



October 2014

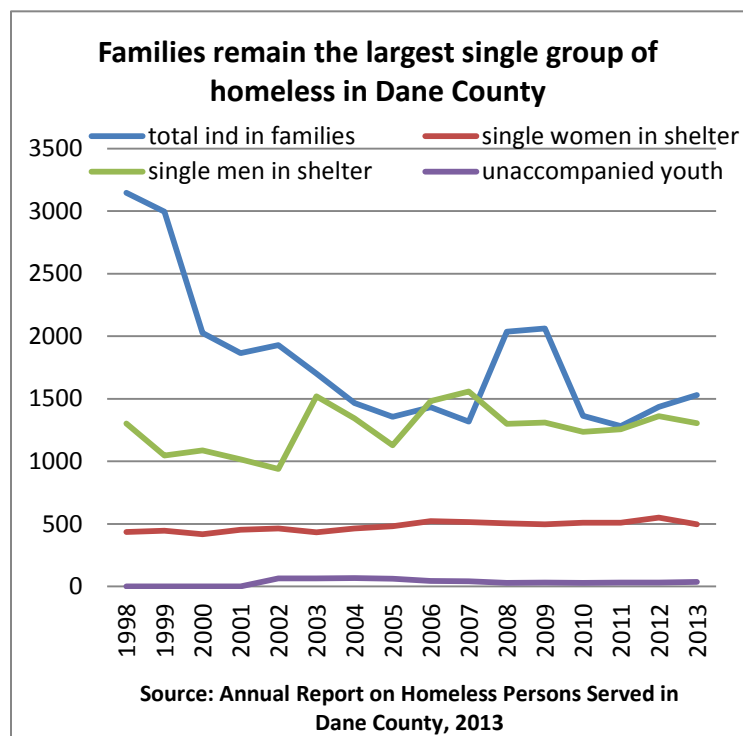


Housing in Action Mobilization Plan 2.0 There is a decrease in family homelessness.

I. Problem Statement

Families continue to make up close to half the homeless population

It is clear that separate even from extreme poverty, homelessness and lack of stable housing presents a formidable set of challenges to an already extremely vulnerable group of children. In 2013, parents and children in families made up close to half (45%) of the homeless population in Dane County using emergency shelter. 473 families with 946 children used emergency shelter last year, an increase over 2012 (445 families with 881 children). Further, close to 60% of the families had lived in Dane County for more than two years. Young families and children of color are significantly overrepresented in the homeless shelter population. In 2013, 79% of families staying in shelter identified themselves as nonwhite. Almost one quarter (22%) of the families reported income from working, another 26% had income from Social Security or related programs, and 26% from W-2 (TANF).ⁱ



Children and families become homeless due to a variety of reasons both systemic and personal. Significant causes include a dramatic decline in public investment in the creation of affordable housing nationally, increased housing costs combined with stagnant or declining incomes, an increase in female-headed families living in poverty, and drastic reductions over the years in state and federal safety-net services that protect against homelessness.ⁱⁱ The systemic issues combined with serious personal events such as injury or illness, loss of employment, flight from domestic violence, substance abuse, and mental illness also contribute to housing instability and homelessness. Finally, an historic focus on funding emergency shelters rather than systemic permanent housing solutions has allowed the problem to persist.ⁱⁱⁱ

For this reason, in 2014, the Basic Needs Community Solution Team undertook to examine the Housing in Action Mobilization Plan (the “Plan”) approved by the United Way Board of Directors in 2005 and again in 2009 after updating and revisions. As part of this review the Team examined the Plan’s primary strategies, assessed the effectiveness of the strategies individually and collectively, and considered alternative methods to measure and communicate the progress. These research- based strategies have been successful in preventing and ending homelessness for many thousands of families in Dane County as well as dramatically altering the prevailing conversation on homelessness by asserting that stable housing solutions and not emergency shelter are the most effective way to address homelessness in our community.

These strategies are as follows:

1. Landlord/ tenant connections and financial counseling
2. Quality case management
3. Greater food access
4. Direct access to permanent housing (Housing First)

Over the last seven years, the environment has become yet more challenging, poverty in Dane County has increased dramatically, the housing supply has decreased significantly, and Wisconsin has been slow to recover from the recession.^{iv} Accordingly, our new plan affirms the original

Homeless Students in MMSD

Miss more days of school than other students:

- *Non- economically disadvantaged students: 7 days per year*
- *Economically disadvantaged students: 10 days per year*
- *Homeless students: 16 days per year*

Change schools mid-year more than other students:

- *3% of non-homeless students changed schools mid-year*
- *19% of homeless students changed schools mid-year*

Continue to remain residentially unstable over time:

- *20% of students who experienced homelessness in 2006-07 also experienced homelessness in 2012-13*
- *Have parents who have less time than other parents to schedule and organize their children’s social and enrichment activities*

Research by Dr. Peter Miller, UW Madison, 2014

strategies and reprioritizes our core strategies as well as adds two strategies – Leveraging Resources and Influencing Policy.

Why it matters:

- While much attention has been paid to the very visible chronically homeless single adults, it must be noted that homelessness has particularly adverse effects on children and youth including hunger, poor physical and mental health, and missed educational opportunities.
- Many homeless families have experienced trauma prior to becoming homeless such as multiple moves, domestic violence and substance abuse, and living with chronic stress.

- More than 90 percent of sheltered and low-income mothers have experienced physical and sexual assault over their lifespan.^v Fleeing violence is the most prevalent reason given for families seeking emergency shelter in Dane County.^{vi}
- The school year for homeless children is often marked by interruptions and delays, with homeless children twice as likely to have a learning disability, repeat a grade, or to be suspended from school.^{vii}
- Homeless children are twice as likely to experience hunger as their non-homeless peers. Hunger has negative effects on the physical, social, emotional, and cognitive development of children.^{viii}
- A quarter of homeless children have witnessed violence and 22% have been separated from their families. Exposure to violence can cause a number of psychosocial difficulties for children both emotionally (depression, anxiety, withdrawal) and behaviorally (aggression, acting out). Nationally, half of school age homeless children experience problems with depression and anxiety and one in five homeless preschoolers have emotional problems that require professional care.^{ix}
- Homelessness is linked to poor physical health for children including low birth weight, malnutrition, ear infections, exposure to environmental toxins, and chronic illness (e.g. asthma). Homeless children also are less likely to have adequate access to medical and dental care.

