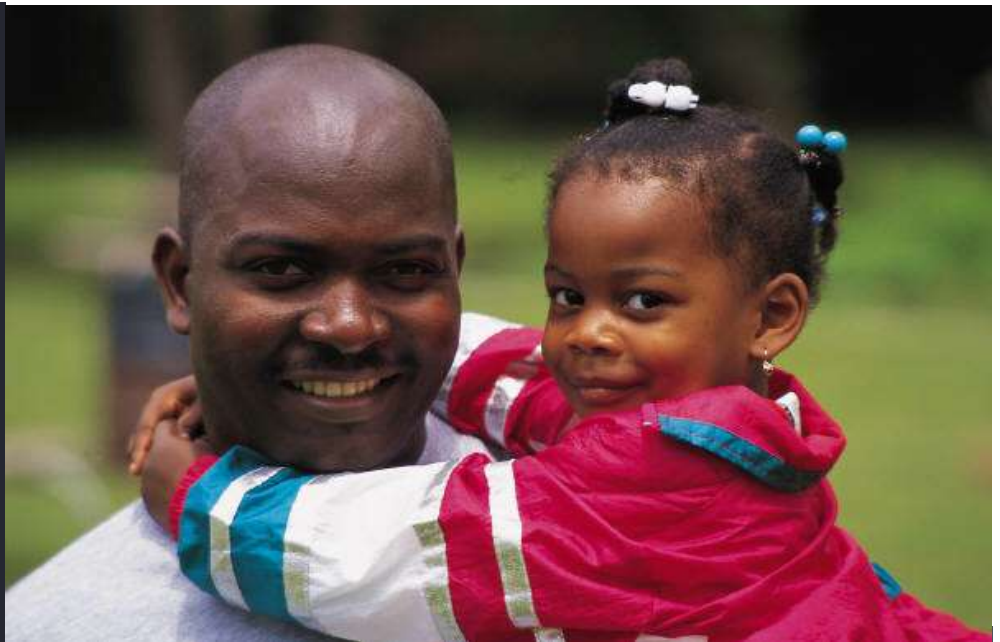


Year Two Report of The Emergency Housing Partnership



**Program
Overview**

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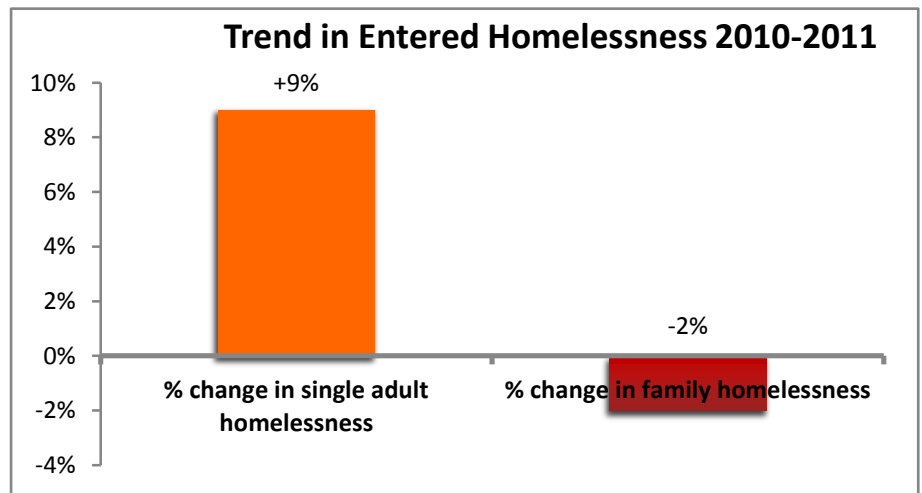
Summary

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**Emergency Housing Partnership
Helped 3,934 People Avoid
Homelessness in Memphis from
October 2009-September 2011**



Building on a very successful first year, but battling against the effects of double-digit unemployment, the Emergency Housing Partnership continued to help families leave or avoid homelessness at high rates. The overall impact has been a reduction in the number of families who enter homeless shelters and transitional housing programs over the past year. This compares to an increase in the number of single individuals (who did not benefit from the initiative due to funding constraints) who experienced homelessness last year.





