

2015 PROGRESS REPORT
ON ENDING HOMELESSNESS

HOME to stay



 STRATEGIES TO
END HOMELESSNESS





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Dear Friends,



Ending homelessness is a task that will require patience and perseverance; it is a marathon, not a sprint. We work in collaboration with a network of 30 homeless service agencies, and we use outcomes-based data to track trends and identify solutions, we make strategic decisions to address homelessness in our community.

Strategies to End Homelessness was formed and we began our work in 2008, just as the economic crisis began. Homelessness was on the rise, and the Homeless to Homes Plan was being developed to improve services available to homeless individuals. Today, we lead a coordinated system of care to end homelessness throughout Greater Cincinnati.

Our system includes integrating a cost-effective homelessness prevention program, comprehensive street outreach services, a transformed shelter system for single individuals, expanded supportive housing programs and we are in the beginning stages of implementing a plan to improve and expand services available to address family homelessness.

With the opening of three new service-enriched emergency shelters in 2015, the work of the Homeless to Homes Shelter Collaborative has transformed the way homeless individuals are cared for in Cincinnati and Hamilton County. Each of these new facilities – City Gospel Mission, the Esther Marie Hatton Center for Women and the David and Rebecca Barron Center for Men – provides comprehensive case management, daytime services and on-site healthcare. These shelters integrate a step-up model to incentivize residents to move toward housing – a home to stay.

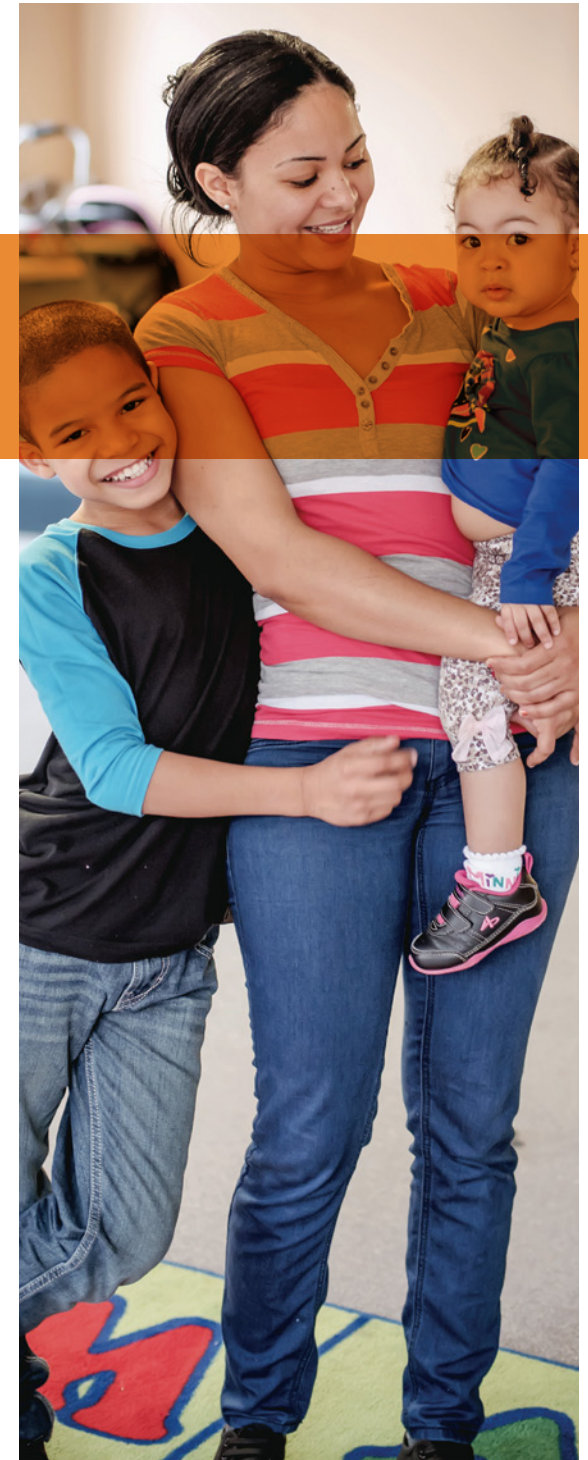
Our collaborative work is accomplished through a network of homeless service agencies. Using outcomes-based data to track trends and identify solutions, we make strategic decisions to further reduce homelessness in our community.

We thank each and every one of you for your dedicated support of our homeless services system, and invite you to continue to invest in our coordinated community effort to prevent and eventually end homelessness.

Sincerely,

Ron Cramer
Board Chair

Kevin Finn
President & CEO





Who is Homeless?

“Literally”
homeless

[hohm-lis]

adjective

(people who are) living in emergency shelters or are sleeping in a place not meant for human habitation, such as on the streets.



