FACES OF HOMELESSNESS
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DEAR FRIENDS

“We envision a community in which everyone has a stable home and the resources needed to maintain it. Together we can make that a reality, here in Greater Cincinnati.”

At Strategies to End Homelessness, we work in partnership with 30 non-profit service providers to run a comprehensive, coordinated system of care to end homelessness. The system locally has been recognized as one of the best in the nation. This report serves as a snapshot of our efforts in 2017. As we celebrate 10 years since our founding, all of us can look back with great pride at what has been achieved.

We have accomplished a lot together. But we have a great deal more to accomplish. We will do so by remaining steadfast in our mission towards families and individuals. We will work to prevent people from becoming homeless, provide high-quality assistance to those who are homeless, and coordinate solutions to homelessness through housing.

Within this report, you will find data regarding services provided to homeless and at-risk people in our community, as well as updates on our programs, new initiatives, and where we will grow in the future.

As always, our goal is to decrease the number of people experiencing homelessness. There is no single answer. We, with our partners, will continue addressing our goal one family at a time, one person at a time. This is best for those who are homeless, best for those who would otherwise experience homelessness, and best serves our community as a whole.

Please reach out if you have any questions regarding the information in this report, or about the work we are doing to end homelessness in Greater Cincinnati.

Kevin Finn
President & CEO
kfinn@end-homelessness.org

Ron Cramer
Board Chair
WHO IS HOMELESS?

In 2017, 7,197 people found themselves sleeping in an emergency shelter or in a place not meant for human habitation in Hamilton County. This number of people experiencing literal homelessness has been stubborn over the past five years, declining by only 1.5% (7,306 in 2013).

While a change of such a small percentage might lead us to conclude that little has changed within the homeless services system, the reality is very different. For example:

- **Fewer people on the street**: the number of people sleeping in places not meant for human habitation (aka “on the streets”) has declined by 42% over the past five years (from 1,692 people in 2013, to 979 in 2017), while the number of people entering homeless shelters in Hamilton County has remained steady over that same time period (6,661 in 2013, 6,670 in 2017). As a result, by percentage, more homeless people are entering shelters (23% of homeless people slept on the streets in 2013, 14% in 2017). This is clearly a positive development, as a recent study published by JAMA Internal Medicine found that homeless people sleeping in places not meant for human habitation are three times as likely to die as those sleeping in shelters.

- **More Rapid Re-Housing (RRH)**: RRH is a short-term best-practice in assisting people out of homelessness quickly, moving people back into their own housing while providing them with intensive case management services targeted at helping them achieve self-sufficiency. While there were no RRH programs in Hamilton County prior to 2009, 3,366 people were assisted by Rapid Re-housing programs in 2017.

- **More Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)**: PSH is a more long-term housing option targeted toward people who are both chronically homeless and disabled. A goal of PSH is to provide people with housing and services who otherwise might be homeless long term, and
cycling through other community resources such as hospitals and other facilities which are far more expensive than housing. Local PSH capacity has continued to expand, with the number of people served in PSH programs increasing by 8% over the past five years (2,371 people in 2013, 2,577 in 2017).

**Overall Permanent Housing Capacity:** both RRH and PSH are Permanent Housing programs. With the increase in each considered together, the number of homeless people served in local Permanent Housing programs has increased by 42% over the past five years (3,381 people in 2013, 5,835 in 2017).

---

**Thanks to our partner agencies who provide RRH and/or PSH services:**

Bethany House Services  
Caracole  
Center for Independent Living Options  
Excel Development Co.  
Interfaith Hospitality Network of Greater Cincinnati  
Lighthouse Youth and Family Services  
Nothing into Something Real Estate  
Ohio Valley Goodwill Industries  
Over The Rhine Community Housing  
Salvation Army  
Shelterhouse  
Talbert House  
Tender Mercies  
YWCA Greater Cincinnati

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**Un fortunately, our data points to several issues of concern:**

**Youth:** homelessness continues to be an issue disproportionately affecting young people. In 2017, 24% of homeless people were under the age of 18, 35% were under the age of 25, and 54% were under the age of 35. One common myth of homelessness is that it is an issue that disproportionately effects people between the ages of 40-65, but the data does not support this common assumption. More and more, homelessness is an issue affecting the young.