Families access a wide range of housing and benefits through Partnership; fewer than 10% require shelter stay

Beginning in October 2009, with funding from the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA), the City of Memphis formed the Memphis and Shelby County Emergency Housing Partnership to maximize the impact of the Homeless Prevention and Rapid Rehousing Program (HPRP) initiative authorized by ARRA. The Partnership’s goal was to help prevent families from entering homelessness through mediation and eviction prevention and to prioritize those families for shelter whose homelessness could not be avoided.

The Partnership consists of five primary elements: 1) a 24-hour Emergency Housing Hotline operated by Tennessee Community Services Agency (TNCSA), 2) a Central Intake at MIFA that conducts face-to-face screenings for shelter, transitional housing and HPRP, 3) Financial Assistance for eviction prevention and to rapidly rehouse those exiting shelter, 4) Family Housing Advocates who work in partnership with families who received financial assistance to prevent future

episodes of homelessness; and 5) a Housing Specialist who recruits and mediates with landlords on behalf of clients, conducts inspections, and provides housing stability monitoring for clients not assigned to FHAs.

1) **The Hotline** operates on a 24-hour basis and screens callers to determine if they are homeless or imminently homeless and therefore need to be screened at MIFA. During the day, the Hotline is managed by TNCSA and staffed by Families First (Tennessee’s TANF program) participants. In the evenings and on weekends, family shelter and transitional housing providers rotate coverage. In the event the shelters are full and a family would otherwise sleep unsheltered, emergency placements (cots in a congregate area or hotel nights) are provided. Additionally, TNCSA provides EarnBenefits counselors who screen adults for dozens of public benefit programs including Food Stamps and Families First.

Following are summary statistics from the Hotline:

Chart 1: Hotline Data

	Year One	Year Two
Total Calls	20,528	23,224
After Hours	4,115	5,054
Emergency Placements	96	353
EarnBenefits	859	1,105

2) **The Central Intake at MIFA** conducts face-to-face interviews with families identifying themselves as homeless or about to be homeless. Each month, an average of 520 families are screened at MIFA; 200 of them have less than \$500/month in income (often \$0) with at least one child, and are screened for shelter.

In total, 6,256 people were screened at MIFA in FY2011 and 546 were placed in shelter or transitional housing programs.

Securing placements in shelter and transitional housing remains a key challenge for the program. On any given



Families experience high rate of stability after receiving assistance.

day, there are 21 families on the waiting list for shelter. Often, families on the waiting list have very large households (5 or more children) and a history of homelessness. The Partnership recognizes the need to secure additional units of permanent supportive housing through the Continuum, or other subsidized housing options through the Memphis Housing Authority and low-income housing providers in the County. Further, there are several providers in the community interested in expanding the number of emergency shelter units for families with children, which may also address the waiting list issue.

When MIFA or after-hours hotline staff has confirmed through collateral contacts that a family has no resources, (financial and social) to prevent homelessness, several measures are taken to avoid the family sleeping unsheltered. The first is to mediate with family or friends for a short-term placement. If that is unsuccessful, the family is referred to shelter or transitional housing, depending on their specific circumstances. If there is no space available and mediation is not possible, the family may be provided an emergency placement (congregate space at a shelter or hotel for a very short-term). Chart 1 (page 2) shows the significant growth in the need/use of emergency placements in the most recent year. As demonstrated by the high percentage of families who are screened but do not enter shelter, central intake and after hours hotline staff successfully mediate the majority of situations.

3) Financial Assistance to Prevent Homelessness or Rapidly Rehouse Families from Shelter: MIFA provided financial assistance (less than 3 months) to landlords and MLGW on behalf of 968 families in year two and 1,192 families overall. The majority of families, 907 of the 968, received eviction prevention assistance to avoid homelessness. The effect of this investment is that 3,249 people –including 2,027 children -- would otherwise have been homeless in Memphis but for this program.