II. National Research

A. Housing First

The data on the Housing First model has become even more compelling. National results confirm that it has an 80% success rate in keeping families who have been homeless settled in permanent housing – as compared to a 37% rate for families who have stayed in shelter – and it costs only 66% of serving a family in shelter.^x

80% success rate in keeping families who have been homeless settled in permanent housing – as compared to a 37% rate for families who have stayed in shelter – and it costs only 66% as much

United States Interagency Council on Homelessness’s strategy (called *Opening Doors*) to reduce family homelessness throughout the country continues to

grow. The 2013 Point-in-Time (PIT) count reflected a steady and significant decrease in national rates of homelessness since the launch of *Opening Doors* in 2010. According to HUD’s PIT estimate, the total number of people homelessness on a single night decreased by six percent between 2010 and 2013 and four percent between 2012 and 2013. The decrease in persons who are unsheltered was even greater, dropping by 13 percent since 2010 and over 11 percent between 2012 and 2013.^{xi}

Progress was made across all sub-populations. Perhaps, most notably, the country has seen homelessness among Veterans decline by 24 percent since 2010. In addition, the number of

people experiencing chronic homelessness declined by 15.7 percent between 2010 and 2013. For the first time in the last five years, the number of families on the street or in homeless programs at a point in time decreased in 2013, as did the number of families experiencing homelessness over the course of a year.

The USHIC has taken the position that ending homelessness is possible when communities use the tools that are research-based and focus heavily on housing and not shelter as the solution. (See chart on page 9)

B. Rapid Rehousing

Rapid re-housing is the practice of focusing resources on helping families and individuals quickly move out of homelessness and into permanent housing, which is usually housing in the private market. Services to support rapid re-housing include housing search and landlord negotiation, short-term financial and rental assistance, and the delivery of home-based housing stabilization services, as needed. Priority is placed on helping individuals and families move into permanent housing as rapidly as possible and providing services to help them maintain housing. Rapid re-housing also increases turnover in shelters, which allows them to accommodate more families without increasing capacity.^{xii}

Early analysis by the USHIC, suggests that rapid re-housing is a more effective use of homeless assistance than homelessness prevention because of the difficulties in predicting which households at-risk of homelessness will actually become homeless without assistance.

C. Case Management

Case management has been defined as a “collaborative process that assesses, plans, implements, coordinates, monitors, and evaluates the options and services required to meet the client’s health and human service needs. It is characterized by advocacy, communication, and resource management and promotes quality and cost-effective interventions and outcomes.”^{xiii} Applying these principles to work

“...increases the person’s self-care capacity and consequently reduces other service system expenditure”

with homeless families continues to be considered best practice in programs intended to end homelessness for families and support them in remaining stably housed. The USHIC as well as the National Alliance to End Homelessness includes case management as a best practice. Further, a 2009 synthesis of literature on case management practices^{xiv} found that although case management can be a time intensive practice as it is based on forming relationships between families and professionals, it is cost effective because it “increases the person’s self-care capacity and consequently reduces other service system expenditure.”^{xv}

D. Financial Coaching

Although United Way has been engaged in financial coaching through the Financial Education Center for a number of years, it is still a relatively new approach to working with low income persons. Extension activities in this area have traditionally involved financial education and counseling. The coaching approach works by helping partners to make a long-term behavioral

change by building skills and teaching content based on the client’s unique needs and goals. The University of Wisconsin Extension has worked through its Family Living professionals statewide to develop the coaching program in a number of areas of the state based on the experience of Dane County. Past studies on these approaches have generally documented improvements in participants' knowledge and behavior. Financial coaching is intended to complement the other financial education and skill building that has historically been engaged in by Family Living agents. Although there has not been a great deal of quantitative research done in this specific field, a study by EARN^{xvi} found that best practices in the field pay attention to:

- Anchor coaching in behavior change
- Thoughtfully consider the use of coaching
- Pay attention to cultural relevance
- Support coaching through organizational culture
- Commit to rigorous evaluation

E. Access to Food as a Housing Strategy

John Arnold, from the Second Harvest Gleaners Food Bank of West Michigan, developed and implemented a model to significantly increase access to surplus food. Research shows that low income families with ready access to surplus food can decrease their monthly food-related costs by \$384, thereby effectively allowing an informal rent subsidy.

The methodologies to increase access to surplus food include:

1. People in need should be able to access food pantries as often as needed
2. Intake and screening at a pantry including screening for eligibility for federal food subsidy programs should be done in a welcoming dignified manner
3. Clients should have ability to select from all products available versus receiving pre-packaged selections
4. Enough food pantries must exist within an accessible distance of clients to meet need^{xvii}

A 2012 study by the Robert Wood Johnson Healthy Eating Research found that when low income



clients of food pantries were given a list of potentially desirable food qualities and asked how important they “are to you and your family”, a majority of the guests who were surveyed at the California food pantries rated having healthy foods available most highly, with 92 percent of respondents saying this was “very important or important to them”. In order of preference, clients ranked vegetables, meats/poultry/fish, fruits and eggs most highly in their preferences to receive from pantries. Sweetened beverages, snacks and

frozen meals were ranked lowest. Only 1 percent of surveyed food bank staff said that clients

wanted more packaged meals, soda and snacks.^{xviii} According to the study, the “provision of nutritious foods, which tend to be more expensive, would likely relieve pressure on discretionary funds of low income families; would satisfy client preferences and priorities; and is consistent with the goal of improving public health.”^{xix}

F. Research of Successful Section 8 Housing Stabilization Efforts

The Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) program works with individuals living in Section 8 supported housing to provide case management that arranges for services aimed primarily to help participants find jobs, build assets, clean up credit histories, and take other steps to increase their incomes. Participants also have the chance to build savings as their incomes increase. As with the regular Section 8 program, participants’ rents go up with their incomes, but the program places the additional amounts paid in rent into an escrow account for their benefit. They can access the funds only after they have successfully graduated from the program.^{xx} The goal of the program is to increase a head of household’s earned income in order to successfully “graduate” out of subsidized housing thereby opening up space for new low income renters.

