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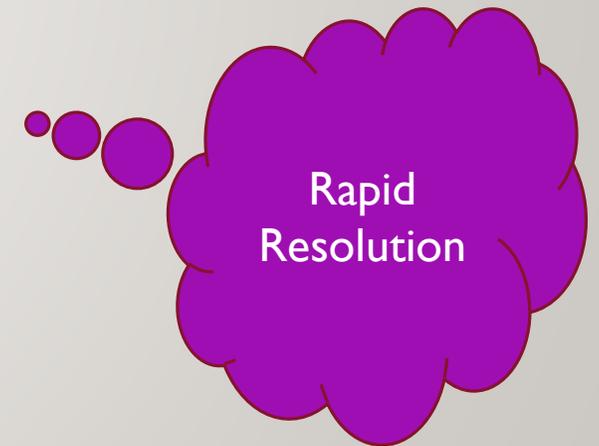
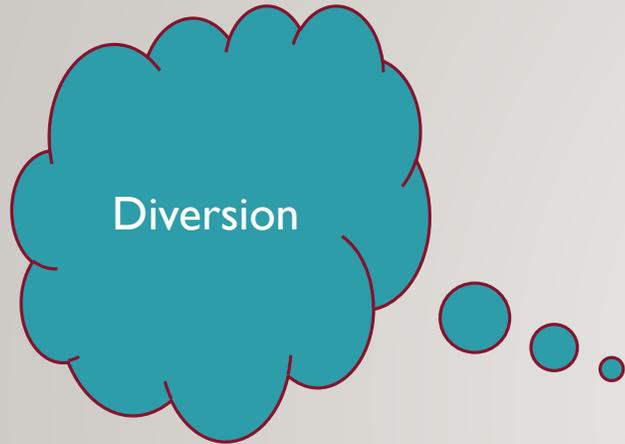
Innovative Practices in Housing Problem-Solving

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SESSION OVERVIEW

- Basics of Housing Problem-Solving
 - Alphabet Soup
 - Key Elements and Components
 - Using HUD Funding
- Innovative Approaches
 - Seattle, WA
 - Montgomery County, PA
 - Washington, DC
 - Columbus, OH
 - San Francisco, CA

