

A Letter from the Minneapolis-Hennepin County Coordinator to End Homelessness

As the Coordinator to End Homelessness for the City of Minneapolis and Hennepin County, I am pleased to present this report. While there is no doubt that these have been extremely difficult economic times, this report highlights the truly remarkable and successful work that has occurred in our community over the past four years. In all my years working on this issue, I have never before seen the kind of coordination and collaboration that is now taking place. Over 125 nonprofit partners, faith communities, and businesses are engaged in the work of implementing the plan to end homelessness. Multiple Hennepin County and City of Minneapolis departments have made this a priority and are coordinating services for greater efficiency and effectiveness.

The Office to End Homelessness is proud to be a partner in this effort, however, the hundreds of community partners and city and county staff who implement this plan every day are truly to be commended and supported. Together, we have connected thousands of people to housing, as well as services to help them maintain their housing. We are improving systems. We are moving away from simply funding activities to investing in solutions. We are ending homelessness.

The intent of this report is both to update the community on the current status in our efforts to eliminate homelessness and to illuminate the context in which we are working. In this economy, need has risen dramatically. People who never believed they could become homeless are finding themselves on the edge. Jobs are scarce and inadequate to afford housing.

Despite these challenges, we have made great strides. We have increased prevention efforts, keeping more people in their housing and improving the ways people are discharged from foster care, corrections, and the Hennepin County Medical Center. We have moved away from a criminal justice response to people living outside to a social service and housing response, resulting in a reduction in public costs and improving community livability. We have assisted thousands of individuals and families into permanent housing, including those who have been homeless for many years. We have increased access to and efficiency of services through our Project Homeless Connect community events and now the development of two new "one-stop-shop" Opportunity Centers. We have improved the coordination of public and private systems to ensure that we are reducing duplication of efforts and improving outcomes for people. And, finally, we have leveraged more private, state, and federal resources to accomplish our work at the local level.

These are tough times and that is all the more reason to be as smart as we can with the resources we have.

Thank you for your commitment to ending homelessness in Minneapolis and Hennepin County.

Sincerely,



Cathy ten Broeke

Minneapolis-Hennepin County Coordinator to End Homelessness

Introduction

Heading Home Hennepin is the City of Minneapolis and Hennepin County community's 10-year plan to end homelessness by 2016. The plan was developed over the course of 100 days in 2006 by a commission of representatives from federal, state, and local governments, as well as business, nonprofit, faith, and philanthropic communities, and homeless and formerly homeless citizens. In December 2006, the plan was passed unanimously by the Minneapolis City Council and Hennepin County Board of Commissioners. Championed by hundreds of government, business, faith, philanthropic and advocacy leaders, Heading Home Hennepin is a model for similar initiatives nationwide.

The final recommendation of the plan is to develop a system to track and evaluate its progress. This report is an outcome of that recommendation. It provides a description of the current state of homelessness in our community, along with the plan's key initiatives that prevent and end homelessness. Where specific program evaluations have been conducted, those evaluations are summarized. It also describes new, recently-implemented initiatives. Finally, this report highlights key areas of concern, as well as priorities moving forward.

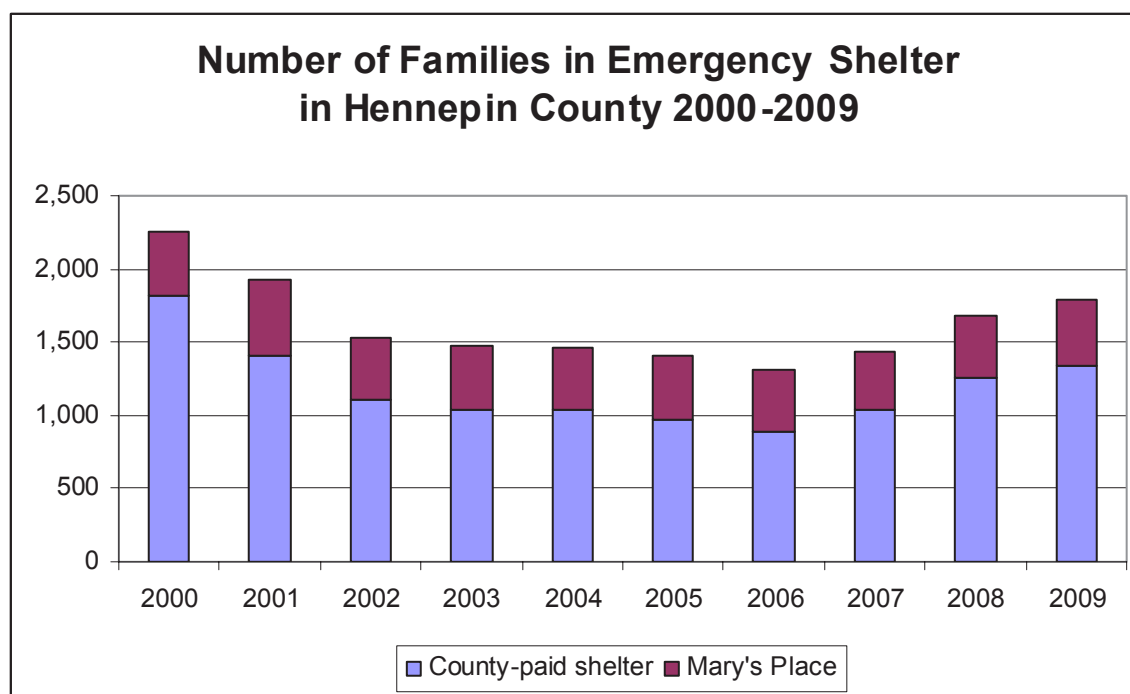


Current State of Homelessness in Our Community

The Wilder Research survey conducted on October 29, 2009 found a total of 4,035 people experiencing homelessness in Hennepin County. This includes people staying in emergency shelters, battered women's shelters, or sleeping outside. It does not include people who live doubled up or "couch-hop" with friends or relatives, for which there is no adequate measuring tool.

Family Homelessness

In 2009, Hennepin County sheltered 1,343 families and Mary's Place, a private agency, sheltered 442 families, for a combined increase of 6.5 percent over the previous year. There is a clear correlation between the economic recession, the foreclosure crisis, and the rise in family homelessness over the past several years.



Families in Hennepin County Shelter										
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
County-funded shelter	1,817	1,411	1,102	1,045	1,042	967	888	1,032	1,251	1,343
Mary's Place	431	514	431	426	420	444	419	408	425	442
Total	2,248	1,925	1,533	1,471	1,462	1,411	1,307	1,440	1,676	1,785
Average length of stay										
County-funded shelter	51.2	36.5	31.5	26.9	27.0	30.0	31.1	34.7	38.0	38.3
Mary's Place	58	68	71	76	79	73	81	76	69	61
Percent increase from previous year										
		-14.4%	-20.4%	-4.0%	-0.6%	-3.5%	-7.4%	10.2%	16.4%	6.5%

Hennepin County funds shelters for about half the families seeking emergency shelter in the county. Families stay at People Serving People (PSP), which has 98 rooms, and St. Anne's Place, which has 15 rooms. Mary's Place and Families Moving Forward, both faith-based initiatives, shelter other families.

Mary's Place serves 425-450 families each year and 92 families each night. Families Moving Forward shelters 10 families per night and battered women's shelters can shelter 68 families per night. They are always full.

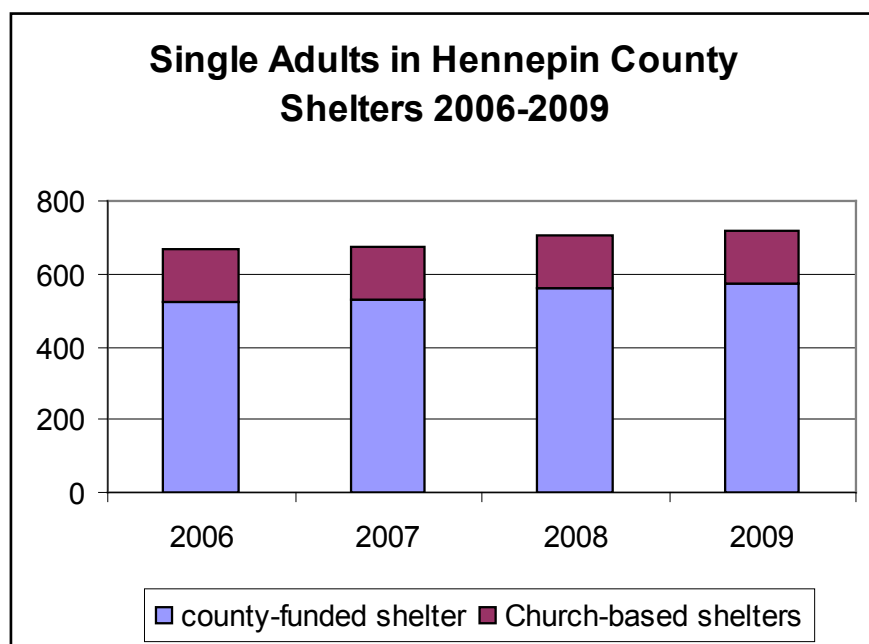
Current State of Homelessness in Our Community cont.

Single Adult Homelessness

There are three private church-based shelters and two shelters funded by Hennepin County that serve single adults. The three church-based shelters have a capacity of 144 men and women total per night. These shelters have been full every night for years. The county-paid shelters have beds for those vouchered through the county's Eligibility

Supports system. All others arrive at the shelter each night and are given a mat on the floor of the "secure waiting" space. There are no criteria for entry to secure waiting.

Single Adults in Shelter					
Year	Nights in county-funded shelter	Avg number per night	Church-based shelters	Total singles sheltered	Pct change
2006	191,527	525	144	669	
2007	194,245	532	144	676	1.1%
2008	203,914	559	144	703	3.9%
2009	209,492	574	144	718	2.2%



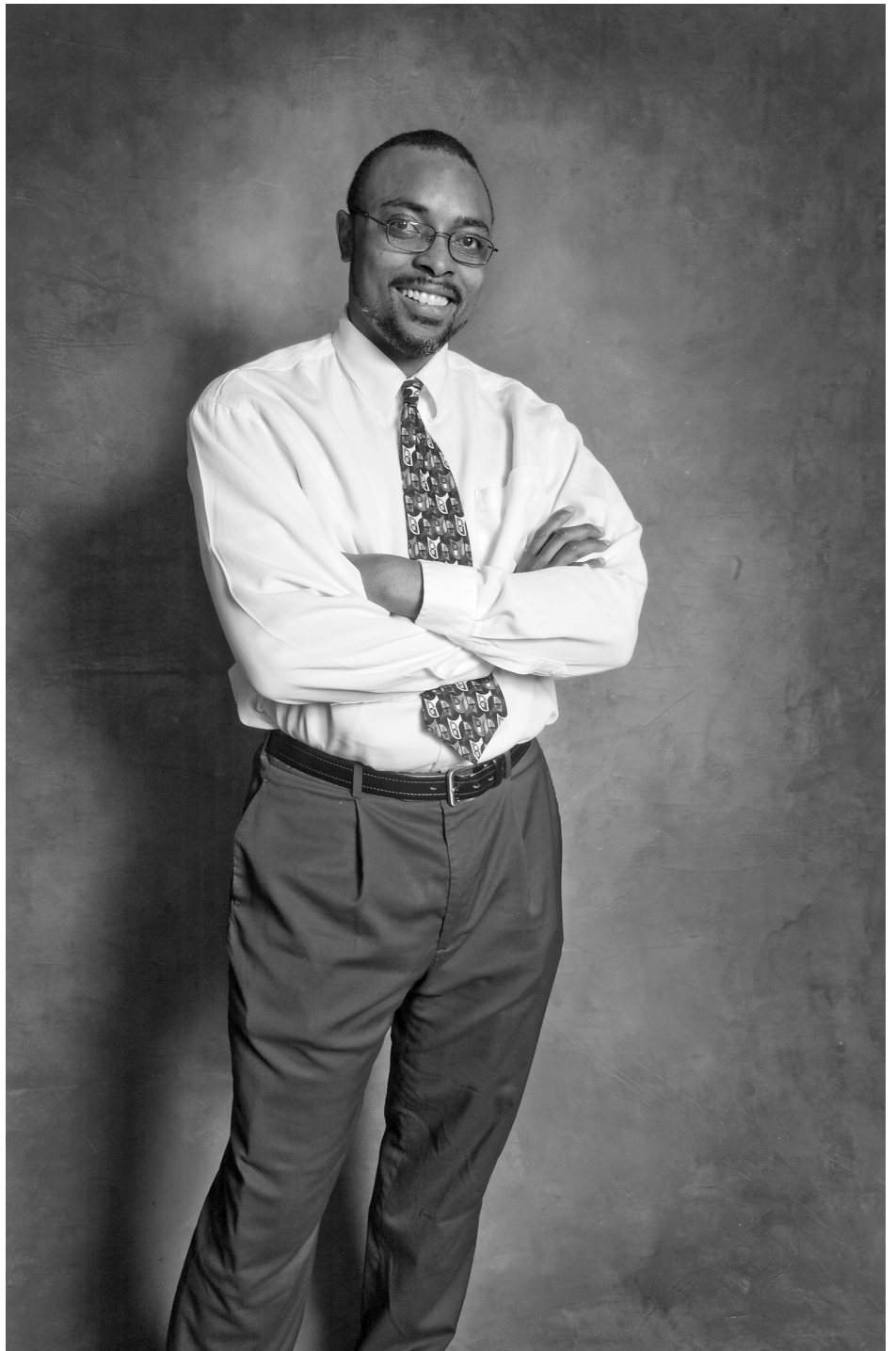
RANDY

My name is Randy. I'm thirty-seven years old. And last night I stayed in my own apartment.