The program has been successful. In 2011, HUD reviewed FSS program characteristics in a representative sample of 100 housing agencies. In addition, the study also followed a group of 181 FSS participants in 14 programs, observing their FSS experiences and outcomes. HUD found that after 4 years in the FSS program, 24% of the study participants completed program requirements and graduated from FSS, 37% had left the program without graduating, and 39% were still enrolled in FSS. Program graduates were more likely to be employed than other exiters or the still-enrolled participants. Program graduates also had higher incomes, both when they enrolled in FSS and when they completed the program, than participants with other outcomes. Staying employed and increasing their earned incomes helped graduates accumulate substantial savings in the FSS escrow account. The average escrow account balance was \$5,294 for program graduates, representing about 27 percent of their average household income at the time of program enrollment.

G. Coordinated Assessment and Shelter Diversion

Coordinated assessment, also known as coordinated entry or coordinated intake, paves the way for more efficient homeless assistance systems by:

- Helping people move through the system faster (by reducing the amount of time people spend moving from program to program before finding the right match);
- Reducing new entries into homelessness (by consistently offering prevention and diversion resources upfront, reducing the number of people entering the system unnecessarily); and
- Improving data collection and quality and providing accurate information on what kind of assistance consumers need.^{xxi}

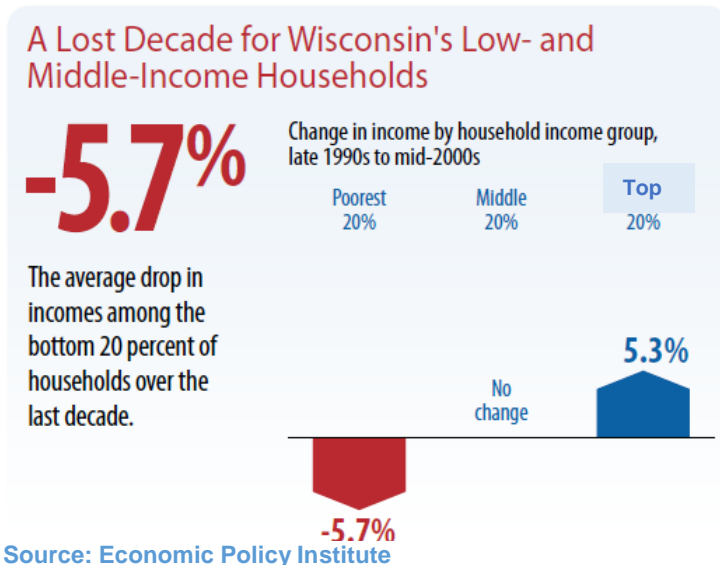
HUD urges local Continuums of Care to move toward a more seamless system for families in housing crisis. A robust coordinated system includes the existence of options for families to be diverted from emergency shelter. This diversion begins with the adoption of a shared

assessment tool. The Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (SPDAT) holds promise as a comprehensive tool that works in conjunction with local Homeless Management Information System (HMIS data systems) to appropriately assess families' needs and assist in placing them in appropriate services.

III. Local Data

A. The number of people at risk of homelessness in Dane County has grown.

In 2012, after a decade of economic decline, one in eight of our neighbors (and nearly one in 6 children) were living in poverty in Dane County - that's an annual income of \$23,550 for a family



of four. A study by the Brookings Institute shows a 46% increase in poverty between 2000 and 2008-12 in the Madison Metro area. Perhaps even more alarming is the increase in the percentage of children living in extreme poverty (50% of the Federal Poverty Level FPL) in Dane County. In 2012, 7% of children (7,388) lived in families with incomes below \$11,775 annually. These are the families showing up in our emergency shelters due to loss of housing.

The growth in child poverty has been accelerated by Wisconsin's poor

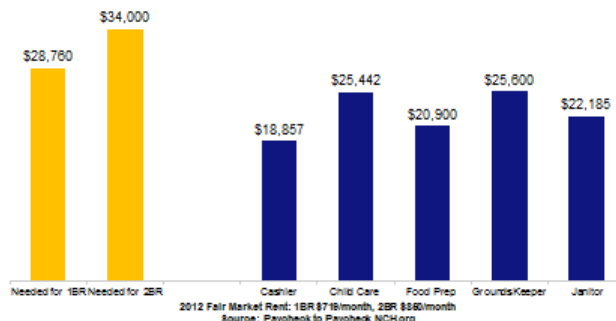
economic growth. A 2013 report by the Federal Reserve shows that the rate of Wisconsin's recovery from the Great Recession lags significantly behind other states across the Midwest and the United States.^{xxii} While Dane County is experiencing a faster recovery than the rest of Wisconsin, there remains a widening gap between upper and middle and lower income families.^{xxiii}

Extremely poor families in Dane County, as in the rest of the country, were the first to be hit by the Great Recession, and they are the last to see any improvement. The Economic Policy Institute's "Pulling Apart" reports that from the late 1990s to the mid-2000s, the bottom 20% of Wisconsinites actually lost 5.7% of their income while the middle 20% saw no change and the

Madison is 66th least affordable city in the US



Cost of Rent Outpaces Workers Salaries



top 20% reported an increase of 5.3 %.

B. High Cost of Housing

Dane County is an expensive place to live and having a full time job is not enough. One third of the heads of household in the Housing First program have less than a high school degree. Although many have income from work, jobs that require little to no formal training often do not pay a wage that allows people to live independently. For example, even working full-time, workers in the service industry are hard pressed to afford area rents.

Recent changes in state law and our low (2%) vacancy rate also give property owners the ability to be more selective as well.^{xxiv} The elimination of Madison’s previous landlord/tenant ordinances has resulted in additional barriers to housing. A new and growing challenge is the practice of requiring that tenants have three times as much income as the rent: that is \$28,760 in annual income for an average one-bedroom apartment and an income of \$34,000 for an average two-bedroom apartment. That is nearly three times the average annual income (\$12,000) of our Housing First families.

