Improving Access to Mainstream Services for Families with Children Experiencing Homelessness

Intercontinental Hotel
Houston, Texas
April 20-22, 2005

ALASKA SWOT ANALYSIS

Strengths

- Alaska is very wealthy. Large amount of natural resources, but we have limited access to them. $30 billion in permanent fund, $2 billion state reserve. Can access interest from fund, but not the principal
- Mental health trust authority, AK housing Authority is in better shape than other places. Native corporations can contribute to their regions (some)
- Some tribal governments apply for grants, e.g., to refurbish housing in rural areas
- Many dedicated professionals in agency working with homelessness
- Ability to know one another
- Number of faith groups that provide community services -- supportive faith organizations
- Less local government
- Alaskans have relatively good access to resources, (e.g., no state personal income tax is offset by local taxes and sales taxes)
- Some tribal dividends
- Governor who publicly supports the process
- Communities taking ownership of problem on their own
- Unique, creative partnerships to address an issue
- Alaskans have strong self-identity and addressing their own issues. Very independent
- Small proportion of people who are homeless
- Issue is manageable. Small State, small areas with specific challenges that can be solved
- Really tight social network in Alaska – ability to go to someone for shelter. Also helps provider community to work together
- People in small communities don't feel daily threat to their safety

Weaknesses

- Less local government – less tax revenue. This is often by local choice
- Funding allows agencies to stand alone and not require collaboration to accomplish their work
- Money is not always tied to outcomes
- Multiple funding streams also can lead to lack of coordination
- Lack of roads and infrastructure. Costs more to build

- Because of different funding streams, i.e., local and tribal, can make it harder to build bridges – operate in own area
- Parallel systems: tribal and non-tribal; regional native, non-regional native
- Categorical funding
- Lack of political will – no state direction or attention span
- Some small, rural communities, no economic base. Only thing is government money. Subsistence living
- Lack of data
- Funding for bricks and mortar, but none for services, sustainability
- Divide between Native population that creates roadblocks to collaboration
- Cumbersome funding requirements
- Huge community-wide poverty issue
- One out of every 4-5 people is on Medicaid
- Difficulty in travel – lack of roads
- Fragmented system in some communities. Some have access to services – some do not. Often no place to go for some sub-populations in some communities
- Don't have a critical mass of people who need the services. Vouchers vs. block grant for funding. Not enough income to support staff to support vouchers. How justify infrastructure in smaller communities
- No shared vision. Need to have conversations about values and cultural differences/similarities
- Anchorage public housing stock is old, in need of repair and replacement.
- Skills of the providers of services. Lot of turnover/retirement. Increasingly complex set of skills needed
- Inconsistent policies across organizations
- Not knowing other agencies' resources

Opportunities
- Set up trust funds, because State has wealth
- Lot of planning going on and need to integrate all the plans
- Involving business or corporate community to address this issue, e.g., housing of their own workforce
- Can go to each community for resources that they can bring to the table
- Regional advisory council using all-residents strategies. They are entities creating their own vision
- Interest in developing or re-developing housing in Anchorage
- ANWR – influx of workers. Require funders to create housing for their workers
- Policy Academy effort
- Faith-based organizations with other resources
- Create stronger partnership with Native organizations

Threats
- Medicaid match change
- Cost of and lack of access health care is a threat
- Weakening federal support to states. Contracting block grant funding
- Housing costs rise and out-pace wages

- Federal funding don't cover operating funds. Funding for specific little projects
- Change fatigue and fatigue around big initiatives. Distinguish what is ours to do and what is for the community to do
- Population-based funding criteria. Doesn't include geographic size of State
- Lack of local government to deal with issues and make policy decisions. Not a lot of leadership
- Don't have strong capacity at local levels
- Makes funding strategies more complex
- Workers' comp costs. Impinging on nonprofits' ability to keep doors open
- Aging population and chronic disease increase will impact demographics of homeless population
- HUD cuts to public housing (by 50%)
- Need quantifiable data on strategies we implement
- Conflicting Federal initiatives and directives
- Concern of perception of government helping everyone – instead of people helping themselves. Don't be overly ambitious, so that we don't lose public support
- Gentrification of neighborhoods (mobile home parks). Erosion of affordable housing
- Developers not renewing HUD contracts for affordable housing
- Could lose attention because of the next "big boom" – ANWR
- Changes in political positions that could impact future federal funding