This is the definition we are using to determine the number of people who were homeless in Hamilton County, Ohio in 2015. Last year, largely due to increases in the number of people sleeping unsheltered and on their streets, several major U.S. communities declared a homelessness state of emergency. Among these communities were Seattle/King County, Washington; Portland, Oregon; San Francisco and Los Angeles, California; and the State of Hawaii.

In Hamilton County, reductions in homelessness have proven difficult to maintain over time. According to 2015 data from our community's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS)*, the overall number of people residing in emergency shelters, on the streets or in other places not meant for human habitation has remained stable over the last 5 years, fluctuating from 7,135 to 6,560. In 2015, 7,122 people found themselves on the street or in shelter, an overall increase of 8.6% from 2014; however, this number represents a slight decrease (0.2%) over the past five years.

For the purposes of this report, we focus specifically on people who were literally homeless because definitions truly do matter. If people who resided in Transitional Housing were included, the number of people counted as homeless would rise to 7,858. Furthermore, a significantly larger number of people were at risk of literal homelessness, living in precarious housing situations such as relying on others for a place to stay or “couch surfing.” To be clear, people living in such precarious housing situations are not counted in this report, with the exception of those households that were served by Shelter Diversion programs, which seek to prevent “literal” homelessness.

Please note, the above totals include data from domestic violence projects that are not available through other sources.

Unless otherwise noted, all data presented in this report was gathered by Strategies to End Homelessness from VESTA®, our community's Homeless Management Information System, which is operated by The Partnership Center, Ltd.

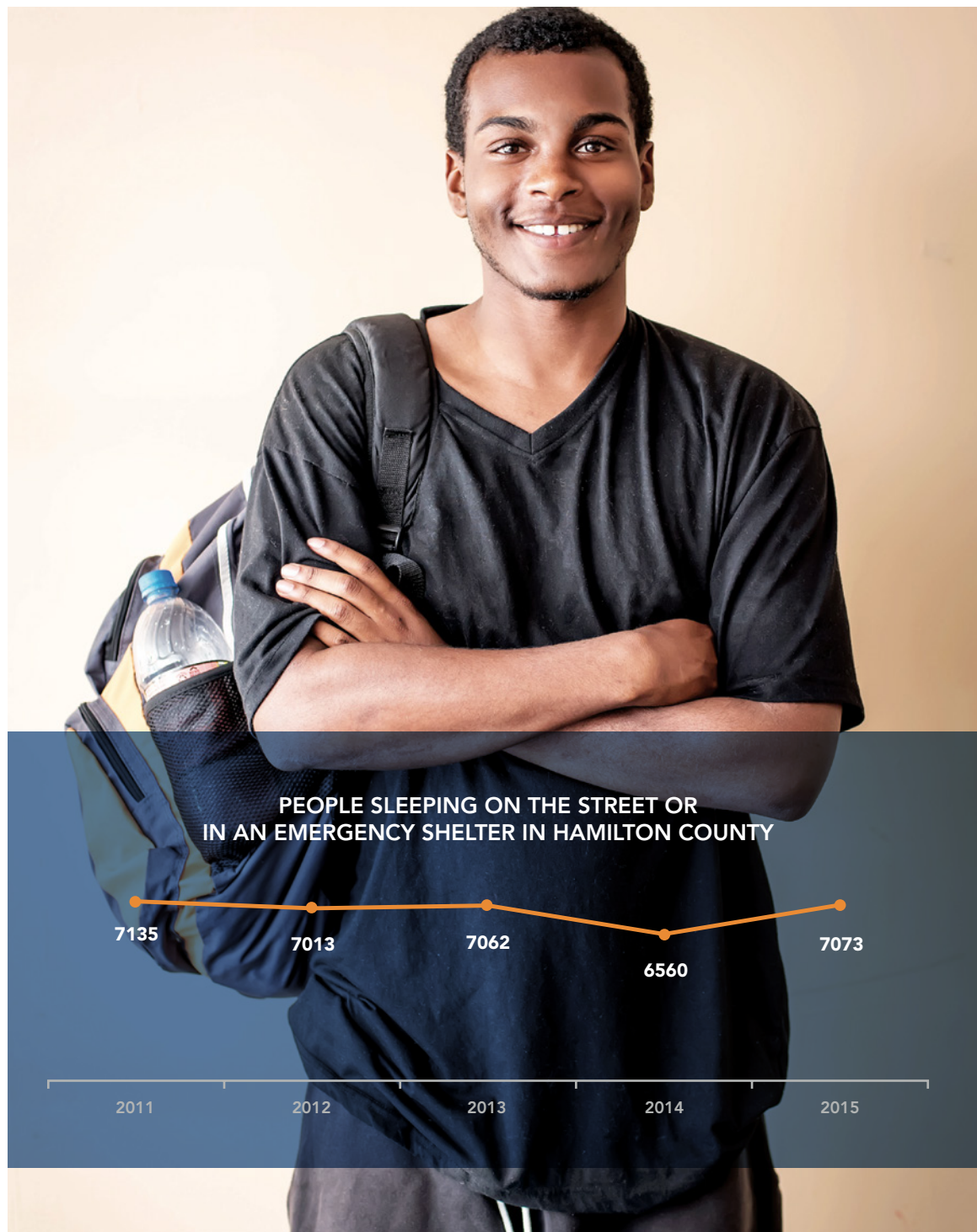
By the Numbers:

