

Staying Housed: Tools and Strategies for Prevention



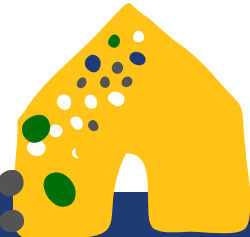
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Department of
HOUSING

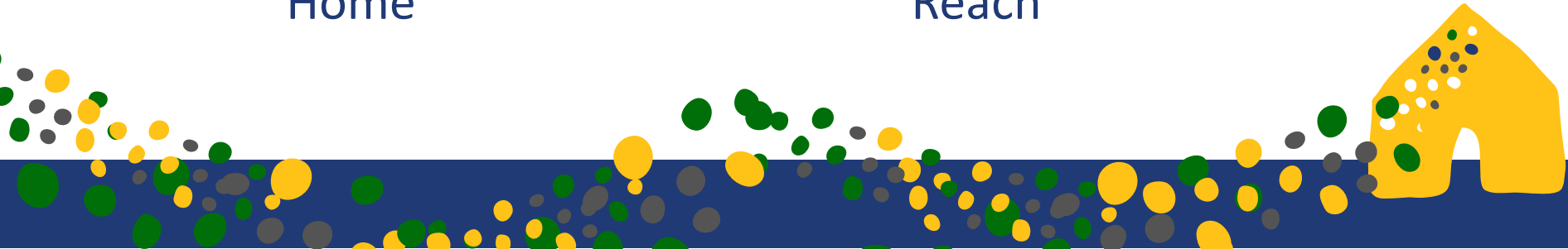


United Way of Connecticut



Staying Housed: Tools and Strategies for Prevention

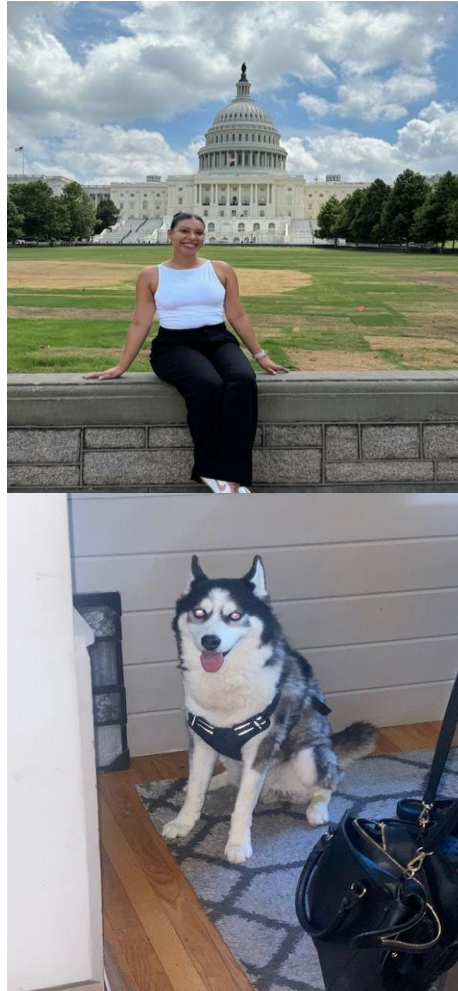
- Adriana Negron, Journey Home
- Kellyann Day, New Reach



Staying Housed

**Tools and Strategies for Coordinating Homeless
Prevention**

Today's Speaker



Adriana Negrón

- Coordinated Homeless Prevention Manager at Journey Home
- Areas of focus: Upstream Prevention, Re-Entry, Landlord Engagement & Advocacy
- Fun fact: I am a dog mom; I enjoy spending time with my family and attending community events

Journey Home

WHAT WE DO



Journey Home has spent more than a decade committed to leading the efforts to end homelessness in Connecticut's Capital Region. We are proud to be the lead agency within the local coordinated assessment systems (called the Greater Hartford and Central Coordinated Access Networks and creator of [A Hand Up](#)).

