

BEYOND SHELTER

Moving to Employment Through “Housing First”

Presented by
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THE HOUSING FIRST APPROACH

Moves homeless families into permanent rental housing *as quickly as possible*, with the services traditionally provided in *transitional* housing provided after relocation into permanent rental housing. The basic goal of “housing first” is to *break the cycle* of homelessness and prevent a recurrence.



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- **There is a focus on helping families access and sustain permanent housing as quickly as possible and that housing is not time-limited;**




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- **Social services are primarily delivered following a housing placement to improve housing stability and family well-being; AND**



▪Housing is not contingent on compliance with services – instead, participants must comply with a standard lease agreement and are provided with the services and supports that are necessary to help them do so successfully.





While acknowledging and addressing the personal factors that contribute to family homelessness, the Housing First methodology also directly addresses one root cause of the problem: the lack of affordable housing.





Often this is done through partnerships that increase access to existing housing resources, including Section 8 vouchers.

In communities where such resources are scarce, the basic components of the Housing First approach may need to be rearranged in order to focus on employment sooner.



Housing First programs help families (including those with special needs) to move into permanent housing of many different types, including housing in the private rental market, often with a subsidy – and then offers home-based services (which for families is most often time-limited and transitional) to help them stabilize and maintain their housing.



COMPONENTS OF HOUSING FIRST

- **Crisis Intervention and Stabilization**
- **Intake and Assessment**
- **Assistance Moving into Permanent Housing**
- **Home-Based Case Management (time limited & transitional or long term)**
- **Job development and placement**



**Components
of the
“Housing First”
Methodology**



STEP 1: CRISIS INTERVENTION & SHORT-TERM STABILIZATION

This phase usually includes emergency shelter services and short-term transitional housing geared to special needs, i.e. domestic violence, substance abuse treatment, stabilization.



STEP 2: SCREENING, INTAKE & NEEDS ASSESSMENTS

The “needs assessment” results in an Action Plan, including short and long-term goals and objectives with concrete action steps.

Can occur immediately or after stabilized in emergency services.



STEP 3: ASSISTANCE MOVING INTO PERMANENT HOUSING

- **Overcoming barriers to accessing affordable housing.**
- **Assistance applying for housing subsidies, move-in funds, etc.**
- **Tenant education.**
- **Assistance conducting housing search, presentation to owners, negotiating.**



STEP 4: PROVISION OF HOME-BASED CASE MANAGEMENT

- **Intensive during the first 90 days.**
- **Intensifies during crises.**
- **Includes connecting people to community resources and services to meet their particular needs.**
- **May include longer-term case management for vulnerable and at-risk families and individuals.**



STEP 5: HOUSING STABILIZATION AND EMPLOYMENT

- Stabilization in permanent housing
- Integration back into the community
- Participation in job readiness activities and/or part-time or full-time employment
- Follow-up and job retention assistance



THE HOUSING PLAN

The objective is to assist the family to obtain decent, affordable permanent housing in which they can stabilize and rebuild their lives. This requires a match between the housing unit and the family's needs. Suitable means decent housing in an environment which will be conducive to the family's stability in permanent housing.



TRANSITIONAL

Home-Based Case Management




Once relocated to permanent and affordable housing, experience has shown that homeless families are often more responsive to interventions and support that may be offered to them than while still in a homeless state.




The primary functions of home-based case management are to provide assistance to parents in life skills and household management and to link them to other community organizations that provide services and resources which they might need. In Housing First, these services are most often “time-limited” and “transitional.”





Direct case management is often focused on helping the family overcome the trauma experienced during an episode of homelessness, to enable the family to regain stable living patterns or to develop stable living patterns for the first time.





The case manager provides the core level of services and refers specialized services to “mainstream” programs in the community (i.e., substance abuse services, child care, job training and employment).