I'm on social security because I am fighting a mental illness called bipolar. I get manic sometimes. If I sit down in a certain situation too long I get bored. And whoa! there I go.

But just recently I, you know, I have a handle on my manic episodes. I'm on medication. At first I was on four, now I'm on one.

I stayed in shelters. I made it, try to make it through. I even went to school for radio broadcasting at Brown Institute, which is now called Brown College. And I graduated while I was homeless. You know, homeless and working and going to school seven days a week: a man can lose his mind after awhile! But summer came and my final instructor came up and shook my hand and said, "Congratulations, you graduated from Brown College in Radio Broadcasting." When he shook my hand, the feelings I have of being homeless were just put to a side for a moment. Because I had accomplished something.



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Current State of Homelessness in Our Community cont.

Hennepin County Shelter Numbers at a Glance

Family Shelter	
Mary's Place (Sharing & Caring Hands)	92 families
People Serving People	99 families
St. Anne's	15 families
Families Moving Forward	8 families
	214 families total

Youth Shelter	
The Bridge for Youth	14 youth (ages 10-17)*
Avenues for Youth	16 youth (ages 16-20)
Hope Street	16 youth (ages 16-20)
	46 youth total
	* These beds are only available to youth who can be reunified with family.

Single Adult Shelter	
Men	
Catholic Charities Secure Waiting	151 men
Catholic Charities Pay for Stay	150 men
Our Saviour's Housing	34 men
Salvation Army Safe Bay	150 men
Salvation Army 2nd Floor	144 men
Simpson Housing Services	44 men
St. Stephen's Human Services	47 men
	720 men
Women	
Our Saviour's Housing	6 women
Simpson Housing Services	22 women
Salvation Army 3rd Floor	58 women
Salvation Army Sally's Place	50 women
	136 women
	856 single adults total

University of Minnesota Humphrey Institute Study of Shelter Use in Hennepin County

A Humphrey Institute capstone class completed an analysis of single adult shelter usage in Hennepin County for 2006 through 2008. Their key findings included:

- 27 percent of individuals spent only one night in shelter. 50 percent of individuals spent six or fewer nights in shelter. Only two percent of shelter clients spent 181 or more nights in shelter.
- Shelter preference (private versus county-funded) is based on personal priorities. Many preferred the private shelters but accessed the county-funded shelters because of convenience and availability.
- Between six and twelve months, the probability of exiting from shelter drops dramatically.
- Those who mostly used public and those who mostly used private shelter did not have a significantly different average number of nights in shelter. However, those who used both private and public shelters (the mixed group) used a disproportionately larger number of nights in shelter.
- Housing First voucher recipients were just as likely to come from private as from public shelters. The mixed group of shelter users was less likely to get a Housing First voucher.
- Women had longer stays in shelter but they were also more likely to obtain assistance through a Housing First voucher.
- It appears that the definition of long-term homeless beginning at 12 months is appropriate. This seems to be the timing when people truly become "stuck" in shelter cycles and need intervention to escape. The sharp decline in departure after 6 months suggests that this may be a good time to assess the shelter guests to determine who will still get out on their own and who may need additional help.
- The average length of shelter stay increased in 2008 when compared to 2007 and 2006, possibly due to the economic recession and consequently the concurrent lack of ability to find employment.

Current State of Homelessness in Our Community cont.

Youth Homelessness

Emergency shelter for youth operates under a different philosophy than the adult shelter system. Youth serving agencies focus on reunifying youth with their families or they work to transition them into independent living when reunification

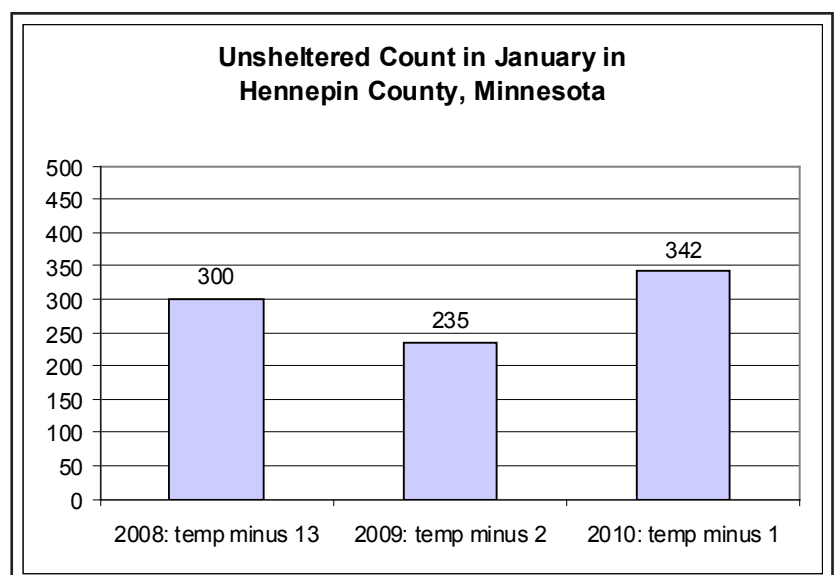
is deemed impossible. Therefore, shelter beds are not offered without services that work towards a permanent solution to the individual's housing situation. Shelter beds are offered in the following configuration:

Agency	Type of shelter	Beds	General target	Average length of stay
The Bridge for Youth	Family reunification shelter	14	10 through 17 year olds, who can be reunified with family.	3-5 days
The Bridge for Youth	Emergency shelter	3	16 to 18 year olds, overnight stay only, for youth not able to be reunified.	overnight, but may repeat stay nightly
Avenues for Homeless Youth	Transitional shelter	15	16 through 20 year olds, transition into housing opportunities. Reunification at youth's request only.	60 days
Avenues for Homeless Youth	Emergency shelter	1	Male or female, overnight stay only.	Overnight
Hope Street Youth Emergency Shelter	Emergency shelter	16	16 through 20 year olds, some reunified with family and others transitioned to housing opportunities. All families are contacted if possible to locate.	24 days

Unsheltered

There are many individuals and families who are unsheltered on any given night, staying awake throughout the night, sleeping in cars, in encampments, under bridges and overpasses, or in abandoned buildings. Hennepin County does quarterly unsheltered counts and compares the winter count to other communities across the country.

In Hennepin, there was a sharp increase in the number of people identified as unsheltered at the end of January 2010. This is similar to increases that the community saw in homelessness generally. In addition, there have been improvements in shelter counts over the years, with a combination of surveys and social mapping of people known to be unsheltered. Still, the count of unsheltered individuals continues to be an underestimate of the actual number.



The 2010 unsheltered count included 283 adults, 53 youth, and 6 children with their parents.

Current State of Homelessness in Our Community cont.

Wilder Triennial Survey

Wilder Research has conducted a triennial survey of homelessness throughout the state since 1991. It is the best measure we have of long-term trends in homelessness. The last survey was conducted in October 2009. The table below shows comparable numbers for the past three surveys of people in

shelter and transitional housing. An additional 571 people were counted in informal arrangements or unsheltered in 2009, totaling 4,035 people experiencing homelessness in Hennepin County. Statewide, the greatest percentage increase was in the age 18-21 population, which rose 57% between 2006 and 2009.

	2003	2006	2009	Pct increase 2006 to 2009
Men	1,071	978	1,240	27%
Women	859	766	914	19%
Youth < 18	22	29	23	-21%
Children	1,138	1,104	1,287	17%
Total	3,090	2,877	3,464	20%

Homeless & Highly Mobile Children & Youth

The McKinney-Vento Act requires all public school districts to identify students who are homeless or highly mobile (HHM). These students are entitled to specific educational benefits and accommodations as a result of their housing situation. The Minneapolis Public School system has been a leader in identifying and serving this population. All public school districts in the nation are required to identify students for services and suburban Hennepin County districts have greatly improved their ability to identify these students in need, as well.

In Minnesota, for the most recent school year available (2008-2009), there were 8,406 children identified as HHM. 45 percent of these students were identified in Hennepin County, with three-

quarters of these identified by Minneapolis Public Schools. The percentage increases in homelessness were much more dramatic in suburban Hennepin and the state as a whole compared to Minneapolis. Minneapolis Public Schools reported an increase of 3 percent between the 2007-2008 and the 2008-2009 school year. Suburban Hennepin reported a 35 percent increase and the state as a whole reported an 11 percent increase. Data from Minneapolis Public Schools documents the challenges of HHM youth as they progress through school. At every age, there is a large disparity between the achievement of HHM students and the rest of the student body. The disparity exists even when comparing HHM students to other students with free and reduced lunch status, indicating that housing stability plays a significant role in student achievement.

	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	Pct increase 07/08-08/09
Minnesota	5741	5462	7571	8406	11%
All Hennepin County	3446	3342	3492	3813	9%
Minneapolis	2919	2845	2820	2909	3%
Suburban Hennepin County	527	497	672	904	35%

Source: MARSS Report, MN Attendance & Recording

* Only includes children and youth documented in this system. Not inclusive of all children and youth identified as homeless.

Current State of Homelessness in Our Community cont.

Homeless and Highly Mobile Students in Minneapolis Public Schools Some Comparative Academic Achievements

	Pct attending school 95% of the time	Pct proficient in reading-grade 3	Pct proficient in reading-grade 10	Pct proficient in math-grade 3	Pct proficient in math-grade 11
Homeless and Highly Mobile Students	29%	31%	22%	28%	2%
All students district-wide	56%	54%	54%	61%	30%

Source: Minneapolis Public Schools, Elizabeth Hinz and Chi-Keung (Alex) Chan
Data from the 2009-2010 McKinney Vento Attendance and Achievement Report

University of Minnesota Institute of Child Development Study of Homelessness & Early Childhood Development

Minneapolis has been a site of extensive research on the impact of homelessness on early childhood development. Spearheaded by Professor Ann Masten at the University of Minnesota Institute of Child Development, the research focuses on resiliency factors for children experiencing homelessness. One aspect of the research examines the achievement of children in Minneapolis Public Schools, following those children identified as homeless and highly mobile, and compares their outcomes to other students. Homeless and highly mobile students, on average, have lower attendance rates and score lower on standardized math and reading tests compared to other children who are eligible for free and reduced cost lunch, as well as students from higher income families.

A second study follows a smaller cohort of children staying in Minneapolis family homeless shelters. The project looks at potential protective factors that may promote school success, focusing specifically on cognitive self-regulation skills known as executive functions. Executive functions include the abil-

ity to initiate and stop actions, change behaviors, control impulses, and act in a socially appropriate manner. Research shows that early stressors in life can impede the brain's development of self-regulation skills, resulting in physiologic and behavioral changes. Poor responses to stress can make children less able to sit still in class, follow instructions, and ultimately achieve success in the school environment. The research found that early stressors did indeed change children physiologically. However, strong parenting—as measured through ratings on warmth, involvement, and structure provided for the child—helps mitigate early stressors and improves the child's self-regulation skills.

