



National Alliance to
END HOMELESSNESS

Using TANF to Address Family Homelessness

Prevalence of Homelessness/Housing Instability Among Families

- 222,000 persons in families (including over 130,000 children) are homeless on any given night, 31,000 in an unsheltered location.
- 175,000 families (including 340,000 children) stay in a homeless service program each year.
- 1.166 million school age children identified as meeting Dept. of Ed. Definition of homeless (includes children in doubled up housing, shelter/unsheltered locations each year).
- 3.24 million families with children with “worst case” housing needs.
- 7.4 million low income people in doubled up housing.



TANF & Family Homelessness

- Housing instability and homelessness is common among families served by TANF agencies.
 - *Over a 3 year period, 1 in 4 experienced literal homelessness, and nearly half doubled up.*
- Families experiencing homelessness may not be accessing TANF assistance they are eligible to receive.
 - *Recent study found 41 percent of families entering shelter report receiving TANF assistance.*



Characteristics of sheltered families/Compared to other poor families

- Mostly single parents.
- Parents are younger (many under age 25).
- Children are younger – half of children in shelter are age 5 or under, risk of homelessness is higher the younger the child.
- Families are very poor and often have thin social networks/support systems.
- Children are at the far end of a “continuum of risk”.



Understanding Family Homelessness

- Characteristics of families experiencing homelessness generally mirror those of other low income, housed families, including families receiving TANF assistance.
- They have similar challenges, including employment barriers and service needs, as other low income families receiving TANF assistance.
- Family homelessness is not primarily driven by MH/SA disorders or other significant personal challenges (such as recent domestic violence) - but rather the gap between family income and the cost of housing.



Culhane Typology of Homeless Families

- Most families (72-80%), experience a short-term homeless episode and don't become homeless again.
- Approximately 15-20% have a protracted homeless episode, typically staying in transitional housing for a year or more. They have similar barriers and needs as families who have shorter-term homeless episodes.
- A small number (5-8%) have multiple episodes of homelessness. They have the highest indicators of intensive service needs.



Improving Performance of Homeless Service System

- Most families remain homeless a short time – often until they save enough to exit on their own – with help, they could exit faster.
- Long-term stays in homeless programs are very expensive, long stays in transitional housing programs should be reserved for situations when it is more effective/beneficial than helping families pay for housing.
- Families who have multiple homeless episodes require more intensive help than they typically receive from homeless service programs.



Improving Family Homeless Systems

Service Pattern	Percent	Current Response	New Response
Temporary	72-80%	Short shelter/TH stays	Rapid Re-housing when necessary
Long-Stays	15-20%	Long transitional housing stays	Rapid Re-housing
Episodic	5 – 8%	Multiple shelter stays	Intensive housing & service models – including PSH



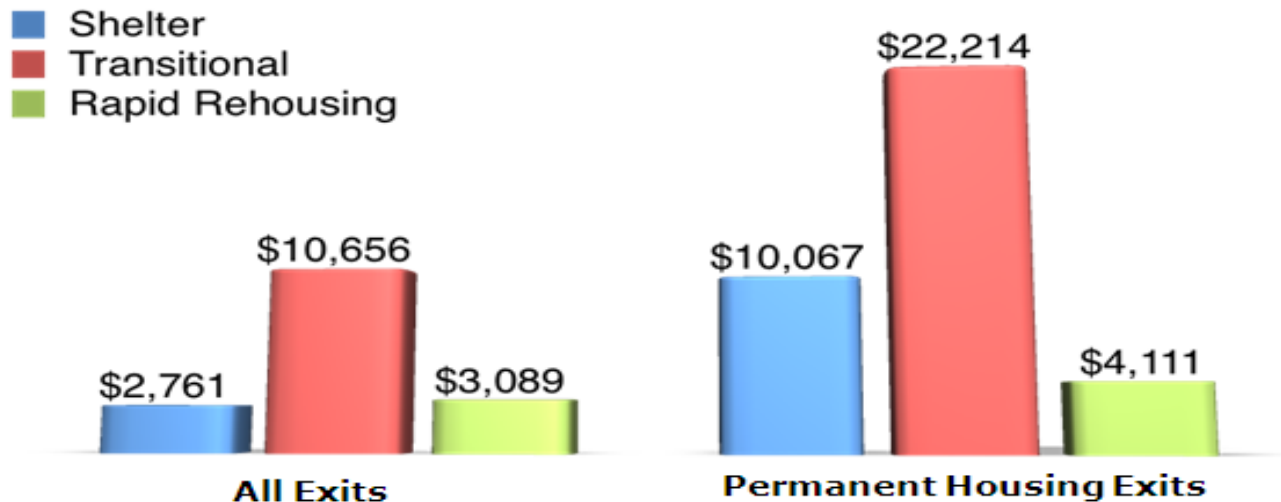
Rapid Re-housing

- Rapid Re-housing is an intervention designed to help individuals and families move quickly back into housing in the community through the provision of:
 - Housing Identification assistance;
 - Rent and Move-In assistance; and
 - Rapid Re-housing Case Management and Services



Outcomes: Rapid Re-housing

Average Cost Per Exit for Families with Children in 14 Communities



Source: Data from 14 Continuums in seven states that prepared Evaluators for National Alliance to End Homelessness Performance Improvement Clinics in 2011-2012 compiled by Focus Strategies



Outcomes: Rapid Re-housing

Rate of Return to Homelessness Within 12 Months of Exit for 7 Communities

- Shelter
- Transitional Housing
- Rapid Rehousing



Source: Data from seven Continuums in four states that prepared Evaluators for National Alliance to End Homelessness Performance Improvement Clinics in 2011-2012 compiled by Focus Strategies



Rapid Re-housing Models: *Idaho*

- Homeless families in CATCH RRH program receive:
 - Housing search and landlord negotiation assistance
 - Six months of rental assistance
 - Intensive case management
 - Employment assistance
 - Financial mentoring from volunteers from local banks; \$1,000 to open a bank account, matched dollar-dollar savings up to set amount (through partnering banks) while enrolled in the program



Rapid Re-housing Models: *Idaho* (cont.)