C. Homelessness still a costly community problem

Homelessness is a costly problem for our community and devastating for the children and families involved. In 2009, United Way, the city of Madison and Dane County were investing close to \$7 million in tax dollars and HUD funds to address homelessness. Two thirds (64%) was going toward providing emergency shelter. In 2014, collectively, funders are investing over\$9 million in public and private funds to support and manage the homeless services network in Dane County. While funding for shelter has not decreased significantly, all the new funds have been invested toward housing as a response to crisis. In 2009, there were more family members in shelter than single men. In 2013, families still made up 45% of the homeless individuals in Dane County but their numbers have dropped from 2005 when families made up 52% of the homeless population. While, the numbers are unfortunately rising (as mentioned earlier) we believe our efforts and investments are making a significant impact on the families we are reaching with both Housing First and prevention efforts. Neither of these approaches is yet at scale.

Housing in Action strategies

1. *Housing First – Grow to scale*
 2. *Case management & access to benefits*
 3. *Financial coaching & Landlord/Tenant relationships*
 4. *Access to food*
 5. *Leveraging resources*
 6. *Influencing policy*
- } **New**

VI. Hypothesis and Goal

By expanding diversion strategies; providing direct access to stable housing for families; and through a coordinated system which engages our strategies of Housing First, case management landlord/tenant connections and financial counseling; and access to food we will reduce our reliance on shelter as the first line of defense for these



families.

Through the leveraging of resources and artful collaboration, we will decrease by half the number of families from Dane County that remain in emergency shelter for 30 days or more by 2020.

V. Our strategies and resources: Progress has been made towards the initial goal

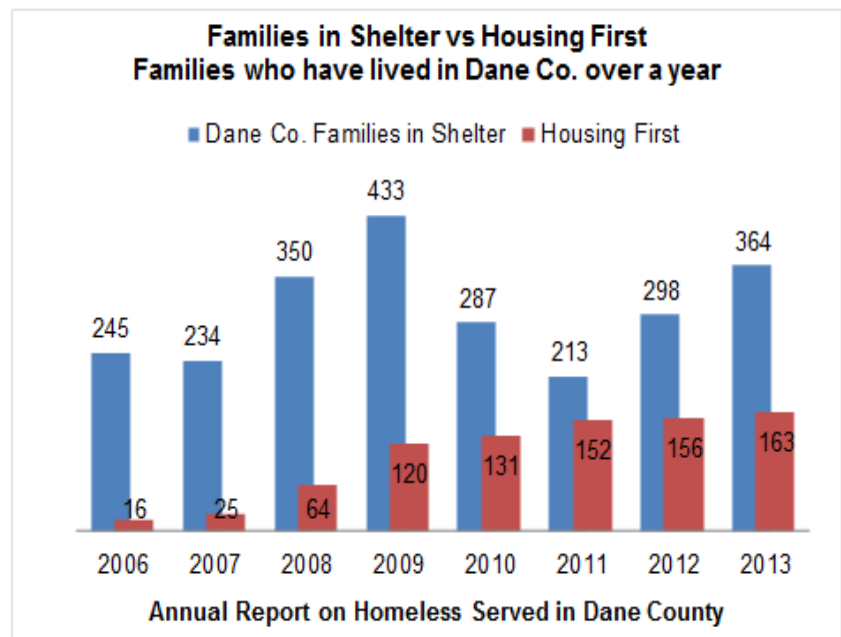
A. Outcomes to date

Our efforts have worked to end homelessness for more than 600 Dane County families. Moreover, the policy of moving families rapidly from shelter to housing is considered best practice and is a priority for HUD and other federal agencies addressing family homelessness. Housing First is a critical piece of what is needed to make a truly responsive housing crisis system. To fully address housing crisis for families, Dane County needs an effective and efficient system that can quickly assess families, strengths and needs, prevent eviction and tackle the loss of housing immediately. Coordination of local resources has been identified by the Team as a key priority and is included in the recommendations for further strategic action in 2015.

The implementation of the Housing In Action Mobilization Plan has concentrated on the four main strategies of Landlord/Tenant Relationships and Financial Coaching, Case Management, Access to Food, and Housing First. The team reviewed current local data on the supply side and demand sides of housing and homelessness in our community and the results of strategies implemented during the first four years of the Housing Mobilization Plan. Outcomes for each of the four strategies are highlighted below.

We are seeing positive results from these focused strategies that can reduce dependence on family shelters as the primary vehicle to end homelessness in our community. We have developed effective alternatives to shelter and our experience during the past eight years and continuing local and national research validates the chosen strategies.

- Beginning in 2006, we piloted the Housing First model with 12 families - 90% of these families are still in permanent housing. We are now serving 163 families in Housing First programs. Despite the Great Recession of 2008-2009, there was a remarkable decrease in homelessness for families from



2009 to 2011, attributed substantially to the increase in Housing First programs and steady support of eviction prevention, financial counseling, and housing case management programs.

- In 2013, we are reaching an estimated 45% of families from Dane County who have used the shelter system. In 2013, we also supported 2,028 families with eviction prevention, housing case management, tenant-landlord building bridges, and financial literacy programs to help them avoid homelessness.
- We now have 2,330 families participating in case management and eviction prevention work. This large number of families receiving support to remain housed indicates the likelihood many more families would be in shelter if our prevention strategies were not in place.
- We have increased the training, quality and quantity of case management.
- We have significantly grown the work of reducing family homelessness through additional grants and shifting of investment dollars. The Housing First program has received both the greatest number of grants and highest total funding from private and government grants of any initiative in our Agenda for Change portfolio. Altogether, we have leveraged \$4,623,734 in grant funding for Housing First.