From July 1, 2009 - June 30, 2010, there were 5,721 children and youth identified as HHM in Minneapolis. This is an increase of 3% from the previous year. The 5,721 children and youth include students of Minneapolis Public Schools as well as those age 0-4

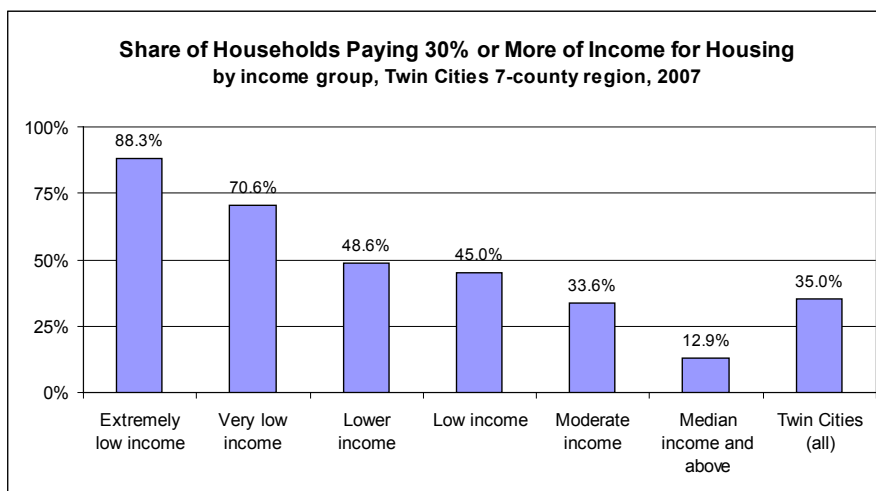
and 18-21 not in school but living in Minneapolis, and students staying in Minneapolis shelters but attending schools in St. Paul or suburban districts in the metro area. Of these 5,721 children and youth, 71% were African American.

People at Risk of Homelessness

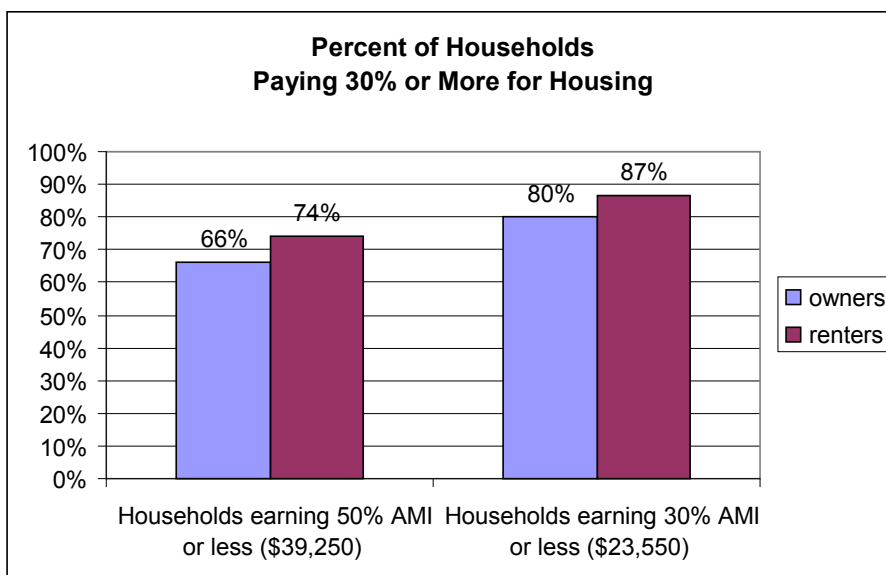
Homelessness is driven by poverty. With the downturn in the economy between 2007 and 2010, the number of people seeking emergency shelter swelled. Metro-wide, extremely low income households paid an extremely high price for housing. Hennepin County-specific data showed that 87%

of renters earning less than 30% of area median income, or \$23,550, paid more than 30% of their income toward housing, making them vulnerable to homelessness. We know that many Hennepin County clients are often paying as much as approximately 80% of their income for rent.

Rent Burdened Population



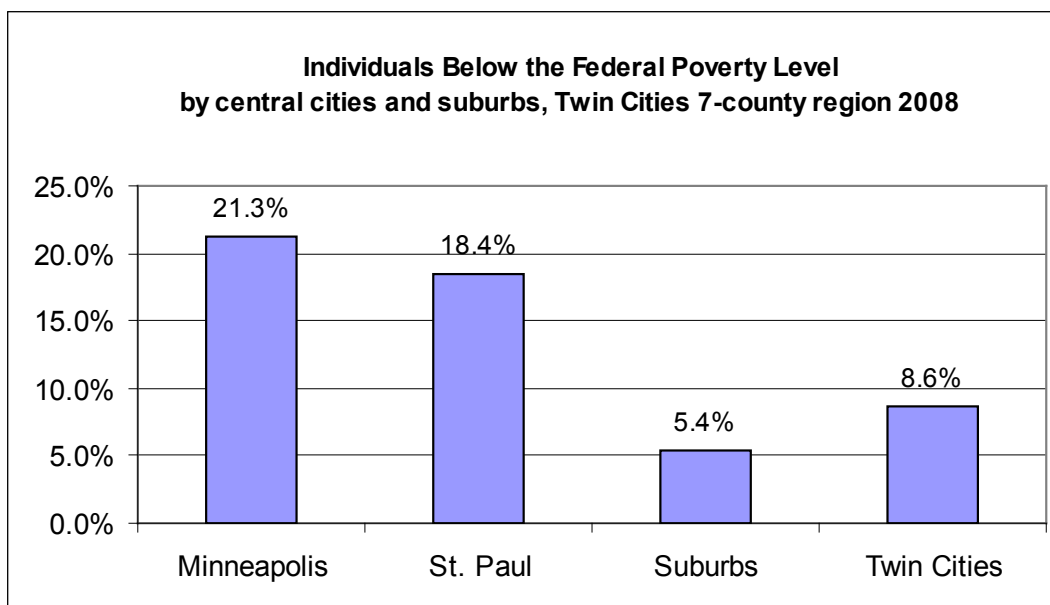
Income categories are based on HUD guidelines and indexed by household size. In 2007, the HUD median family income for a family of 4 in the Twin Cities 13-county metro area was \$77,600. For a one person household, these income levels represent the following categories: extremely low income - \$16,500; very low income - \$27,500; lower income - \$33,000; low income - \$41,700; moderate income - \$55,000; median income and above > \$55,000.



Source: Twin Cities Compass, from US Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2007.

People at Risk of Homelessness

Poverty



Vacancy Rates and Average Rents

Rents in Minneapolis and the metro area have climbed since 2005, an average of 3-4% per year. The vacancy rate jumped dramatically in 2009, and housing advocates report in 2010 that rents have stabilized or decreased slightly in response to the

high vacancy rate, yet the disconnect between living wage employment opportunities and affordable housing remains a challenge.

Average Rent in Minneapolis and Metro Area Fourth Quarter			Vacancy Rate in Minneapolis and Metro Area Fourth Quarter		
	Minneapolis	Metro Area		Minneapolis	Metro Area
2009	\$948	\$909	2009	7.2%	7.3%
2008	\$914	\$906	2008	4.2%	4.9%
2007	\$876	\$899	2007	4.3%	4.2%
2006	\$848	\$871	2006	3.3%	4.7%
2005	\$826	\$851	2005	4.8%	6.1%
2004	\$822	\$849	2004	4.8%	7.3%

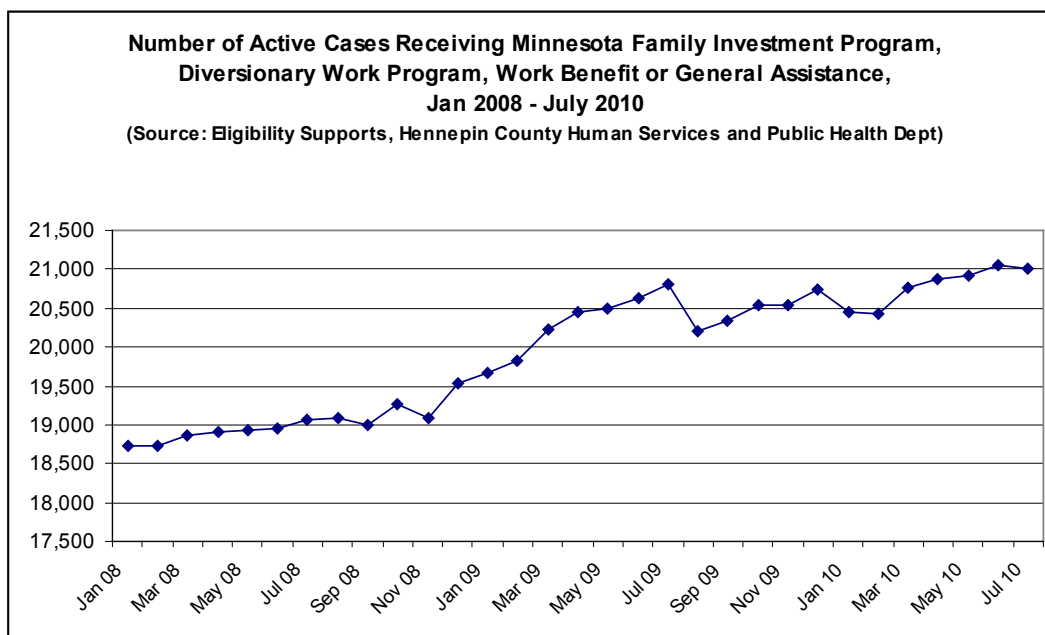
<p>Data for multifamily rental housing Source: GVA Marquette Advisors City of Minneapolis: Minneapolis Trends Reports</p>	<p>Data for multifamily rental housing Source: GVA Marquette Advisors City of Minneapolis: Minneapolis Trends Reports</p>
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People at Risk of Homelessness

Work Supports & Cash Assistance in Hennepin County

The number of families and single adults eligible for monthly cash assistance in Hennepin County has grown over the past two and a half years. In January 2008, there were less than 19,000 open cases.

In July 2010, there were more than 21,000 open cases totaling a 12% increase. For this population on public assistance, affording a place to live is particularly challenging. People who receive General Assistance get \$203 per month and a parent on MFIP with two children gets \$532 per month.



Foreclosures

The dramatic increase in mortgage foreclosures since 2005 was unprecedented. There was a small decrease in foreclosures in 2009, however first quarter 2010 shows an increase of 14 percent over first quarter 2009. Most recent foreclosures are credited

to lost income. While most homeowners facing foreclosure do not become homeless, they put pressure on the rental market as they move from homeownership to tenancy. Renters in foreclosing properties are more likely to become homeless if they cannot locate another unit they can afford.