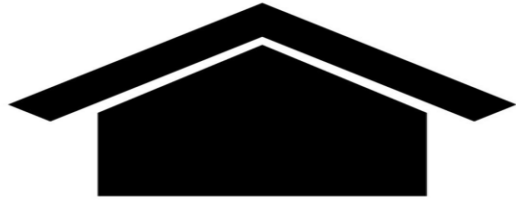
Journey Home works each day:

- To prevent as many people as possible from losing their housing
- To increase the speed at which we find housing for anyone who is already experiencing homelessness
- To help folks move into their homes and provide furnishings and household items
- To help them gain the income and services they need to never become homeless again

Today's Learning Objectives

Participants Will:

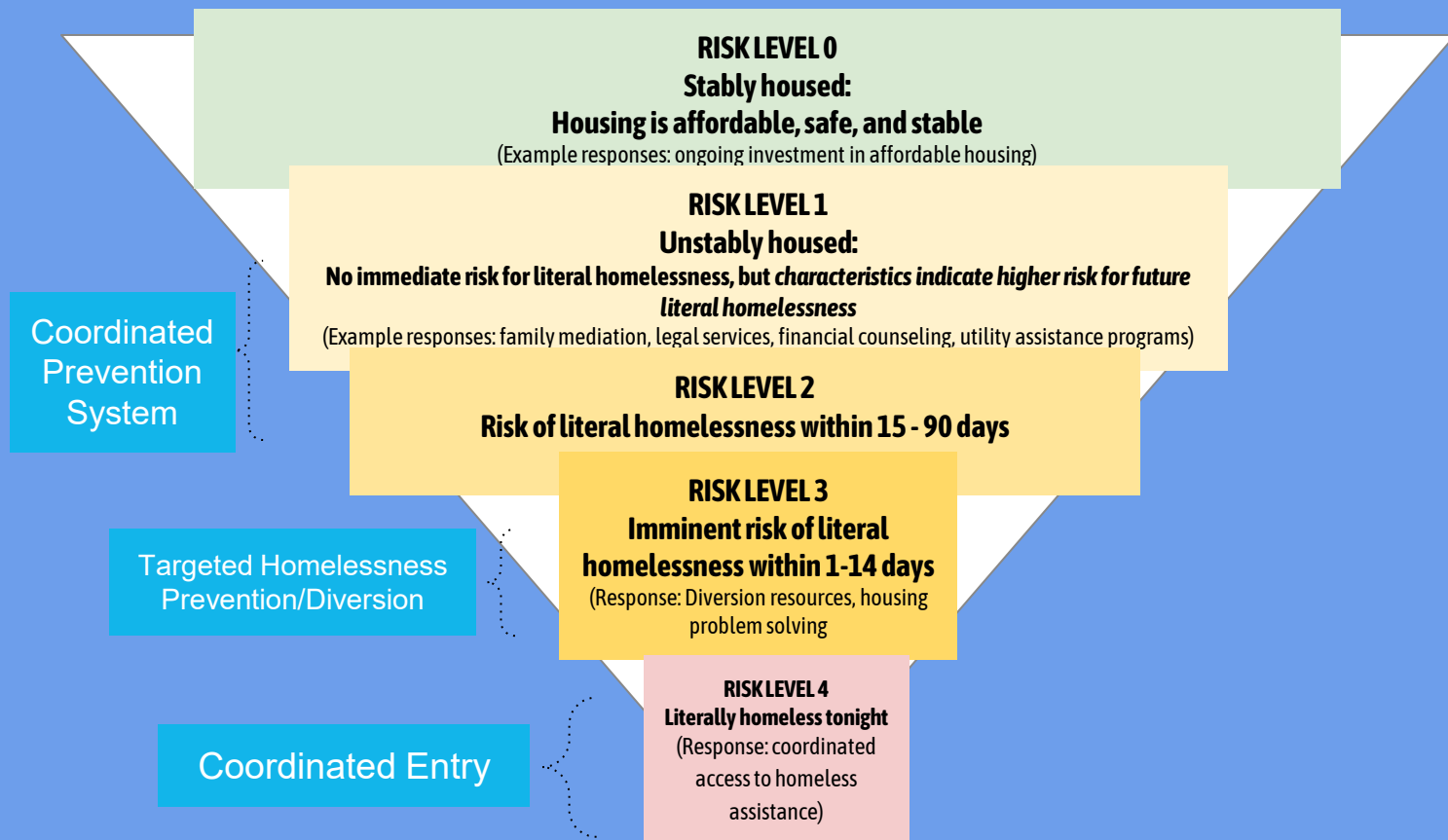
- **Understand Basics of Prevention**
 - Common understanding of Prevention
 - Coordinated Homeless Prevention
 - Who is involved in Coordinated Prevention
- **Prevention Strategies**
 - Landlord engagement
 - North Hartford Housing Trust
 - Homeless Prevention Program
 - Preventing Returns to Homelessness
 - Community Partners
 - Risk Assessment
 - Activity



Understanding Prevention

How Do We Define Homeless Prevention?