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ALABAMA SWOT ANALYSIS

Strengths
- Administration chose to participate
- Policy Academy process itself
- Collaboration represented in this group
- Compassion of the people of Alabama
- Existing structure by which providers already exist (i.e., Continuum of Care)
- Dedication of existing service providers
- Number of organizations serving this population
- Focus of President Bush on this issue
- Additional resources now available at Federal level
- Availability of existing grant dollars
- Availability of funding in general

Weaknesses
- Leadership
- Communication
- Apathy towards the issue
- Lack of trust and prejudice toward people who are homeless
- Lack of coordination and networking of services
- Resistance to change
- Lack of awareness
- Limited fund resources
- Duplication of services
- Lack of human resources to implement change
- Conflicting policies and laws that adversely impact homeless people
- Identification of the population
- Isolation, separation and marginalization of the population in some areas

Opportunities
- Partnerships in providing services
- Establish credibility
- Policy Academy

- Federal and foundation grants that we haven't tapped into yet
- Communication
- Collaboration
- Change conflicting policies and regulations
- Eliminate barriers and boundaries
- Education and standardization in policy and procedures
- Inform and educate
- Improve quality of life

Threats

- Literacy
- Health and mental health issues
- Not enough funding
- Conflicting national and State priorities
- Prejudices and stereotypes
- Lack of will to do the right thing
- Misinterpretation of existing policies and procedures
- Lack of transportation
- Territorial boundaries
- Distractions
- Resistance to change
- Lack of awareness
- Conflicting policies and laws that adversely impact homeless people
- Misuse of limited McKinney funds

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ARKANSAS SWOT ANALYSIS

Strengths
- Interagency Council on Homelessness
- Faith-based initiatives
- Preceding Policy Academy
- Continuum of Care network
- Knowledgeable and committed community-based providers and government service providers
- ARKids First
- Combined application for food stamps, Medicaid, ARKids, TANF
- Homelessness management information system – ARMIS
- Small state, good networking opportunities
- Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (PATH) grant
- Day-long homeless outreach event
- Community Action Agencies
- Head Start and other early childhood programs
- Domestic Violence Association
- Every kid can attend school of origin, enroll immediately in school, and receive transportation
- Department of Human Services website – www.dhs.ar.gov
- CHALLENGE meetings
- FEMA-funded feeding programs and other services
- State and city attention being paid to Spanish language education and information opportunities (brochures, forms, etc.)

Weaknesses
- Lack of consistent definitions across program lines
- Lack of money/no State funds
- Limited public awareness of the different dimensions of homelessness
- Lack of support from State and local governments
- Limited transportation
- Low-paying jobs
- Lack of identification of the target population
- Lack of flexible funding
- NIMBY – Not In My Back Yard
- Limited information sharing

- Need greater access to health care
- Need for more frequent homeless outreach events
- Limited involvement and commitment of relevant partners
- Two-year waiting list for Section 8
- Insufficient affordable housing
- Lack of employment opportunities/job training
- Insufficient resources – State and Federal
- Insufficient public awareness of homelessness in local communities
- Limited treatment for substance abuse and mental health (inpatient, outpatient and residential)
- Need for additional support with utilities for families
- Insufficient child care subsidies and availability of slots for mobile/emergency family situations
- No place for families to go once shelter lets them out for the day

Opportunities
- Education of public officials, citizens and public at large
- Faith-based initiatives (develop applicable programs and services)
- Continuum of care network and their developing capacity to apply for federal and other resources
- Homeless awareness weekends
- Building on the efforts of the first policy academy, utilizing resources, expertise and information systems
- Policy Academy #2
- Arkansas Hunger Coalition
- Attention from the White House on homelessness and revitalization of the Federal Interagency Council on Homelessness
- State homeless conference (this year is our 16th!)
- Coordination and collaboration of various government entities
- Leadership from national partners
- Consolidated Plan (5-yr. plan for HUD mainstream programs, including public meetings across the state)
- Olmstead housing task force for disabled populations
- Opportunities to include children and families in the development of the plan
- Advocacy, government officials, legislators, etc.