Foreclosures in Hennepin County and Minnesota

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	First Half 2010
Total number of foreclosures						
Hennepin County	1,681	3,042	5,561	7,348	5,655	3,080
Minnesota	6,472	11,907	20,398	26,251	23,017	13,093
Foreclosure rate (1)						
Hennepin County	0.46	0.82	1.48	1.93	1.49	0.73
Minnesota	0.38	0.68	1.15	0.46	1.28	0.81

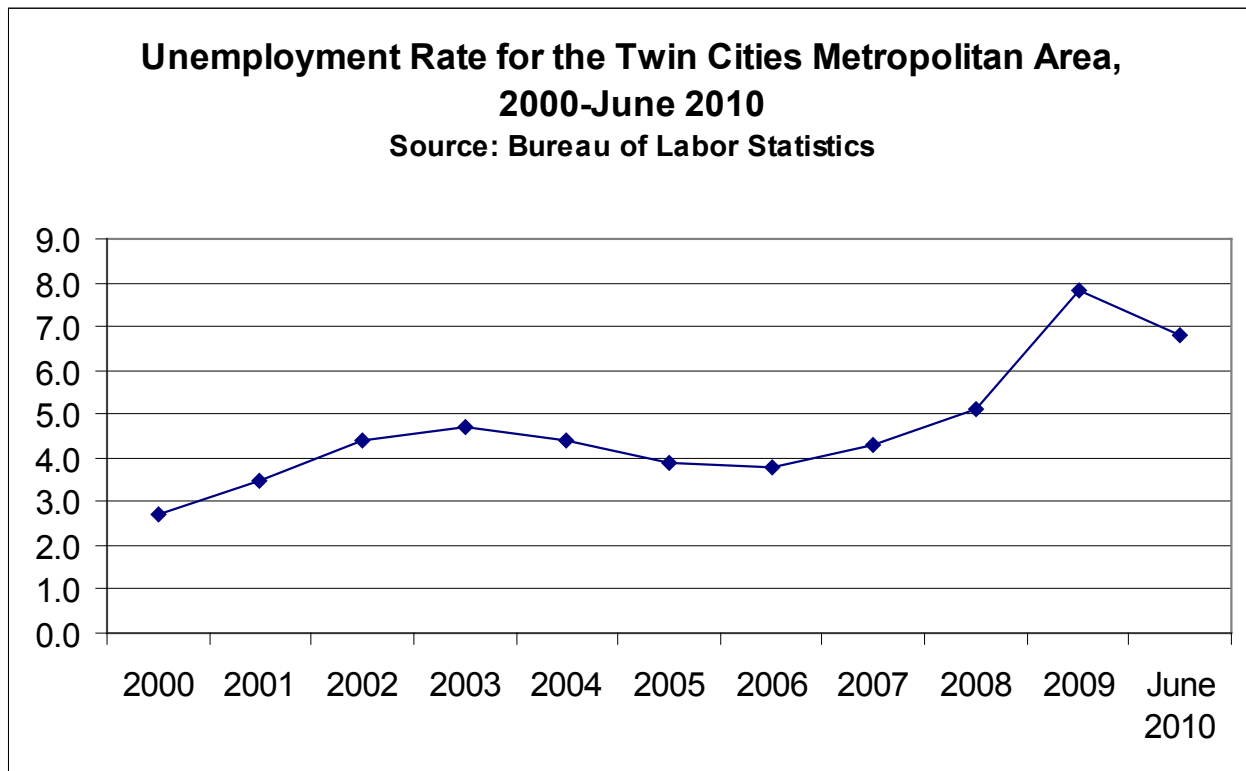
Source: Housing Link, 2010, Foreclosures in Minnesota: A Report Based on County Sheriff's Sale Data
(1) Foreclosure rate - number foreclosed mortgages as a percent of total residential parcels.

People at Risk of Homelessness

Unemployment Rate

As the unemployment rate rises, more workers' incomes are reduced, placing some in poverty and unable to afford their housing. What little employment that is available is highly competitive. An increasing number of skilled workers are entering

the shelter system for the first time. Over the past decade, the unemployment rate averaged 4.4 percent. Between 2000 and 2006, the average unemployment rate was 3.9 percent, rising to an average of 5.6 percent since 2007. It peaked in June 2009 at 8.4 percent.



KYLE

Hi, my name is Kyle. I'm forty-one years old. Last night I stayed at the House of Charity.

It's rather a long story so I'll try to abridge it as much as possible. I got my undergrad at the university. And I went to the MBA program, Master of Business Administration. I began working at the highest paying job I could. And learned very rapidly why some companies hire MBA's and pay them so much money. Because they work them eighty plus hours a week.

Unfortunately at that point I ran into some chemical dependency problems. Some mental health issues came up. Depression runs in the family. And once I lost that job, getting another one became very, very difficult.

So I applied, and applied, and applied for jobs. And one day I had counted up 105 rejection letters. And I was the kind of person that was used to getting the job now, you know, during the interview. A hundred-and-five letters was something I was wholly unprepared to deal with and I had a nervous breakdown and I wound up in a locked psychiatric facility at HCMC.

Slowly I was able to put my life back together, which took time of course. But to this day I still haven't replaced the job. One of the big problems is I have medical assistance now that pays for my antidepressants. And as long as I'm on them I'm fine. The second I get a job of any kind the medical assistance quits. The drug they prescribe me is in patent so it's \$190 a month, which I can't afford to pay. And so, really, the moment I get a job all the support falls away.

It was very embarrassing to me to go back to friends who I had grown up with, who were in professional positions and, you know, have to explain my situation to them. It was very embarrassing.



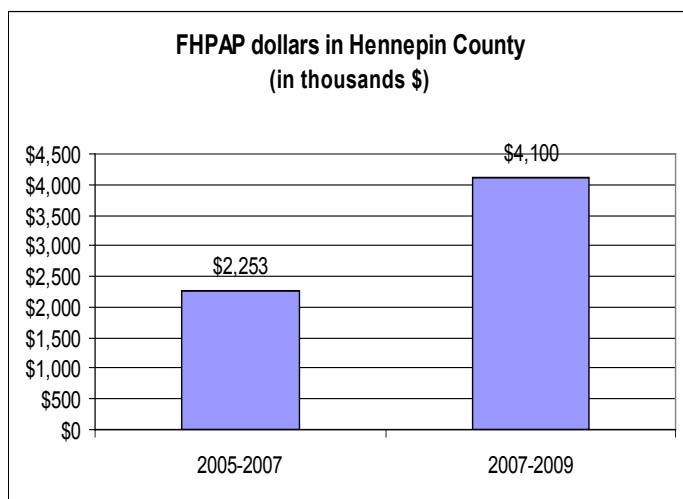
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Prevention

Family Homelessness Prevention Assistance Program

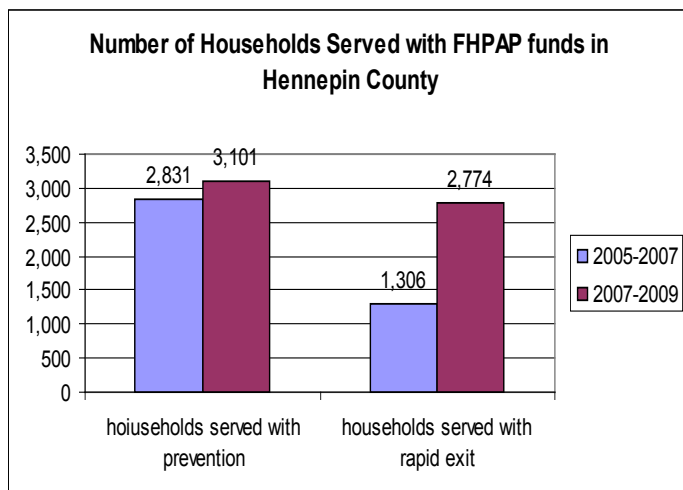
The Family Homelessness Prevention Assistance Program (FHPAP) is a statewide program designed to provide funding to either prevent homelessness through rental assistance or other financial barriers, or to help families move out of shelter. It funds "rapid exit" workers who assist families in shelter to secure income and find affordable places to rent.

The state budget is set every biennium and in the last budget cycle, FHPAP dollars were doubled for Hennepin County. Prevention through rapid exit is the best way to end homelessness and it is by far the most cost effective in terms of taxpayer dollars. For example, in Hennepin County it costs an average of \$650 in one-time funds to prevent a family from becoming homeless, whereas it costs \$2,700 to shelter a family of three for 30 days.



The majority of households helped by FHPAP funds are families at risk of homelessness. They are assisted with prevention funds. Most of the increase in funding in this last biennium supported additional rapid exit workers and resources due to the increased number of families in shelter.

Despite the rise in unemployment and foreclosures, and the stagnation of wages and public assistance as noted above, use of family shelter did not increase as fast in Hennepin County as it did in other parts of the country.



FHPAP services were expanded in July 2008. The expansion included new services for unaccompanied youth and an increase in the level of assistance available for single adults, particularly veterans. The additional FHPAP resources were used to employ a youth Rapid Exit screener at YouthLink and to deliver cash prevention assistance to youth. Freeport West has been providing the youth Rapid Exit services since the expansion. Simpson Housing and Catholic Charities have also been providing additional Rapid Exit services to single adults since the expansion.

Explanation of Rapid Exit in Hennepin County

Rapid Exit for families experiencing homelessness is designed to move families quickly from shelter into housing. While a few families obtain transitional housing or housing subsidies, the vast majority receive Rapid Exit services and leave shelter to return to private market housing within approximately 30-45 days.

Shelter admissions are centrally controlled by Hennepin County's Shelter Team. If a family qualifies for shelter and cannot be diverted to another appropriate option, the Shelter Team vouchers the family into shelter (contracted non-profit) and makes an appointment for the family for a Barrier Assessment.

The Rapid Exit Barrier Assessment occurs within 2-7 days of admission to shelter. The Assessment includes a search of criminal history and eviction databases and a face-to-face interview. The intent is to identify tenant screening barriers (reasons a landlord would typically screen out an applicant for housing) and housing retention barriers (barriers that directly impact the ability to achieve and maintain stable housing). Based upon the number and significance of the family's barriers, the Rapid Exit Screener (contracted non-profit) assigns a rating of 1 (fewest barriers) to 5 (most barriers) and refers the family to a Rapid Exit Advocate (contracted non-profit).

The Rapid Exit Advocate helps the family obtain housing as quickly and responsibly as possible. This requires two critical components: immediate funding for housing start-up costs (which average \$1,200-\$1,500), and relationships with landlords

who will accept families with tenant screening barriers because they trust that the non-profit agency's follow-up services will minimize the risk of renting to a tenant who would otherwise be denied. Rapid Exit Advocates have relationships with roughly 200 landlords who work with their clients and the advocates will match the family to the best available vacancy (based upon the landlord's risk tolerance and the unit location). The Rapid Exit agency, along with Hennepin County's Shelter Team, assures that start-up costs are available as soon as a lease is offered.

The Rapid Exit agencies are funded by Hennepin County at an average cost per household and have very limited financial assistance dollars but considerable flexibility in how these funds are used. The Rapid Exit Advocates may decide a household needs an extremely shallow, short-term rental subsidy—such as \$100-200 per month for 1-3 months—to maintain stability. However, most families do not receive any subsidies after being rehoused and are able to remain stable at the private market housing rate.

The advocates continue to offer tenancy and landlord supports for 6 months following move-in. This includes monitoring the client's housing stability, such as responding to any lease violations or complaints, damage to the unit, conflict with other tenants or the landlord etc. It also includes case management for connection to other services and resources that the family identifies as a priority, such as childcare, employment, education, physical healthcare, and mental or chemical health services. The goal is to prevent recidivism.

Prevention cont.

Homeless Prevention & Rapid Rehousing Program

An additional influx of funding came through federal stimulus moneys in the form of the Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP). HPRP is the Federal Government's version of rapid exit and is funded by the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA). It is based, in part, on

Minnesota's success in implementing FHPAP as a homelessness prevention tool. \$6.5 million was awarded to Hennepin County and Minneapolis through ARRA, and the two jurisdictions collaborated to issue one Request for Proposal for expenditure of the funds. HPRP, however, was a one-time influx of funding and it is not expected that Congress will extend the program.

Hennepin County Rapid Exit Partner Agencies

Ten contracts were awarded for:

- Catholic Charities Rapid Re-Housing of Single Adults Program: \$406,666 to provide Rapid Re-Housing services for homeless single adults without children, primarily in private or county-funded homeless shelters within the City of Minneapolis.
- The Salvation Army Harbor Lights Center: \$651,708 to provide Rapid Re-Housing services for homeless single adults without children in the City of Minneapolis, with an emphasis on Currie Avenue shelters.
- Catholic Charities Hope Street for Runaway and Homeless Youth: \$305,280 to provide family mediation to prevent homelessness among youth in family crisis who are identified by School Support Teams at 15 City of Minneapolis Public Schools.
- YouthLink Housing Relocation & Stabilization: Nicollet Square: \$300,000 for Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing services for youth, ages 16-22, for case management and housing stabilization for youth who will reside in the new site-based program Nicollet Square. Housing relocation and stabilization will be provided to youth who exit the program.
- Greater Minneapolis Crisis Nursery: \$653,290 to provide Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing services for families throughout Hennepin County who have placed a child aged 0-6 in the Crisis Nursery due to high risk of child abuse/neglect. Follow-up home visits for parenting supports are provided by the Crisis Nursery.
- The Minnesota Council of Churches Refugee Services: \$750,770 to provide Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing services for refugee households in the City of Minneapolis, who have exhausted federal benefits and are at imminent risk of homelessness or are in homeless shelters.
- Northwest Hennepin Human Services Council: \$595,000 to provide prevention services to residents of west and northwest suburban Hennepin County, including families, single adults and youth.
- Hennepin South Services Collaborative: \$250,000 to provide Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing services to residents of south suburban Hennepin County, including families, single adults and youth.
- Legal Aid Society of Minneapolis: \$100,000 to provide legal services to tenants in foreclosing properties to prevent homelessness, with a focus on the City of Minneapolis. Services will be provided to families, single adults or youth throughout Hennepin County. Through a partnership with St. Stephen's Human Services, Legal Aid will refer clients who need to be relocated to prevent homelessness.
- St. Stephen's Human Services: \$1,557,423 to provide Prevention and housing relocation services in partnership with Legal Aid for tenants in foreclosing properties, with an emphasis on the City of Minneapolis; and Rapid Re-Housing services for families in County-funded homeless shelters.

