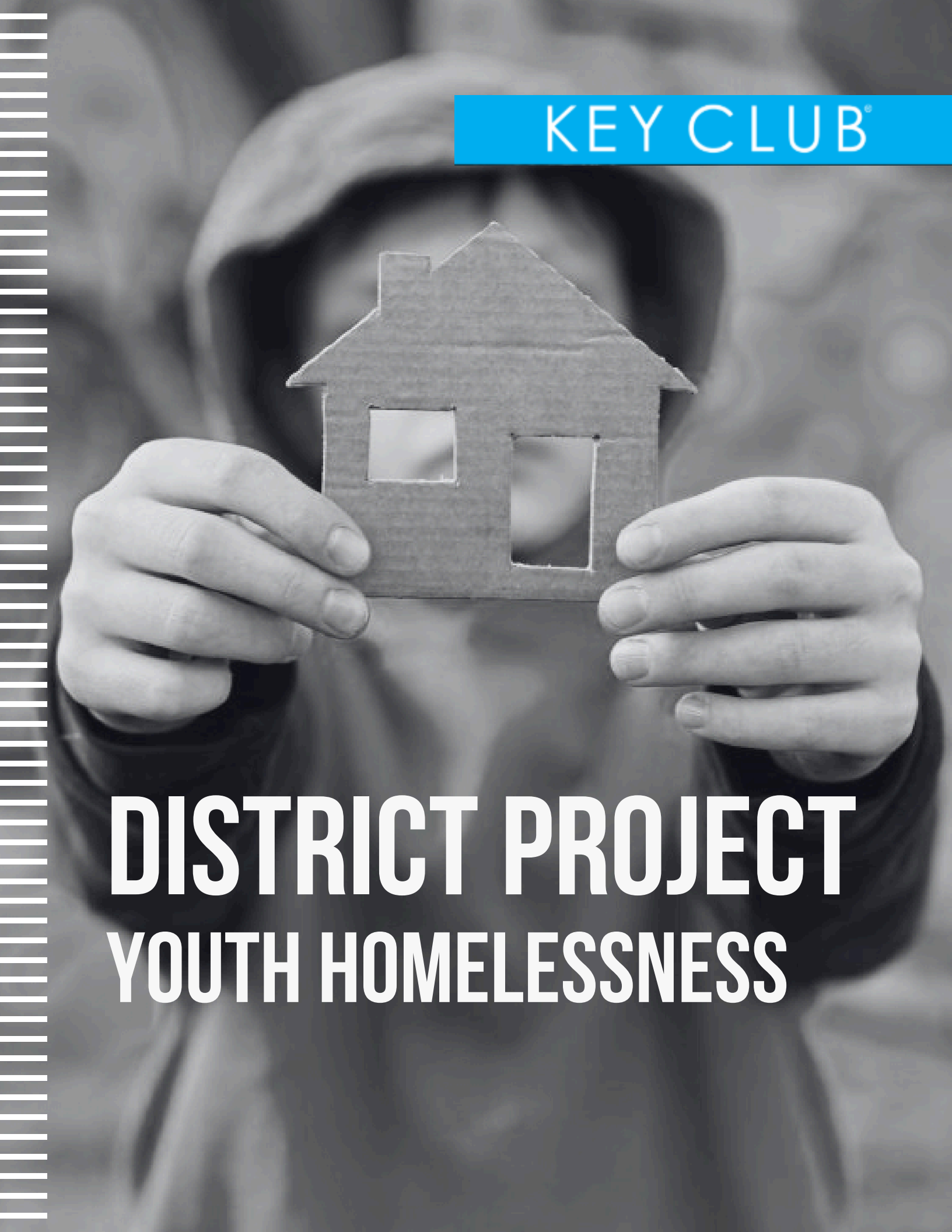


A black and white photograph of a person wearing a hoodie, holding a small, hand-cut cardboard house with two rectangular windows. The person's face is partially visible in the background, looking directly at the camera. The image has a blue banner at the top and white text at the bottom.

KEY CLUB®

DISTRICT PROJECT YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

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**END
YOUTH HOMELESSNESS**



What is the District Project?