Threats
- Little Rock's tendency to criminalize homelessness (panhandling, loitering…)
- Tendency to want to move homeless out of downtown areas
- Budget constraints
- Politics and policy
- Medicaid crisis in the State
- Court order to fund education over other State services
- Changing attitudes toward homeless people; desensitization and stigma
- Bills and legislation that makes our jobs more difficult
- Economic conditions that may increase homelessness
- Hopelessness, discouragement among people who are homeless

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GEORGIA SWOT ANALYSIS

Strengths

- Capital funding/sticks & bricks/money available
- Ability to tie into existing initiatives (e.g., Habitat for Humanity)
- Georgia has a supportive housing model
- Alignment under policy framework for discussion of issue
- Well thought out plans
- Private sector funds available from corporate & philanthropic community
- Leadership from private sector
- Points of contact in all counties through Department of Children and Family Services
- Statewide support network
- DCA best practices
- Leader in integrating housing with primary care & behavioral health services
- Interagency Council on Homelessness (ICH)
- Georgia action plan
- Each agency has data collection capability
- Good public health service system, many programs targeted to women & children
- Committed Governor
- 2 state commissioners chairing (ICH)
- Best practices program of coordinated case management (Savannah Homeless Authority)
- Active/vocal advocacy community
- 1st state with quality standards for homeless service providers
- New homeless service center in Atlanta
- Statewide public health collaborative to house homeless people w/infectious diseases

Weaknesses

- Data inconsistent, incomplete & systems don't communicate/ systems not integrated
- Lack of coordination between agencies
- Lack of consistent behavioral health services
- Lack of service availability (wrap around services for those in housing)
- System enables poor choices
- Apathy at all levels on the issue
- Policy agendas change with leadership

- Conflict of missions between various agencies that provide services – turf issues, competition
- No clear picture of extent of problem for Georgia overall
- Lack of match dollars to create more supportive housing
- Lack of affordable housing stock targeted to 30% & below median income
- Lack of public education/misconception about who is homeless
- Public education system is weak
- Resources drying up
- Lack of clarity regarding what the goal is (manage homelessness? end homeless?)
- No clear accountability/ communication around what level of government is responsible
- No central point of accountability/ designated office or staffing for homeless issues
- Complexity of programs that provide services (fragmentation, differing eligibility, etc.)
- Service resources in rural areas very limited

Opportunities
- Private sector funding
- Disease management system model
- State reprogramming CSB funds to promote consumer choice w/providers
- Integrate services & break down silos
- Statewide Policy Academy in May
- Continuum of Care process
- Build better data collection system
- Coordinated advocacy
- Coordinating/integrating mainstream dollars
- ICH & continuing work
- Support of Policy Academy process
- Public education/awareness
- Combine/maximize resources
- Collating Georgia Coalition's data collected through coordinating entities
- Explore shift to interim/ bridge housing & housing first model

Threats
- Conflicting mandates that pull attention away from this work
- Policy & funding silos, have to compete for dollars
- National policy
- Public opinion turning against us
- Bureaucracy
- Diminishing resources
- Death of women & children as a result of dealing with gaps
- Managed care
- Shifting policy agendas with new administration
- People who don't fit anywhere/fall between cracks
- Partisan split
- Lack of $
- Realistic work schedule to complete PA related tasks