Identifying and supporting households experiencing housing insecurity who are not yet at risk of imminent homelessness



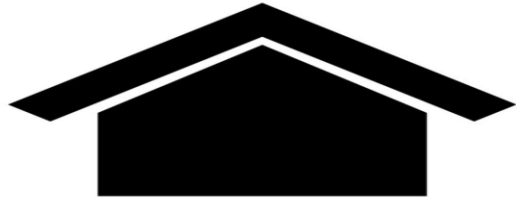
The Foundations of Coordinated Homeless Prevention

- ***Building Leadership & Organizational Capacity***
 - Dedicated Lead Organization, Local Coordinator & Data Lead point-of-contact + initial Working Group (to begin)
 - Formalized diverse, representative **Core Prevention Team with Leaders with Lived Expertise**
- ***Understanding Current State of Prevention***
 - Environmental Scan/Resource Mapping
- ***Using Qualitative & Quantitative Data***
 - Initial inflow investigation - IDENTIFYING BIGGEST DRIVERS - THE DATA ANALYSIS
- ***Moving Toward a Coordinated Prevention Approach***
 - Adopt common definition of Coordinated Prevention
 - Providers test screening, prioritization, access point, referral & training tools
- ***Setting Measurable Goals to Reduce Inflow & Advance Racial Equity***

Who's involved in Coordinated Prevention?

- **YOU**
- Housing case managers
- Workforce Partners
- Legal Aid/ Housing Courts
- Landlord Engagement Specialists
- Mental Health/Substance Use Counselor
- Faith Community
- Grassroots organizations
- Anyone in your community supporting residents





Coordinated Homeless Prevention Strategies

Landlord Engagement

- **Engaging landlords**
 - Grassroot organizations
 - Eviction filings
 - Social media
 - Cold calling
- **Organizing Events**
 - Networking breakfast
 - Luncheons
 - Roundtables
- **Building and maintaining relationships**
 - Identify programs and resources
 - Including landlords in collaboration
- **Methods of communication**
 - In person communication
 - Newsletters/community platforms
 - Communication platforms
 - Phone calls
- **Landlord and tenant supports**
 - Conflict resolution
 - Tenant education
 - Legal assistance
 - Financial assistance



North Hartford Partnership

Goal: How to support private landlords in reducing evictions and increasing housing stability for their tenants

Challenges:

- Hired outside property management company
- Lack of communication between tenant and property management
- Lack of response to tenant complaints
- Tenants struggled to pay rent

Intervention:

- Hired internally for property management role
- Consistent and timely responses
- Monthly case conferencing with landlord and property management
- Newsletters with local resources and community events
- Encouragement
- Collaborative payment agreements

Outcomes:

- 100% Number of current tenants have decreased rental arrears
- \$1,177 is the average amount of rental arrears paid by current tenants
- 59% of current tenants are in arrears
- 65% of tenants are with subsidized housing



Homeless Prevention Programs

Hands on Hartford Neighborhood

Services: We offer referrals, security deposit, utility, and rental assistance, medical and dental resources, training and employment opportunity assistance, nutrition education and health screenings.

Overall referrals since Dec 2024:

- 76 referrals
- Families: 44 Individuals: 30 and youth: 2

High level stats:

- Top three requested needs: Rental Assistance, Security Deposit & Housing Search
- 66% reported to have a previous homeless history

Outcomes:

- Currently there are 38 that are receiving case management and assistance
- 19 clients are currently in the intake process
- How many have entered into homelessness? 0%

Services provided:

- Financial Assistance
- Case management
- Bridging to other services such as workforce development, budgeting classes, education, housing search assistance



Preventing returns to Homelessness

Compassionate Connections to Housing

: A model implemented through Clutch Consulting Group, where we identify an encampment site and work towards securing housing within 30 days.