1. Housing First

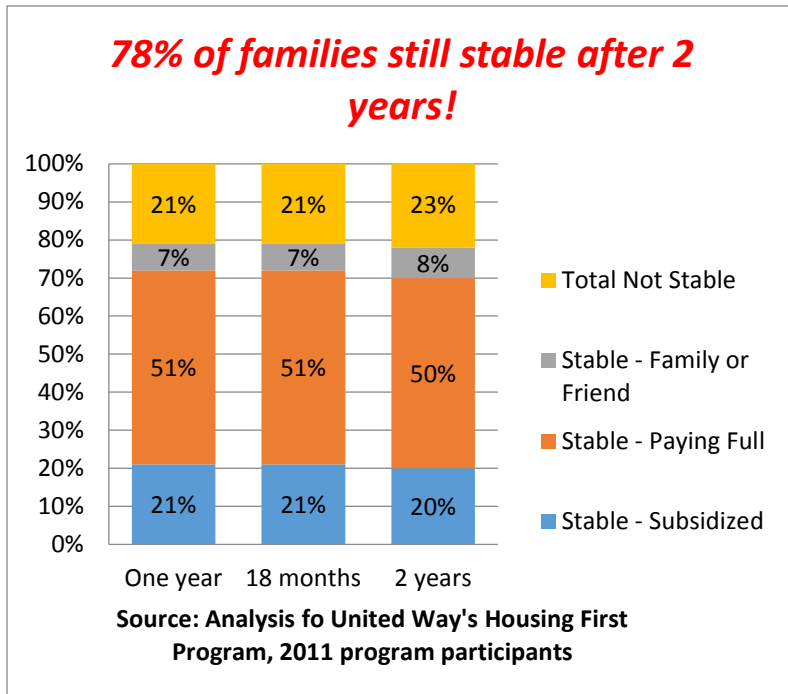
When the Plan was approved in 2006, there were no active Housing First program options for families in Dane County. All homeless families were screened at the Salvation Army and referred to shelter as beds were available. Other families were denied access.

In 2006, we created a new approach whereby case managers worked with non-sheltered residents. Sixteen families were diverted from shelter to Housing First with a pilot designed by United Way and our agency partners, funded by United Way and provided by Porchlight with coordination and referrals from Madison Metropolitan School District. Beginning in 2008, we pursued and gained HUD funding for two Housing First efforts. Beginning in January 2009, this experience with the early programs formed the basis for our work with the Henry J. Predolin Foundation to fund our effort to annually place 45 families from shelter into stable housing in the community under the Housing First model.

Evaluations of studies across the country show that 80% of families are stably housed for at least one year using the Housing First model. This standard has become the benchmarked for Housing First programs for HUD's Rapid Rehousing (Housing First) funded programs.

Our goal also has been for 80% of children and families who are enrolled in our Housing First program to be stably housed for at least one year. As the chart indicates, we have reached or almost reached the benchmarked standard for every year since the program’s inception in 2009.

In addition to, and even more significant than the cost savings, is the fact that 315 of the 500 children who are served just by the shelter system (63%) cycle back through homelessness and 23 of the 500 children end up in foster care, separated from their families. For the 500 children who are provided the Housing First model, only 7 children are placed in foster care and their



school success and health status are greatly improved. Only 100 of the 500 (20%) end up with another episode of homelessness.

Increasing the supply of affordable housing

- **Increasing Housing First.**

(short term rental assistance and case management) The National Alliance to End Homelessness estimates that 75% of families that enter shelter could be successfully rehoused through programs like Housing First. We estimate that there remains a

need for an additional 310 Housing First program slots – an annual need of \$3,720,000.

- **Increase supported housing.** Dane County has a shortage of housing that provides supportive services- long term rental assistance and case management - for those families with very high and continual needs. To more accurately understand what is needed, the Dane County Continuum of Care (Homeless Consortium) has contracted with the Community Supportive Housing (CSH) to undertake a study of Dane County in the fall of 2014.
- **Maximize Section 8.** The Madison Community Development Authority and the Dane County Housing Authority provide approximately 3,800 units of subsidized housing through Section 8 Vouchers. Combined, the housing authorities have an allocation from HUD of just over 3,000 Section 8 Vouchers but are only able to issue about 2,600 due to funding constraints. To permanently increase by 400 vouchers, the system needs a one-time infusion of \$2.6 million.
- **Increase Family Self Sufficiency program.** In order to “free up” section 8 vouchers or units, the HUD funded FSS program should be increased from its current limit of 20 families or individuals to the next HUD limit of 75. The Dane County FSS program was initiated by

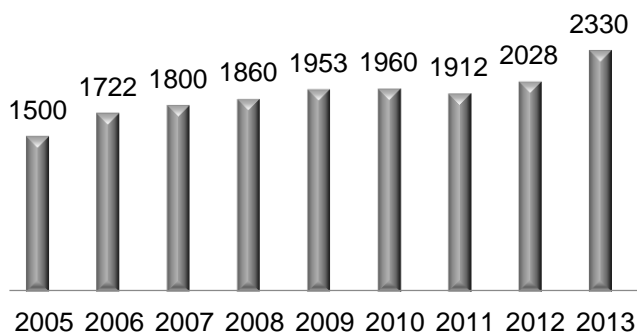
United Way, the City and County Housing Authorities and Community Action Coalition of South Central Wisconsin. United Way continues to fund the Building Bridges project which provides case management for families in Section 8 housing.

- **Explore innovative solutions** such as a social investment fund use for the purchase of affordable housing.
- **Develop effective links to successful employment for families.** Develop the capacity of our HIRE Education Employment Initiative to link adults in our housing services to build skills and place parents in employment.

While programs to decrease family homelessness continue to be the recipients of the largest amount of single issue funding at United Way (chiefly as a result of the generous grant from the Henry J. Predolin Foundation), there remains a significant price tag to growing the program to scale. The United Way campaign continues to be the largest source of funding for programs specifically targeting ending homelessness for families. As expressed in the two new strategies of leveraging dollars as well as influencing policy, we will continue our efforts at moving public dollars in the direction of ending and preventing family homelessness specifically.

2. *Quality Case Management provides connections to important resources*

Families stabilized through case management



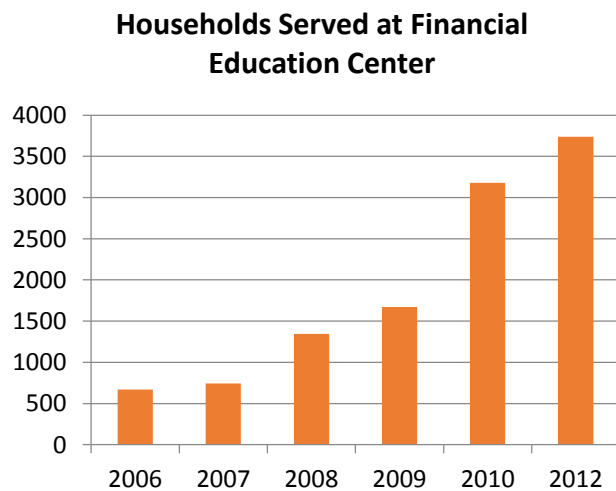
Families who have been homeless or are at risk of homelessness often lack the economic and social resources to facilitate important connections with services they or their children may need. Highly skilled professional case managers assist families in gaining access to the services and supports that will help them be successful. In addition to working with families on goals of housing stability and educational goals for their children,

these professionals are delivering on our strategy to assist families in gaining access to the income and health care supports for which they are qualified, including BadgerCare, FoodShare, W-2, SSI, SSDI, Unemployment Insurance, EITC, Veterans Benefits and others. Through our partnerships, in 2013, 2330 households at risk of homelessness were able to stay housed due to quality case management. Since 2009, United Way has provided professional development to housing case managers in Dane County on a variety of topics to assist them in advancing their skills and practice in working with vulnerable families. This is vital as agencies have limited budgets for professional development. In 2013, United Way trained over 150 case managers on the Affordable Care Act and HealthConnect as well as Motivational Interviewing.