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HAWAII SWOT ANALYSIS

Strengths

- Small State, one entity
- Strong families system, doubling/tripling up to accommodate extended family very common
- Homeless preference for public housing & Section 8
- Strong awareness from government & private sector
- Federal mandate to serve homeless children through Headstart so potential to serve more
- Strong program for access to healthcare – ERISA & 1115 Medicaid waiver
- Up front support in education system from teachers
- Part-time & temporary teachers at shelters for counseling & tutoring
- Dedicated advocates for families experiencing homelessness
- Transportation for homeless children to their originating schools (through McKinney-Vento)
- Interagency Council on Homelessness established (in January); Chronic Policy Academy team became Council
- State awarded SAMHSA Co-occurring Systems Integration Grant
- Employment grant
- Early Childhood Comprehensive Systems Grant (ECCS)
- Medicaid Rehab Option
- Department of Labor (DOL) mandates regarding homeless people & collaborative work with the Office of Veterans Affairs (VA)
- Political will
- Support between partnering agencies across State – formal & informal (volunteer CoCs)
- Department of Health has successful bridge subsidy model for people with mental illness
- Pilot program using TANF dollars for housing placement (1st month rent or deposit, search assistance, work with landlords)
- State homeless coordinator (Sandy)
- County funded program to provide childcare & parent education in shelter in Maui – could serve as pilot for state
- TANF, Foodstamps, Medicaid, Public Housing state run & all under one department
- Ohana (family) spirit, Hanai system (children raised by extended family, informal adoption)
- Good programs, people graduate from homeless system
- Lowest unemployment rate in nation

- Act 40, data system
- National Governor's Association Policy Academy on integrating Department of Human Services

Weaknesses
- Lack of affordable housing options
- Rental units not affordable
- "Hawaii a good place to be homeless"
- Good weather
- Geographically isolated; here once they come here
- People sent here to be homeless (mostly individuals)
- Misconception about who is homeless (60% have lived here for more than 20 years..)
- Increase in homeless families from Pacific Islands; cultural traditions in conflict with public housing rules
- Services are more adaptable for families than individuals but not enough services for both
- Mixed messages from Federal government – loss of Section 8 vouchers, threat of losing Community Development Block Grant but want states to end homelessness
- Services not always accessed – rural areas, cultural/language barriers, fear of being found, mistrust of government
- Increase in homelessness as economy got better
- Lack of Federal funding opportunities to support implementation of plans
- Some families not ready for services (e.g., substance abuse issues, stigma of seeking help, housing)
- Statewide administration of programs may not be reflective of difference at county/local level
- Island state – challenges to service delivery, transportation, etc.
- 100% enrollment mandate for Headstart – cannot hold spots for homeless children – impact unclear
- Lack of childcare services due to low unemployment rate & unavailability of workers
- Low unemployment rate means less funding from DOL
- Lack of facilities for programs & strict requirements (homeless, childcare)
- NIMBYism
- Competing funding
- Small land mass – housing will always be expensive
- Transportation challenges on and between islands
- Federal poverty standards haven't kept up
- Some are "houseless vs. homeless"
- High cost of living, salaries don't match

Opportunities
- Focus on prevention
- Family promise program, faith-based involvement/collaboration
- Networking among team members
- Increase in homeless budget
- Therapeutic living program for people with substance abuse issues, work with landlords
- Encouraging substance abuse providers to access more housing opportunities

- Families with children a priority for mental health department
- Help people exit homelessness quickly, early identification & supports needed to get & keep housing
- Creative solutions & opportunity to apply for funding
- Change systems to remove barriers
- Bills to set aside funds for prisoner re-entry for housing & services
- Revisit rules/regulations to remove barriers
- Link with ECCS work
- Resource guide
- Increasing capacity of Aloha 211
- Get word out/increase awareness of resources
- Keep families in crisis together, offer respite (families w/children who have Autism)
- Employment opportunities as caregivers for homeless or at risk moms
- Use of best-practice models (Delancey/prison reintegration)
- Increased collaboration across agencies
- Funds within Department of Education to hire more part-time teachers & collaboration w/migrant program
- Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) – integration w/mainstream (e.g., Medicaid, TANF, etc.), better data on homeless populations served
- University's interpretation of HMIS data
- Timing is right, homelessness & affordable housing on the radar of Governor, Mayors & legislature
- Send message to Federal representatives about need for better coordination among funding sources to better integrate services
- Support for teachers in early identification & resources for prevention/referral
- Address employment & training needs as a cross-cutting issue
- Link to resources on web through Governor's website

