

EXPANDING THE FIGHT TO END FAMILY HOMELESSNESS

“By working with the Regional Networks across the state, we have pulled together resources to help individuals and families stay housed and help those who are homeless find permanent housing.”

– Lieutenant Governor Tim Murray

Creating a Statewide *Housing First* Network

With homelessness among families with children at a 30-year high, United Way is building upon the dramatic success of the *Housing First* model to create a breakthrough public-private partnership that will lead an innovative state-wide network. Focused on securing permanent housing options for homeless individuals and families, ultimately lessening the need for emergency shelters, this approach will revolutionize the way this population is directly served, decreasing costs and increasing long-term family financial stability.

“We can now institutionalize real reform with a laser focus on the needs of homeless and at-risk individuals and families across the Commonwealth,” says Liz Curtis Rogers, Executive Director of the Interagency Council on Housing and Homelessness. United Ways from across Massachusetts, in conjunction with the Governor’s Office and the Fireman Foundation will lead these 10 regional networks.

Expanding *Housing First* is part of an overall strategy to end homelessness and empower more families to become financially stable. And that creates a stronger future for all.

**Join us to create a brighter future
for families in our region.**



A Proven Approach to Family Financial Stability

Families that are moved quickly out of shelters into stable, permanent housing derive greater benefit from services, suffer fewer negative effects and are more likely to become financially stable in the long run. *Housing First* also saves money. From 2007 to 2010, United Way targeted \$2.3 million in grants to enable 12 homeless shelters to implement a *Housing First* approach specifically targeted at families.

Three Year Results

- **Over 1,000 families were placed in permanent housing, saving the Commonwealth an estimated \$3.6 million in shelter costs and associated expenses.**
- **77% of those successfully housed were confirmed as stable after a three-year period.**
- **Over 400 families received financial education/counseling.**
- **Over 250 families were able to increase their income.**
- **Over 80% of all families established a working budget.**

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Family Homelessness is at a 30-Year High

Despite reductions in homelessness among individual adults, family homelessness – affecting the healthy development of children – is a critical and growing problem. United Way’s mission to ensure that children enter school ready to learn, go on to succeed and graduate and have the support of financially stable families makes fighting family homelessness a major focus of our work.

Right now, in Massachusetts:

- More than **20,000 children** will experience homelessness this year.
- **1,000 families** (including 1,400 children) can’t find space in emergency shelters.
- The negative impact of **episodic homelessness on children** is profound, including depression and poor academic performance.

Housing First: Saves Money. Saves Families

Providing permanent housing instead of months in the shelter system or overflow motel rooms saves \$9,000 per person. The following United Way partners, located in Lowell, Somerville, Boston, Quincy and Lynn, are operating under a *Housing First* approach:

- Community Teamwork • Crittendon Women’s Union
- Father Bills & MainSpring • Heading Home Homestart
- Metropolitan Boston Housing Partnership • Project Hope
- Quincy Community Action Programs • Serving People In Need
- Somerville Community Corporation • Travelers Aid Family Services

Join the movement to end family homelessness.

To learn how, contact Kory Eng at keng@supportunitedway.org or 617.624.8129.

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From Homelessness to a Bright New Future



Susan’s Story:

Homeless, unemployed, and with no hope for the future, Susan had run out of options when she entered a shelter in the fall of 2009 with her two young sons. Luckily, she

found help through Father Bills & MainSpring, a United Way *Housing First* agency. Susan’s case manager soon began the process of finding both stable, permanent housing and a path to skilled employment that would support her family and lead to long-term financial stability. Impressed by Susan’s caring nature and past academic success as a high school honors graduate, her case manager recommended Susan for a scholarship to a Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) program. Within a few short months, Susan’s family moved out of shelter and into a subsidized apartment. Five months later, Susan graduated from the CNA program with a GPA of 92. She is now employed at a nursing home, hopeful for the future and grateful for the new start that she and her boys were fortunate enough to have.

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