**Families:** our 2017 data indicates that the number of families on the streets or in shelters has declined in recent years, including a 4% decline from 2016 (586 families) to 2017 (560 families). However, this data doesn’t tell the full story. In Hamilton County, families call the **Central Access Point** (CAP) helpline to gain entry into a number of facilities, including family shelters. However, in 2017, data specifically from CAP indicates that 60% of the families that called CAP seeking entry into a shelter or Shelter Diversion program were not provided with either, generally due to a lack of capacity in the shelters and Shelter Diversion programs. If capacity had been available, including if the families that were already residing in shelter had been able to exit more quickly freeing up shelter beds, these families could have been served.
Our local homeless services system was one of the first in the country to establish a shared database used by all of our local homeless programs, documenting a comprehensive history of local homelessness since 2004. Such Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) data — is a powerful tool in identifying the most effective strategies to prevent and end homelessness. This data has taught us a great deal about homelessness in our community, and we are using data to guide system changes and track their impact. Identifying indicators that lead to homelessness and cause recidivism will allow funding to be spent more wisely.

To maximize learnings from the data going forward, we and our partner agencies need flexible and timely access to data for analysis. To this end, in November, 2017 the Board of our local homeless services system and HUD-funded Continuum of Care (CoC) for the Homeless issued a Request for Proposal to secure a flexible, web-based software product to serve as our community’s HMIS into the future. We have identified a new, state of the art HMIS system (Clarity, by Bitfocus) and will be changing to this system at the end of 2018.

Concurrent with this change, the management of the HMIS system and the data within it will come in-house at Strategies to End Homelessness, rather than being managed by an external vendor. This change will give us and the system the timely, flexible access to data that we need for more advanced system planning.

But greater access to data regarding homelessness is only one step. This data will be an even more powerful tool when analyzed in tandem with data gathered through other systems: health care, behavioral health, substance abuse, corrections, etc. If we can identify indicators that lead to homelessness and/or cause people to become homeless again, we can target resources more wisely on producing the best outcomes, being cost-effective, and replicating high-performing programs.

We are thankful for the relationships we share with local data experts such as 84.51, the City’s Department of Data Analytics, and other data collection entities in Hamilton County, but Impact Analysis remains a gap in our system. Increasing our internal capacity to perform this work in the future will be critical.
OUR SYSTEM

Our Friends and Partners

Bethany House Services ● ● ●
Brighton Center ●
Caracole, Inc. ●
Center for Independent Living Options (CILO) ●
Center for Respite Care ●
Cincinnati Metropolitan Housing Authority ●
Cincinnati Union Bethel ● ●
City Gospel Mission ●
Downtown Cincinnati, Inc. – Block by Block ●
Emergency Shelter of Northern Kentucky ●
Excel Development Co. ●
Family Promise of Northern Kentucky ●
Freestore Foodbank ●
Greater Cincinnati Behavioral Health Services ●
Interfaith Hospitality Network ● ●
Jewish Family Services ●
Joseph House ●
Lighthouse Youth and Family Services ● ●
Maslow’s Army ●
Northern Kentucky Independent District Health Department ●
Nothing into Something Real Estate ●
Ohio Valley Goodwill Industries ● ●
Over the Rhine Community Housing ●
Santa Maria Community Services ●
Shelterhouse ●
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 ●
Welcome House ●
Women’s Crisis Center of Northern Kentucky ●
YWCA Greater Cincinnati ●●

strategiestoendhomelessness.org
StrategiesToEndHomelessness @toEndHomeless
Strategiestoendhomelessness.org
HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION SERVICES

The overall goal of our Homelessness Prevention Services is to reduce the number of people who experience homelessness in the first place. Prevention programs are often not eligible to be funded through the government funding that we administer or significantly underfunded. In fact, only 4% of our total funding is available for prevention services. This is unfortunate as we know these programs are on average four times more cost effective than programs in place once someone becomes homeless. And prevent people from becoming homeless in the first place.