Race: In 2015, the Greater Cincinnati Urban League, Miami Valley Urban League, and Urban League of Greater Southwestern Ohio released, "The State of Black Cincinnati." The report highlights the fact that African Americans are significantly overrepresented among people living in poverty. Such findings are echoed in data on Hamilton County's homeless population: while African Americans make up about a quarter the population of Hamilton County, 65% of homeless people are black.

Children: Within the City of Cincinnati, 47.2 percent – nearly half of all children – live below the poverty line, according to the Census Bureau's American Community Survey. Responding to this fact, in October 2015, Cincinnati Mayor John Cranley announced a goal of getting 10,000 children out of poverty in five years.

Recent data backs up the need for an increased focus on ending childhood poverty. In 2015, 1,861 children under the age of 18 resided in an emergency shelter in the area, making up 26% of the total homeless population. An additional 635 children were served in Shelter Diversion programs, making up 61% of all individuals provided with such services.

Youth and Young Adults: Homelessness in Hamilton County continues to be an issue that affects a large number of youth. Not only was 26% of the homeless population made up of children under the age of 18, but 39% of the homeless people were under the age of 25, and 57% were under the age of 35. These numbers clearly do not support the common misperception that homeless people are chronically homeless and predominantly older.





Homeless Shelter System Transformed

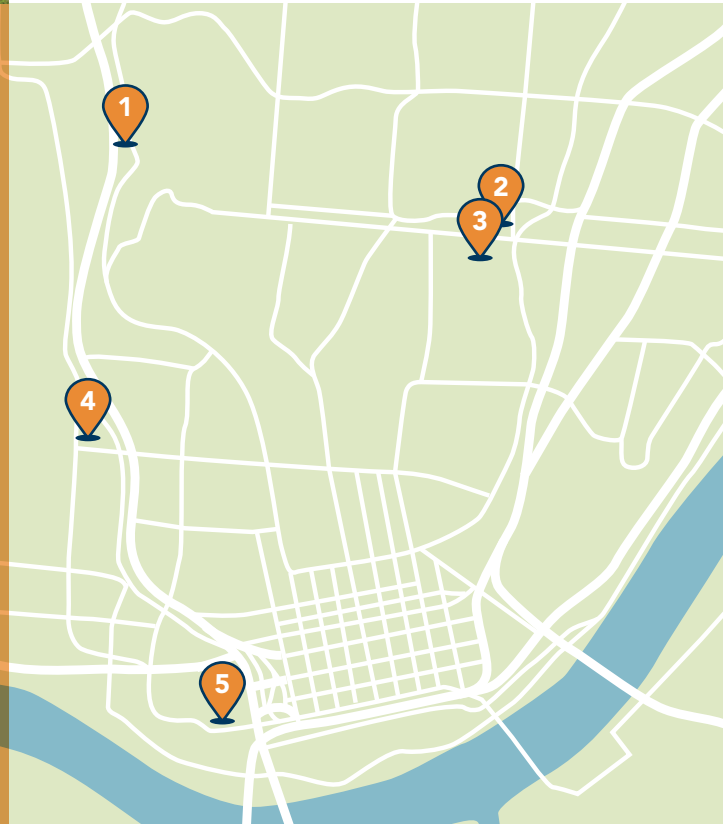
The Homeless to Homes Plan, adopted by Cincinnati City Council and the Hamilton County Board of Commissioners and implemented by Strategies to End Homelessness, articulates a shared vision and course toward ending homelessness for

single individuals. A cornerstone of the Homeless to Homes Plan has been to dramatically improve our local emergency shelter system by constructing five new service-enriched facilities with improved access to housing programs – a goal that was achieved in 2015.

The Homeless to Homes Shelter Collaborative, formed in 2010 and including the City Gospel Mission, Lighthouse Youth Services, Talbert House and Shelterhouse (formerly the Drop Inn Center), in partnership with Strategies to End Homelessness. Also, development partner 3CDC was responsible for guiding the construction of these transformational shelters.

City Gospel Mission opened its new shelter in April 2015. The Esther Marie Hatton Center for Women celebrated its grand opening with a ribbon cutting ceremony in June, and the David and Rebecca Barron Center for Men opened in October.