Prevention cont.

Youth Mediation: Scholarships were made available to 20 youth workers throughout Hennepin County for mediation training through the Conflict Resolution Center. These certified mediators are embedded in community agencies throughout the County, available to mediate situations with youth where housing is threatened by conflict with family members, landlords, or roommates.

Youth Aging Out of Foster Care: Several existing initiatives to improve the outcomes of youth aging out of foster care and prevent homelessness have joined efforts to form On-Ramp to Independence. In response to federal legislation (known as Fostering Connections for Success and Increasing Adoptions Act) that Congress passed at the end of 2008, as well as new State legislation, Hennepin County extended services for youth aging out of foster care up to age 21 (formerly foster care ended at age 19 or high school graduation, whichever came first). These extended services are called the Transition to Independence Program (TIP). Each youth has an individualized independent living plan. TIP provides flexible funds and services to help youth transitioning from foster care with support for education and/or employment, housing expenses, and other supports youth need to prevent homelessness and transition to adulthood. Since July 2009, approximately 120 youth have voluntarily requested TIP services. Some of these youth actually left foster care at age 18 but requested "re-engagement" due to homelessness or because they wished to continue their education.

Discharge Planner: The Minneapolis Foundation funded the salary of a discharge planner for 2009-2010. Hennepin County extended the position for another year. The Discharge Planner is charged with working with government systems including Hennepin County Medical Center (HCMC) and Hennepin County Department of Corrections (DOC) to ensure that no one is "discharged into homelessness." Currently residents of the Adult Correctional Facility (ACF) in Plymouth receive multiple resources to assist with their discharge plan. Examples include identification services, GED classes, employment training, and job search skills offered to inmates while they are serving their sentence. Corrections Supervisor Jim McAllister and Corrections Volunteer Programs Coordinator Connie Meyer work directly with incarcerated men and women, developing and implementing the discharge programs. The various nearby prisons, including those in Faribault, Lino Lakes, and Stillwater, also have multiple resources and programs to assist inmates as they prepare for re-entry. The Adult Discharge Planner attends the DOC's Transition Coalition meetings each month to learn about and collaborate with the many agencies working on re-entry, and also attends the Ramsey County Discharge Planning monthly meetings.

The Discharge Planner spends two days per week at HCMC to work directly with its social services department to ensure that patients are prevented from being discharged into homelessness. Hennepin County now has 20 medical respite care beds available at Salvation Army's Harbor Lights shelter which are approved for minor medical needs once a patient is discharged from the hospital. The individuals are able to continue recuperating while the Discharge Planner and case managers work to find appropriate housing resources. Healthcare for the Homeless is also a partner and resource provider for patients approved for respite at Salvation Army's Harbor Lights shelter.

Outreach

The second goal of Heading Home Hennepin is to provide coordinated outreach to people who are experiencing homelessness and are unsheltered.

St. Stephens Outreach: Since 2008, the City of Minneapolis, the state of Minnesota, and local foundations have supported a team of outreach workers at St. Stephens Human Services to work in collaboration with the Minneapolis Police Department and the City Attorney's Office to provide targeted outreach to homeless individuals and families in downtown Minneapolis. From October 2007 through July 2010, St. Stephens Street Outreach has housed over 200 people directly from the street, mostly without subsidies. Outreach staff has access to the downtown security community's RadioLink and can be dispatched to 911 calls when appropriate in order to intervene with a human services response rather than a criminal justice response. Police records indicate a 14 percent reduction in arrests for people with no permanent address between 2008 and 2009.

Veterans Specific Outreach Worker: The Minnesota Assistance Council on Veterans (MAC-V) also has an outreach worker to engage veterans who are experiencing homelessness and connect them to appropriate veterans' services. In addition, this outreach worker partners with other agencies to help increase their ability to serve homeless veterans.

Youth Mental Health Outreach: Hennepin County has expanded its services to homeless youth by adding a Senior Social Worker to do outreach with homeless youth and young adults who have serious mental health issues. The goal is to identify homeless youth and young adults ages 18 to 23 with untreated mental illness and engage them to access traditional mental health services by collaborating with community agencies serving homeless youth. This added outreach worker focuses

on connecting 50 youth and young adults with available community and county services – financial assistance, health care, psychiatric services, chemical health assessment and treatment, mental health case management, and housing. An integral aspect of this is assisting youth and young adults in navigating complex health plan and county intake processes. The homeless youth outreach worker works evenings and weekends. As a mobile worker, most time is spent at homeless youth shelters and drop-in centers such as YouthLink, Avenues for Homeless Youth, Hope Street, and the Salvation Army's adult shelter, as well as supportive housing sites for homeless youth including Archdale, St. Barnabus, and Lindquist Apartments. The outreach worker will be stationed part-time at the Youth Opportunity Center to develop relationships with other supportive housing providers who are part of the Group Residential Housing (GRH) system but typically not accessed by young adults experiencing homelessness.

Youth Inreach Worker: Hennepin County restructured an existing contract to fill the gap for youth who access adult shelters. An inreach worker visits single adult shelters, family shelters, and drop-in centers to find youth under age 24, then connects them to developmentally appropriate intensive support and skills training to transition out of homelessness. Between May 2009 and December 2009 more than 100 contacts were made and 40 youth received case management services.

Streetworks: Streetworks is a collaborative between 12 youth-serving agencies located in Hennepin County. The collaborative works to provide unduplicated street outreach, emergency case management, and essential resources to homeless youth who are living outside. This approach allows the agencies to cover the largest geographic area possible, as well as provide services to as many youth as possible.

Housing

The third Heading Home Hennepin goal is to create 5,000 new affordable housing opportunities for people experiencing homelessness. Developing new affordable housing or acquiring rental subsidies that can turn market rate apartments into affordable units for people with extremely low income are the two most effective ways to accomplish this. The economic climate of the latter half of this decade undermined many new housing developments. The loss of tax credits has dramatically slowed new development.

- Between 2007 and 2009, 1,419 new housing units were developed, one-third of the plan's 10-year goal. All of the affordable units were made available in the existing housing market by use of Group Residential Housing (GRH) subsidies from the state of Minnesota, as well as through long-term homeless subsidies made available through the state's plan. This subsidy program works well for single adults but not as well for families. New developments were hindered by the weakened economy but 296 total new units were created during the plan's first 3 years of implementation. Some of these units are set aside in larger buildings for people with incomes at or below 30% of area median income, while others are full single site buildings. For example, Nicollet Square is a 42-unit building designed to provide homeless youth age 18-24 a place to reside while developing independent living and employment skills. It opened in November 2010.

Rental Assistance has been Heading Home Hennepin's best tool in helping people experiencing homelessness find long-term stable housing. An example of this is the Veterans Affairs Supportive Housing Program (VASH), which provides housing vouchers specifically for homeless veterans. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, in partnership with the Minneapolis Public Housing Authority and the Minneapolis Department of Veterans Affairs, issues these vouchers. Thus far Minneapolis has received 155 VASH vouchers.

Housing First: Housing First is a strategy to move people from shelter into their own apartments without first requiring them to address all personal barriers. Once housed, comprehensive services are available to support the client. This is a particularly effective strategy for those long-term homeless adults for whom most other efforts have failed. The county has its own Housing First program and some agencies also contract directly with the state to leverage GRH funds for more residents. As of June 2010, there were 409 households housed using the Housing First strategy, including 173 children and 17 youth.

Salvation Army added two rapid exit workers and four housing case managers in October 2009 to find housing for its clients using the Housing First model. Between October 2009 and July 2010, Salvation Army's Harbor Light staff helped 233 people move out of shelter. Since February 2010, the staff have helped an average of 1 person per day move into housing.

Rental Assistance

Rental assistance is provided through the ELHIF, HTFRA-LTH, HTF-LTH, SARAP, S+C, Andris, DHS Service Funding, GRH, SAMHSA, and VASH programs.

Rental Assistance in Hennepin County

	2007	2008	2009	Total
Families	176	60	34	270
Single adults	301	301	149	751
Youth	14	36	0	50
Total	491	397	183	1071

Source: Housing and Homeless Initiatives
Hennepin County Human Services and Public Health Dept.

Explanation of Housing First in Hennepin County

In developing strategies to reduce long-term homelessness, many communities have experimented with innovative programs such as the permanent supportive housing model, which is characterized by its integration of both stable housing and supportive services for previously homeless individuals. Housing First programs are a subset of this model, and initially arose as an alternative to the linear residential treatment model. The linear residential treatment model, also referred to as the continuum of care model, was popularized in the 1980s and remains widely used today. The linear treatment model moves homeless individuals through a series of qualifying steps before providing permanent housing. In contrast, housing first programs are predicated on the belief that housing is a basic human right, thus these programs provide individuals immediate access to permanent housing. In addition, participants typically have the ability to choose their housing and the kinds of services they access. A key difference between the two program models is that the linear treatment model usually requires that participants be sober before being placed in permanent supportive housing, while housing first programs emphasize the importance of placement regardless of sobriety status.

In general, each of these program models in Hennepin County targets single adults that, at minimum, meet the state definition of being long-term homeless. In many instances these individuals are targeted by identifying usage patterns of the

County's public and private shelter systems, as well as through information provided by outreach workers. The programs draw participants through myriad collaborations involving social service agencies and government programs that work to address homelessness. Once participants are identified, program staff work to find suitable permanent housing opportunities in both single-site and scattered-site locations. Following housing placement, participants are provided with supportive services such as transportation assistance, independent living skills, employment assistance, and community referral services. Supportive services are client-centered and reflect the needs of the individual participants. The frequency and duration of the supportive services are also tailored to participant needs.

The programs operate through the support of various funding streams that provide rental assistance and subsidies for housing, as well as the support necessary for program staff. The majority of the financial support for housing comes from rental subsidies, state and federal income supplement programs, and client income. Determination of housing supports is often contingent upon the eligibility of the targeted participants, and program staff work to match participants with the appropriate funding sources. Typically, funding for program staff represents a mixture of private and public dollars and includes support from foundations, government programs, as well as contributions by the social service organizations themselves.

A Housing First Story

People experiencing long-term homelessness are too often considered by the general public as impossible to house. The Housing First model has shown time and again, however, that not only is it feasible to end homelessness for people who have been living on the streets or in shelters for years but it makes economic sense, as many of these individuals cost taxpayers millions of dollars in multiple, expensive public services while they often continue to languish without homes and with no positive outcomes through other program models.

For example, in the traditional linear model, a person with chemical dependency would be required to become sober before receiving assistance in obtaining a home. Yet without the stability of a safe, dignified place to live, it can be exceedingly difficult for a person to overcome their unique barriers. Thus many people remain trapped in the homelessness cycle, unable to develop the skills necessary to escape their circumstances. Housing First has changed this and the results have been encouraging, as hundreds of formerly homeless residents in Hennepin County have obtained and maintained housing with assistance from the program, then successfully addressed personal barriers such as mental illness and chemical dependency.

An, a refugee in his mid-40s who suffers from persistent mental illness, had stayed at Catholic Charities' Secure Waiting shelter in downtown Minneapolis for more than 7 years since he migrated to the United States. During that time, he was unable to work and was not connected with any benefits due to the severity of his mental illness and poor English language skills. He lost all of his identification, including his immigration papers. After several years of unsuccessful attempts by Catholic Charities staff to engage him, outreach worker John Petroskas offered to assist An in accessing General Assistance. With additional help from the Multicul-

tural Assistance unit at Century Plaza, An was able to begin receiving the benefits for which he was eligible.