Central Access Point (CAP) 513-381-SAFE

Anyone experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness can call the Central Access Point to get information about services and check for space in shelters and other homeless programs. Intake Specialists determine if the caller needs shelter immediately or if they can be diverted to services that prevent homelessness. Launched in 2008, CAP was one of the first centralized shelter intake services in the country.

Before CAP, callers needed to contact shelters individually, oftentimes daily, to find available shelter beds. Today CAP can place households into three family shelters, two single men’s shelters, a single women’s shelter, a youth shelter, a transitional housing program, two Supportive Services for Veterans Families programs, four Grant per Diem (GPD) programs for Veterans and seven Shelter Diversion programs. If space is not available one day, CAP saves their information in case they need to call again.

Shelter Diversion Services

We work to prevent households from needing to enter emergency shelters or from sleeping on the streets. Our Intake Specialists determine if callers are in immediate need of shelter or if they can be diverted from homelessness. Those appropriate for Shelter Diversion can get short-term (3-6 months) rental assistance paired with case management services provided by our partner agencies. While in the Shelter Diversion program, clients receive intensive case management services, including housing counseling and financial and employment coaching, targeted at decreasing the likelihood of future homelessness.

Thank you to our generous funders keeping these critical programs operating and for making a positive impact in the lives of thousands of neighbors.

Thanks to our partners who provide Shelter Diversion services.
Bethany House Services
Freestore Foodbank
Interfaith Hospitality Network of Greater Cincinnati
Jewish Family Services
Santa Maria Community Services
2017 RESULTS

CAP intake workers spoke to 4,458 unique callers

- 993 households placed in shelter or housing
- 502 families
- 20% youth ages 18 - 24

Shelter Diversion served 1,115 people

- 681 children
- 434 adults
- 255 families

- 49% of clients in the Shelter Diversion program increased their income
- 84% of clients who left or completed the program exited to a positive housing outcome
- 83% of clients who exited in 2015 - 2017 remained stably housed
YOUTH HOMELESSNESS

Of the 7,197 people experiencing homelessness in 2017, included in that group were 800 unac-
companied homeless youths between the ages of 18 and 24. **Overall, this group represented 11% of the 2017 homeless population.**

In 2017, Cincinnati/Hamilton County became one of the first 10 communities selected to partici-
pate in the HUD-funded **Youth Homelessness Demonstration Project (YHDP)**, with a goal of
developing and implementing an innovative plan to end youth homelessness by 2020.

**Strategies to End Homelessness**, in partnership with **Lighthouse Youth and Family Services** and many community partners, were proud to present “KEYS to a Future Without Youth Home-
lessness”, our community plan to end youth homelessness. This plan has been approved by the
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), and implementation is now under-
way. **Together we’re using our award of $3.8 million to fund solutions to end homelessness among the 18-to-24-year-old population.**

To accomplish the goal of ending youth homelessness in our community, the KEYS plan includes
several initiatives and systemic improvements, including:

- **The “Youth Dedicated Service Team,”** a group of professionals that will be available 24/7 to
  help youth get and keep housing.

- **A more systematic identification of youth** experiencing homelessness and their progress
  via tracking on a by-name list.

- **Expansion of homeless prevention services**, to include innovative approaches to reconnec-
tion with natural support systems.

- **Consistent shelter diversion resources** for young people at imminent risk of homelessness,
  but who are able to identify a safe temporary housing option while working with a case man-
ager.

- **Broader services for LGBTQ youth** and for youth who are pregnant or parents.

Critical to the plan is improved data-sharing capabilities between agencies, the development of a
mobile app for homeless youth to assist in system navigation, and other partnership opportunities
to improve outcomes in employment, education, and transportation.

KEYS also calls for increased cultural competency and trauma-informed care training for all sys-
tems serving youth, in addition to the **Purple Umbrella Campaign**, which connects local busi-
nesses to emancipated youth.

---

**Of the 7,197 people experiencing homelessness in Hamilton County:**

- **24%** under age 18
- **11%** ages 18-24
- **35%** under age 25
- **54%** under age 35
FAMILY HOMELESSNESS

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.

The Solutions for Family Homelessness Plan, released in 2015, works to proactively address the needs of families in each of four key focus areas: prevention, capacity-building, policy change, and housing.