Program overview:

Since January 2024

- 70 participants
- Average length to housing: 38 - 44 days

What we have achieved together:

- Landlords: 10
- Retained housing: 100%
- At risk: 13% due
- Funding: Utilized ARP, flex and private funds for incentives, renters insurance, risk mitigation

Outcomes:

- Established bi-weekly prevention meetings
- Collaboration and resource sharing between all partners
- Active problem solving
- Eliminating barriers to financial assistance
- Education
- Community support



Community Partners

Working together to prevent homelessness

- **Stronger collaboration and resource coordination**
 - Reduces duplication and increase impact
 - Streamline referrals
 - Aligned goals
- **Advocacy & Systems change**
 - Amplify community voices
 - Push for innovative housing solutions
 - Bridge gaps between systems such as healthcare, Justice and Education
- **Trust Building & Culture**
 - Value and continue to learn the diverse lived experiences to continue to evolve and tailor services to meet unique needs
 - Trauma informed approach
 - Continuous learning reflection
- **Proactive support & Community Outreach**
 - Strengthen neighborhood networks
 - Accessibility to services
 - Shifting from crisis response to long term relationship-building



Risk Assessment

Homeless Prevention Risk Assessment

- **Early Identification**
 - Allows timely intervention to prevent homelessness
 - Clarity on current needs
- **Targeted Support**
 - Helps allocate resources to those most at risk
 - Increased effectiveness of prevention programs
- **Data-Driven Decisions**
 - Identifies trends and risk factors across the Capitol region
 - Advocacy
- **Improved Coordination**
 - Supports collaboration across all agencies and community supports
 - Creates a shared understanding of Coordinated Prevention
- **Outcome Tracking**
 - Measures the impact of interventions over time
 - Helps refine strategies

Risk of Homelessness Factors

Does the client have sufficient resources or support networks, e.g. family, friends, faith-based or other social networks, immediately available to prevent them from becoming literally homeless? *

☐ Yes ☐ No

Has tenant received a Notice to Quit or are they currently in court proceedings for an eviction? *

☐ Yes ☐ No

Which category best describes this household's annual gross income? *

- ☐ < 15% AMI for HH
☐ 15 – 30% of AMI for HH
☐ 31 – 50% of AMI for HH
☐ 51- 80% of AMI for HH

Does this household have at least one dependent child under age 6 in physical custody? *

☐ Yes ☐ No

Has this household experienced a major change in household composition (e.g. death of family member, separation/divorce from adult partner, pregnancy or birth of new child) in the past 12 months? *

☐ Yes ☐ No

Number of rental evictions within the past 7 years for any adult in the household? *

- ☐ 2 or more prior rental evictions
☐ 1 prior rental eviction
☐ No prior rental evictions

Has head of household ever experienced literal homelessness (in a shelter, transitional housing, in a vehicle, on the streets, or fleeing from domestic violence)? *

☐ Yes ☐ No

Does the Tenant have a Housing Subsidy?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Resource mapping

[illegible]



An Innovative Partnership to Prevent Evictions and Homelessness

Bringing together housing, legal service, and social work entities to stabilize families

OUR STORY



Since 1990, New Reach has implemented best practices across the region – from community collaboration to collective impact, permanent supportive housing to in-home case management – helping thousands of families, children, and households achieve stability and self-reliance. New Reach has emerged as a leader in homelessness services in Connecticut, operating emergency shelters, developing affordable and supportive housing, and providing a range of programs that spark independence. At New Reach we build bright futures on a foundation of support, shelter, and services. **Last year, New Reach served more than 5,000 adults and children throughout the state of Connecticut.**

A Model For Making Change.

New Reach's integrated model is focused on long-term solutions.



Intervention to
avoid the eviction



Addressing
Immediate Issues



From Shelter to
Permanent
Housing

UNDERSTANDING THE NEED – LANDLORDS



2019 State of CT
19,106 Evictions



2020 State of CT
6,428 Evictions



2024 State of CT
20,063 Evictions
Filed



**TRIPLE THE TYPICAL
RATE OF RENTERS FELL
BEHIND IN THEIR RENT
PAYMENTS DURING THE
PANDEMIC**



**15% of the families
struggle to pay rent and
remain compliant with their
lease**

UNDERSTANDING THE NEED – LEGAL SERVICES

A high percentage of evictions are sought by private landlords, which require long-term specialized support that falls outside of traditional legal services. In recent years, there has been a 170% increase in private landlord cases (NH Legal Assistance Association)

Families are often unfamiliar with detailed services & processes provided by community resources

SYSTEMIC IMPACT OF EVICTIONS ON THE COMMUNITY

People who are evicted are significantly more likely to become homeless within 2 years as compared to people who remained housed

In the past 5 years, 25% of people entering New Reach's shelters identified evictions as a contributing factor to their homelessness.

