

Keeping Families Together

Child Welfare & Supportive Housing Resource Center



OVERVIEW

CSH *Keeping Families Together* is all about supportive housing helping children. Families involved with child welfare systems are kept whole because this model is the glue preventing separation, binding supportive housing stability with comprehensive services to meet the needs of every family member.

Too often families are torn apart and children sent to foster care because housing instability together with other complex challenges stresses the family unit. By creating a safe home and treating underlying issues, *Keeping Families Together* offers the better outcome – children and parents moving forward as one.

Our *Keeping Families Together* pilot achieved results that received favorable attention. So much so, the federal government established ***Partnerships to Demonstrate the Effectiveness of Supportive Housing for Families with Child Welfare Involvement*** to help five grantee communities implement similar models of supportive housing.

CSH provides important guidance to the grantees in the demonstration project through the **Child Welfare & Supportive Housing Resource Center**, which we jointly operate with **The Center for the Study of Social Policy**. The five local grantee programs that are being supported by the Child Welfare and Supportive Housing Resource Center are:

- [Housing, Empowerment, Achievement, Recovery, Triumph - Broward County, Florida](#)
- [Partners United for Supportive Housing in Cedar Rapids - Cedar Rapids, Iowa](#)
- [Memphis Strong Families - Memphis, Tennessee](#)
- [Families Moving Forward - San Francisco, California](#)
- [Intensive Supportive Housing for Families - State of Connecticut](#)

We are deeply indebted to the **Robert Wood Johnson Foundation** for its initial investment in *Keeping Families Together* as well as its continued support. They are joined by an impressive set of foundations – the **Annie E. Casey Foundation**, **Casey Family Programs**, and **Edna McConnell Clark Foundation** – in supporting the Resource Center.

Keeping Families Together is a promising policy response allowing children to remain with their parents in a home that supports both caregiver and child, improving health and social outcomes for both generations.

For more information on the *Keeping Families Together* supportive housing model and the national **Partnerships to Demonstrate the Effectiveness of Supportive Housing for Families with Child Welfare Involvement**, please contact Alison Harte at alison.harte@cs.org or visit our two website locations: www.csh.org/KFTtoolkit and <http://www.csh.org/childwelfaresupportivehousingresourcecenter>



KEEPING FAMILIES TOGETHER SUPPORTIVE HOUSING MODEL

Keeping Families Together was initially a New York City pilot project funded by Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and designed and implemented by CSH that sought to answer the question: Could supportive housing permanently end homelessness, child neglect and maltreatment and foster care placement among homeless families with chronic and high levels of child welfare system involvement? To implement the pilot, CSH partnered with New York City government agencies and several nonprofit supportive housing providers to identify, house and provide wrap-around supportive services to 29 homeless families involved in the child welfare system. Families receiving supportive housing through *Keeping Families Together* had long histories of contacts with the child welfare system, including multiple investigations, incidences of maltreatment and child removals. The 105 children of these 29 families had consumed more than 3,000 foster care days prior to placement. Two years after families moved in to supportive housing, 92% of the families remained housed, open child welfare cases decreased by 61%, 100% of children placed in foster care were reunited with their families, children's school attendance rates increased from 60% to 80% and no children were removed from their parents. Foster care days consumed decreased by 77%.

CSH is proud of our role in developing the *Keeping Families Together* model, and our public education and engagement efforts around the need for federal and philanthropic leadership to address the needs of families experiencing homelessness and recurring child welfare system involvement.

PARTNERSHIPS TO DEMONSTRATE THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SUPPORTIVE HOUSING FOR FAMILIES WITH CHILD WELFARE INVOLVEMENT

The US Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children Youth and Families (ACYF), bolstered by the promising results from our New York City pilot and other supportive housing initiatives, assembled a \$35 million five-year public-private partnership with four philanthropic organizations to test Keeping Families Together-like supportive housing initiatives in five communities. The goal of the demonstration is to determine if supportive housing can preserve and strengthen vulnerable families, improve child well-being, and prevent foster care placements among the child welfare systems' highest need families. This demonstration represents the first federal investment specifically focused on creating supportive housing to reduce child welfare system involvement. As such, it reflects ACYF's belief that supportive housing holds tremendous potential in breaking the cycle of homelessness, parental behavioral health challenges, child neglect and maltreatment, and child removal among the highest need families.

Together we are poised to build strong and compelling evidence of supportive housing's potential as a cost-effective tool for improving family and child outcomes and addressing avoidable family separations and child removals. More than that, it's a major step forward towards transforming our nation's child welfare system and overall public response to vulnerable families by providing them with the housing assistance, resources and support needed to stay together and grow together.

www.csh.org/KFTtoolkit and <http://www.csh.org/childwelfaresupportivehousingresourcecenter>