

Intensive Supportive Housing for Families (ISHF)



The Connection



Lead Organization:

State of Connecticut Department of Children and Families (DCF)

Location:

State of Connecticut

Number of families to serve:

240 families

Family Selection Criteria:

Income: low income level (according to HUD Guidelines), lack of financial resources and receiving or eligibility for public assistance

Child welfare involvement: Open child welfare case that resulted from a substantiated reports of child abuse or neglect

Housing instability: Currently living in an emergency shelter; currently living in transitional housing; currently living in a hotel or motel; currently living in an institution or hospital with discharge pending; housing loss is imminent; 3 or more moves in the past year; currently living in condemned housing; currently fleeing domestic violence; exiting a residential treatment center without access to stable housing

Partner Organizations

The Connection, Inc. (TCI)

University of Connecticut (UConn)

Connecticut Department of Children and Families (DCF)

Connecticut Department of Social Services

The Need

Families are the fastest growing segment of the homeless population comprising one third of the country's homeless. There is a correlation between duration of shelter stay and child welfare involvement; of children who stayed in a shelter an average of 90 days or more, 40 percent became child-welfare involved as compared to just 10 percent of children who had shelter stays of 90 days or less. Housing influences a family's outcomes. Lack of access to housing places children at risk for diminished health, education and developmental outcomes; increases the likelihood of foster placement; and is associated with higher service utilization and delays family reunification.

The Local Solution

The Connecticut Department of Children and Families (DCF) will collaborate with state partners, community agencies, and service providers to deliver a two-tiered triage procedure including access to stable housing, trauma-focused assessment, interdisciplinary team-based support and access to empirically supported interventions for family members. Long-term outcomes include: reduced child welfare system contacts, maltreatment, removal, and foster care placement; and increased family housing stability and parental employment.

Overview of ISHF Demonstration

ISHF clients will have access to evidence-based interventions for parenting (Triple P), Trauma-Focused Cognitive Behavior Therapy (TF-CBT) and other mental health challenges, substance abuse, health, housing and employment preparedness. ISHF has obtained 50 Rental Assistance Vouchers through the State of Connecticut. ISHF will include the following core features:

- * Triage and assessment will prompt team-based services, engaging parents as full members
- * Interdisciplinary family teaming will include the parent, case manager and representatives from support providers
- * Fidelity, client engagement and satisfaction measures will ensure families' access to interventions, teaming and housing assistance, and consistency with the implementation plan

Local Evaluation

ISHF is part of a larger national demonstration designed to test an intensive approach to serving families that 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 ISHF evaluation and cost study is being conducted by the UCONN researchers who will provide project evaluation (process, outcomes and economic) and lead dissemination activities. A comprehensive evaluation plan, coordinated with the State Office of Policy and Management, will ensure accountability of activities and outcomes, specify plans for data collection and analysis linked to objectives, include formative and summative elements assessing the quality, sustainability, and effectiveness (and cost-effectiveness) of activities, and include dissemination to a diverse constituency to support replication of effective elements.

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.