Created by 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 Greater Cincinnati).

Without this critical coordination, our community would be unable to determine the most effective ways to assist at-risk and homeless families and prevent more families from becoming homeless. It's our collective goal to prevent as many children and families as possible from experiencing the trauma of homelessness. Thanks to the tremendous support of The Carol Ann and Ralph V. Haile, Jr./U.S. Bank Foundation, and the United Way of Greater Cincinnati, PNC Charitable Trusts and the Jack J. Smith Charitable Trust.

Implemented by the collaboration, thus far:

**Family-Centered Cross System Case Management**

Cross-system Case Management is a new shared vision of case management services among all agencies in the family homeless sector. The Family Homelessness Steering Team worked to finalize standards and protocol to fill gaps in case management services, specifically Aftercare and Emergency Assistance.

**Child Services Coordinators**

Child Services Coordinators ensure a comprehensive assessment of each child’s needs, serve as advocates with the education system, and connect families with appropriate physical, mental, and behavioral health services while in shelter.

**Trauma-Informed Care**

In June of 2017 the organizations that comprise the Steering Team partnered with Klingberg Family Centers’ Traumatic Stress Institute (TSI) to provide trauma-informed care technical assistance, training and evaluation services for all staff members at the six collaborating organizations.

**Children and Youth Taskforce**

For the last two years an expert group of 30 individuals representing 15 organizations have been meeting monthly to develop strategy and programming, and create system change with the sole focus of improving services for children and youth experiencing homelessness. They recently made recommendations to the Solutions for Family Homelessness Steering Team for childcare and transportation initiatives to support children and families experiencing homelessness.
SEASONAL SHELTER

Homelessness knows no season. But at two particular times of year, for two very different reasons, our need for shelter is at peak demand. Our emergency shelters have operated beyond capacity for several years, adding overflow capacity however possible. In the summer and winter months they need our help.

**Summer Shelter**

When school lets out family homelessness spikes. It’s called Summer Surge and it happens across the country and here, at home. “Doubled-up” situations – where a family without housing tries to squeeze in with family or friends – become unbearable when school ends and kids are underfoot every day.

Many families are out of options. They’re turned out and turn to our partners at Bethany House Services and Interfaith Hospitality Network of Greater Cincinnati. More shelter space is needed, which means an additional cost. Families are housed temporarily until space is available in a year-round shelter, and are assigned case managers to help them find long-term housing.

- In 2017, added Summer Shelter capacity served 123 people, 98 of whom were children.

**Winter Shelter**

To save people from dangerously cold temperatures, Shelterhouse opens the Winter Shelter, adding 200 beds to our system-wide shelter capacity. The Winter Shelter opens in mid-December each year and closes at the end of February. In rare instances when funding is available, the shelter can open earlier. Or in cases of extreme weather may stay open longer, into the beginning of March.

While in shelter, individuals experiencing homelessness can be connected to services that can assist them out of homelessness. He/she may qualify for subsidized housing and case management services within the local system.

- In 2017 Winter Shelter served 733 individuals for a total of 8,354 bed nights.

“John was sleeping on the streets for over two months when he came to the Winter Shelter. During his overnight stays at the Winter Shelter, he started working with a case manager and became eligible for Rapid Re-Housing. This May, he moved into his own apartment.”

Our partners make Seasonal Shelter possible. Strategies to End Homelessness is responsible to raise the money needed for this additional shelter capacity.

Our sincere thanks to our generous funders and donors for your support.
SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

Supportive Housing encompasses a variety of programs that provide both affordable housing opportunities and the supportive services needed to sustain that housing while working toward self-sufficiency. Supportive housing services are available in Cincinnati for both individuals and families, and includes two types of Permanent Housing (Rapid Re-housing and Permanent Supportive Housing), and Transitional Housing.

**Rapid Re-Housing** is a housing model designed to provide temporary housing assistance to people experiencing homelessness. Through short to medium term rental assistance, we can move families and individuals back into housing quickly.

**Transitional Housing** provides short- to medium-term assistance combined with supportive services. Supportive housing services help residents increase their income and obtain permanent housing.

