

H.E.A.R.T Alliance for Sustainable Families

Lead Organization:

Kids In Distress, Inc. (KID Inc.)

Location:

Broward County, FL

Number of families to serve:

50 families

Family Selection Criteria:

Income: 30 percent of Area Median Income

Child Welfare Involvement: verified maltreatment; children at imminent risk of removal or have been removed; two or more child welfare reports received regarding the family; two or more child protection investigations involving the family; two or more child protection investigations with verified findings; legal sufficiency for judicial involvement; judicial involvement; family with children in foster care with a permanency goal of reunification for whom the lack of permanent housing is one of the remaining obstacles to reunification,

Housing Status: Homeless; Living in: places not meant for habitation, emergency shelters, transitional housing, residential treatment center without stable housing; facing imminent eviction from housing within 5 – 7 days; having 3 or more moves in 12 months; fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence

Multiple High Needs: At least one of the following: primary caregiver has mental health, drug or alcohol problem; child has mental health, behavioral health problem, a developmental, learning or physical disability; and the family has two of the following characteristics: two or more domestic violence incidents in past year; primary caregiver has chronic health condition; age of youngest child is under two years; four or more children in the house; primary caregiver has criminal arrest history; household has previously received child protective services; primary caregiver has their own history of abuse or neglect as a child.



Partner Organizations

Kids in Distress

ChildNet

Broward Sheriff's Office

All 5 Public Housing Authorities in Broward County

HOPE South Florida

Urban League of Broward County

Legal Aid of Broward County

Broward Health

Memorial Healthcare System

Broward Addiction Recovery Center

Women in Distress

Broward County Homeless Initiative

Partnership

Barry University

Group Victory, LLC

The Need

On any given day in Broward County, Florida, there are approximately 289 homeless families comprised of 414 homeless children. Furthermore, there are over 2,000 children in the local child welfare system.

Children and families face these distressful conditions due to housing, employment and economic challenges. These at-risk children and families frequently encounter a number of emotional consequences including trauma, mental health disorders, substance abuse and domestic violence.

The Local Solution

KID is committed to strengthening vulnerable families in Broward County, decreasing child abuse and neglect and ensuring well-being. KID shares this mission with more than 15 community partners and organizations representing an innovative system of care. HEART has developed supportive housing with a robust array of integrated services to reduce homelessness, child removals and foster care placements while increasing healthy parenting, family emotional coping, family employment, financial management and housing stability. The HEART collaborative offers a wealth of child and family human service experience in program planning, development, implementation and

management in Broward County. This oversight is coupled with a rigorous process, implementation and outcome evaluation that will measure HEART success and drive project decision-making and quality improvement.

Overview of the HEART Demonstration

HEART has 50 scattered-site units with permanent rental subsidies provided by the five Broward County public housing authorities. HEART provides multiple supportive services within their supportive housing program, including evidence-based interventions, and clinical case management.

The services model focuses on:

- * Strengthening families by providing family and parenting skills training and positive parenting
- * Supporting healthy babies and children by providing pre-natal health and enhanced child health and development and success
- * Trauma Focused Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) to help families build relationships, trust, protection and empowerment
- * Promoting economic self-sufficiency mentors, employment advancement, financial literacy, income enhancement, household budgeting and financial management coaching through Center for Working Families.

Services coordinated or provided to the HEART families will be in the form of:

- * Enhanced triage
- * Intensive case management
- * Employment assistance
- * Financial services
- * Household and life skills training
- * Legal services
- * Trauma-informed therapy
- * Physical and behavioral health care
- * Substance abuse treatment
- * Domestic violence prevention

Local Evaluation

HEART is part of a larger national demonstration designed to test an intensive approach to housing by supporting families who have come to the attention of the child welfare system because of chronic or recurring homelessness and other serious, persistent issues such as mental illness, chemical abuse, and domestic violence. The HEART evaluation and cost study is conducted by Barry University and studies the impact on HEART on families and children. The HEART local evaluation utilizes a true experimental design with randomized treatment and control groups.

What is Supportive Housing?

Supportive housing is an innovative and proven solution to some of communities' toughest problems, serving as the scaffolding for the delivery of more effective and responsive services and public systems. It combines affordable housing with services that help people who face the most complex challenges to live with stability, autonomy and dignity. Supportive housing is affordable housing where supportive services providers actively engage tenants in flexible, voluntary and comprehensive services and work with property and housing management to support tenant stability and ensure that the housing remains a positive community asset for the long-term.

What is Partnerships to Demonstrate the Effectiveness of Supportive Housing for Families with Child Welfare?

An innovative public-private partnership among the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the Annie E. Casey Foundation, Casey Family Programs and the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation. The initiative is testing an intensive approach to providing vulnerable families with safe, affordable housing together with the other services and supports that they need in order to stay together. Over the next five years grantees in five sites – Broward County, Fla.; Cedar Rapids, Iowa; Memphis, Tenn.; San Francisco; and the state of Connecticut will bring supportive housing to more than 500 families with children at risk of, or already in, foster care placement.

Child Welfare & Supportive Housing

RESOURCE CENTER

A joint effort of CSH and Center for the Study of Social Policy (CSSP), the Resource Center provides and coordinates tailored one-on-one expertise and services to help meet the needs of grantees taking part in *Partnerships to Demonstrate the Effectiveness of Supportive Housing for Families with Child Welfare*. In addition, the Resource Center encourages and supports peer learning among the five sites, building on local capacity and the experience of people working in the field.