- 1 TALBERT HOUSE**
Parkway Center
2880 Central Pkwy
Cincinnati, OH 45225
- 2 LIGHTHOUSE**
Sheakley Center for Youth
2522 Highland Avenue
Cincinnati, Ohio 45219
- 3 SHELTERHOUSE**
Esther Marie Hatton Center for Women
2499 Reading Road
Cincinnati, OH 45202
- 4 CITY GOSPEL MISSION**
1805 Dalton Avenue
Cincinnati, OH 45214
- 5 SHELTERHOUSE**
David and Rebecca Barron
Center for Men
411 Gest Street
Cincinnati, OH 45203



More Shelter, More Services

The collective impact of these facilities is already being realized. We have completed the transformation of our shelter system from one that once kept people safe in homelessness, to a system that rapidly helps people out of homelessness. The number of people served in our shelters increased by 2.3%, yet the length of stay in these new facilities decreased by 8%, indicating that the shelter upgrades are making a significant impact. Upgrades to our community's shelter facilities and services include:

- **Improved shelter facilities**, which encourage people to come in off the streets at night; plus, the improved shelters no longer turn residents back to the streets during the day
- **Daytime services**, which include drug and alcohol treatment, mental and medical health services, and job search and placement
- **Higher quality and increased case management services** to help residents navigate complex systems effectively, and receive the assistance they need to exit homelessness
- **Step-up model**, which incentivizes residents to engage in the services that will assist them out of homelessness.

The ambition of the Homeless to Homes Plan goes beyond shelter. By creating the facilities and resources needed to end individual homelessness in Cincinnati, we can create a more vibrant and revitalized community, and improve quality of life for all Cincinnatians.

OUTREACH APP ALLOWS YOU TO HELP THE HOMELESS CONNECT TO SERVICES

A new app developed at Northern Kentucky University has technology breaking down barriers between the homeless and street outreach services.

The Street Reach app uses location based technology to allow community members like you to make electronic reports for those in need. It also allows anyone experiencing homelessness to reach out for help. The app is a result of a collaboration between NKU, the university's Center for Applied Informatics, and Strategies to End Homelessness.

"Street Reach makes it possible for community members to provide help to the homeless, and also educates the public about what resources are available in our community," said Rachael Winters, NKU Professor of Social Work. "We believe that it could become a national model."

You notice someone living on the streets, open the app, enter a few brief details, and click send. Strategies to End Homelessness receives the information and street outreach workers reach out to offer services.

The free app is available on [Google Play](#), and in the [iOS App Store](#).





Increasing Emphasis on Prevention

Immediately before finding themselves in shelter or on the streets, most people reside in “doubled-up” situations, relying on someone else for a place to stay. As a result, local homelessness prevention efforts target households that have already lost their own housing, are living in precarious situations, and running out of options. The goal of such prevention programs is “Shelter Diversion”—preventing as many people from needing shelter as possible.

Due to declining federal funding for prevention, the number of people able to receive these services was reduced by 76% from 2011-2014. However, in June 2015, recognizing that Shelter Diversion is a cost-effective and high-performing intervention, the City of Cincinnati began to invest in Shelter Diversion services and effectively stopped this decline.

Even though the new City funding and capacity was not in place until September 2015, the number of people served in prevention services during the year increased slightly (0.6%). Additionally, with this new City-funded capacity coming online in the third quarter of 2015, 66% more people received prevention services during the 4th quarter of 2015 when compared with the 2nd quarter of the year. For the first time in years, cost-effective prevention services are on the rise, which is increasing the number of people served by Shelter Diversion programs.