Evictions lead to an increased need for legal services, higher use of emergency services, and increased criminal justice involvement

Poor education outcomes for children

People evicted from housing are statistically more likely to be persons of color and, more specifically, Black women with children.

NEED FOR SUPPORTIVE SERVICES



79% of New Reach homeless prevention participants were under the federal poverty level

39% of people in housing court for eviction had generalized anxiety disorder, **37%** had PTSD, and **17%** had a history of suicidal ideation

Further, **44%** had a history of homelessness

These issues can significantly impact someone's ability to maintain stable housing and are best addressed through supportive services.

BEST PRACTICES

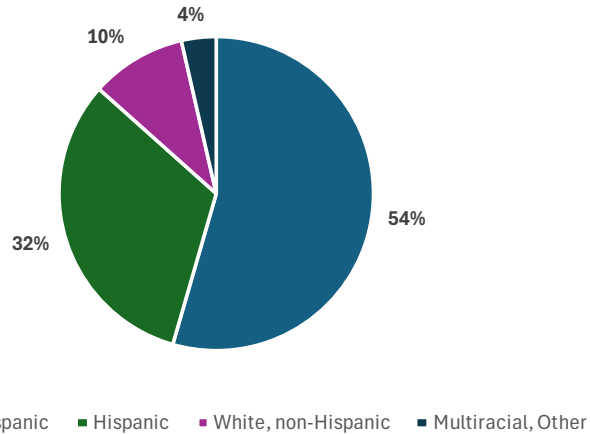
According to the Corporation for Supportive Housing, the best strategy for maintaining stable housing for families is to “Find the key partners that bring negotiation and mediation expertise, financial resources, education, and support services to address both root causes and impacts of evictions across the community. These partners are typically drawn from legal advocates, government agencies, housing advocates, property owner and tenant associations, and judicial system representatives.”

HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION: A MULTI-DISCIPLINARY APPROACH