ALPHABET SOUP OF HOUSING PROBLEM-SOLVING

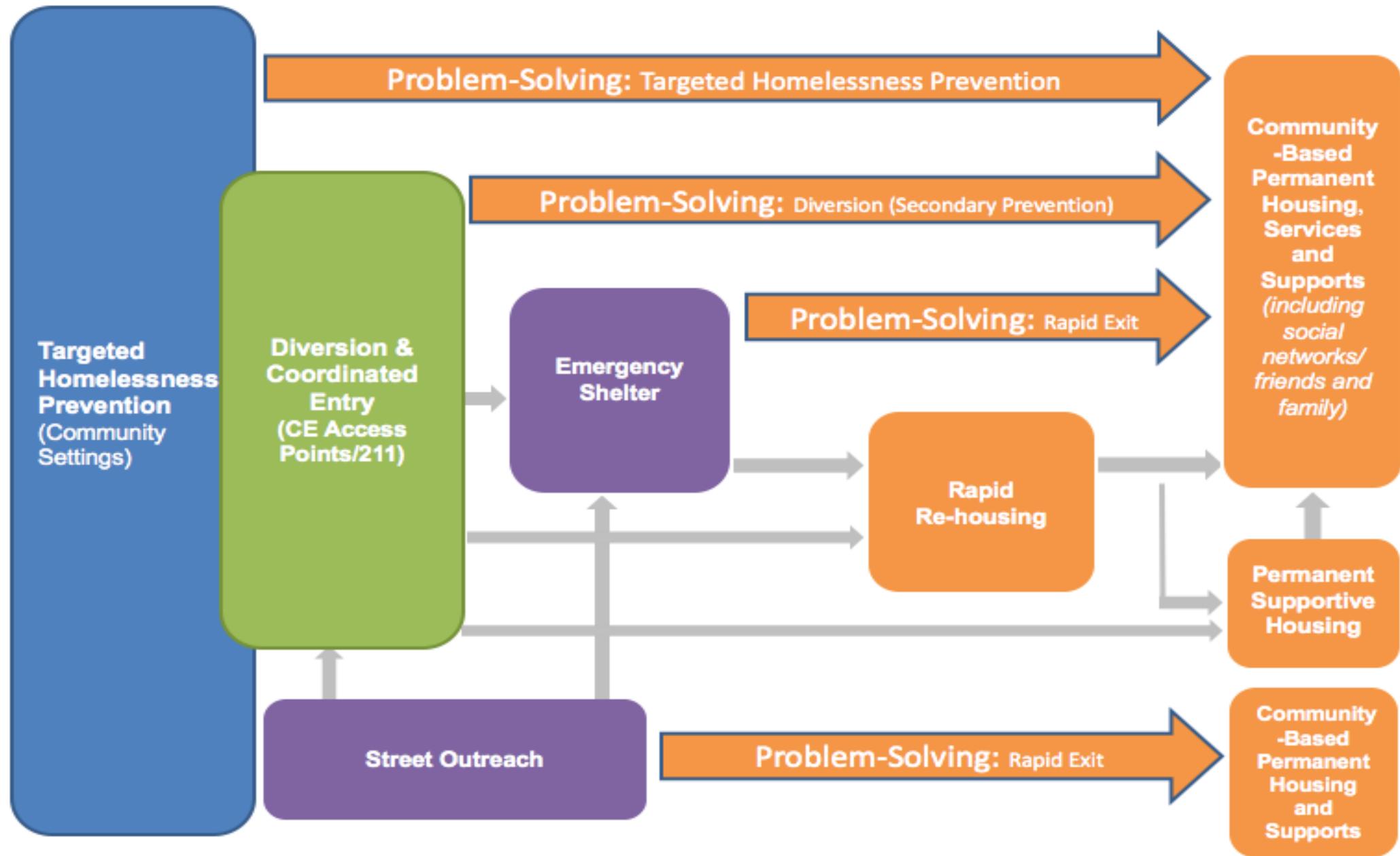


HOUSING PROBLEM- SOLVING IS....

A **practice** that involves strengths-based conversations to empower households and help them to remain in current housing or to identify alternative housing options either to avoid homelessness or to exit homelessness as quickly as possible. An approach to client-engagement.

A SYSTEM WIDE APPROACH

Homeless Crisis Response System



FOUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

#1: Homelessness is a crisis

#2: Choice. Respect.
Empowerment.

The Solution is
Housing

#3: Progressive Engagement

#4: Maximizing Resources

- Housing problem-solving can be integrated into any community
- Can be tailored in each community based on local coordinated entry setup and available resources
- Housing problem-solving can be utilized for diversion and rapid exit interventions for most households not prioritized for more intensive housing and service options
- Ideally, housing problem-solving is integrated as part of a progressive engagement response

NO ONE-
SIZE-FITS-ALL

CONTINUOUS ENGAGEMENT

- Problem-solving strategies may need to happen **more than** once, twice, etc.
 - **NOT** an event or one-time service
- Use a **progressive engagement** approach and consider:
 - Increased engagement of problem-solving and connection to supports
- Determine how to access deeper housing resources and assist with access



KEY COMPONENTS AND COSTS

SERVICES

- Case management
- Crisis resolution
- Family reunification
- Housing search and navigation
- Connection to mainstream resources
- Mediation
- Transportation
- Certifications/license for employment

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Rental Arrears	Utility Arrears	Short-Term Rental Assistance	Application Fees	Background/Credit Checks
Moving Truck	Storage	First/Last months rent	Security Deposit	Supplies (i.e., furniture, kitchen utensils)
Food/groceries	Cash assistance	Utilities	Relocation Assistance	Obtaining birth certificate and other ID

