



Pathfinders' Overview

For 50 years, Pathfinders has brought safety, hope and healing to youth facing homelessness, sexual abuse, exploitation and trafficking, crisis and other trauma through innovative and transformational services.

Our mission is “**empowering youth – changing lives.**” Our vision is to provide a more meaningful voice for youth in crisis and ensure that all youth are safe, healthy, independent, successful and valued.



Pathfinders' Services

Supported Housing

Pathfinders provides assistance to help find, secure and sustain safe housing for homeless or at-risk homeless, low income, special needs and LGBTQ+ youth.

- Housing First approach – We believe housing is an essential tool for success and not a reward for program compliance.
- Once housing is secured, we work alongside youth to develop shared goals and work towards youth's mental well-being, academic/employment success and independent living skills.

Runaway & Homeless Youth Services

Pathfinders offers a wide array of services for youth experiencing trauma, crisis, homelessness and housing instability through direct service, harm reduction and prevention supports.

- Drop-In Center: Our day shelter was created by and for homeless youth aged 11-25 to serve as respite and a place to access Pathfinders' broad array of basic needs (food, showers, clothing, laundry, etc.), case management, employment, educational and mental health services.
 - Street Beat: Pathfinders operates the only street outreach program in Milwaukee for at-risk youth providing connections to community resources, hygiene/other supplies and case management.
 - Youth Shelter: Our 8-bed emergency shelter for 11-17-year-olds serves youth who are experiencing homelessness, on the verge of homelessness or in crisis.
 - Prevention Education: Pathfinders provides group programming to prevent teen pregnancy, sexual violence, HIV/AIDS and other STIs.



Education

Pathfinders operates Southeastern Education Center, a behavioral reassignment middle school for students referred by Milwaukee Public Schools. We provide youth a trauma-informed educational approach as well as access to mental health and basic-needs wraparound services with the goal of scholars returning to their school of origin.

Clinical Services

Pathfinders' Comprehensive Community Services team offers youth and young adults coping with mental health and/or substance abuse diagnoses individual wellness plans to help build skills needed to:

- Improve overall health,
- Promote wellness,
- Improve coping skills that reduce negative mental health symptoms like anxiety and depression,
- Develop life skills and support systems,
- Attain personal goals – like education and employment,
- And enhance overall quality of life and assist with transitioning into adulthood.



Anti-Sexual Violence Services

Pathfinders serves young people, aged 25 and under, who are at-risk or have experienced sexual abuse, exploitation and trafficking.

Our New Paths program serves young people, aged 25 and under, who are at-risk or have experienced sexual trafficking, exploitation or violence by offering:

- Accompaniment to medical exams, law enforcement interviews, court appearances, etc.
- Crisis counseling and ongoing therapy
- Street outreach advocacy, which identifies and screens exploited youth who live on the street and offers them basic needs and ongoing resources through our Drop-In Center

Our Hand-in-Hand program offers trauma-informed services for boys and girls aged 6-17 who have been sexually abused and/or exploited, including:

- Individual and family therapy
- Client advocacy
- Case management and group programming

Additional Factors Impacting Our Work

- Hundreds of youth experience homelessness each night in Milwaukee.
 - There are only 16 emergency beds; Pathfinders provides 8 of them.
- Within 72 hours of experiencing homelessness, 1 in 3 youth will trade sex to meet their basic needs (food, shelter, etc.).
- Milwaukee ranks in the top 5 nationally as a hub for youth sex trafficking.
- 1 in 3 youth aging out of foster care will be homeless within 2 years of exiting the system.
- 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 6 boys will be sexually abused in the U.S.
- 90% of teenagers involved in trading sex for money are survivors of sexual violence, such as child sexual abuse and sexual assault.