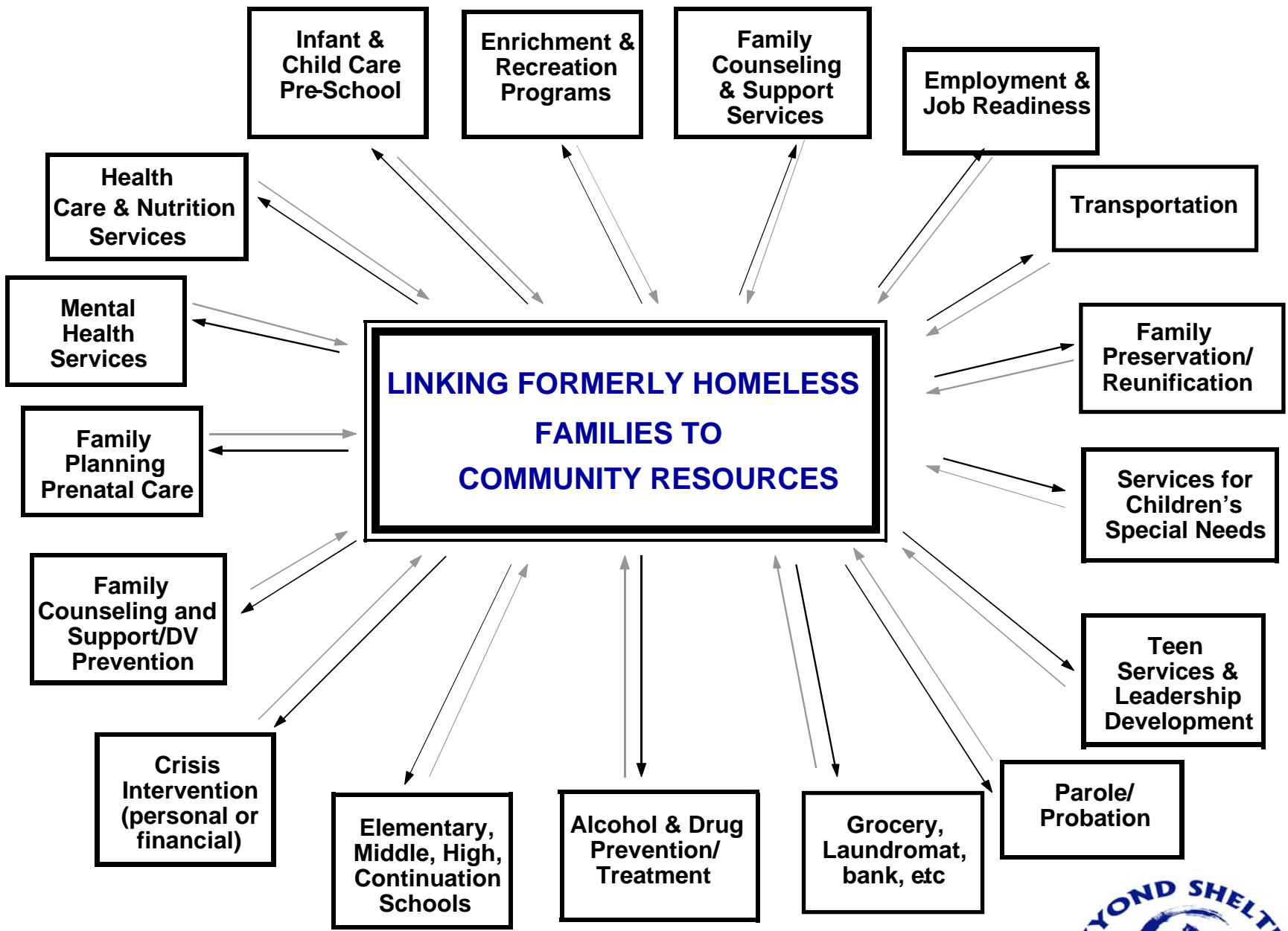




Some clients require more intensive home visits that include demonstrations of house-keeping skills, money-management and budgeting, development of grocery lists, and parenting support.

Others need only assistance in identifying resources in the community and monitoring to insure that they do not lose their housing if a crisis occurs.





EXAMPLES OF SERVICES BY CASE MANAGERS

- **Household management**
- **Money management**
- **Problem solving/survival skills**
- **Advocacy with welfare, CPS, legal, etc.**
- **Family and individual counseling**
- **Parenting education and support**
- **Relapse prevention**
- **Crisis intervention**



The First 3 Months

Once housed, families may experience:

- Loss of income
- Substance abuse relapse
- Increase in a child's behavioral problems
- High phone bill
- New relationship
- Expensive purchase
- Friend seeking to stay with them
- Unexpected depression



EMPLOYMENT PHILOSOPHY AND APPROACH

Stability in housing
**is an important element to help
ensure a successful transition
into the workforce.**



EMPLOYMENT PHILOSOPHY AND APPROACH

Once stabilized in housing, formerly homeless people have more successful employment outcomes.

Helping hard-to-employ, single parent heads-of-household requires intense family-centered case management support *at the same time.*



PROGRAM BASICS

- **Nature of services: voluntary**
- **Numbers served**
- **Funding**
- **Staffing**
- **Partnerships**



Enrollment in employment program activities is generally implemented from two to three months after movement into permanent housing, to provide a transitional period of time to help them transition to stable living patterns, enroll children in school, and become adjusted to their new community.



WHO WE SERVE

- **90% single, female-headed households**
- **Majority on welfare/TANF**
- **Some undocumented families**
- **Many with poor or no work histories**
- **Limited education**
- **Special needs (DV, MH, SA, Child welfare-involvement, etc.)**



Individual/Psychological Barriers to Employment

Adults in homeless families often face major barriers to employment, such as unstable living patterns, poor coping skills, low education levels, early parenthood, low self-esteem, histories of substance abuse and/or domestic violence, and poor or nonexistent family or other social support systems.