CoC Program Funding and Housing Problem-Solving

ESG and ESG-CV Program Funding and Housing Problem-Solving

Eligible Activity	SSO-CES	SSO-Other	RRH	Street Outreach	Emergency Shelter	Hmless Prevention	Rapid Re-Housing
Diversion	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Rapid Exit	X	X	X	X	X		X
Case Management	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Transportation		X	X	X	X		
Vocational Certifications & Licenses		X	X		X		
Food		X	X		X		
Legal Services		X	X		X	X	X
Rent & Utility Arrears			X			X	X
Security Deposit			X			X	X
Short-Term Rental Assistance			X			X	X
Application Fees			X			X	X
Background/Credit Check			X		X	X	X
Moving Expenses			X			X	X
Storage			X			X	X
First/Last Month's Rent			X			X	X
Utilities			X			X	X
Obtaining ID's and Birth Certificate			X		X	X	X
Mediation						X	

STAFFING



Various ways that communities can increase staff capacity to implement problem-solving



There may be new, dedicated staff or existing staff adopt housing problem-solving approach



Staff implementing problem-solving may include:

- ✓ Case managers
- ✓ Outreach Workers
- ✓ Call Center Staff
- ✓ Diversion Specialist
- ✓ Coordinated Entry Staff

SHIFT IN APPROACH

FROM

TO

Assessment of need and vulnerability

Problem-solving conversations focused on strengths and resources

Intake & put on waitlist

Crisis resolution to avoid/reduce homelessness

“Are you willing to enter shelter?”

“What can we do to keep you from needing to enter shelter?”

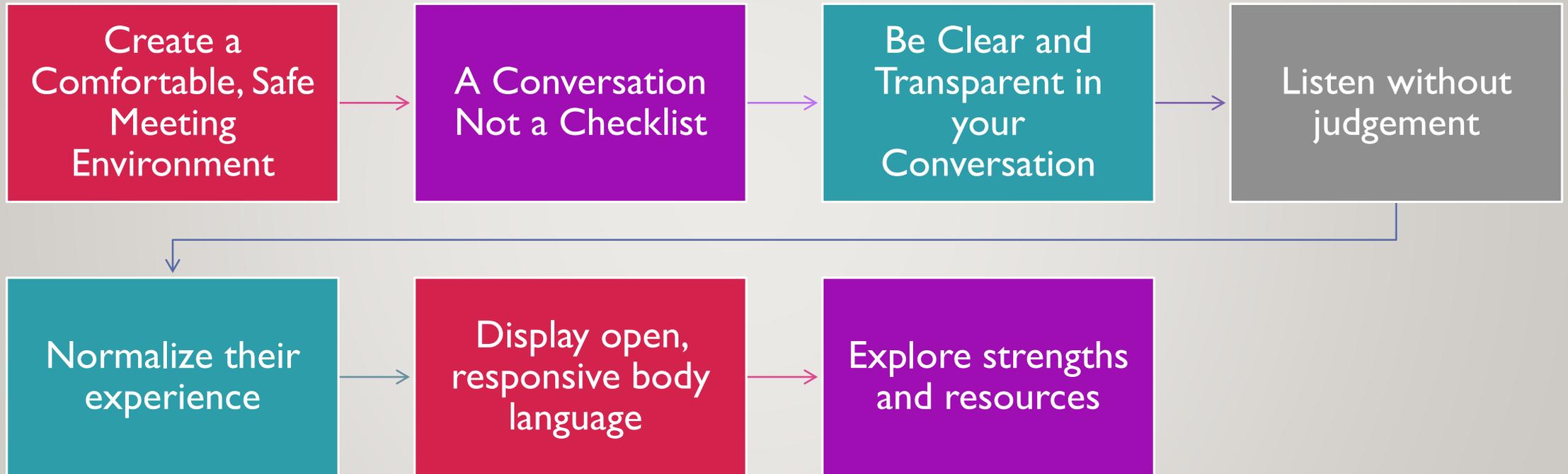
Focus on determining what programs client is eligible for