4) Family Housing Advocates: Families receiving financial assistance through the Partnership are screened using the Structured Decision-Making™ Risk Assessment Protocol. The tool measures risk of child maltreatment and, by proxy, housing instability. Families that score moderate to very high risk on the tool are assigned to a Family Housing Advocate (FHA) who partners with the family to establish and/or reinforce family strengths and prevent future episodes of homelessness. Thirty-five percent of households received assistance from an FHA. The FHAs, employed by Agape Child and Family Services and TNCSA, are trained in VanDenBerg High Fidelity Wraparound techniques and are often from similar backgrounds to the families with whom they work. The FHAs also help families make progress on their identified goals including increased employment and educational attainment. The performance of the FHAs is measured by the rate of housing stability at 3, 6, and 12 months after receiving assistance.

Depending on the availability of funds, families who experienced subsequent financial crises and were working with their FHAs were able to receive additional assistance. The maximum number of times a family could be helped is four: twice a year in each of the two years the program has been operating. The table below demonstrates the rate of families requiring additional assistance.

Chart Two: Number of Assistance Episodes (1-3 months) for each family served

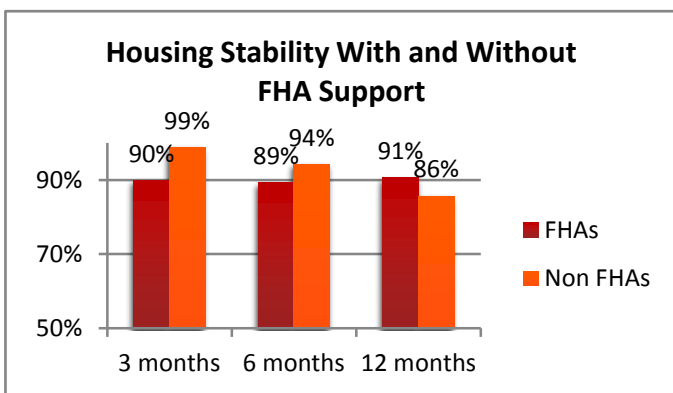
Once	Twice	Three X	Max (4)
884 (74%)	187 (16%)	77 (6%)	44 (4%)

Families are deemed stably housed if they have not been evicted from their rental unit. We also measure whether families have returned to the Central Intake seeking shelter placement after having received HPRP financial assistance.

Families returning to shelter: 0

(Continued)

Families receiving assistance struggled with a variety of challenges including job losses, medical issues, and poor budgeting decisions. Nonetheless, most avoided eviction. The rate of stability far exceeded expectations and performance targets, particularly considering the economic climate. It was expected that the non-FHA clients would do better in the short-term as they had lower housing barriers. The performance target for the FHAs at the 12-month mark was 65% and was based on the program model's actual performance. The Memphis Partnership's achievement, 91% on this measure is remarkable.



5) Housing Specialist: The Partnership includes a Housing Specialist employed by the Community Alliance for the Homeless who conducts property inspections on behalf of qualified applicants; identifies affordable rental housing for prospective tenants; mediates landlord-tenant disputes to prevent evictions; and provides housing stability reports for all those who are not assigned to an FHA. In the first two years, the Housing Specialist identified over 5,000 affordable rental properties and prevented the evictions of 216 families through successful mediation efforts.

HPRP As An Alternative to Transitional Housing

The Prevention and Rapid Rehousing approach adopted in Memphis has gained traction nationally as a more cost-effective alternative to transitional housing. Further, only 29% of all families leaving transitional housing exit to their own rental units versus 100% under this model. The HPRP model also tends to decrease the length of homeless episode or help families avoid homelessness altogether, which is highly preferable, as the experience of homelessness is known to cause school delays, failures, medical and behavior problems among children. HPRP works best for families who are able to secure employment. Transitional Housing will

continue to play a very valuable role in our safety net for families who are unemployed and/or face numerous barriers to housing and employment.

