

# Keeping Families Together



## Family Snapshot: Ronald & Felicia

The story of Ronald and Felicia – a family plagued by substance abuse, the instability of chronic homelessness and repeat involvement with the child welfare system – is an all too familiar one for providers who ensure that Keeping Families Together supportive housing is successful.

Like so many who are eventually saved by their experiences in supportive housing, everything seemed destined to separate Ronald and Felicia. Obstacles, not opportunity, ruled their lives.

Prior to supportive housing, they were homeless and living in the shelter system for nearly two years. Ronald's heavy marijuana use led to investigations and actions by the Administration for Children's Services.

The timeline of their struggles reflects the hardships they endured. Born in 1998, Felicia spent a total of 610 days of her young life in shelter care and another 585 in foster care.

When Felicia was eight years old, she and Ronald moved into supportive housing through the Keeping Families Together pilot program. Ronald struggled with relapse and recovery, but intensive case management relying on constructive coordination between his supportive housing case manager and child welfare personnel helped him maintain his ability to parent. With assistance and persistence, he found employment.

Now Felicia is 15, doing well in her classes, and Ronald is a highly involved parent—going to school on a regular basis to talk with her teachers and advocate for her. He is balancing fatherhood and work. Also, Felicia's primary and behavioral health issues are being addressed.

As they grow together to a bright future, Ronald credits the opportunity he found in supportive housing for the triumph of his family over obstacles.