Focus on determining what will resolve crisis

One-time conversation at intake

Ongoing conversations until housed

BEST PRACTICES IN PROBLEM-SOLVING CONVERSATIONS



COMMUNITY EXAMPLES

SEATTLE/KING COUNTY, WASHINGTON

Component	
Funding Sources	Private, city, and county funding
Community Partners	Africatown International is contracted to provide the fiscal administration of the Centralized Diversion Fund
Activities Funded	Mediation, family reunification, housing location, crisis resolution, flexible financial assistance, diversion staffing
Community Linkages	Mainstream benefits and broad community supports
Conversation Approaches	Occurs at any entry point of the crisis response system
Participating	Staff are trained to have diversion conversations by diversion coaches who include individuals with lived experience of homelessness.
Key Takeaways	Central Diversion Fund helped to scale up diversion and promote equity in access to resources. The expertise of diversion coaches (including people with lived experience) needs to be adequately compensated.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY, PA

Component	
Funding Sources	Continuums of Care (CoCs), Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG), state and local grants, private funds
Community Partners	Legal Aid of Southeastern Pennsylvania, Pennsylvania Housing Affordability and Rehabilitation Enhancement fund
Activities Funded	Call center staff, shelter case management, outreach, direct client assistance, rapid rehousing lite
Community Linkages	Linkages to tenants' rights advocacy, mediation services, and legal aid
Conversation Approaches	Homeless hotline, street outreach, shelter
Participating	Five trained call center staff, five outreach workers, case managers at emergency shelter
Key Takeaways	Leadership identified staffing as a primary operational expense. It is critical to fund time and intensity of services, not just financial assistance. Even so, this approach can be difficult as few funders want to pay for staff time

WASHINGTON, DC

Component	
Funding Sources	Local public funding
Community Partners	Four community-based HPP providers offer prevention services while the central intake for families at risk of homelessness is provided by the Department of Human Services at the Virginia Williams Family Resource Center (VWFRC)
Activities Funded	Case management, mediation, family reunification, housing location, direct client assistance, central intake/assessment staff, prevention program staff
Community Linkages	Public benefits/child and family services, employment/education, upstream emergency rental assistance, legal aid, food banks, budgeting/credit repair/financial wellness workshops, connection to mental health services, parenting workshops
Conversation Approaches	Initial conversations take place at the central point of intake for families to determine initial eligibility for homeless services
Participating	Families engage with community HPP partners to receive a range of services
Key Takeaways	The HPP was introduced to provide alternatives to shelter placement to ultimately slow the rate of shelter placement through redesign of the intake process. Measuring the success of the HPP process has been focused on reduced rates of shelter entry and returns to the system. DC has intentionally not set targets for diversion at intake to ensure families are not disincentivized to ask for, and ultimately get connected to, services they need

COLUMBUS, OH

Component	
Funding Sources	ESG, Local Grants
Community Partners	Prevent Family Homelessness Collaborative, DCFS
Activities Funded	Call center staff, diversion specialists, direct client assistance, case management, housing search, mediation
Community Linkages	Linkages to employment & benefits referral & support, legal services, life skills training, mental health services, substance abuse services, pregnancy and parenting services, DV services
Conversation Approaches	Homeless hotline, in-person (families only)
Participating	Staff Trained at hotline center do first attempt Secondary diversion assistance operated by a community partner (families only)
Key Takeaways	Developed a typology of risk that has provided common language for community partners to discuss housing insecurity. Typology provides an understanding of the current urgency of crises, distinguishes who is responsible for people at various stages of housing instability and catalogs the different resources available to the household based on their situation

SAN FRANCISCO, CA

Component	
Funding Sources	State and local funding
Community Partners	Homeward Bound, CalWorks, Homeless Prevention and Eviction Programs, Season of Sharing
Activities Funded	Fiscal administration, training, staffing, mediation, family reunification, crisis resolution, limited financial assistance
Community Linkages	Linkages to public benefits, legal aid, Season of Sharing
Conversation Approaches	Coordinated Entry access points, outreach (mobile access points), temporary shelter
Participating	Staff Trained at hotline center do first attempt Secondary diversion assistance operated by a community partner (families only)
Key Takeaways	Problem Solving is defined by even one day outside of the homeless system is a success. Problem-solving is not a one-time intervention and instead, can be available on multiple occasions and there are no limits to the number of times a person or household may access a problem-solving conversation or related service