Youth Homelessness

The New Jersey District Project (DP) for the 2025–2026 service year is focused on combating youth homelessness across our state. Endorsed by the District Board and supported through club-level and district-wide action, this initiative seeks to raise awareness, mobilize student-led service, and deliver direct aid to young people who are experiencing housing instability.

Youth homelessness refers to young people, generally between the ages of 8 and 18, who lack a stable, safe, and consistent place to live. This may include youth who are couch-surfing, living in shelters, transitional housing, on the streets, or in unsafe living situations. Causes range from family conflict and abuse to economic hardship and aging out of foster care.



Through partnerships with organizations like the Center for Family Services (CFS) and other local shelters, the project aims to:

- **Educate** members and communities about the root causes and effects of youth homelessness
- **Collect** and donate tangible items to support housing programs and outreach efforts
- **Promote** long-term advocacy and understanding among student leaders
- **Encourage** clubs to build sustained relationships with shelters or youth service agencies
- **Empower** youth-led solutions and amplify underrepresented voices

Key Club members will participate in donation drives, awareness campaigns, legislative advocacy, and educational workshops that not only support those in need, but also build compassion, civic responsibility, and leadership within our schools.

What's in a Together Tote?

Essential Items That Make a Difference

A "Together Tote" is a thoughtfully assembled donation kit tailored to the daily needs of youth in emergency or transitional housing. These totes—or sturdy duffle bags—are more than containers: they are vehicles of hope, comfort, and dignity.

Based on guidance from CFS and other trusted partners, a standard Together Tote may include:

- Sturdy duffle bag or travel backpack (preferably collapsible or with wheels)
- Toiletries & hygiene supplies: soap, shampoo, deodorant, toothbrush, toothpaste, menstrual products
- Haircare products: especially those designed for natural or textured hair
- Household items: bath towels, bedding basics, washcloths, plastic utensils or bowls
- Clothing: new socks, gender-neutral T-shirts, sweatshirts, undergarments
- Recreational supplies: sketchbooks, colored pencils, stress balls, journal
- Gift cards: Amazon, Target, Walmart, or Dick's Sporting Goods for flexibility and choice

These bags should reflect dignity, consistency, and sensitivity to the lived experiences of the youth receiving them. Clubs are encouraged to coordinate with their regional CFS contact to prioritize specific needs (e.g., seasonally relevant clothing or supplies). Include kind notes or messages of encouragement when possible.



Timeline / Monthly Focus Ideas

District Project Youth Homelessness (2025-2026 Service Year)

AUGUST – DISTRICT PROJECT TOOLKIT

- Introduce the District Project Toolkit and explain how clubs can use it to guide their service efforts throughout the year
- Share toolkit resources, including flyers, timelines, and Together Tote guides

SEPTEMBER – BACK-TO-SCHOOL SERVICE & FALL RALLY FUNDRAISING

- Host back-to-school awareness campaigns introducing the District Project to new members
- Promote Fall Rally Fundraisers, encouraging clubs to raise money for both Fall Rally and the District Project.
- Fundraise/ Collect Items needed for the District Project.

OCTOBER – FALL RALLY & MINI COLLECTION KICKOFF

- Participate in Fall Rally
- Launch a small-scale collection drive focusing on backpacks, duffle bags, and hygiene kits in preparation for winter needs
- Set up collection boxes in schools or community spaces

NOVEMBER – FUNDRAISING MONTH

- Host a small fundraiser (e.g., bake sale...)
- Goal: Raise funds for gift cards or to purchase missing donation items
- Spotlight: Social media posts around Thanksgiving & giving back

DECEMBER – HOLIDAY GIVING CAMPAIGN

- Focus: Games, toys, art supplies, journals
- Tie into existing holiday drives or school spirit weeks

JANUARY – WINTER ESSENTIALS PUSH

- Critical donation month (per CFS guidance)
- Focus: Socks, undergarments, winter clothing, bedding
- Share progress with CFS and members

FEBRUARY – FINAL COLLECTIONS

- Focus: Final collection of towels, utensils, gift cards, and totes
- Begin packaging Together Totes for delivery
- Confirm logistics with CFS for drop-off or pick-up

MARCH – DECON/ END OF TERM

- Attend District Convention (DECON)
- Encourage clubs to submit final reports, impact, and more for DECON recognition and awards.

