

# NATIONAL LAW CENTER ON HOMELESSNESS & POVERTY

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## **Cyndi Lauper's True Colors Fund and the National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty Unveil First-of-its-Kind Resource to Address Youth Homelessness**

*State Index Rates all 50 States and Washington, D.C. Based on Effort to Prevent and End Youth Homelessness*

Today, Cyndi Lauper and the True Colors Fund, in partnership with the National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty, unveiled the State Index on Youth Homelessness –a first-of-its-kind resource that evaluates all 50 states and the District of Columbia on their efforts to prevent and end youth homelessness. The two organizations have also launched a campaign to empower the public to contact their governors to improve their state’s index scores.

The State Index on Youth Homelessness provides a snapshot of some of the legal, systemic, and environmental barriers that youth experiencing homelessness face. The State Index assigns all 50 states and the District of Columbia a score of up to 100 and provides concrete steps that states can take to protect the safety, development, health, and dignity of youth experiencing homelessness. The State Index will be updated annually and will act as a barometer of the progress each state makes year over year in their efforts to prevent and end youth homelessness.

See the State Index here: <https://truecolorsfund.org/index/>

“It doesn’t matter if you’re from Kansas or California. In the United States of America, everyone deserves a place to call home. As Americans, we have a responsibility to protect the safety, health, and dignity of every young person experiencing homelessness,” said Cyndi Lauper, co-founder and board member of the True Colors Fund. “Youth who experience homelessness are some of the most resilient people I know. It is our dream for this State Index to help each state amp up its work to ensure these young people can reach their full potential.”

“Young people experiencing homelessness face steep barriers in exiting homelessness – and even simply surviving – when laws prevent them from securing a job, renting an apartment, or accessing health care,” said Maria Foscarinis, founder and executive director of the National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty. “States must take action now so that these youth have a chance for a better future. The State Index provides practical tools for states to do that and helps the public hold them accountable.”

According to a recent study by Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago, one in 30 youth ages 13 to 17 and one in 10 young adults ages 18 to 25 endure some form of homelessness in the U.S. each year. The study also found that lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning (LGBTQ) youth are 120% more likely to experience homelessness than non-LGBTQ youth. The State Index on Youth Homelessness takes LGBTQ inclusion into account in its findings and provides recommendations on how states can address the unique needs of LGBTQ youth.

Cyndi Lauper, the True Colors Fund, and National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty are asking the public to take action by contacting their governor over email and Twitter to improve their state’s index scores. People can take action in a matter of seconds at <https://truecolorsfund.org/index/>

As the True Colors Fund launches its tenth anniversary celebration this month, the State Index is the latest example of Cyndi Lauper’s and the organization’s commitment to ending homelessness among LGBTQ youth through federal, state, and local public policy efforts. Lauper has been an unwavering advocate for equality throughout her entire life which lead to her co-founding the True Colors Fund in June 2008. Today, the True Colors Fund is the national leader on preventing and ending LGBTQ youth homelessness and is fulfilling its mission through a broad array of advocacy, training and education, and youth collaboration programs.

For nearly 30 years, the National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty (the Law Center) has used the power of the law to prevent and end homelessness in America. Maria Foscarinis, who founded the Law Center in 1989, has advocated for solutions to homelessness at the national level since 1985, having served as a primary architect of the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act, the first major federal legislation addressing homelessness. Today, the Law Center serves over 3.5 million Americans experiencing homelessness through impact litigation, policy advocacy, and public education. The Law Center also provides training and technical assistance to schools and advocates, and legal support to families, to ensure children have access to quality education under the federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.

[View photo here](#); photo credit: Amber Sterling.

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*Co-founded by Cyndi Lauper, the True Colors Fund works nationally to end homelessness among lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, and questioning youth. Through a broad continuum of training & education, youth collaboration, and advocacy programs, the True Colors Fund is creating a world where all young people can be their true selves. [www.truecolorsfund.org](http://www.truecolorsfund.org)*

*The National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty (the Law Center) is the only national organization dedicated solely to using the power of the law to prevent and end homelessness. With the support of a large network of pro bono lawyers, we address the immediate and long-term needs of people who are homeless or at risk through outreach and training, advocacy, impact litigation, and public education. [www.nlchp.org](http://www.nlchp.org)*