Cost Effectiveness:

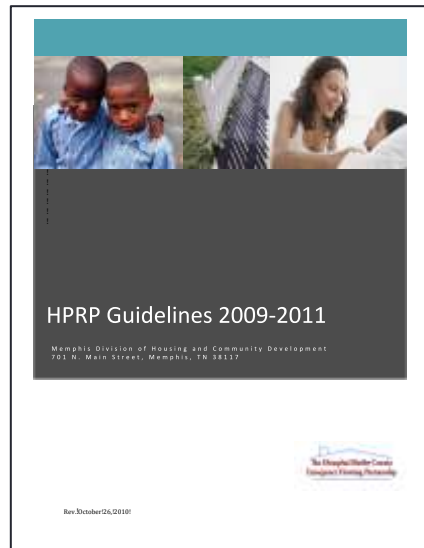
The cost per family of the initiative (includes central intake, FHAs, and hotline) = \$2,535

The cost per family of a transitional housing episode = \$13,000-\$19,000

Program Management

The Partnership is a collaborative among 17 different non-profit and public agencies serving homeless families with children. Each of the shelter and transitional housing providers has given the Partnership exclusive referral rights to ensure a true "Front Door" to the system. This results in effective and targeted prevention and sheltering as it is directly connected to the shelter system. Only those who would otherwise go into shelter

have access to the prevention resources and those in most critical need are offered the limited shelter resources that exist.



Partners share data through an open Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) and additional programmatic data submitted manually. HMIS allows us to track required indicators such as the number of families receiving

financial assistance and/or shelter, and also allows us to determine the extent to which recidivism occurs. Additional data collected includes Hotline data (number and disposition of calls), Housing Specialist data (inspections, mediations, housing searches, stability follow-ups for those without FHAs), FHA client performance (housing stability at 3, 6, and 12 months), and Central Intake data (number of persons screened for shelter or financial assistance, disposition of shelter seekers, emergency placements.)

The Partnership is governed by a Management Team consisting of decision-makers at each of the participating agencies. The Management Team meets monthly and routinely makes

(Continued)



The Housing and Community Development jointly oversee the Partnership. CAFTH provides annual monitoring as well as routine case file reviews. Both the Inspector General and HUD headquarters have conducted monitoring and made no significant findings in their review.

Spotlight on Homeless Veterans

In partnership with the Memphis Veterans Administration (VA) Medical Center, 29 homeless veterans have received HPRP assistance for security and utility deposits as they move into the VA's permanent supportive housing program. Twenty-one of these veterans were once chronically homeless and now have their own apartments with appropriate support services provided by the VA. Another eight veterans with children are also in the VA Supportive Housing Program with financial support from HPRP.

Demographic Information – Children are Main Beneficiaries of Assistance

In the first two years, a total of 4,262 individuals in 1,192 households have received HPRP funded assistance from the Partnership. Ninety-eight percent are families with children. Two percent (N=98) are single adults referred through the VA or Department of Children's Services. The

majority of beneficiaries are children, accounting for 64% of all participants.

The program also primarily served those who are unstably housed, though 1,047 (25%) were literally homeless or at imminent risk of homelessness at program entry. Families had an average of 3 children per household and income of \$1,100/month (less than 30% of the Area Median Income), considered extremely low-income by HUD standards.

Ninety-eight percent of program participants are black/African American and only 11 (less than 1%) are Hispanic/Latino.

Though we do not have specific data, staff at MIFA reported a continued challenge in serving families with very large household sizes (8-9 children) and a significant growth in the number of pregnant women without income or resources.

SUCCESS STORIES

Beyond the statistics are real people, primarily families with children, whose lives have been impacted by the initiative. Here are two examples.

"Ms. Lewis was assigned to me as a Rapid Re-housing case in May of this year. Ms. Lewis has been an excellent client in that she has always communicated with me, and stayed in compliance with the program. In the 6 months that I have been working with Ms. Lewis, she has paid her rent on time and in full every month, kept up with her utilities, mediated for herself, and has recently been promoted at her place of employment. Ms. Lewis has been a delight to work with and has a very bright future."