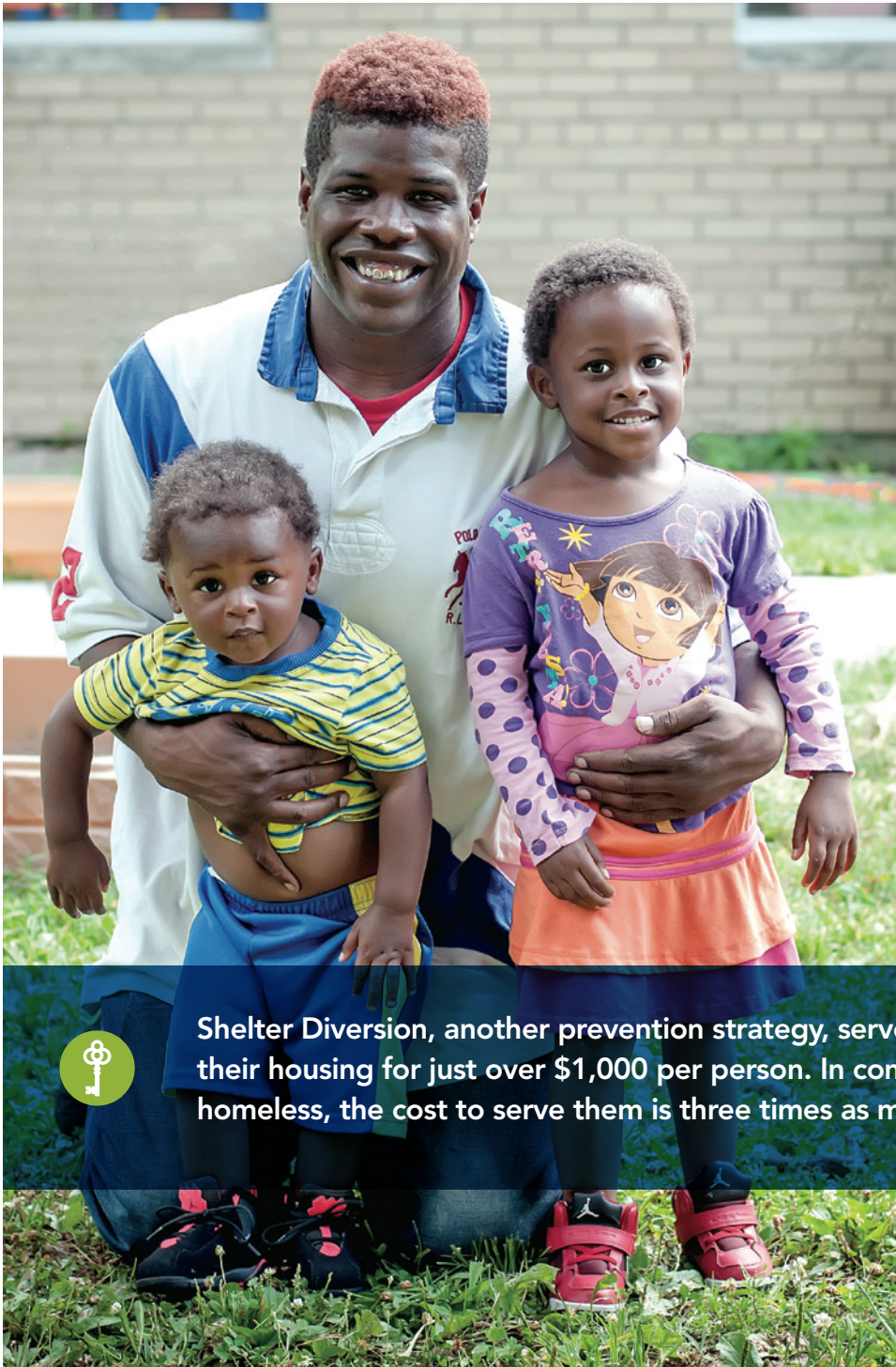
66% more people received prevention services during the 4th quarter of 2015 when compared with the 2nd quarter of the year.





SHELTER DIVERSION PREVENTS HOMELESSNESS

Nikki, a wife and mother of two, was dedicated to a part-time job to support her family, while her husband Jason worked with City Link to obtain his GED, with the goal of finding a job and providing his family with more financial assistance. An unexpected challenge came when their landlords changed and resulted in a rent increase; they were unable to afford the higher payments and received notice of eviction. Nikki was beside herself, trying to find friends to stay with temporarily, however space was limited. Her and Jason searched for hotels, but found their prices out of reach. A friend happened to refer Nikki to the Central Access Point (CAP line). She nervously called the next day and was relieved to know they were being referred to the Freestore Foodbank Shelter Diversion program, where she and Jason were able to meet with a case manager for help with budgeting, employment and skills training. A couple weeks later, they were able to find a more affordable apartment for themselves and their children, and Jason finished up his GED and took a job in the restaurant industry. "Being referred to this program was one of the best things that could've happened to us," Nikki said with a smile. "We can now provide a better life for our family."



Solutions for Family Homelessness Plan Takes Shape

Strategies to End Homelessness, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul and the Family Housing Partnership (Bethany House Services, Interfaith Hospitality Network of Greater Cincinnati, The Salvation Army and YWCA of Greater Cincinnati) released the **Solutions for Family Homelessness** community-wide plan in October 2015.

Similar to the comprehensive community process used to develop the Homeless to Homes Plan for homeless individuals, the participation of more than 60 key organizations led to the development of **Solutions for Family Homelessness**, a collaboratively developed, multi-year plan designed to solve critical issues for homeless and at-risk families. **Solutions for Family Homelessness** is a plan to identify how we, as a community, can proactively address the needs of families. Recommendations are focused in four key areas – Prevention, Capacity Building, Policy Change and Housing.

As a team, three priorities have been identified, including expanding homelessness prevention services, offering specialized services for homeless children and targeting existing housing resources toward at-risk and homeless families so that we can minimize the trauma of homelessness.



Shelter Diversion, another prevention strategy, serves families who have already lost their housing for just over \$1,000 per person. In comparison, when a person becomes homeless, the cost to serve them is three times as much per person.