3. *Engaging Landlords & Financial Coaching*

From 2009 to 2013, more than 12,000 households participated in United Way funded financial counseling and education programs. Our financial coaching program is a research-based, nationally recognized approach to financial education specifically designed for low income individuals and families. Through this partnership, families set individual financial goals and are assisted in reaching those goals by volunteer coaches or case managers. Last year, 83% of program participants reached one or more of their financial goals.

Increasing access to benefits for homeless families remains a central role of the work of financial education and case managers. Several case management symposia over the course of the last five years have teamed the Financial Education Center with public benefits specialists from Dane County and Disability Rights, to deliver training for case managers on the various income supports, eligibility criteria, as well as application processes. This training assists families in receiving the work and income and health insurance supports for which they are eligible.



To further the relationship between area landlords and our housing agencies, in April and May 2014, in partnership with the Apartment Association, United Way and our partner agencies have had three significant meetings engaging over 50 area landlords in extensive conversations about ending homelessness and the role of Housing First and case management. We heard three important messages from landlords:

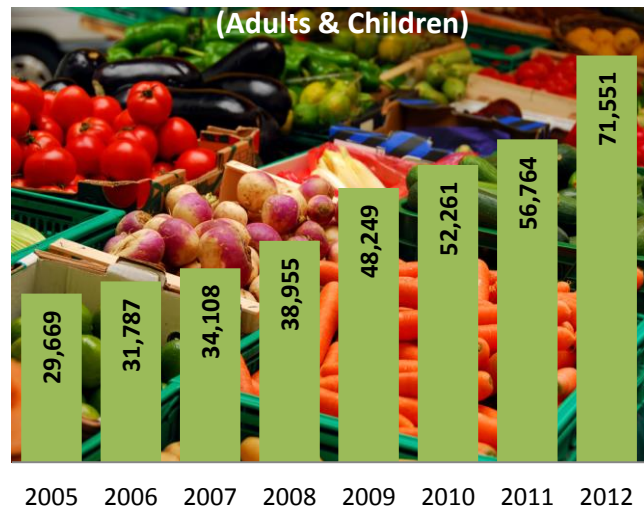
1. Increase the number of families being served by Housing First program
2. Cross training between front line staff in rental housing and case managers
3. Understanding the important role of case managers to landlords.

4. Access to Surplus Food as a Housing Strategy

Due to the Great Recession, families and individuals are attending food pantries at nearly twice the rate as five years ago. In 2013, 158,141 households (with 193,793 children) visited a pantry - an increase of over 68 percent from 2007. While food pantries can serve households with incomes up to 185 percent of the FPL (those receiving TFAP- The USDA commodities program), 60 percent of families using food pantries in Dane County fall below 100 percent of the FPL which is \$19,090 for a family of three. The number of FoodShare participants in Dane County has more than doubled from 2007 from 34,108 to 71,550.

In 2013, in partnership with the Goodman Foundation, United Way created a Delegation to examine ways to increase the access to healthy food for all children in Dane County. Three important areas of emphasis emerged in the effort to close the gap in access to healthy food: children and family’s access, neighborhood availability, and institutional and organizational culture that contributes to healthy food consumption. Barriers exist across these parts of the system which require different strategies, both short and long term to remove them. The Delegation has established a long term community goal to increase access to and consumption of healthy food for all children in Dane County, especially children in low income households, in order to decrease the number of food insecure children by 50 percent.

FoodShare Participation in Dane County



Source: Wisconsin DHS

B. Challenges in reaching the initial goal

- In 2012 and again in 2013, we saw a worrisome increase in family homelessness that is attributed the very slow economic recovery from the Great Recession.
- While significant progress is being made in community awareness, there continues to be a focus on solutions for chronically homeless single adults on the part of the City and County. Although, recent efforts by the City of Madison in particular are meant to address singles, future plans include building or acquiring additional permanent supportive housing for families. While, we have generated a change in the view of shelter as the response to homelessness, there remains a reluctance to move significant public resources from emergency services to housing.

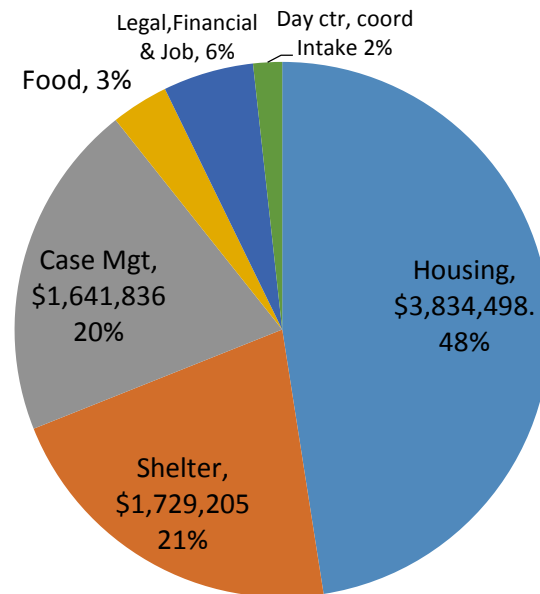
- There is no single point of entry for those in housing crisis which would allow families a one-stop for a robust assessment of need and assets. This entry system is now in its early stages of implementation at the end of 2014. A fully developed system has the potential to move families more quickly into appropriate services.
- The economic downturn of the community has resulted in more joblessness among the least trained and most unstable adults in the community who have the greatest likelihood of needing shelter. The numbers of individuals facing unemployment and loss of housing is increasing at a greater rate than resources being added to address their needs.
- The elimination of Madison’s previous landlord/tenant ordinances has resulted in additional barriers to housing. A new and growing challenge is the practice of requiring that tenants have three times as much income as the rent. In addition, a two percent vacancy rate gives property owners the ability to be more selective as well.
- Food Share participation still represents only 76% of those eligible for the program - this means there are around 20,000 families in Dane County who are likely eligible for the program but are not taking advantage of it

