



Your Voice Matters July 2023

Only when we are sensitive to and value the circumstances and experiences of our neighbors will we be able to create significant and lasting change in our community.

The first step in truly understanding homelessness and housing rights is centering the right voices and learning from the experts: our neighbors, friends, and loved ones in our community who've recently experienced or nearly experienced housing insecurity.

MACCH is fortunate to be guided by the Youth Action Board (YAB) and Community Advisory Board (CAB), two groups with valuable and **recent** lived experiences that inform change in our community and advise the Omaha Metro Area Continuum of Care (CoC). Both groups share their expertise and insights on housing needs and issues regarding housing insecurity that affect individuals and families in our community. They actively participate in the advisement and planning of new and expanded housing programs within the community, giving them a strong and impactful voice in the decision-making process in our community. MACCH values and leans on their expertise in every step of its housing insecurity response. If our participants want to gain new experiences and skills, they can also get involved in project management, program design, and community planning. These skills can help in building and strengthening resumes as well as expanding their access to job opportunities, career exploration, and passions for a variety of crafts.

We believe that centering the voices of our Lived Expertise groups is a critical part of achieving transformation within our housing insecurity response system. By considering and implementing the advice of our Lived Expertise groups, we enact changes on a systemic level while utilizing lenses of inclusion, compassion, love, and unconditional opportunity to establish secure and safe routes to housing from the inside out. We acknowledge and reimburse our advisory groups for their invaluable expertise, time, emotional labor, and advisement, just like any contractor.

Working together, MACCH, CAB and YAB, the CoC and Access Point providers, and partners in our community make a difference one life at a time. MACCH aims to help and connect individuals and families to other providers so they can continue to work, learn, and contribute to our community. All in all, strengthening the collective impact to end homelessness in our community.

If you or someone you know has **recent** lived experience expertise and wants to participate in creating lasting change in our community, please click on the links below for more information and to sign up to join a Lived Experience group.

[Individuals 25 and older can sign up for CAB updates here.](#)

[Individuals younger than 25 can sign up for YAB updates here.](#)

If you or a neighbor are facing housing instability or feel that their rights to housing have been violated, please connect with MACCH through our Access Points and CoC organizations in our community. We have a network of resources to prevent individuals and families from facing housing insecurity and gain access to safe, quality housing. We would like our neighbors and community to know they are not alone. Everyone's circumstances are unique, MACCH and its CoC partners are committed to addressing each of our neighbors' needs.

Follow us on [Facebook \(@MACCHOMAHA\)](#) and [Twitter \(@MACCH_OMA\)](#) to stay connected and engage in our community's collective response to housing insecurity in Douglas, Sarpy, and Pottawattamie Counties.