



“Building Communities Together”

A Networking Tool of HUD's Center for Community and Interfaith Partnerships

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Homelessness Prevention 101

Many of the organizations and individuals with whom the Center for Community and Interfaith Partnership relates are interested in how they can become involved in assisting homeless families and individuals. Because of these queries, we would like to provide some basic information on the **Continuum of Care (COC)**. HUD's COC is widely recognized as a holistic and integrated methodology for dealing with the complex issue of homelessness.

The COC is the centerpiece of the federal policy on homelessness announced by President Clinton in 1993. It stresses permanent solutions to homelessness through comprehensive and collaborative community planning. Communities submit plans to HUD that reflect efforts to address the complexities of homelessness through a range of housing and services. The COC approach has been successful because it is coordinated with non-profit organizations, state and local governmental agencies, housing developers, service providers, private foundations, local businesses and the banking community, neighborhood groups, and homeless or formerly homeless persons.

HUD believes the best approach for alleviating homelessness is through a coordinated community-based process. The fundamental components of a COC system network:

1. Outreach and assessment to identify the needs of an individual or family and connect them to facilities and services.
2. Immediate (emergency) shelter as a

safe, decent alternative to the streets.

3. Transitional housing with appropriate supportive services, such as job training/ placement, child care, substance abuse treatment, mental health services, and instruction in independent living skills.

4. Permanent housing or permanent supportive housing arrangements.

While not all homeless people will need access to each of these components, all four must be present and coordinated within a community in order for the COC to be viable. Communities assess the housing and service needs of homeless persons in the area, take inventory of the existing resources available to them, and identify “gaps” in housing and services.

Planning for and implementing the COC occurs within the strategic overview of local housing and economic conditions that make up each community's Consolidated Plan or Con Plan. A large part of the planning of the Con Plan takes place with the assistance of specially trained Community Builder professionals who are present to help facilitate discussion of priorities in your communities. Community Builders are aware of other organizations and needs in your area, as well as HUD programs and initiatives.

For more information on the Continuum of Care or other programs mentioned in this article, please look to the HUD web site at www.hud.gov. You can also contact the Center for Community and Interfaith Partnerships at 1-800-308-0395 or 202/708-2404.

Message from the Center

Marilyn DiGiacobbe, Deputy Director of the Center for Community and Interfaith Partnerships, will be leaving for another challenge in the world of education. Ms. DiGiacobbe has accepted a position as Associate Dean for External Affairs for Seton Hall University's School of Diplomacy in New Jersey and will depart the Center in early June, 1999.

Ms. DiGiacobbe has been a driving force at the Center and HUD and it is with mixed emotions that we see her depart to accept this new opportunity. Prior to joining HUD in the Fall of 1997, Marilyn served as Special Assistant to the President for Public Liaison from the start of the Clinton Administration in 1993. Before coming to Washington, Ms. DiGiacobbe owned her own fund raising firm in Philadelphia.

Although we at the Center and HUD will miss her, we are grateful for her many past contributions, and we offer our best wishes and prayers. Thank you, Marilyn.

Joseph Hacala, S.J., Director
Marilyn DiGiacobbe, Deputy Director
Donner Buchet
Heidi Chapman
Brian Siebenlist
Billy Terry
Yvonne Brown

Office: 202/708-2404
Toll Free: 1-800-308-0395
Fax: 202/708-1160
Web site: www.hud.gov/cdc.html

Welfare to Work: Working for All

The Department of Housing and Urban Development is involved in Welfare Reform through our budget requests for Section 8 Vouchers and Certificates as well as our funding of community centers, job training programs, child care facilities and Youth Build programs. The Clinton Administration and this Department understand how important all these services are for moving people from welfare to work. In addition to a litany of services, we know that without the proper connections between the recipients, services and jobs, there will be no true welfare reform. It is because of this understanding that the Center highlights an opportunity with **The Welfare to Work Partnership (The Partnership)**.

The Partnership is a national, non-profit effort of the American business community to move those on public assistance into jobs in the private sector. We want to make you aware of an opportunity to connect with companies interested in hiring and retaining welfare recipients. The Partnership is made up of employers, known as Business Partners, who pledge to hire and retain welfare recipients without displacing existing workers.

They are looking for service providers to add to the "Network Solutions" database that can help businesses with their hiring needs. Service providers

offer businesses help in: a) screening welfare recipients for work opportunities, b) preparing them for work through training and readiness, c) placing them in jobs, and (d) helping businesses provide job retention services such as child care, health care, transportation, and mentoring.

If your organization provides any of these services on a national, regional or local level you may want to become a member of the "Solutions Network." The network will allow your group to post a description of your organization and the service it provides in a free database accessible through The Partnership's web page to businesses committed to hiring and retaining welfare recipients. A service provider within this network will be able to search our database for Business Partners, entry-level job openings and receive email notifications when job openings in your area are posted.

To request a survey to join the "Solutions Network" or for questions on the Partnership, please contact Mr. Errol James at 202/955-3005 ext. 304. After completing the survey, please fax it to 202/955-1087 or visit the Partnership's web site at www.welfareto.org and download a copy of the survey. If you have questions on HUD's Welfare Reform initiatives, contact the Center for Community and Interfaith Partnerships at 1-800-308-0395 or 202/708-2404.

Important Resources

Communities in Schools, Cisco Foundation and HUD have planned an exciting agenda for their first joint conference, called "**Workforce of the Future: Preparing Students to Live, Work and Learn in the 21st Century**" Friday, July 9- Monday, July 12, 1999.

At this event participants will hear from some of the world's leading ex-

perts in workforce development, technology, education and community development. The information and networking opportunities at this conference promise to be invaluable.

To register for the conference, access the CIS web site at www.cisnet.org or call between 12 noon and 5:00 p.m. EST at 1-877-219-1416 or 202/291-2129 for more information.

Featured Best Practice

In the wake of recent school shootings, the Center feels it would be valuable to show you a program that works to curb youth violence through a consolidated community effort.

After an unprecedented summer of youth violence in 1993, the Mayor of Denver, CO brought the community together to take action in a Safe City Summit. The resulting **Denver Safe Neighborhood Action Plan (SNAP)** addresses drug related crime issues through a multifaceted, community-based effort in and around HUD assisted multifamily dwellings. SNAP is a partnership that began with the Assisted Housing Managers Association, Denver's Community Development Agency, and HUD's Office of Multifamily Housing and grew to a very large and constantly changing community coalition.

Many SNAP partners are providing volunteering activities and services to give youth alternative uses of their time. By encouraging and facilitating communications and cooperative efforts among residents, government officials, law enforcement agencies, and by developing a comprehensive strategy, the programs help provide safer neighborhoods. SNAP consists of three primary parts: education, empowerment and organizing, and community partnerships. A coalition between the Denver Police Department and the Aurora Police Department was established in order to stop crime from moving between boundaries. Volunteers in Service to American (VISTA's), funded by HUD, began a resident needs assessment on HUD multifamily properties and also organized resident councils.

HUD Contact: Deanna Beaudoin, (303) 672-5291, x1068

This information has been edited from the John J. Gunther Best Practices on HUD's web site at <http://www.hud.gov/ptw/menu.html>.