Although he had received help from Catholic Charities and made several steps forward in his life, An was still hesitant to enter the Housing First program as a result of deep-seated insecurities rooted in his mental illness, as well as the institutionalization that often occurs to people who have spent many years of their life in shelter. However, through the use of photographs that depicted potential housing opportunities, John was able to coax An to feel comfortable enough to make the decision to move from shelter to independent living. After the move, John helped connect An with a psychiatrist and he began taking much needed medication for his mental illness. He also visited a doctor for the first time in many years and began treatment for a debilitating physical illness. An then quickly agreed to apply for SSI and he was approved through John's assistance in the application process. A professional payee now handles An's SSI benefits, which are sufficient to pay full rent without subsidy from Catholic Charities. An was able to replace his immigration documents, obtain a new state ID and social security card, and turned in an application for public housing, for which he is currently on the waiting list. His mental health symptoms have improved greatly during his time in the Housing First program. Catholic Charities' Housing First team will continue to work with An for as long as he desires, even after he eventually moves into public housing.

"People who knew him when he was homeless are quite surprised by how much his life has improved, and how fast," said Petroskas. "He is really a great guy and it has been wonderful to watch him come out of the fog of homelessness and rejoin the broader community. I am hopeful things will continue to go well for him."

University of Minnesota Humphrey Institute Study of Housing First in Hennepin County

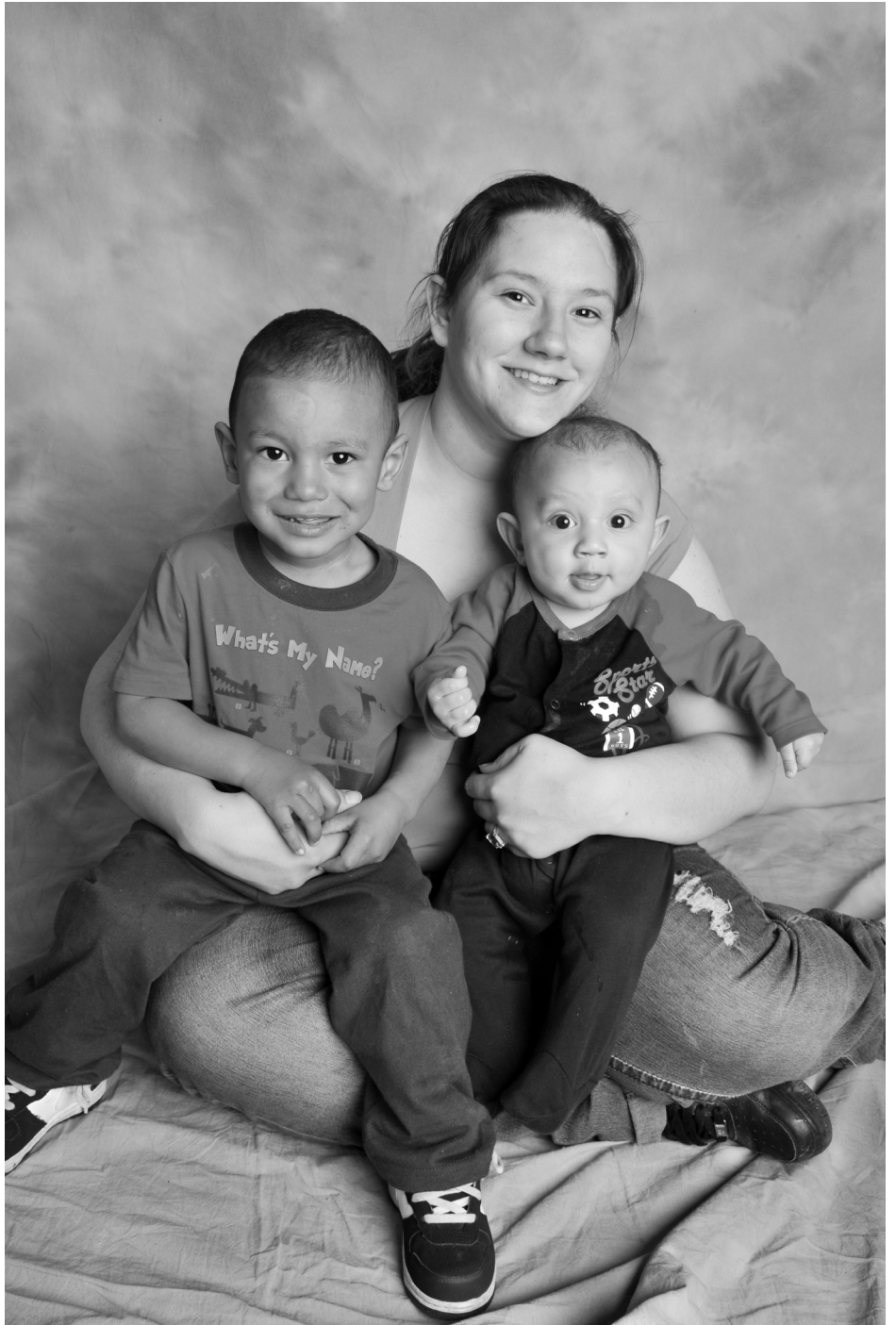
An evaluation of the county's Housing First program was conducted by the University of Minnesota Humphrey Institute in the spring of 2009. They examined shelter usage for 444 adults along with a matched comparison group. Their key findings were:

- Housing First participants' shelter use dramatically decreased after housing placement.
 - The program increased the number of days and the continuity of health care coverage.
 - The Housing First program contributed to a decrease in arrests in the 12 months post-placement when compared to pre-placement levels.
 - The Housing First program did not reduce the percentage of long-term or frequent shelter users.
- Placement into housing had a positive effect on participants' feelings of safety and well-being.
 - The transition to housing posed challenges related to new daily activities and a changing social environment.
 - The location of initial placement for many participants changed.
 - Participants noted their respective case managers provided a great deal of support before, during, and after the move into housing.
 - Transportation was a significant challenge that affected prospects for jobs, access to health care, and general well-being for participants after placement.

PHOTO(?)

STEVI

My name is Stevi, I'm 21, and I stayed at Mary's Place shelter. I became homeless because I decided to move to Minnesota from Kentucky. It was two years ago. I don't know why I moved. I guess I'm motivated. To do better, to get better things, you know. One thing I'm proud of is I graduated high school. The only one since my grandmother and I come from a huge family. I don't know what else to say. It's hard. Shoot, it is hard. It sucks. I'm sorry, I don't want to cry.



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University of Minnesota School of Social Work Research on Refugee Homelessness

Addressing the unique barriers that face homeless refugees is an important action step for Heading Home Hennepin. Over the past several years, roughly 3,000 refugees have settled in Hennepin County each year. They often arrive with a limited support network, limited English language skills, unrecognized credentials and few marketable skills. To inform strategies on working with refugees, the University of Minnesota School of Social Work provided a faculty member and several graduate students to conduct research among refugees, both those with housing and those experiencing homelessness. The key research findings from their work are:

- There are significant ethnic differences in the ways refugee groups respond to housing instability. Culture matters.
- Refugees who first moved in with a relative had less housing stability than those placed in their own apartment upon arrival.
- Those whose first housing was less stable received more forms of public assistance and those services did help stabilize their housing long-term.
- Those whose current housing is less stable tend to have more mental health issues, less social capital or social networks, and use less public assistance.

- Larger families have more housing instability.
- A housing crisis pushes refugees to seek more formal help both within their ethnic group and with non-ethnic social service and government agencies.

The Minnesota Council of Churches received funding from Hennepin County and The McKnight Foundation to work with refugees who were experiencing homelessness or at risk of losing their housing. The two-year program (2007-2008) provided rent subsidies and case management to refugee families to stabilize housing, increase income and keep families and children engaged with school. The program was re-funded with HPRP funds in fall 2009. Initial findings from the pilot include:

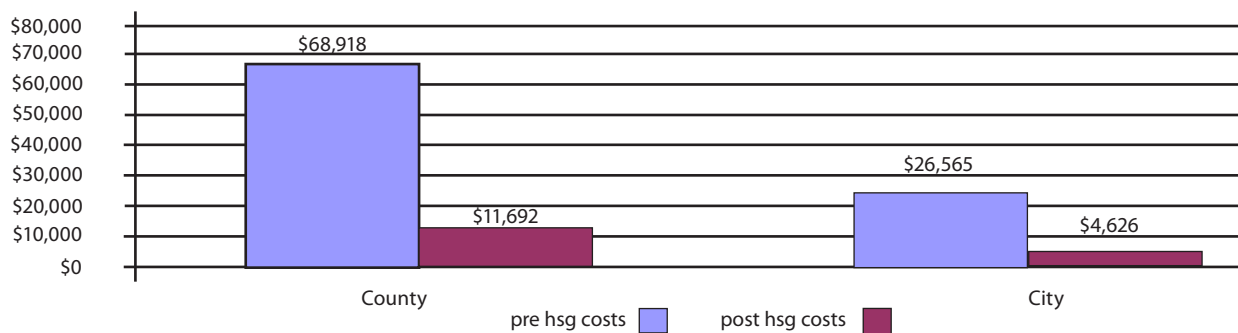
- 70 families were served in the two year period. 98 percent remained in housing during the program.
- 83 percent of families increased their income and for those families, the average increase was 63 percent within the first six months. This was due to an increase in employment.
- Those who completed the pilot received a rental subsidy for 6.3 months, on average.
- 97 percent of families surveyed with school age children showed positive engagements in their children's school.

Housing cont.

Frequent User Service Enhancement (FUSE): In 2007, Hennepin County conducted a study which found that 266 individuals used approximately 70,000 nights of stay in shelter, jail and detox over five years, costing taxpayers \$4.2 million. In partnership with Hennepin County, St. Stephen's Human Services, a local nonprofit agency, created the Frequent User Service Enhancement (FUSE) program. FUSE began operation in March 2008 and recruited over 50 people through 2009. The program targets people who are high users of both the single adult shelter system and the criminal justice system. It follows a housing first model. The program focuses on reducing the involvement of criminal justice and other government systems that provide emergency services to people experiencing homelessness. As a preliminary examination of FUSE, six participants who had been placed in housing for more than one year were studied to determine their systems use in the year prior to housing as compared to their year post-housing. Use and costs for the Adult Detention Center, Adult Correctional Facility, county-paid shelter, county-paid detox, and HCMC Emergency Department were also examined. The six participants used \$95,000 in services in the year prior to housing. In the year post-housing, they used \$16,000 in services, for a savings of \$13,000 per person.

An evaluation of FUSE was also conducted by the University of Minnesota. Completed in April 2010, the study found that shelter use and criminal justice involvement declined once participants entered the program. There was a 43 percent reduction in shelter nights and a 39 percent reduction in jail nights. The researchers compared FUSE participants to a similar cohort of potential participants who used shelter and jail. They found that there was a significantly larger decline in shelter nights among FUSE participants versus the comparison group. They found, however, that criminal justice involvement declined for both the comparison and FUSE group and that the FUSE participants didn't decrease their criminal justice involvement more than the comparison group. This may reflect a general decline in criminal activity in downtown Minneapolis, a change in police practice, or the combination of other Heading Home Hennepin programs targeting shelter users, such as Street Outreach and the COHR/Housing First programs. It may also reflect the success of probation, as the comparison group like the FUSE group received probation services after release from jail. There is no way to determine whether any of the people selected for the comparison group were served by other HHH-related programs.

**Gov't Costs for Six FUSE Participants 1 Year Pre- and Post-Housing
(includes jail, workhouse, detox, HCMC-ED, and shelter)**



Combined Days of Service Use Pre-Housing

ACF	jail book	jail days	detox	shelter	ED	Total
464	19	185	46	397	28	1139

Combined Days of Service Use Post-Housing

ACF	jail book	jail days	detox	shelter	ED	Total
0	7	24	1	0	23	55

Housing cont.