5. Leveraging Resources

The United Way’s investment in Housing First demonstrated to policymakers and program providers that this combination is better for the long-term well-being and success of children and families. Funding for prevention programs – including Housing First – has grown from \$6.2 million in 2010 to \$8.1 million in 2014. The success of United Way of Dane County’s eviction prevention, Rapid Rehousing, and Housing First programs are the drivers of this change.

Since our launch of the Housing First model as a pilot program in 2006 with 12 families, the focus of the United Way has been to use the success of this privately funded model to inspire the City of Madison and Dane County to move their funding away from shelter and into prevention and the Housing First model. The case was successfully made that the millions of dollars that the City, County,

Homeless Services Funding, 2013



State/HUD, and FEMA spent on managing homelessness through shelters would be more productive in ending homelessness through prevention programs.

The City of Madison and Dane County believe in and are expanding investment in the combination of eviction prevention, Housing First, and affordable permanent housing as the balanced solution to reduce homelessness.

Homeless Services dollars have been shifted toward Prevention and Housing						
	2003 Shelter	2003 Prevent& Housing	2010 Shelter	2010 Prevent& Housing	2014 Shelter	2014 Prevention& Housing
United Way of Dane County	382,825	600,145	0	2,016,293	0	2,073,552
FEMA ¹	44,010	23,236	67,002	162,065	51,930	100,641
County	4,546,000		1,648,870	974,521	1,384,293	1,721,561
City/CDBG Includes HUD funding ²	1,244,000		Not Available	605,000	104,569	1,426,380
HUD			382,959	2,484,445	344,766	2,780,897
TOTAL (split shelter/prevention)	1,126,835	623,381	2,098,831	6,242,324	1,885,558	8,103,031
	64%	26%	25%	75%	19%	81%
Total unable to split	\$5,790,000					
TOTAL:	\$6,840,216		\$8,339,155		9,988,589	

6. Influencing Policy - United Way is an integral leader and partner in changing the system

The review of the results of our strategies confirms that meaningful progress has been made toward reaching the 2005 Plan’s stated goal:

We will reduce our reliance on shelter as the first line of defense for Dane County homeless families with minor children. We will expand eviction prevention strategies and provide direct access to stable housing for families facing homelessness. Our strategies focus on landlord/tenant connections and financial management, quality case management, access to food and Housing First.

¹ FEMA provides funding to the United Way in the form of the Emergency Food and Shelter Grant. The local board, chaired by United Way, determines these allocations to local agencies.

² Funding from the City of Madison also includes State ESG & ETH funds.

United Way and our partners at the City, County and agencies have been leading change toward a more comprehensive and responsive housing crisis system for families. **The partnership that was spearheaded by United Way's investment and leadership in Housing First/rapid rehousing has led to greater coordination in a number of housing programs for families between our partner agencies and has demonstrated that Housing First can be successful.** Specifically:

1. The YWCA, The Road Home, and The Salvation Army are expanding our partnership to include the discussion of sharing information on families seeking emergency shelter. This is critical to understanding how to more accurately assess the individual needs of the families.
2. Since 2013, the Salvation Army (with the assistance of the City of Madison) has implemented a shelter diversion program to help families that are currently doubled up or living in unsafe arrangements to find housing and avoid shelter.
3. Over the last year, the Dane County Continuum of Care (the collaboration that applies for and receives HUD funds for the operation of homeless services) has strategically begun moving toward a more coordinated system by aligning our application for 2014 funding more closely to the priorities set forth by HUD. This application to HUD for more than \$3 million dollars is overseen by the Homeless Service Consortium Board of Directors.
4. In 2013, Community Action Coalition began piloting a coordinated entry for families and individuals that have been homeless fewer than 6 months.

City and County committee involvement – Staff at United Way are appointees to 1) the *Dane County Homeless Issues Committee* which has been responsible for providing input and strategies to the Director of Human Services to manage homelessness and recently the development of the permanent day resource center and 2) the *City of Madison's Housing Strategy Committee* which is responsible for developing the City's housing plan. Currently, the city is in the process of developing 60 units of supported housing on Rethke Road for single adults. In addition, the city is in the early stages of planning for 50 units of family housing to be available in 2018. All of the housing is proposed in a 5 year capital budget for the City that, if approved by the Common Council will increase the amount of affordable housing in the City of Madison by roughly 1,000 units.

Homeless Services Consortium. For several years, United Way has taken a leadership role in the Consortium, which represents homeless persons, agencies, faith communities, and advocates. Staff chairs the new board of directors that acts as the governing body for the consortium including oversight of the HUD funds as well as the state Emergency Solutions Grant funding.

FEMA - Emergency Food and Shelter Grants. United Way of Dane County chairs the local board for this annual allocation of funds to area agencies supplying emergency shelter, food, and rent assistance. Last year, the allocation from FEMA to Dane County was \$152,571 and \$98,290 went to prevention and housing.