Kim L. FHA at TNCSA

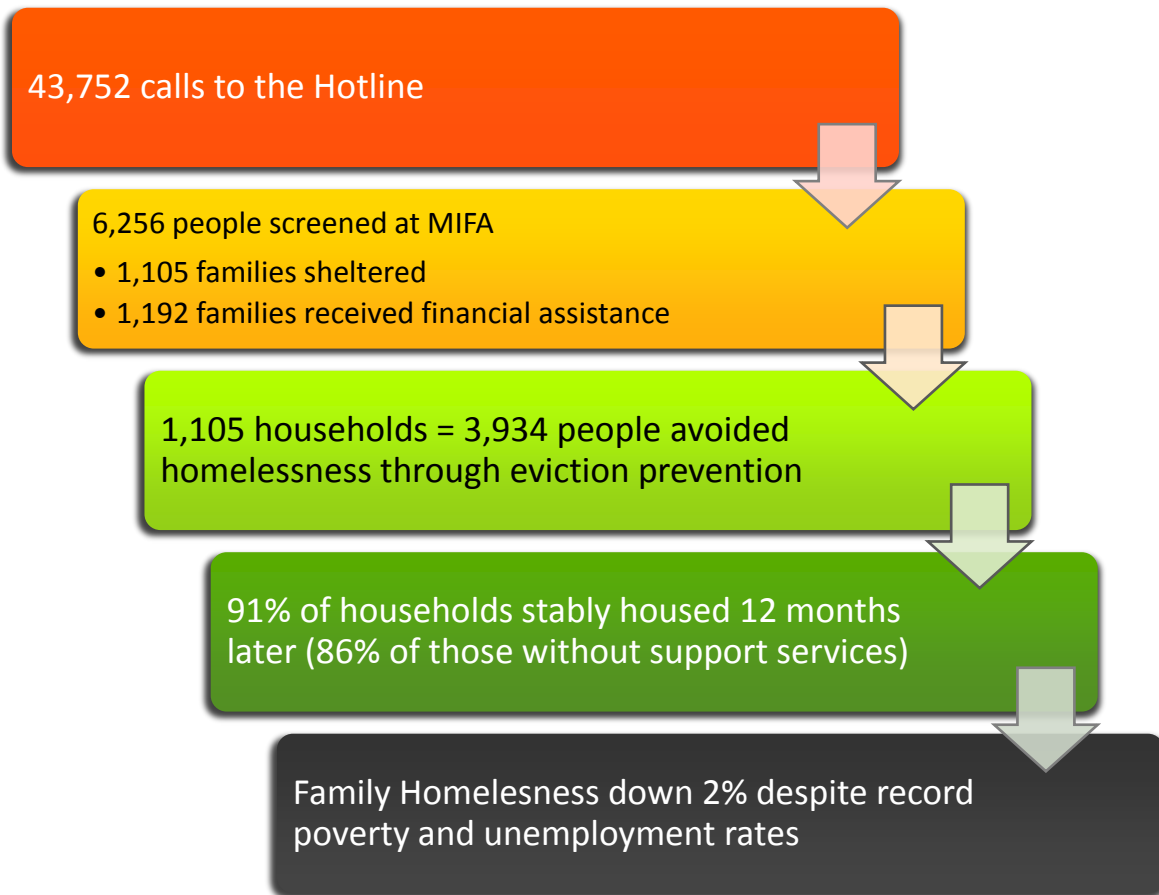
"Shuntay Crockett, out of desperation, gave up her newborn for adoption just days before entering Memphis Family Shelter. Once settled into the shelter, Ms. Crockett was able to retrieve her son out of the adoption system before he was a week old. She went on to complete her GED, gain full-time employment, and pay down on her debts.

Ms. Crockett found permanent housing with the help of a Family Housing Advocate from Agape Child and Family Services.

Today, she lives with her four children in a neat three bedroom rental home."

Hayes, S. Memphis Family Shelter

PERFORMANCE SUMMARY 2009-2011



Special Thanks to Our Partnership Members!

Agape Child and Family Services
 City of Memphis
 ??????????????????????????????
 Memphis Interfaith Hospitality Network (MIHN)
 Memphis VA Medical Center
 ???????
 Shelby County
 Tennessee Community Services Agency
 YWCA

Catholic Charities
 Community Alliance for the Homeless
 ??????????????????????????????
 Metropolitan Interfaith Association (MIFA)
 Salvation Army
 SHIELD, INC.
 TN ???
 Trinity Community Coalition