HUD-VASH: The Federal Government has made a commitment to end homelessness among Veterans in the next five years. As a part of this commitment, the Department of Housing and Urban Development, in partnership with Veterans' Affairs and local Public Housing Authorities, have issued 30,000 Housing Choice Vouchers (Section 8) to veterans who are homeless or at risk of chronic homelessness. Minneapolis Public Housing Authority has received 155 of these vouchers as of fall 2010. These vouchers are attached to a VA case manager who works with veterans to ensure stable housing and help with daily living activities such as shopping, accessing benefits, banking and money management etc., if needed. While implementation was slow at first, collaboration with community housing providers has helped to issue all 155 vouchers to veterans to ensure secure housing for veterans and their families.

Host Homes: Hennepin County supports a Host Home program. This program provides a safe place for gay/lesbian/bisexual/transgender youth to live with host families while they prepare for independent living. There are 23 host homes across the metro area, and they have served 25 youth in the last three years. The homes are being expanded in suburban Hennepin and the population is being expanded to include all youth at risk of homelessness.

GRH for Youth: GRH funds have not historically been used for youth even though some youth may be eligible for the program. GRH funds are used for people with disabilities who are unable to work, and there are few youth who fit this category who

aren't already involved in other support programs. Finnegan's Irish Amber donated \$25,000 for start-up funds for a case manager to work with homeless youth with disabilities and Freeport West operates the contract to house these youth in scattered site apartments.

Nicollet Square: Nicollet Square, a 42-unit permanent supportive housing center, opened in late 2010. The target populations are youth aging out of foster care and youth who are experiencing long-term homelessness. YouthLink is the service provider and Plymouth Neighborhood Foundation is in charge of building management responsibilities. The program is working to develop on-site employment and training opportunities for some of its residents.

24/7 Scattered Site Housing for Youth: Youth aging out of foster care can participate in experiential apartment living as a transition to adulthood. Hennepin County subsidizes the rent and provides a life coach, contracted from The Bridge for Runaway Youth or the YMCA. Youth work on independent living skills and can obtain support funded by Adult Rehabilitation and Mental Health Services (ARMHS) medical assistance. This program is also supported by a three-year grant from the Andrus Family Fund, which also funds The Bridge's Transition Training for staff. This program is being expanded by 7-10 slots for young adults exiting mental health treatment centers who would otherwise be discharged to homelessness.

The Currie Avenue Housing Partnership

The Currie Avenue Partnership (CAP) is a private-public collaboration to house single adults staying at Currie Avenue shelters who have disabilities and are eligible for Group Residential Housing. The program officially began on May 15, 2010, once all housing case managers were hired. Funds raised from private individuals, the Downtown Congregations to End Homelessness, and the Downtown Business Council totalled more than \$350,000 and were sufficient to hire ten housing case managers with the goal of housing 150 people in 6-9 months. The project is on track and 150 individuals will be housed from Currie Avenue shelters by early 2011.

- Two undergraduate students at the University of Minnesota did background research on issues related to the Currie Avenue Partnership. One student analyzed police encounter data for people identifying themselves as homeless in downtown Minneapolis. The student found that the majority of arrests were related to alcohol and drugs (38 percent) or "life" crimes (17 percent) which included public urination, trespassing, and begging or panhandling. Overall, 91 percent of the crimes committed by people with no permanent address were non-violent, non-property related crimes. The student also found from police interviews that the majority of people cited for these types of crime had housing. Alcohol and drug crimes, as well as "life" crimes, are not committed, for the most part, by people who are homeless.
- The second student looked at the issue of panhandling and jurisdictional responses to it. The student found that studies have shown that people feel uncomfortable around panhandling because there is a general sense that it erodes feelings of safety and increases crime. While there is no evidence that panhandling

actually adds to crime, the student found that most jurisdictions respond to panhandling with ordinances that criminalize it. These ordinances have proven to be ineffective. The student analyzed results from a survey conducted in summer 2009 with 58 current or former panhandlers. She found that two-thirds reported that they were homeless and 28 percent were housed (5 percent didn't answer). She also found that an overwhelming majority said that they started panhandling when they lost a job, needed money, lost their housing, or became too ill or disabled to work. When asked what would make them stop panhandling, the majority said a job, money or government assistance.

- A capstone class from the Humphrey Institute examined the nature of the CAP collaboration between the business community, faith community, service providers, and Heading Home Hennepin. They found that all partners understood and agreed with the primary goal of the partnership: to house 150 people with disabilities experiencing homelessness in six to nine months. Each member of the partnership, however, had disparate goals that brought them to the collaborative. For the business community, it was the potential for improvement in downtown livability issues. For the faith community, it was the hope that, through these newly formed relationships, there would be future collaboration that could lead to more people being housed. For the service providers, there was an expectation that overcrowding at Currie Avenue shelters would decline and conditions in the shelters would improve. The capstone advised Heading Home Hennepin to focus on the implementation of the program and relate its narrative and results to the greater community.

Housing cont.

A Currie Avenue Partnership Story

Jacqueline lived at Sally's Place—Salvation Army's Harbor Light shelter for women—for 10 years. She would return, night after night, in need of a bed and a place to stay. During this period of long-term homelessness, Jacqueline was also diagnosed with breast cancer, and struggled to battle the disease while living without the comfort, safety and refuge of a home of her own. Shortly before completing chemotherapy, she was finally able to move into a new apartment through the CAP program. Jacqueline had a mastectomy after moving in and then completed radiation treatment. She is now considered to be in full remission by her doctor and her general day-to-day life has greatly improved since obtaining permanent housing. Now that her cancer treatments are complete, she has begun to receive ongoing medical care with a primary physician. Despite facing the diagnosis of a thyroid condition, inflammatory arthritis in her feet and hands, hypertension, and the recent discovery that her IQ is approximately 80 points, Jacqueline reports that her new apartment is the nicest place she has ever lived and this is the happiest that her life has ever been.

PHOTO(?)

Self-Support

The fourth goal of the plan is to build people's capacity to support themselves with increased income including benefit assistance where appropriate, or living wage jobs. People experiencing homelessness are often isolated from mainstream resources that help to obtain the education and employment needed to afford a place to live.

Employment Pilot: The primary strategy of this goal is to provide employment services that work with people experiencing homelessness, noting the unique barriers to a job that come with not having a stable place to live. The employment committee received funding in 2010 for a pilot project, providing job counseling, training, and after-placement support at the Adult Opportunity Center, which opened in November 2010. Funding from the City of Minneapolis and the United Way will help leverage federal dollars through the Food Support Employment and Training (FSET) program. The program has an evaluation component built in, with former users of the Branch III center (where the Adult Opportunity Center is housed) as a comparison group.

Youth Employment: Hennepin County has a SELF grant to direct employment resources to youth aging out of foster care. The grant funds an employment specialist from HIRED to co-locate

and work with a transition specialist to make youth job ready. A private donor through the Minneapolis Foundation provided funds in 2010 for soft-skills training provided by Empower. In 2009, this program worked with 53 young people. 87 percent got a job paying more than \$7.00 per hour and the average wage was \$8.16 per hour.

Tax Credits: Another strategy for this goal is to help low-income families and individuals receive federal and state benefits for which they qualify. United Way's Claim It! program educates low income families on state and federal tax credits and provides free tax preparation services to low income people. The Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) averages \$1,700 per family but can go as high as \$4,800 per family. The state's Working Family Credit (WFC) provides approximately \$500 per family. In Hennepin County, the number of EITC claims grew from 55,742 in 2006 to 61,827 in 2008, for an 11 percent increase.

Transportation Costs: Homeless Against Homelessness and the Human Rights Program at St. Stephens Human Services led an organizing effort that resulted in legislation allowing for 20 homeless serving agencies to purchase bus tokens for clients at 50 percent of their face value.

JESSICA

My name is Jessica. I'm 20 years old. Safe House is six kids and we are all twenty and under. It's better than the street.

I had an apartment for a year and then I had another one, but my fiancé who I lived with, we split rent together and he joined the Marines, so he left and I lost my job and became homeless.

I'm getting married this month and I am moving to Florida. I will be living on a Marine base until he gets stationed and then we will probably end up going to Japan. Wherever the Marines send him, I get to go. Better than the street.

I was thinking about joining the Army Reserves – was actually at my recruiter the other day and took my pre-test that they take. I got a 97 out of 99 so I can do any job I want except for three in the Army. They will pay for my school and I can still live with my--who will be my husband in, like, twenty days at the courthouse. Two of our friends are witnesses. No family, just us.

I don't give up, no matter what happens 'cuz it's worthless to sit on your butt and do nothing. Just gotta keep fighting.



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Systems Improvements

The fifth goal of the plan is to improve the delivery of services to people experiencing homelessness. This includes increasing the accessibility of services through Opportunity Centers, where a wide variety of services are co-located and available year-round. It also includes creating funding for systems navigators for specific populations—such as veterans, refugees, or young mothers—who have unique barriers preventing them from escaping homelessness.

Project Homeless Connect: Hennepin County and Minneapolis have hosted ten Project Homeless Connect (PHC) events since 2005. PHC transforms the Minneapolis Convention Center into a one-stop service center, addressing the numerous and complex barriers that prevent homeless individuals

from finding lasting employment and securing safe, stable housing. PHC unites 125 separate service agencies, providing a continuum of wraparound services that include mental and chemical health care, employment training and placement, comprehensive medical and dental care, haircuts, ID assistance, and voicemail services. On average, over 400 service providers and 1,000 volunteers help between 1,500 and 2,100 individuals obtain services at each event. Guests are partnered with volunteers to identify and access necessary resources, explore previously unobtained benefits, and eat lunch together. Project Homeless Connect has consistently been proven to be a service delivery model that is crucial in eliminating barriers to housing, employment, education, and the myriad other factors that contribute to long-term homelessness.



Project Homeless Connect Demographics			
March 2010			
People served	2044	Housing Status	
Households served	1612	Not currently homeless	39%
Children served	432	- of these - doubled up or living	50%
Single adults with children	22%	First time homeless	23%
Married adults with children	8%	Long-term homeless or multiple	
Unaccompanied youth	2%	Times homeless	30%
Single adults with no children	64%	Services Requested	
Married adults with no children	4%	Housing	
Veteran	10%	Employment	
Disabled	46%	Dental care	
Attended previous PHC in Henn Co.	39%	Eye care	
		State ID	
		Haircut	
		Birth certificate	

Systems Improvements cont.

A Project Homeless Connect Story

When Mark first began attending the City of Minneapolis and Hennepin County Project Homeless Connect (PHC) events, he had been homeless for almost fifteen years. Like most people experiencing homelessness, he had numerous barriers preventing him from finding and maintaining stable housing. Over the course of his first four visits to Project Homeless Connect events, he obtained a multitude of services, including a Rule 25 Chemical Dependency Assessment that resulted in the successful completion of a 28-day treatment program, extensive dental work that continued through subsequent visits to a local dental office, and a medical exam that diagnosed hypertension, for which he has now been taking medication for over 2 years.

As a direct result of services provided at PHC events, Mark has been substance free for more than eighteen months, returned to better health, and been placed into CD supervised transitional housing with an eye on a future apartment of his own.

But his story doesn't end there.

On May 11, 2009, when Mark visited the Minneapolis - Hennepin County Project Homeless Connect for the fifth time, he had only one request, albeit an unusual one. Having lived on the streets for a lengthy portion of his life, he admitted he had not seen his three children for more than twenty years and believed they still lived in the Duluth area, where they grew up, and were likely in their late 20's. Their mother, he said, had also been out of contact with them since they were very young, so other relatives had raised them. With the help of a PHC volunteer at the information desk, Mark was able to locate his oldest daughter via the Google internet search engine. He was overjoyed at the dis-

covery but remained apprehensive about contacting her. Once again his PHC volunteer stepped in to help. During the subsequent telephone call Mark's daughter informed the volunteer that she and her siblings had lost contact with their father decades ago, often wondered as to his whereabouts and well-being, and would be absolutely thrilled to see him again.

While his volunteer called the Greyhound bus company, Mark went to the PHC haircuts area to ensure he looked his best. With the necessary bus information obtained, Mark was advised of several departure times to choose from and given a \$61 check for the fare. Another volunteer familiar with the Duluth area also provided him with the name and address of a local social services professional. Thus, within four hours of arriving at Project Homeless Connect, Mark was on a bus to Duluth to be reunited with his children.

