” is probable cause for arrest for Solicitation for Lewd and Indecent Purposes (SLIP) - prostitution

No transgender bars, so hanging out means on the streets

Sex work arrests mean incarceration with male population

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The Cycle of Marginalization

Discharge from prison / jail comes with enormous challenges:

HIV and STD infections

Substance Abuse Addiction

Homelessness

Vocational Rehabilitation

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The Cycle of Marginalization

Multiple Social Stigmas

(transgender, sex worker, ex-offender, etc.)

Ongoing Transgender Needs (hormones)

Mental Health Needs & Internalized Transphobia

(sexual risk taking, substance abuse, etc.)

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Breaking the Cycle - Challenges

Inability to Reach Clients due to Homelessness or Substance Abuse Addictions

Time Constraints (work hours versus hour of client need)

Lack of Funding for Transportation for Clients to Appointments

Lack of Providers of Transitional Housing for transgender clients

Lack of Substance Abuse Treatment Programs that Address Transgender Issues

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Breaking the Cycle - Strategies

Use client-centered Harm Reduction approach

Be prepared to deal with many client issues (multiply diagnosed)

Be mindful of the need for continuity of care and services

Follow-up with clients

Try to re-integrate clients with family members for support

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Breaking the Cycle - Strategies

Work the system – know your elected representatives & advocate !

Make certain resources are available – outreach & training !

Role modeling

Don't be afraid of Spirituality !