

## Comparison of Host Home Program Models for Unaccompanied Minors and Young Adults Facing Homelessness

	Stranger Match	Chosen Family
<b>Also called</b>	Program match, program identified	Kinship, youth identified, youth initiated, stabilized couch-hopping or natural support arrangement
<b>Program purpose</b>	Provide housing; connect youth with supportive adults	Stabilize youth’s existing hosting arrangement and support network
<b>Program focus</b>	Outward; recruiting hosts requires educating community on homelessness	Inward; program assumes youth come with loving connections
<b>Narrative</b>	Pitch expands responsibility: a colorblind call for all to pitch in, youth facing homelessness are “our kids”; reinforces existing narrative that couch-hopping is dangerous; youth facing homelessness, especially BIPOC, lack support so outsiders must step in	Introduces counter-narrative: structural racism has suppressed the ability of BIPOC households, who are predominately renters, to extend stable hospitality, causing increased homelessness among BIPOC youth; invest in these caring households
<b>Normative</b>	Hosting is a novelty, but can occur openly	In many BIPOC, immigrant, low-income, LGBTQ+, and/or rural cultures, hosting is an accepted—even expected—norm; however, renters often host under the radar to circumvent barriers such as time-limited guest policies
<b>Typical host/youth demographic</b>	Host more likely a homeowner, white and/or middle-class; often race and/or class mismatch with youth	Host more likely a renter, BIPOC and/or low income; often shares race and/or class identity with youth
<b>Host compensation</b>	Programs most often ask hosts to volunteer, differentiating hosting from foster care and honoring youth desire to live with adults “who care”	Programs most often provide financial support to host households, recognizing that an additional person can strain already tight budgets
<b>Social capital</b>	“Bridging capital” connects youth to more resource-rich communities	“Bonding capital” strengthens existing connections, reinforces that “people like me” can achieve success
<b>Match longevity</b>	Limiting time commitment for match can help attract hosts; no expectation that the connection will endure long term	Because youth and host already know each other, the connection often endures; host is a prime candidate to become a “permanent connection”

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<b>Agency role</b>	Introduces the youth and host, and helps support their connection; assists youth to become independent and self-reliant; often sees staff as primary support for youth and potential permanent connection	Helps youth assess the health of an existing informal hosting arrangement and provides support to stabilize it; works with youth to build an unpaid support circle that will outlast agency involvement
<b>Screening process</b>	Agency vets host and requires background check prior to match	Youth has vetted their host; agency may request host background check, helps youth identify alternatives if arrangement is not healthy
<b>Screening barriers</b>	People who foresee challenges to becoming a host (due, for example, to lease restriction or background check) self-select out	People with screening barriers still host informally, often under the radar; agency works case by case to bring healthy arrangements above board
<b>Host training</b>	Agency trains hosts prior to match; topics often include Homelessness 101, LGBTQ+ 101, and Racism 101	Training is optional and tailored to needs as they arise; more likely to be 1-on-1
<b>Staff training focus</b>	How to help hosts who are white, middle-class, straight and/or cisgender understand privilege and micro-aggressions in preparation for hosting youth who are BIPOC, low-income and/or LGBTQ+	How to help youth build their own support circle and work with chosen family as clients; how to navigate policy/legal barriers to bring under-the-radar hosting arrangements with renters above board
<b>Scalability</b>	Programs are small, limited by difficulty finding adults willing to host a youth at risk of homelessness who they don't already know; even vigorous recruitment sees limited results; potential to address a population-level crisis is minimal	Programs less common, limited by liability fears, policy/legal barriers, and negative assumptions about the capacity of BIPOC and/or low-income communities; investing in existing hospitality of regular folks could provide scalable option to address youth homelessness
<b>Race equity lens</b>	Reinforces white saviorism: BIPOC and low-income youth need to be saved by white people with power and resources	Requires system change to remove barriers and redistribute resources to the predominantly BIPOC and/or low-income people already hosting
<b>Impact on racial disparities</b>	Minimal, if at all	Given that the majority of BIPOC households are renters and renters face more barriers to hosting, stabilizing renters who host can reduce the overrepresentation of BIPOC youth facing homelessness