The day after Mark arrived, the social services contact there phoned Mark's PHC volunteer to say that Mark had been to her office and she was able to help provide him with food subsidies and health insurance. She had also begun to search for affordable housing. When last contacted, Mark was staying with his daughter and said the reunion had been wonderful, and he planned on remaining in the Duluth area to live near his rediscovered family.

Systems Improvements cont.

Youth Connect: Patterned after Project Homeless Connect, the youth services community has held three Youth Connect events in Hennepin County. This event brings together youth workers from many agencies to provide services to homeless youth in one location. Hennepin County and Minneapolis are the first communities in the country to host Youth Connect events.

Opportunity Centers: Heading Home Hennepin calls for the creation of Opportunity Centers for singles, families, and youth. In late 2008, Hennepin County awarded grants to Catholic Charities and YouthLink to develop their sites as Opportunity Centers to serve single adults and youth, respectively. Both agencies have recently opened their centers. These service centers are based on the concept of Project Homeless Connect, co-locating multiple services to facilitate breaking down barriers to housing, employment, and self-sufficiency. Each contains multiple services, including housing, employment, mental and physical health care, community resources such as IDs and birth certificates, creative activities, benefits, and direct connection to Hennepin County agencies. Thus the Opportunity Centers also serve as satellites in the County's regionalization plan.

Single Adult Shelter Network: The Shelter Efficiency group identified a need to coordinate services among shelters for shelter guests who use multiple shelter sites. The team developed a shared release form that shelter guests can sign in order to have their case coordinated among all the shelters serving single adults. This collaborative is titled the Single Adult Shelter Network (SASN). The group meets bi-weekly and discusses approximately 15-20 cases each meeting. The group develops a shared plan to help a shelter guest move into appropriate housing or work on eliminating a barrier to housing such as a criminal charge or record, insufficient income, or lack of money to pay a damage deposit. During its first year, the number of SASN clients housed was 12, while there are 7 with housing pending, 14 percent still homeless, and 9 percent with client status unknown. SASN has increased efficiency and reduced redundancy of efforts amongst shelter providers. Youth agencies created their own network, Young Adult Shelter Network (YASN), to accomplish similar coordinated case management.

Young Mothers grant from Phillips Foundation:

In 2009, based on a trend of young mothers staying in shelter, the Jay and Rose Phillips Foundation awarded Heading Home Hennepin a \$75,000 grant to fund an advocate to assist young mothers in obtaining and maintaining housing after leaving shelter. The advocate cooperates with the shelter's rapid exit worker so that once the family leaves shelter the advocate can help connect the mother to programs for education, child care, medical services, and other identified needs. The contract was awarded to St. Anne's Place and services began in May 2010.

Cultural Competency Committee: The Cultural Competency Committee received a grant from the Minneapolis Foundation for their work. The grant funded consultants to develop criteria for measuring the cultural competency of agencies working with people experiencing homelessness and identify appropriate training for agencies. The consultants completed their work in 2010 and a cultural competency inventory tool will be marketed in early 2011.

Downtown Congregations to End Homelessness: In 2008, 11 churches in the downtown Minneapolis area formed a collaborative—the Downtown Congregations to End Homelessness (DCEH). The DCEH has examined the services they can provide to people experiencing homelessness and are reshaping those services to help end homelessness rather than simply assist in managing it. They hired a full time coordinator to manage the collaborative and organize the congregations on public policy discussions. The DCEH was instrumental in the Currie Avenue Partnership, funding 4 of the 10 case managers and helping build relationships with the Downtown Council. The DCEH expanded to include a total of 15 congregations in 2010, with more likely to join in 2011.

Homelessness 101 Trainings: Homelessness 101 is a service provider community collaboration established to educate other service providers and members of the general public about ending homelessness. Over two days, participants learn about the causes of homelessness and trainers provide a history of modern homelessness in Minnesota and the United States. Participants learn about the continuum of care, and the variety of housing

Systems Improvements cont.

and service models our community uses to prevent and end homelessness. Demographic information is provided to depict the homeless population. Tips for working with people experiencing homelessness are offered and best practices for successful advocacy are also covered. Each Homelessness 101 workshop culminates with county and provider specific resources, and tours of shelter & housing programs in the Twin Cities metro area. In 2009, 200 people were trained through this program.

Family Services Network: This network of private and public family shelter providers, rapid exit workers, and child development and school experts have met since 2007. The group exchanges information on shelter processes. They have developed protocols to provide a more seamless array of services for families in shelter and have helped provide

services to the County's overflow shelter at The Drake Hotel. They are researching best practices for services for children experiencing homelessness and have made recommendations for changes in shelter protocols related to access to rapid exit and employment services.

Youth Service Coordination: Hennepin County operated services and youth community case managers meet quarterly to discuss systems improvements to services for youth. This group instigated a policy change that allows homeless youth to obtain a psychological assessment at the County's mental health clinic one day per week, reducing the wait time for an assessment from three months to one week.

PHOTO(?)

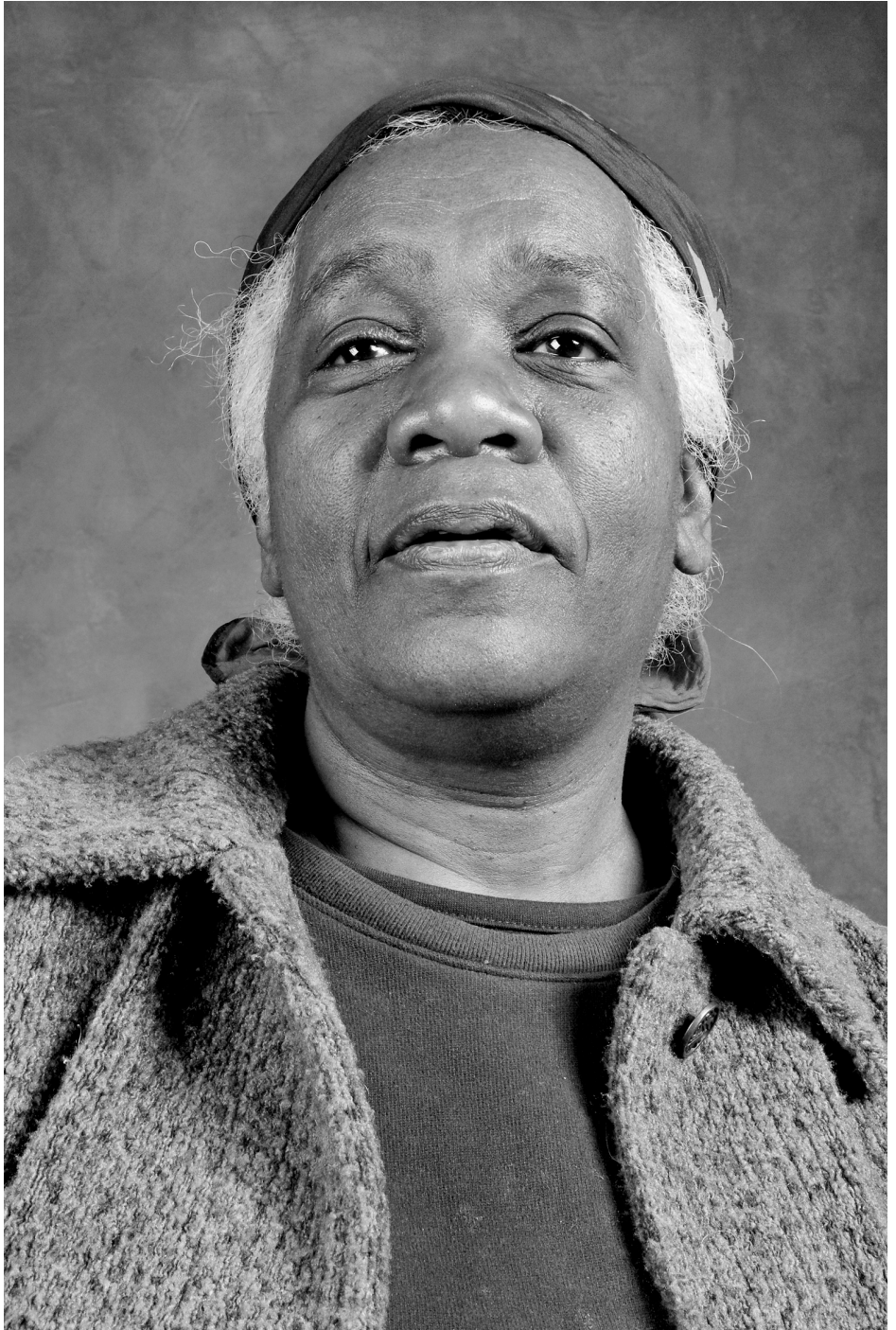
RITA

My name is Rita and I'm 61 years old. Last night I stayed with a friend. I'm kind of in need of permanent housing, something that would make me feel secure and that I can afford. I make a limited income; there's always the insecurity about not knowing if I have enough to pay the rent or sustain the rent for any length of time.

I worked as a mail clerk at the hospital for about 23 years. There's a lot of cutbacks and stuff so I was kind of pushed into early retirement. So I only receive partial benefits and I guess I have to wait until I'm 62 to apply for social security so it makes it really difficult. Even then I know that I would be on a limited income.

I take care of grandchildren all the time so the kind of housing I would want is the type that would permit me to be in the kind of setting where there's not just seniors only, but housing for people who have grandchildren to take care of. I spend 4 hours or more every day taking care of them because I have children that are barely making it themselves and in terms of affordability of child care, it's really difficult.

I'd like people to know that we don't choose to be homeless, that the majority of us have jobs or have had a long history of employment. And that we have the same basic needs that they have or desire. And, you know, that even though we have difficulties doesn't mean that we don't have a need to fit in with the rest of the community. We all want that sense of belonging.



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Next Steps

The Office to End Homelessness held two meetings regarding Heading Home Hennepin in early 2010. At Plymouth Congregational Church on February 22, 2010, we reported on our efforts and the results of our plan's implementation over the first 3 years. The community was joined by Nan Roman, Executive Director of The National Alliance to End Homelessness, who spoke about the recently developed Federal plan to end homelessness. At St. Mary's Orthodox Church on March 10, 2010, we held a community working meeting to follow up on the 3-year report. The purpose of the working meeting was to re-evaluate the 10-year plan, develop new ideas, provide focus for the next several years of implementation, and re-energize our collective efforts.

- **Prevention:** The highest priorities going forward included improving services for ex-offenders and youth and adult discharge, as well as targeting and measuring current prevention efforts. Other areas of discussion included examining prevention for homeowners and renters who are facing foreclosure, and continuing to expand FHPAP.
- **Outreach:** Conversations supported a broader outreach effort, such as connecting people to mental health resources, developing culturally specific outreach efforts, and leveraging the work of volunteers to assist with outreach. Strengthening mental health resources was identified as an important new area to develop, along with leveraging more funding for street outreach, examining local ordinances that criminalize homelessness, developing a public education campaign and conducting outreach in suburban Hennepin to reach hidden homelessness.
- **Housing:** The community identified several new areas of focus including creating programs for people transitioning from GRH housing to market rate housing, exploring options for providing housing and services for undocumented workers, creating a more comprehensive housing continuum for youth (including shelter, host homes, and permanent supportive housing), creating an outreach and housing mechanism for homeless seniors and veterans, improving efforts for matching participant needs with appropriate resources, providing housing and supports for ex-offenders, using volunteers to help provide informal community supports, expanding rapid exit to include domestic violence shelters, and educating the greater community about homelessness and how to end it.
- **Self-Support:** Increasing employment opportunities will be a focus moving forward and action steps that were suggested in this area include partnering with the Department of Vocational Rehab and creating an employment program that collaborates with GRH. Many ideas and action steps arose during community discussion on strategies to increase youth employment opportunities, such as developing an internship pilot with stipends, expanding traditional employment and social enterprise opportunities, and researching other models of youth employment initiatives. Two new focus areas surrounding education were identified by the community including the need for educational opportunities and placing an emphasis on people utilizing these opportunities, and a life skills mentorship program that would allow those who have become stable to mentor and teach basic life skills to others who are experiencing homelessness or newly housed.
- **Systems Improvement:** The major discussion item was developing more service funding for the entire continuum of services. The community agreed that this requires immediate focus and priority should be placed on developing an inventory map, creating flexible mental health services identified as best practices, a drop-in center for youth, and supporting children with early childhood education.