



**For Immediate Release**

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## **Larkin Street Releases Annual Incidence Report Detailing Increased Demand for Services Among Homeless Youth**

### ***Programs Struggle to Meet Overall Needs Amid City Budget Cuts***

**SAN FRANCISCO—Jan. 13, 2009—**Larkin Street Youth Services, San Francisco's leading provider of housing and support services for homeless and at-risk youth ages 12 to 24, released today its ["Youth Homelessness in San Francisco: 2008 Report on Incidence and Needs"](#) highlighting the growing demand for educational, housing, job assistance, medical and social services among this vulnerable population.

In the past five years, demand for Larkin Street's services has grown by 242 percent. Through its 25 programs, Larkin Street reaches over 61 percent of the total estimated population of 5,700 homeless youth living on San Francisco's streets. In 2008 the 25-year old organization provided more than 3,500 homeless and at-risk youth with critical basic and support services representing an increase of 12 percent versus 2007 levels.

San Francisco's at-risk youth stand to be greatly impacted by the current economic downturn. Larkin Street projects a number of challenges in continuing to meet the increased need for youth services in 2009, including:

- **Demand for point-of-entry services at Larkin Street continues to rise and is projected to grow significantly in 2009.** Larkin Street's experience battling previous recessions demonstrates that home foreclosures, higher unemployment and other economic pressures contribute to increases in family disruption and lead to more youth living on the streets.
- **Reduced state and local funding for employment and education are creating gaps in school enrollment and exacerbating existing challenges for homeless youth.** With unemployment rising, 89 percent of the youth Larkin Street serves already are actively searching for work and over half do not have a high school diploma.
- **Public and Private funding is expected to diminish and does not provide for basic services young people need even now.** City and state budget cuts and possible reductions in private corporate and individual giving will hamper Larkin Street's sources of overall financial support. Even at 2008 funding levels, 42 percent of Larkin Street youth have no health insurance.

"Larkin Street serves San Francisco's most vulnerable group within the homeless community, our youth," said Sherilyn Adams, Larkin Street's executive director. "We are deeply concerned about losing funding for the vital support services our young men and women need—especially since we know that with these services our youth are often able to get a job, get educated and live independently."

The *“Youth Homelessness in San Francisco: 2008 Report on Incidence and Needs”* reveals that 74 percent of the youth who participate in Larkin Street’s full complement of programs are able to successfully exit street life.

Larkin Street’s yearly report details current facts and figures about the extent of youth homelessness in San Francisco and includes demographics, use of agency services and issues that homeless youth face. For a complete copy of the report, please visit [www.larkinstreetyouth.org](http://www.larkinstreetyouth.org) or contact Dina Wilderson in Larkin Street’s Research and Evaluation Department at (415) 673.0911, ext. 224.

### **About Larkin Street Youth Services**

Founded in 1984, Larkin Street Youth Services is a globally recognized nonprofit leader providing innovative and effective housing, medical, social and educational services for at-risk homeless and runaway youth ages 12-24 across 25 programs and 13 sites in San Francisco. Seventy-four percent of youth who participate in the full continuum of services at Larkin Street exit street life. For more information, please visit [www.larkinstreetyouth.org](http://www.larkinstreetyouth.org).

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