Threats
- Political will runs hot & cold
- HUD requirements inflexible, limit housing options
- Department admin rules & statutes may be outdated & create barriers
- Misconceptions about homeless people & their needs
- Crystal Methamphetamine problems drain individual & system resources
- Continued funding decreases from HUD (e.g., Section 8)
- Good economy results in other problems (e.g., less affordable housing, etc.)
- Tourist based economy, fragile economy
- Lack of funds for supportive services
- NIMBYism
- Absentee ownership, cuts into available units & increases housing costs

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KANSAS SWOT ANALYSIS

Strengths
- Willing participants
- Broader base of interagency council
- Faith-based support
- Relatively small homeless population
- Statewide Homeless Coalition (KSHC); 501C3
- Co-location of homeless services with SRS services
- Strong commitment & involvement from Veterans Affairs
- Strong neighbor network/communities, especially in rural areas
- Kansas maxed federal homeless dollars
- Geographical layout of state for providers & data collection
- Homeless summit

Weaknesses
- Some faith-based philosophy
- Fewer discretionary or planning dollars due to small population
- Marginally housed people not counted in homeless definition
- Poor transportation affects service access & employment
- Lack of data
- Lack of public awareness; denial of problem
- Criminalization laws
- Inadequate low-income housing
- Lack of services for dual diagnosis, bi-lingual/ESL population, & access in rural areas
- Turf issues/protection of funding sources
- Current data/ information sometimes used punitively

Opportunities
- Lack of awareness – opportunity to frame issues & educate
- State's revenues are increasing
- More job openings
- Use older populations as mentors for young homeless individuals
- Youth Vision

- Use faith-based community in prevention efforts
- Asking homeless individuals themselves what works best
- Money management strategies
- Economic development
- Development of self-sufficiency standard
- Public health & safety involvement

Threats
- Not a winnable issue politically in Kansas
- Perceived low return on investment
- Decrease in telecommunications industry
- Increase in elderly at-risk population
- Stigma regarding homelessness
- Develop a plan that does not get implemented
- Political atmosphere
- Federal and state budget, cuts to social services & housing
- Not bringing in economic development along with affordable housing development
- Certain communities have over-reliance on one industry

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MINNESOTA SWOT ANALYSIS

Strengths

- Variety of quality programs
- Evidence that housing with supports works
- Consumer/client choice – continuum of services and housing
- Jobs plus program
- Interagency collaboration in place
- Infrastructure already in place to talk about this issue
- Core group of people committed to issues and to involvement of providers in process
- Recognize that there are unaccompanied youth who are homeless, committed to serve them
- Data from Wilder Research on this population.
- Pilot program with evaluation
- Bipartisan support
- Crisis housing fund so some people don't lose housing
- Strong advocacy groups
- Reliance on non-profits, independent agencies to provide services
- Aware and receptive media
- Have a large number of insured children
- State funding specifically for homeless programs
- Very rich funding streams compared to other states
- History of programs for family self-sufficiency
- Have Business Plan on which to build and have director to coordinate efforts from 3 key agencies
- Good leadership
- Know what works
- 88% of homeless children are in school
- Will have quality transportation policy for kids to access education, if approved by legislature
- Have a prevention program in most counties.
- Philanthropic community
- Faith-based community
- Historically high ranking for child well-being (Children's Defense Fund)

Weaknesses

- Lack of resources
- People getting "stuck" in supportive housing programs
- Lack of affordable housing options
- Lack of consensus about what's needed and best models for housing. Keep continuum?
- Difficulty accessing behavioral health (psychiatric) and especially dental services
- Big reduction of specialized programs to assist in employment
- Increased demands on stressed provider community to fill the gap of decreasing resources
- Staff turnover
- Reliance on non-profits, independent agencies to provide services
- Wide divergence in all success rates with white population compared to people of color
- Focus on long-term homelessness takes away from other areas in the short term
- Don't know how to recognize failure and constructively move forward
- Very insular, private, don't share, don't have discussions that need to have
- Caught between Federal and State priorities
- Counties each have own rules, regulations making coordination and continuity of services difficult
- Lack of centralized administration. ~400 governmental entities in Twin Cities
- Artificial or perceived barriers to serving homeless
- Inability to recognize cost savings across departments or legislative committees. Can't sell it to the legislature. No global financing
- Need to focus on crises, rather than on prevention
- Mainstream agencies are not aware of efforts of deal with this problem
- Competing missions and priorities of agencies
- Different ways of describing issues
- Services, resources and coordination vary across 437 school and charter school districts