Systemic Barriers to Employment

Systemic barriers to employment for welfare dependent heads-of-household are well documented and include lack of appropriate training or opportunities, a shortage of jobs that pay a livable wage, lack of child care, and transportation problems.



The Team Approach:

Through trial and error over the past eighteen years, Beyond Shelter has developed an individualized, client-centered, *team approach* to helping multi-problem, welfare-dependent, primarily single female heads-of-household to successfully transition from welfare dependency to employment.



- **In the team approach, a Case Manager and Employment Specialist work closely together with each participant over time, helping her to address each barrier, while moving her slowly toward improved social and/or economic well-being.**



- **While the Case Manager addresses basic issues related to family stability and resources, such as housing, child care, money-management, household management, transportation, etc., the Employment Specialist focuses on employment-related needs and addresses psychological barriers that prevent women from participating in job development and job placement activities.**



Once the barriers have been overcome and the parent is employed or in training, the Case Manager and Employment Specialist continue to share responsibility to promote *job retention*, providing appropriate interventions and support for the new worker and her family for at least a twelve-month time period.



The Role of the Case Manager:

- ❑ **Conducts Family Needs Assessment and identification of strengths and weaknesses**
- ❑ **With all family members, develops individualized Family Action Plan**
- ❑ **Provides one year of case management support to help family follow through on Plan**



The Role of the Employment Specialist:

- **Employment Needs Assessment, identifying psychological and other barriers to employment**
- **Development of individualized Employment Action Plan to address the barriers**
- **Provision of individualized job readiness activities and pre-employment counseling**



- ❑ **Provides direct job placement and ongoing support to client to ensure job retention**
- ❑ **Maintains contact with employer and Case Manager during the transition from welfare to work**



Both Case Managers and Employment Specialists together provide:

- ❑ Assistance with child care arrangements
- ❑ Provision of support during the interviewing and hiring stages
- ❑ Continued support for a necessary period of time to ensure job retention



The Employment Specialist also provides:

- ❑ Interaction with and support to both the employer and participant during the early stages of employment
- ❑ Assistance in new job search and placement activities if current employment terminates
- ❑ Employment support in the future, including long after a client-agency relationship has terminated



Individualized Job Development and Job Placement Activities:

- ❑ the development of a resume, including a *Functional Resume*
- ❑ basic skills testing and remedial education
- ❑ identification of appropriate entry-level jobs for which participants are presently qualified
- ❑ obtaining interview clothing
- ❑ development of a job search strategy
- ❑ Telephones, resource directories, computers, printers and typewriters available at Beyond Shelter offices for participant use.



Sample Group Sessions:

- **Resume Writing . . . How to Get Started**
- **Cover Letter Do's and Don'ts**
- **The Interview Process**
- **Top Interview Q & A**
- **Mock Interviews**
- **The Internet In Your Job Search**
- **Networking for Employment**
- **Coping with Unemployment**
- **Surviving the First 90 Days**



The Functional Resume:

- Because significant numbers of welfare-dependent clients are emotionally unable to view themselves as employable, Beyond Shelter has developed the Functional Resume as a unique and innovative tool to identify their life skills and help them begin to see themselves as marketable to employers. The Functional Resume is developed professionally in three different forms, on good letterhead, focusing on *participant life skills*.



Employer Recruitment and Retention

- **Know What You Are “Selling”**
- **Develop Relationships With Employers**
- **Market The Program**
- **Warm Hits – Through Contacts**
- **Cold Calls And Community Searches**
- **Networking**
- **Follow-Up**



Job Retention

Once a participant has entered a training program or obtained a job, there are additional kinds of monitoring and support that might be needed.

Participants newly enrolled in a training program or in the first few months of new employment can benefit greatly from periodic monitoring to ensure that the transition to a different life style is successful.



Examples of Job Sources:

- ❑ **Hilton Hotels (Catering/Front Desk)**
- ❑ **The VONS Companies (Grocery Chain)**
- ❑ **Lane Bryant Stores (Sales)**
- ❑ **Customer Service Representative**
- ❑ **Home Health Care companies**
- ❑ **Pacifica Security Company**
- ❑ **Universal Protection Services**
- ❑ **ACE Security**



Successful Approaches

- ❑ working in partnership with local government welfare-to-work programs,
- ❑ helping clients arrange child care and transportation
- ❑ developing a collaboration with a job development or job placement agency;
- ❑ providing access to computers
- ❑ developing part-time and full-time on-the-job training and/or employment



Program Results – 2006

- ❑ Provided services to 185 parents
- ❑ 115 parents obtained jobs
- ❑ Participants secured employment at an average wage of \$9.37/hour
- ❑ More than 80% of the parents obtained “career” track jobs at starting wages of \$10.50 an hour