**Permanent Supportive Housing** is a combination of services and housing. Specifically, it supports people with serious mental illnesses or other disabilities who need professional care, advocacy and assistance in order to live stably in their communities.

In 2015, Strategies to End Homelessness developed a partnership with the Cincinnati Metropolitan Housing Authority (CMHA) to implement a preference system for providing public housing for households that have been homeless. During the first 18 months of the program, CMHA awarded Strategies to End Homelessness first 25 vouchers per year, then 200 per year. In 2017, the number increased to 500.

We are grateful for this strong collaboration with CMHA and together will keep increasing the number of families housed each year.
THANK YOU

Strategies to End Homelessness is funded in part by The U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development, The State of Ohio, the City of Cincinnati, Hamilton County, and is a United Way of Greater Cincinnati Agency. Strategies to End Homelessness is a BBB Accredited Charity and received the GuideStar Gold Seal of Transparency.

Major Funders
Agnes Nordloh Charitable Trust
Anonymous
Camden Foundation
The Carol Ann and Ralph V. Haile, Jr./U.S. Bank Foundation
Charlotte R. Schmidlapp Fund, Fifth Third Bank, Trustee
Christ Church Cathedral
Hatton Foundation
Interact for Health
Joiner Family Fund of The Greater Cincinnati Foundation
The Maxwell C. Weaver Foundation
Mercy Health
Ohio National Foundation
PNC Bank
PNC Foundation
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Trihealth
United Way of Greater Cincinnati
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Wuest Fanning Family Foundation
The Wyant Family Foundation

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## FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

### Year ended December 31, 2017*

#### Condensed balance sheet

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<td>Grants &amp; Contributions receivable</td>
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<td>Other assets</td>
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<th>Liabilities and net assets</th>
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<td>LIABILITIES</td>
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<td>Accounts payable and accrued expenses</td>
<td>$ 2,180,583</td>
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<td>Deferred revenue</td>
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<td><strong>Total liabilities</strong></td>
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<td>Unrestricted</td>
<td>$ 564,799</td>
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<td>Temporarily restricted</td>
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<td><strong>Total net assets</strong></td>
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| **Total liabilities and net assets** | **$ 4,167,842**  |

#### Condensed Revenues & Expenses

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<td>Government grants</td>
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<td>Contributions</td>
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<td>Other</td>
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<td><strong>Total revenues</strong></td>
<td><strong>$ 22,927,584</strong></td>
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<th>Expenses</th>
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<td>Program**</td>
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<tr>
<td>Administrative</td>
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<td>Development</td>
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<td>Homeless Management Information System</td>
<td>487,118</td>
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<td>Shelter / Housing</td>
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<td>Homeless to Homes</td>
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<td>Prevention</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total program costs</strong></td>
<td><strong>$ 22,331,667</strong></td>
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* Excerpted from Financial Statements Audited by Barnes, Dennig & Co., Ltd.

#### Unified Funding Agency

In 2015, Strategies to End Homelessness was designated as a Unified Funding Agency (UFA) one of only seven out of 412 CoCs in the nation. In this role, we have a level of authority and autonomy normally reserved for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), enabling us to make flexible funding decisions to address our partner agencies' needs in real time and to better target resources toward ending homelessness.

Prior to becoming a UFA, funding was contracted directly between HUD and almost 50 different programs in Hamilton County. Under that structure, programs with underspent funds returned that money to HUD, and there was no systemic way to redirect such underspent funds. In our first two years as a UFA, we have been working diligently through ongoing monitoring of spending by our partner agencies to ensure maximum impact from HUD funds in our community.

Unspent funds returned to HUD in 2016: $1,100,000
Unspent funds returned to HUD in 2017: $29,000
Strategies to End Homelessness had the pleasure of working with ArtWorks Cincinnati on the Faces of Homelessness mural (pictured on cover) as their signature mural for 2017. The Faces of Homelessness mural features six real people from Greater Cincinnati who have experienced homelessness. While it would be impossible to include all people who experience homelessness, this mural, located on Vine Street in Over-The-Rhine, succeeds in representing some of those statistically most affected by homelessness. We thank our partners ArtWorks Cincinnati and OTR Community Housing for making this permanent mural possible.