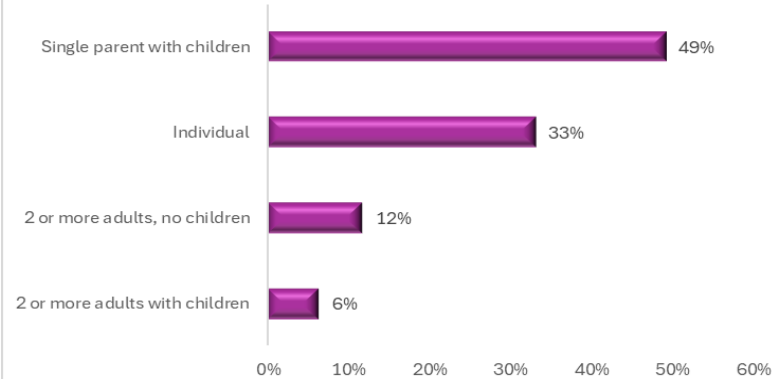


HOMELESS PREVENTION: DEMOGRAPHICS FY24

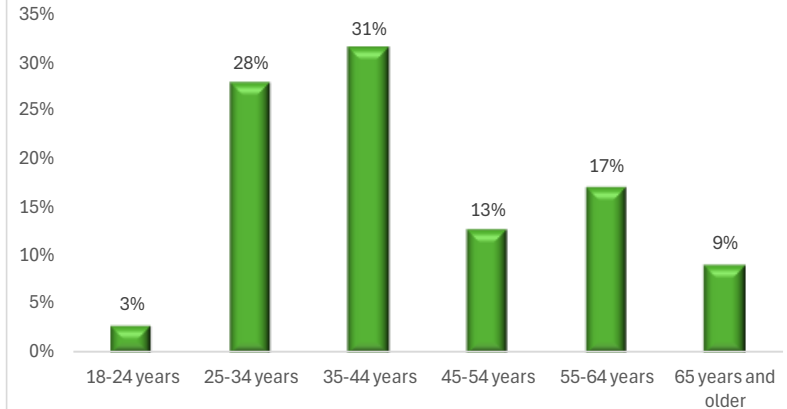
Race/Ethnicity



Household Type

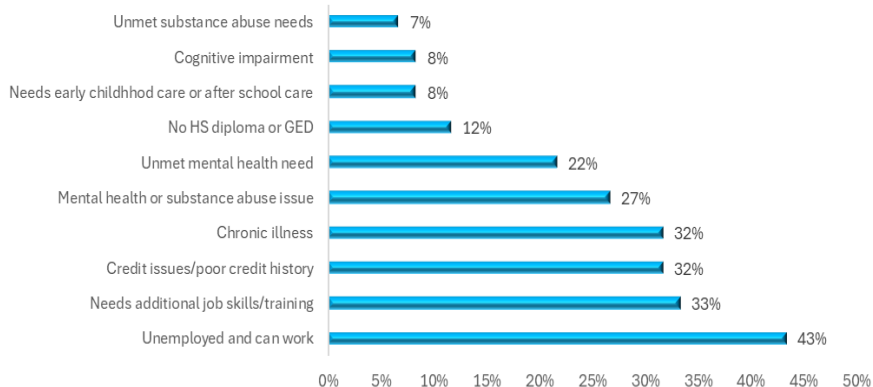


Head of Household Age

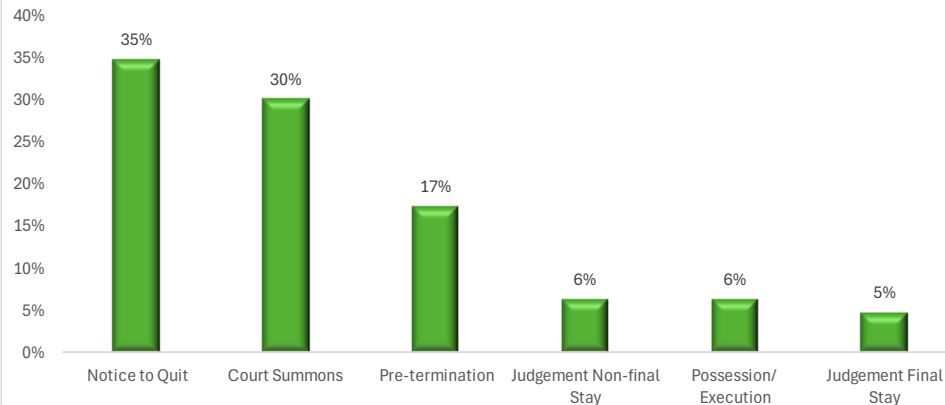


HOMELESS PREVENTION: *CLIENT RISK/NEEDS AT INTAKE FY24*

Household Challenges at Intake: FY24



Eviction Status at Intake



STABLE FAMILIES HOMELESS PREVENTION PROGRAM MODEL



Level 3 - Crisis

- Address and resolve immediate Crisis leading to Eviction (ex. Execution Phase of Eviction, mediation, Basic needs, child neglect, safety issues, chronic illness etc.)



Level 2 – Behavioral Health Services

- Educate, support, and coach families in addressing behavioral health and service needs (high focus on community linkages).

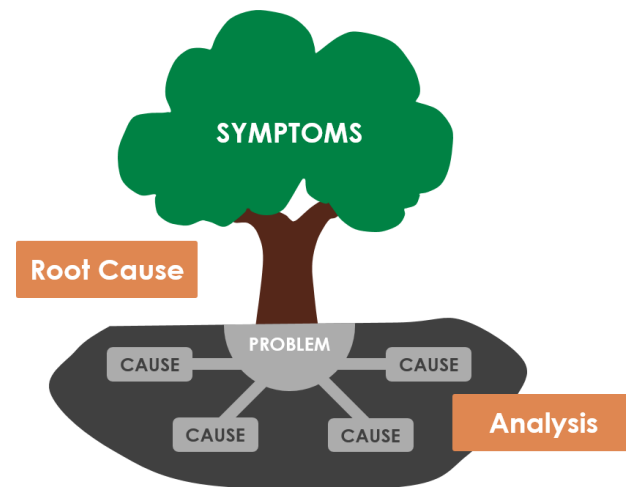


Level 1 – Sustainability

- Focus on discharge planning and sustainability beyond program (stipulated agreement, repayments, repairs, leases, tenant education, financial literacy and move-outs with landlords etc.)