Opportunities

- Single adult family programs that address family reunification
- Flexibility in funding streams (would provide ability to pursue other targeted money)
- Build better bridges between county managed systems and providers
- Talking to clients about what they want
- Need to look at definition of homelessness
- Preserving tenant mix
- Help create more incentives in relation to employment – with no penalties
- Defining "case management" as "service coordination"
- Add member on nutrition, food banks, WIC, food stamps
- Engage broader community, individual citizen action
- Housing and supportive services, collaborating with school districts to ensure education stability, including transportation services, for children from homeless situations
- HMIS (Homeless Management Information System) to measure outcomes, identify barriers and collaborate with human services systems
- Initiative to End Long-Term Homelessness – re-look at mission
- "Fast-track" identification of those at risk to avoid homelessness
- Housing multiple agency programs in one place (one-stop)
- Talk about people not programs

- Opportunity to visit holistic programs to see other models and missions
- To get rid of barriers to mainstream services. Increase knowledge of issues
- Utilize media's understanding of issue. Build on media champions
- Initiative can educate public officials and others on complexity of issue
- Develop programs to build employment skills and to assist in maintaining employment

Threats
- Housing first defined as housing only
- Question of what to do with families who are still using
- Mandating services instead of offering them
- Cuts in supports for families is increasing vulnerability
- Dismantling of the State family support programs
- Increased partisanship
- Not enough champions in legislature
- Not focused. Focus on what can do
- Growing separation between suburban areas and rest of State (greater Minnesota and urban areas)
- Reduced rental assistance or subsidies
- Federal restructuring and funding cuts: HUD especially, HHS too
- "Cause of the day" – sustaining effort on this issue
- Frontier mentality. ("Just get a job")
- Homeless are not visible
- Shifting of responsibility from one level of government to another or to community agencies, e.g., faith-based
- Pressure of mandates that may reduce federal programs for the academically at-risk (Title I) availability for homeless kids
- Ability to sustain momentum in light of other responsibilities
- Historically high ranking for child well-being (Children's Defense Fund) is slipping
    - Health insurance (39% of homeless adolescents are uninsured in Ramsey County)
    - Child poverty

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PENNSYLVANIA SWOT ANAYSIS

Strengths

- Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence – strong housing advocate & training provider
- Local housing option teams (N= 27)
- State-wide steering committee
- State support for Continuum of Care process in rural and small city areas
- COMPASS – on-line application for Medicaid, CHIP, LIHEAP, TANF, Food Stamps, waiver programs, & some home and community-based services
- Interagency Council on Food & Nutrition
- County-based services that bring strong networking and local decision-making capacity; including system of Community Action Agencies
- Funding by Department of Public Works (DPW) for emergency shelter allowance and HAP
- Good state and county infrastructure for these issues
- Legal services, in general, and regional housing legal services, in particular
- Family Violence Option – established policies related to domestic violence that waives temporarily policies and regulations
- Habitat for Humanity
- Capacity of local community development agencies
- Technical assistance provided by consultants
- Permanent supportive housing demonstration
- Maximizing Participation Project – identifying barriers & helping achieve self-sufficiency for TANF eligible persons
- Verification work group – looking at ways to make the verification process less onerous
- State's pilot project to work with prisons and YDC's to apply for Medicaid before release
- Philanthropic resources
- Network of faith-based organizations
- Demonstration and pilot programs in mental health diversion and other areas
- Economic development and home ownership choice programs
- Knowledgeable pool of people who are willing to be innovative and collaborative
- Governor's Office participation
- Increased funding for community development and housing resources
- Homelessness management information system (HMIS) in the works

- Use of HOME funds for matching CoC projects
- Existing State resource materials
- Increased attention to youth exiting foster care
- Network of independent living coordinators across the state with youth advisory board
- Participation of the Housing Finance Agency