Complex Issues Require Complex Solutions

Family homelessness is a complex, multi-faceted issue. Contributing factors include a lack of affordable housing, generational poverty, the challenges of raising children alone, domestic violence and a lack of social supports. As the gap between housing costs and income continues to widen, more families are at risk of homelessness.

Prevention is the most cost-effective strategy to reduce homelessness. St. Vincent de Paul, the largest provider of Emergency Assistance in the region, finds that 89% of families avoid eviction for at least 6 months after receiving an average of \$200 of emergency assistance.

The Family Housing Partnership provides shelter for families who have become homeless due to a lack of affordable housing, job loss, domestic violence and other causes. The overall plan will require action in partnership with multiple systems, sectors and providers, more strategic uses of funds, changes in systems and programs and the use of data to drive community improvements. Without effective coordination our community would be unable to determine the most effective ways to assist at-risk and homeless families.

SOLUTIONS FOR FAMILY HOMELESSNESS EARLY ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- Cincinnati Metropolitan Housing Authority established a preference for providing Housing Choice Vouchers to homeless families
- New Coordinated Entry system prioritizes families based on need and ensures families are served by the best intervention available as quickly as possible, thereby reducing likelihood of future instability
- New funding for Emergency Assistance from Liz Carter Fund of St. Vincent de Paul
- Secured \$420,000 in Shelter Diversion funding from the City of Cincinnati
- Partnership with the City of Cincinnati to make ending homelessness a priority for human services funding
- \$100,000 in City of Cincinnati funding to plan a capital project for Bethany House Services

Solutions for Family Homelessness is informed by the analysis of data released in 2014 within the **Cincinnati Family Homelessness Services Study**. Both are available online at www.strategiestoendhomelessness.org.



DENISE'S STORY:

WHEN YOU'VE NEVER HAD TO ASK FOR HELP, IT CAN BE VERY DIFFICULT TO REACH OUT.

When you have four little girls depending on you, you have no choice. Denise always worked to support her family, at times working two or three jobs. Then due to an error in the re-certification of housing paperwork and a change in management at her apartment complex, she became homeless.

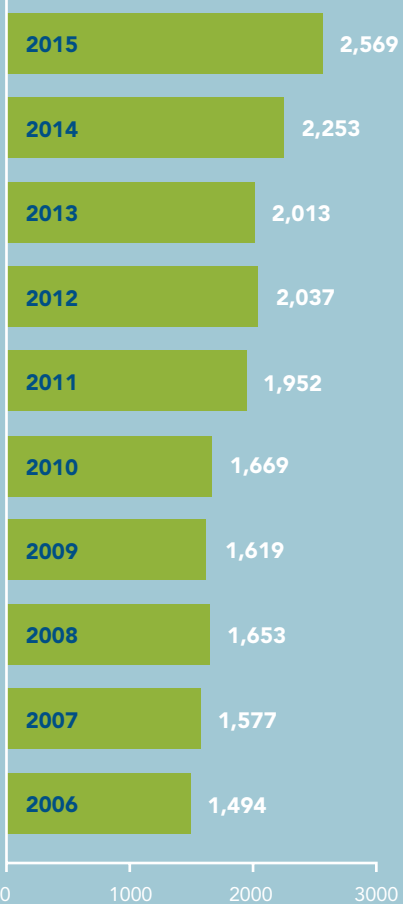
Devastated by her situation, she reached out to our Central Access Point hotline and was referred to a family shelter, where she was offered life-skills courses that guided her back to self-sufficiency. Denise said the experience changed her life and helped her to become independent again, stating that the shelter's director of client services was her mentor and "gave me enough tools to be successful in my life."

Today, Denise is a nurse's assistant at Cincinnati Public Schools and is happily married to her husband Mike, who she met through church. Three of her girls are now in college and one is a new mom, making her a very proud grandma. Denise stays in touch with those who helped her and volunteers to help other families in shelter saying, "it's now my turn to give back."





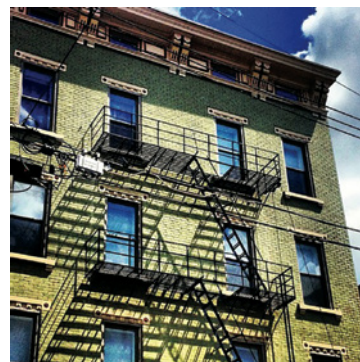
NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING



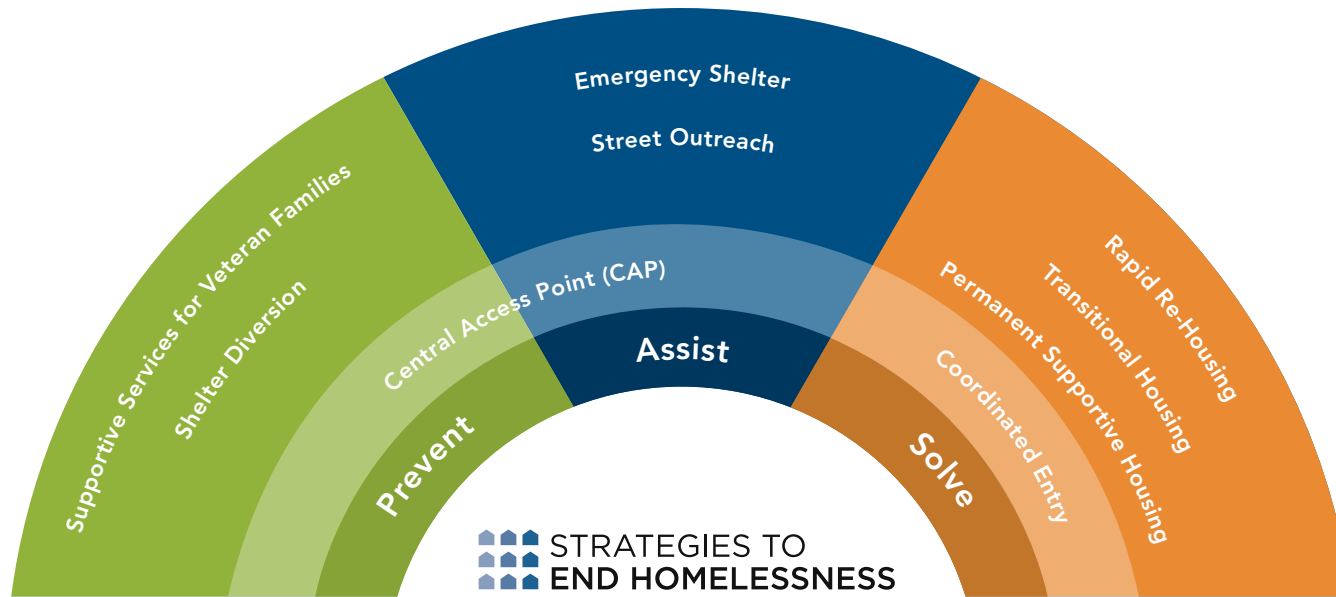
Assisting People with Supportive Housing

For many people, getting out of homelessness means entering a supportive housing program, such as transitional housing, permanent supportive housing, or rapid re-housing. While the number of people experiencing literal homeless has remained relatively steady, the number of people who have been assisted out of homelessness by supportive housing has increased steadily each year. In 2011, just over 4,021 people were provided with supportive housing, while in 2015, 5,701 received such housing, an increase of 42%

The largest part of this increase was in Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH), which is targeted toward people who are chronically homeless and disabled. Our partner organizations served 14% more people in their PSH programs in 2015 than in 2014, and have increased this number by 32% since 2011.



Thank you to all of our partners who are working together to end homelessness in our community:



Direct service providers

- Bethany House Services ● ● ●
- Caracole, Inc. ●
- Center for Independent Living Options (CILO) ●
- Center for Respite Care ● ●
- Cincinnati Union Bethel ● ●
- City Gospel Mission ● ●
- Downtown Cincinnati, Inc. - Block by Block ●
- Shelterhouse (f.k.a. Drop Inn Center) ● ●
- Excel Development Corp ●
- Freestore Foodbank ● ●
- Greater Cincinnati Behavioral Health Services ●
- Interfaith Hospitality Network ● ● ●
- Jewish Family Service ●
- Joseph House ●
- Lighthouse Youth Services ● ● ●
- Northern Kentucky Independent District Health Department ●
- Nothing Into Something Real Estate ●
- Ohio Valley Goodwill Industries ● ●
- Over the Rhine Community Housing ●
- Santa Maria Community Services ●
- St. Francis/St. Joseph Catholic Worker House ●
- Society of St. Vincent de Paul ●
- Talbert House ● ●
- Tender Mercies, Inc. ●
- The Salvation Army ● ●
- Veterans Administration ●
- Volunteers of America ● ●
- YWCA of Greater Cincinnati ● ●



Funding Partners

CareSource Foundation
 Christ Church Cathedral
 Cincinnati Bengals
 Hatton Foundation
 Helen Steiner Rice Fund of Greater Cincinnati Foundation
 Interact for Health
 Jacob G. Schmidlapp Trusts, Fifth Third Bank, Trustee
 John A. Schroth Family Charitable Trusts, PNC Bank, Trustee
 Louis and Louise Nippert Charitable Foundation
 Louise Taft Semple Foundation
 Maxwell C. Weaver Foundation
 Mercy Health
 Ohio National Foundation
 Ruth & Robert Conway Foundation
 St. Xavier Church
 The Carol Ann and Ralph V. Haile, Jr / U.S. Bank Foundation
 The Greater Cincinnati Foundation
 The Spaulding Foundation
 U.S. Bancorp Foundation
 U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
 United Way of Greater Cincinnati