- **Outcomes:** 86% of families are able to pay their own rent within 6 months; 85% - 90% of families served remain stably housed one year after exiting the program.
- **Resources used:**
 - **TANF:** Short-term, non-recurrent benefits is used to provide 4 of the 6 months of rental assistance. TANF grant to CATCH also funds intensive case management services.
 - **HUD/Private, charitable giving:** Housing search/landlord negotiation assistance, employment services, and additional months of rental assistance.
 - **Community banks:** Asset development program, including grant to families to open a bank account.
 - **Community/individual donors:** Meets start-up needs of families (furniture, etc.)



Rapid Re-housing Models: *Utah*

- Families enrolled in The Road Home RRH program receive:
 - Housing search/landlord negotiation assistance
 - Employment assessment and employment services
 - Rental assistance (“Progressive engagement” model used)
 - Case management services designed to promote housing stability and link families with needed support services (Intensified, extended or tapered off based on ongoing assessment of needs).



Rapid Re-housing Models: *Utah* (cont.)

- **Outcomes:**
 - Over 1,000 families rapidly re-housed since 2009; 85% of families retain housing, those who returned to shelter are re-housed with more intensive support
 - Average cost of RRH intervention is \$4,900.
 - Reduced average family homeless episode by more than 50% - from 71 days to 26 days.
 - Shelter program was able to absorb the increased demand for shelter during recession without building shelter capacity – greater turnover meant existing shelter units could serve more households/per year.



Rapid Re-housing Models: *Utah* (cont.)

- **Resources Used:**

- ***TANF/Workforce Resources:*** Short-term, non-recurrent benefits to pay for rental assistance to help families move out of shelter. TANF/One Stop staff person works at the shelter program, conducts employment assessments of parents, links families with needed TANF services, and coordinates closely with HUD-funded staff focused on meeting families' housing needs.
- ***HUD/Local Resources:*** Funds the emergency shelter, housing focused case management services, additional months of rental assistance families require. Families who require more intensive assistance may be moved from RRH program to more intensive housing program.



Rapid Re-housing Models: *Mercer Co., NJ*

- Mercer County Board of Social Services (MCBOSS) RRH program provides:
 - Housing search/landlord negotiation assistance.
 - Tenant-based rental assistance to help families pay the rent.
 - Housing and employment focused services.
- ***Resources Used:***
 - Primarily TANF and other public resources available for TANF-eligible families, including TANF/WIA program staff.
 - Average cost of RRH: \$7,040 for rental assistance and case management support.



Rapid Re-housing Models: Mercer Co., NJ

- **Outcomes Achieved:**

- Number of people in families experiencing homelessness in any given day declined by nearly two-thirds.
- Homeless episodes decreased: Avg. shelter stay declined by 30 days (34%), fewer families referred to TH & avg. TH stay declined by 27%.
- Approximately 5 percent of families returned to shelter after rapid re-housing.
- Employment outcomes were better for families receiving RRH than TH.



Other Examples of Rapid Re-housing

- TANF-Funded/Supported
 - Washington State
 - Ending Family Homelessness Initiative
 - California
 - Housing Support Program
 - Family Stabilization Program
- Supported Through Other Funds in Region IV

Serving Survivors of Domestic Violence

- Best available data indicates that the vast majority of families who are homeless have experienced domestic violence although few report DV as the precipitating cause of their homeless episode.
- Domestic violence providers are spearheading and adapting new approaches.
 - Housing protections
 - Alternatives to traditional shelter/transitional housing



Collaboration Across Systems

- TANF agencies can help reduce family homelessness through many means:
 - Expedite access to cash assistance, develop programs/strategies to reconcile sanctions or assess extensions (20 percent exemption)
 - Modify work requirements for families attempting to resolve homelessness/housing crisis
 - Partner/consult with Rapid Re-housing providers to promote positive housing *and* employment outcomes
 - Directly or indirectly support RRH interventions with TANF resources (financial assistance to support interventions, set-aside employment services)



Role of Other Human Service Systems

- **Child Welfare**

- Coordinate with homeless service systems to address the housing needs of CW-involved families and to help prevent or minimize out-of-home placements.
 - Keeping Families Together Initiative
 - Title IV-E Waivers
- Strategic Use of Family Unification Program Vouchers.
- Use TANF resources for short-term benefits to address housing needs, facilitate family reunification.



Role of Other Human Service Systems

- **Early Childhood Development Programs**
 - Early Intervention Program
 - Maternal, Infant, Early Childhood Home Visitation Program
- **Schools/Homeless School Liaisons**
- **Workforce Development Boards**
 - Deploy employment/training support to assist families exiting homeless programs with short-term rent assistance.



Other Funding Resources

- Supportive Services for Veterans and their Families (SSVF)
- Community Services Block Grant
- Emergency Solutions Grant Program



Investing in Serving Homeless Families? Big Picture Design Considerations

- Prevention vs. Rapid Re-housing
- Targeting:
 - Literally homeless families (shelters/unsheltered vs. doubled up households)
 - Assessing housing barriers
- Augmenting the intervention
- Sizing the intervention: progressive engagement, predictive models, one size fits all.



Partnership Considerations

- What to look for in a community partner?
- How will families be identified for services – how to target for greatest impact?
- Who will do what? What will each bring to the table? How will it be coordinated?
- How to assess progress?
- How to troubleshoot issues and maintain progress toward a common vision?



Questions?

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