Weaknesses
- Lack of State level data on families/children
- Lack of public understanding of and support for homeless family programs
- Lack of full member participation among regional homeless advisory boards
- Lack of affordable, accessible housing options for very low income people
- Service program funding cuts
- Lack of resources to meet all housing needs
- Lack of coordination of services/co-location of services
- Lack of transportation
- Lack of high-level decision makers in some programs
- Inconsistent discharge planning in child serving system
- Staff cutbacks at state-level to address issues like this and impact of this at county-level
- HUD's focus on chronic homeless population
- Lack of financial literacy
- Insufficient permanency options for foster care youth
- Inconsistent communication
- Lack of discharge planning for women with families exiting prison
- Inconsistent definitions of homelessness throughout our systems
- Inconsistent ability to coordinate efficiently at state and local levels
- Childcare subsidy is not enough
- Insufficient child care subsidy slots
- Not enough non-traditional hours for child care
- Level of TANF/G Assistance not adequate to the costs of living
- Problems with limited English proficiency
- Difficulties serving immigrant populations
- Cultural intolerance
- Stigma/lack of respect for families served by system(s)
- Lack of attention to homelessness among county assistance offices/ inconsistent enforcement of policies
- Inadequate use of workforce investment and coop extension programs
- Lack of emergency shelters in certain areas
- Lack of shelters for minors outside the child welfare system
- Lack of understanding about eligibility for different programs and training of staff who refer/determine eligibility
- Insufficient funding for life skills training for youth
- Lack of employment skills among family members
- Inconsistent coordination on county level among schools, children and youth systems, housing authorities, non-profits, etc.

Opportunities

- Participating in the Policy Academy
- Creation of the Governor's Office of Housing & Community Revitalization
- Good, experienced service providers
- Private funders (foundations and others)
- HMIS as a data gathering tool
- Changes to policies (DPW and others) that remove barriers/eliminate duplication and gaps in services
- Programs that will be added to COMPASS (e.g., WIC and PACE)
- Willingness of State agencies to collaborate
- Steering committee
- Supportive Housing Demonstration Program
- Vacant public housing units and available Housing Choice vouchers
- Low Income Housing Tax Credits
- State legislation for homeless and runaway youth
- Subsidized and innovative child care slots
- Subsidized transportation
- Strong child welfare training program
- Strong network of community action agencies
- Medicaid simplification and realignment
- Potential to improve state and local relationships
- Use Pennsylvania Housing finance Authority to serve populations that Public Housing Authorities don't want to serve
- Work with housing and redevelopment authorities
- Working with Habitat for Humanity
- Good models for providing voluntary on-site services for families
- Workforce Investment and Coop Extension Programs
- Opportunity for community agency collaboration to meet needs of families and youth who are homeless
- Opportunities to use TANF for homeless prevention to assist families and youth in transition
- Focus on prevention activities
- State-wide Housing Alliance education of public about housing needs targeted to Policy Academy
- Make better use of career link resources
- Better use of web technology to increase communication and inform people state-wide
- Secretary's commitment to include advocates & community-based organizations in the planning & creation of policy

Threats

- Potential to lose existing McKinney programs due to funding limits & need to fund renewals
- Loss of Shelter Plus Care because some providers find it burdensome
- Loss of good will among prior collaborators due to administrative burdens & lack of funding
- TANF reauthorization

- Threats to Section 8 program
- Cuts in federal housing, community development, and community service programs
- Cuts in federal and state human service programs
- Current federal policy leadership
- Insufficient minimum wage and living wage
- Loss of staff capacity on State and local level
- Public perception of homelessness
- Paperwork requirements
- Increase costs of housing and utilities
- Growing prisoner release population
- Rising costs of medical care
- Lack of health care insurance
- Public schools not preparing students
- Some areas lack capacity to access services
- Waiting lists for Section 8 and public housing
- Loss of Single Room Occupancy housing
- NIMBY – Not In My Back Yard
- Inability to coordinate efficiently at State and local levels
- Inflation