Coordinating Partners

Cincinnati Health Network
 Cincinnati Metropolitan Housing Authority
 Cincinnati Public Schools- Project Connect
 Cincinnati VA Medical Center
 City of Cincinnati
 Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio (COHHIO)
 Greater Cincinnati Homeless Coalition
 Hamilton County
 Hamilton County Mental Health and Recovery Services Board
 Human Rights Campaign
 Northern Kentucky University
 Our Daily Bread
 Pro Bono Partnership of Greater Cincinnati
 The Partnership Center, Ltd.
 U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Special thanks to Interfaith Hospitality Network of Greater Cincinnati and Sarah Mansell Photography for providing the beautiful portraits of local families.

Funding Advisory Committee Members:

Catholic Health Partners
 City of Cincinnati
 Interact for Health
 The Carol Ann and Ralph V. Haile Jr./U.S. Bank Foundation
 The Federal Home Loan Bank
 The Greater Cincinnati Foundation
 The P & G Fund at The Greater Cincinnati Foundation
 The PNC Bank Charitable Foundation
 The United Way of Greater Cincinnati



Financial Highlights*

Year Ended December 31, 2015

CONDENSED BALANCE SHEET

Assets

Cash and cash equivalents	\$	672,742
Grant and contributions receivable		3,247,834
Other assets		73,170
Total assets	\$	3,993,746

Liabilities and net assets

LIABILITIES

Accounts payable and accrued expenses	\$	2,049,840
Grants payable		918,503
Deferred revenue		207,783
Total liabilities		3,176,126

NET ASSETS

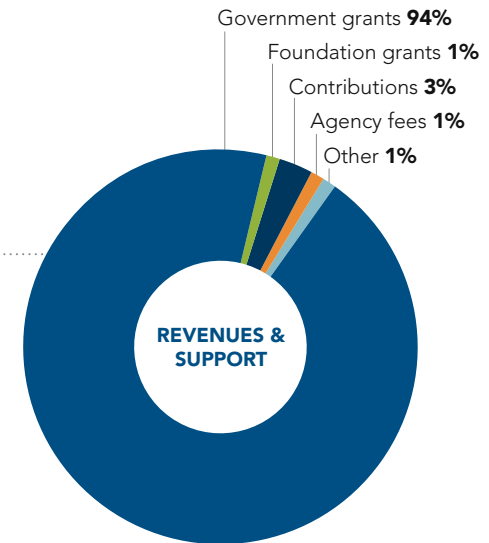
Unrestricted		409,930
Temporarily restricted		407,690
Total net assets		817,620

Total liabilities and net assets	\$	3,993,746
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ACTIVITIES HIGHLIGHTS

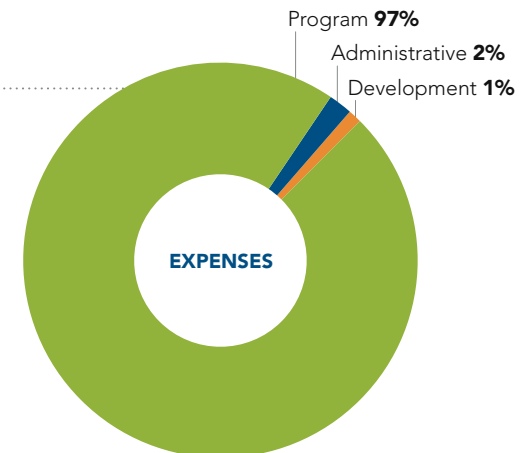
Revenues and support

Government grants	\$	10,134,613
Foundation grants		89,755
Contributions		279,384
Agency fees		103,427
Other		108,526
Total revenues	\$	10,715,705



Expenses

Program**	\$	10,463,683 **
Administrative		216,611
Development		128,416
Total expenses	\$	10,808,710



**Program detail

Shelter/Housing	\$	7,523,210
Prevention/Rapid Re-housing		1,158,676
Homeless Management Information Systems		477,634
Central Access Point		124,940
Homeless to Homes		1,179,223
Total program costs	\$	10,463,683 **

*From Financial Statements Audited by Barnes, Dennig & Co., Ltd.



2015 BOARD MEMBERS

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Scott Knox <i>Secretary</i>	Jeff Holtmeier Fanni Johnson	Chris Schweikert Sabrina Shattles
Jillian Brown <i>Treasurer</i>	Jamie Lancaster	John Young

GET INVOLVED

Learn more about how to donate or volunteer, visit us at www.strategiestoendhomelessness.org

Strategies to End Homelessness is funded in part by the City of Cincinnati and Hamilton County, is a United Way Agency Partner and a Better Business Bureau Accredited Charity.

www.strategiestoendhomelessness.org | info@end-homelessness.org | 513.263.2780



@toEndHomeless



Strategies to End Homelessness



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