FOUNDATION OF THE STABLE FAMILIES HOMELESS PREVENTION PROGRAM MODEL

- No wrong door
- Not a rent bank
 - focuses on resolving the root of eviction
- Trauma Informed Care
 - Landlords are not the “bad guys” – collaborative approach
 - Economic & Systematic Challenges
- Enhancing Legal Effectiveness Through Social Work
 - Upstream support
 - Increase efficiency and effectiveness for attorneys (case conferencing, professional development)
- Improving relationships between tenants and landlords



STABLE FAMILIES HOMELESS PREVENTION TRAINING MODEL

Critical Time
Intervention

Motivational
Interviewing

Harm
Reduction

Trauma
Informed
Care

Person
Centered
Planning

Eviction laws

Fair Housing
Laws

Mental Health
First Aid

Elder law

FUNDING MODEL



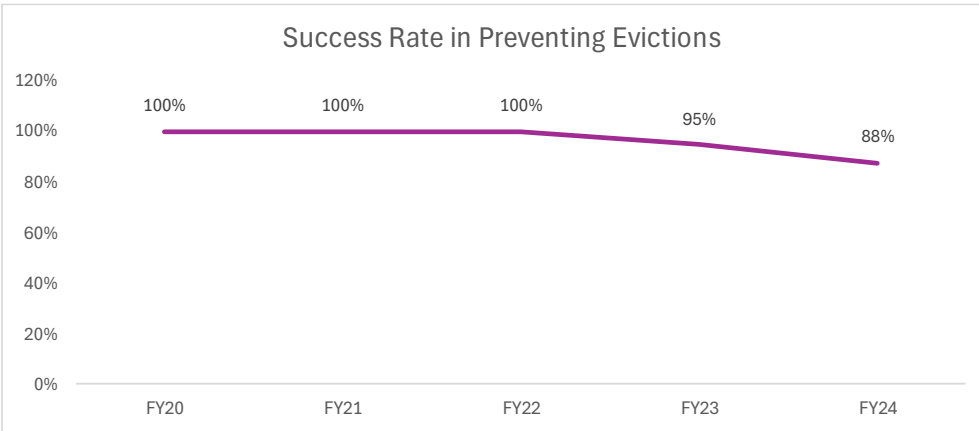
- Primarily funded through private dollars
 - Funding resulting from a lawsuit (began in 1987, settled in 1993) against the Bridgeport Housing Authority
 - Multiple private family foundations
- Some HUD ESG funding used for rental arrears
 - HUD regulations restrict which clients in the program can access these funds
 - Approximately 30% of clients access financial assistance with the program

CURRENT STABLE FAMILIES PARTNERSHIPS

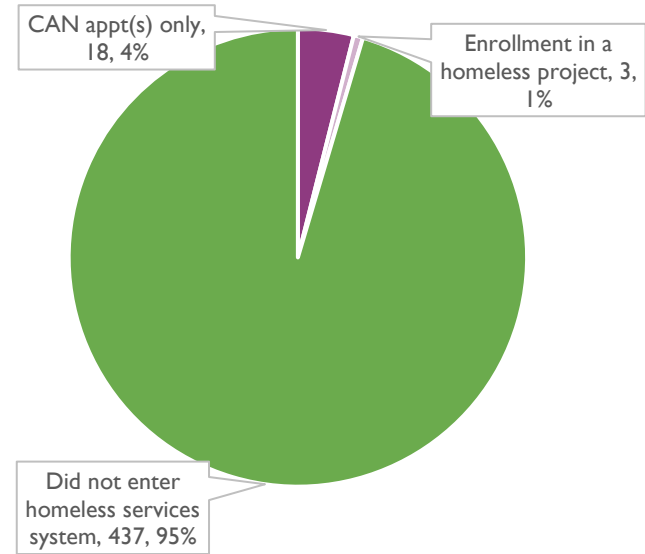


NEW REACH'S HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION PROGRAM: *OUTCOMES*

Success Rate in Preventing Evictions



Rate of homelessness of clients post program discharge: 2011-2021



FINANCIAL BENEFIT OF EVICTION/HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION

The estimated long-term costs of evictions for the estimated **25%** of evicted tenants who become homeless nationally total between **\$61 billion and \$128 billion**



STORY OF HOPE

**THE MOMENT
A FAMILY WAS SAVED**

QUESTIONS AND DISCUSSION

Thank You!

For any questions email
info@cceh.org

Visit our website cceh.org

