

Staying Home

Keeping people in their homes.

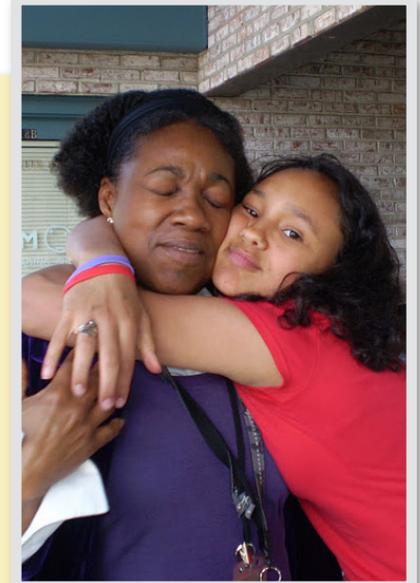
Prevention is the single most cost-effective and humane intervention for addressing homelessness. Many people who become homeless could have remained in their homes and returned to self-sufficiency with some limited assistance. Illness, job loss and other factors cause individuals and families to fall into a downward spiral that may result not only in the loss of housing, but also the loss of self-esteem, security, personal possessions and even relationships.

Rather than waiting for a person to lose so much, prevention efforts seek to intervene sooner and mitigate the damage that homelessness causes. For many years, our community has prevented homelessness by providing emergency housing payments for people experiencing a crisis and by providing ongoing housing subsidies to the most vulnerable in our community. This assistance

is available through a network of nonprofits, faith-based communities, the Fairfax County Redevelopment and Housing Authority (FCRHA) and other government agencies.

Since August 2006, the primary information and referral hotline for Fairfax County has experienced a prolonged increase in the number of requests for emergency assistance. Requests for emergency rental assistance went up 84 percent between FY 2006 and FY 2011.

Information on the number of people who received long-term housing and emergency housing assistance was provided by the Fairfax County Department of Housing and Community Development; Department of Neighborhood and Community Services; Department of Administration for Human Services; and the Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board.



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Emergency Housing Assistance

More Than **10,000** Occasions

- On more than 10,000 occasions, emergency housing payment assistance was provided, which often prevented families and individuals from falling into homelessness.
- This support was provided by a partnership of Fairfax County Coordinated Services Planning, community nonprofits, the Consolidated Community Funding Pool and other Fairfax County agencies.

Long-Term Housing Assistance

18,786 People Served in FY 2011

17,747 People Served in FY 2010.

- 18,786 people received a long-term housing subsidy through the FCRHA (18,128 individuals) and the Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board (658 individuals) to help them remain in their homes and often preventing them from becoming homeless.
- Those served include, but are not limited to, extremely low-income families with children, people with mental or physical disabilities and youth who are homeless and attend school.

Success Stories

A couple and their young child entered temporary housing, with no income for permanent housing, while waiting for a vacancy to open in the shelter. By the time their names came to the top of the shelter wait list, FACETS had assisted this family. Both parents found employment, their child was enrolled in day care and the family was able to move to permanent housing. They used their savings and homeless program financial assistance to pay the first month's rent and security deposit.

Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing

HOST — Housing Opportunities Support Teams

The federal stimulus funds available in FY 2010 enabled our community to launch a new prevention and rapid re-housing model called HOST (Housing Opportunities Support Teams). As a community we are working to build additional capacity in HOST.

The HOST model is designed to be flexible to respond to community needs. The community case manager is at the core of each HOST to coordinate and manage all prevention and supportive services needed in a particular region of the community. Community case managers work with a team of partner service providers to rapidly and permanently re-house homeless/unsheltered individuals and families and to prevent precariously housed individuals and families from becoming homeless. Additional support service providers often include housing locators, benefit workers, employment or educational specialists, mental health providers and mentors, as well as members of neighborhood faith- and volunteer-based organizations.

The first job of a HOST is to identify and coordinate housing opportunities that are appropriate to the household's situation, including the services necessary to keep people in their existing homes. Once housed, services are once again coordinated and delivered. This provides homeless and at-risk members of the community with a more seamless experience.

Housing Opportunities Support Teams are often physically collocated in a site where multiple support services are provided and in parts of the community where potential consumers of HOST services reside or are frequent in number.



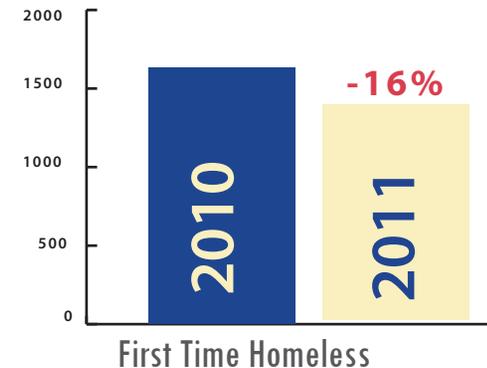
Success Story

Life in their hometown was pretty good for Sherita and her daughter Jada. Sherita worked at a pre-school day care center. It wasn't her chosen career field, but it paid the bills and enabled her to set some money aside for the future. Then, in 2005, Hurricane Katrina devastated New Orleans and forced mother and daughter to leave behind everything familiar and start over. Circumstances brought them to Fairfax County, and a new start.

With the help of Good Shepherd Housing and Family Services, Sherita took the first step toward establishing a new life by volunteering at the Fairfax South County Government Center. A customer training course she took helped her land a job as a county customer service representative, a job she really enjoys. Sherita loves her job and the circle of friends she has at work and in her new neighborhood, and is especially grateful that the stable home life provided by Good Shepherd Housing has enabled Jada to join clubs like Girl Power, which teaches responsibility and making good choices.

First Time Homeless

The number of people in the Fairfax-Falls Church community who became homeless for the first time **dropped 16 percent** from a total of **1,639** people in FY 2010 to **1,376** people in FY 2011. The increased efforts to prevent and divert people from homelessness was significant in reducing the first time homeless.



Community Case Management **1,477** People Served

A total of 1,477 people in housing crisis during fiscal year 2011 received supportive services from a community case manager in order to prevent them from becoming homeless, divert them from shelter and quickly return them to stability.

- 879 of the 1,477 people in housing crisis also received short-term financial assistance through the federal Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP).
- 91 percent of those people who received HPRP financial assistance to prevent homelessness were able to remain in permanent housing.
- 47 of the 1,477 people in housing crisis received short-term financial assistance through local HOST (Housing Opportunities Support Teams) funds.