How To Participate?

Ways Your Club Can Get Involved

Participation is meant to be inclusive, adaptable, and collaborative. Here's a breakdown of how your club can contribute:

Educate Your Members:

- Host a general meeting on youth homelessness using provided slides or videos
- Invite local organizations or alumni to speak about social impact

Coordinate Donation Drives:

- Choose one or more categories: hygiene, household, clothing, etc.
- Publicize with flyers, social media templates, and morning announcements

Fundraise Creatively:

- Partner with other clubs or community members
- Host themed events
- Use funds to fill missing tote items or purchase gift cards

Assemble Totes Thoughtfully:

- Sanitize and sort items
- Ensure age-appropriateness and equal distribution
- Include handwritten messages or notes of encouragement

Share & Report:

- Post updates with appropriate tags and templates
- Fill out the CMRF
- Raise awareness through social media or in-person.

PARTICIPATION AT EVERY LEVEL MATTERS



No act is too small—participation can be scaled to fit club size, resources, and school dynamics. The goal is consistent, meaningful action. Whether your club can commit to organizing a full-scale donation drive or simply contributing a handful of Together Tote items, your effort contributes to the larger mission.

Remember: consistent participation—no matter the scale—helps reinforce our shared values of empathy, leadership, and service. There are countless ways to make a difference, and each one counts.

Where to Deliver Items?

Coordinating with Regional Drop-Off Sites

Clubs can deliver donations directly to designated drop-off sites maintained by the Center for Family Services. Be sure to email contacts ahead of time to confirm availability and drop-off procedures.

SOUTH JERSEY (MAIN SITE)

- **Address:** 1 Alpha Avenue, Voorhees, NJ 08043
- **Contact:** Marissa Cantu, Director of Community Relations
- **Email:** marissa.cantu@centerffs.org

CENTRAL JERSEY (BY APPOINTMENT ONLY)

- **Address:** 2205 Pennington Road, Ewing, NJ 08638
- **Contact:** Marisabel Rivera-Arroyo
- **Email:** Marisabel.Rivera-Arroyo@centerffs.org

NORTH JERSEY

- **Address:** 86 South Harrison Street, East Orange, NJ 07018
- **Contact:** Loredana Henry
- **Email:** Loredana.Henry@centerffs.org

Clubs are encouraged to coordinate donations within their own counties when feasible to ease transportation needs.



Reporting Your Impact

Measuring and Sharing Your Club's Contributions

Clubs are encouraged to report their impact not only through photos and item counts but also formally through the Club Monthly Report Form (CMRF).

The CMRF is a way for clubs to:

- Share their service hours, projects, and collected items
- Highlight successful fundraisers or unique events tied to the District Project
- Be eligible for district recognition, awards, and potential DECON features

Submitting through the CMRF ensures your club's work contributes to district-wide impact tracking and allows for greater visibility of your members' dedication.



Click to access the form

- Make sure to complete all sections of the CMRF each month!
- Include photos or descriptions of your Together Tote drives, fundraisers, or awareness campaigns
- Reach out to your LTG or the District Secretary if you need support filling out the form

Why This Matters

The Deeper Impact of Addressing Youth Homelessness

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Resources

Center Of Family Services Resources/Templates :

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1JyV7fmf5KRU7SNHb7P-CDbpBSar2hwBl?usp=sharing>

Center for Family Services (CFS): <https://www.centerffs.org>

Visions and Pathways: <https://visionsandpathways.org>

National Runaway Safeline (NRS): <https://www.1800runaway.org>

Covenant House New Jersey: <https://www.covenanthousenj.org>

HUD Exchange – Youth Homelessness:

<https://www.hudexchange.info/programs/youth-homelessness>

NJ 2-1-1 Resource Database: <https://www.nj211.org>

New Jersey Key Club (District Project Steering Committee)

Christina Trecate: ctrecate@njkeyclub.org

Deborah Meade: dmeade@njkeyclub.org

Bea Ascalon: bascalon@njkeyclub.org

Xuan Dong: xdong@njkeyclub.org

Riya Singh: rsingh@njkeyclub.org

Jacob Park: jpark@njkeyclub.org

Divya Das: ddas@njkeyclub.org