The Community Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness. This ten year plan developed and implemented in partnership with the City of Madison, Dane County and the United Way shares the results our community is obtaining in the important goal areas of reducing homelessness and fully embraces the strategic efforts of United Way of Dane County.^{xxv}

The following table shows the elements of a system as recommended by the USICH, the National Alliance to End Homelessness and the extent to which Dane County is engaging in or developing these priorities. **United Way’s investment in our strategies is in line with best practices in a robust coordinated system.**

Best Practices in Coordinated Housing Crisis System	Progress in Dane County
<p>1. A centralized or coordinated entry system with the capacity to assess needs and connect families to targeted services.</p>	<p>Pilot project this year to provide intake services for families and individuals homeless less than 6 months. The family shelter providers (except DAIS) are coordinating waiting lists of families seeking shelter</p>
<p>2. Ensure interventions and assistance are appropriate to the needs of families.</p>	<p>Due to a shortage of some services, clients are placed in programs where openings exist regardless of the length or breath of services needed. Which is not the best use of resources.</p>
<p>3. Provide rapid re-housing to the majority of families experiencing homelessness.</p>	<p>United Way is the major funder of this program that serves 163 families per year (to address 473 families that arrived in shelter)</p>
<p>4. Increase access to affordable housing.</p>	<p>Affordable housing need in Dane County is 18, 826 households.^{xxvi} Porchlight is seeking to develop 15 to 20 units for singles. City of Madison is developing 60 units of supported housing for chronically homeless singles. Planning for 50 family units in 2018.</p>
<p>5. Direct more service-intensive housing interventions to the highest need households.</p>	<p>Currently services are driven by where openings exist. A new assessment shows promise in triaging all families and determining highest need families for greatest appropriate intervention.</p>
<p>6. Connect families to mainstream resources.</p>	<p>Case managers fill this important role in preventing eviction and keeping families stable in housing. 2300 people served in 2013. They connect to resources such as FoodShare, WIC, W-2 (TANF), EITC, and BadgerCare.</p>

VI. Results and Measures

Following is a summary which tracks the metrics of all of the implemented strategies starting with the 2009 affirmation of the Housing in Action Strategies by the United Way Board of Directors.

	2009	2010	2012	2013
#1 Housing First for Families				
Habitat for Humanity Homes	16	15	16	16
Porchlight Housing First for Families	4	6	8	8
Henry J. Predolin Foundation Housing First	45	45	47	48
House-ability (HUD) (YWCA)		26	25	23
Second Chance Apartments (YWCA & TRH)	6	8	17	16
Home for Good (CAC)		3	14	14
Housing and Hope (TRH)	4	16	16	32
Dollars spent on Housing First for families through UWDC	\$500,258	\$550,000	\$712,151	\$729,514
#2 Best Practices in Housing Case Management and Benefits				
Case Managers w/quality Case Mgt training	148	125	150	150
Households receiving UWDC funded Case Mgt	1,960	1,912	2,028	2,330
#3 Building Bridges + Eviction Prevention				
% of Total FEMA funds spent on Eviction Prevention	44.30%	33%	35.50%	35%
Earned Income Tax Credits Filed	\$1.9M	\$1.48M	\$1.43M	\$1.57M
HH w/ Financial education at Financial Ed. Center	1,672	3,180	3,738	
#4 Access to Food				
Tons of Surplus Food Distributed	5.9M	6.7M	7.6M	8.1M
Households using food pantries	132,000	154,500	150,016	158,141

VI. Meeting our Goal and Continuing Work Plan

Our overriding approach continues to be that housing is the key to ending homelessness. Maintaining or gaining stable housing for families provides the foundation for this work. Given the economic realities for low income families in Dane County, we believe that this means an increased emphasis in growing the Housing First programs as well as creative partnerships with the city, county, and private employers. This mobilization plan affirms the original strategies of Housing First, quality case management, landlord tenant relationships and financial coaching, and access to food. To these are added leveraging resources and influencing policy.

Our logic model below for this work shows how these strategies feed into the long term goal of decreasing family homelessness.

Decreasing Family Homelessness				
	Strategies	Immediate Results	Long Term Results	Goal
Investments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Housing First – Rapid Rehousing (Increase affordable housing) Quality Case Management Financial education Landlord/Tenant Relationships Access to food 	# Families in Housing First # Case Management #Financial Ed \$ in federal tax returns \$ in EITC #Food Pantry visits %Food Security Increase in access to benefits (food share, EITC, SSI, Sec 8 etc)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Families remain stably housed for at least 12 months Decrease the # of families using emergency shelter Increase utilization of income supports Children have healthy food where they live, learn and play 	Decreasing Family Homelessness
Cross Cutting – Eliminating Racial Disparities				
Influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaborate with City, County and agency partners to drive change to coordinated system Increase public and donor awareness of what works through presentations and community engagement Convene stakeholders, landlords and others to maximize private sector assets (housing) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase public and private resources to address homelessness Reduce barriers to families receiving benefits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The system to address families in housing crisis has the capacity to address all families. Increased supply of affordable housing 	
leverage	Collaborate with other funders to align goals (10 year plan to end homelessness)	Leverage summer afterschool (USDA) meal programs.		
Cross Cutting – Volunteers support strategies				

Attachments:

- A. Basic Needs CST Roster
- B. Landlord Design Lab attendees
- C. Homeless Services Consortium Members
- D. 2014 Community Engagements focused on homelessness

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- ⁱ The City of Madison maintains an annual report on homelessness that monitors the shelter services provided in Dane County
- ⁱⁱ National Center on Family Homelessness, <http://www.familyhomelessness.org>
- ⁱⁱⁱ National Alliance to End Homelessness, <http://www.endhomelessness.org/>
- ^{iv} American Community Survey (ACS), <http://www.census.gov/acs/www/>
- ^v horizonsforhomelesschildren.org/understanding-homelessness/overview/
- ^{vi} *Annual Report on Homeless Persons Served in Dane County*, 2013
- ^{vii} *Understanding Homelessness*, Horizons for homelesschildren.org.
- ^{viii} Ibid
- ^{ix} American Psychological Association, *Effects of Poverty, Hunger and Homelessness on children and youth*.
- ^x National Alliance to End Homelessness.
- ^{xi} *Opening Doors*, United States Interagency Council on Homelessness, 2013
http://usich.gov/opening_doors/
- ^{xii} Ibid.
- ^{xiii} Commission for Case Manager Certification (CCMC). Definition and Philosophy of Case Management.
http://www.ccmcertification.org/pages/13frame_set.html
- ^{xv} *What makes case management work for people experiencing homelessness? Evidence for practice*, Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute, 2009
- ^{xvi} *Advancing Financial Coaching for Low-Income Populations: Midstream Lessons from EARN*, Ben Mangan February 2010
www.feedingamericawestmichigan.org
- ^{xvii} *Improving the Nutritional Quality of Emergency Food: A Study of Food Bank Organizational Culture, Capacity, and Practices*, Robert Wood Johnson, Healthy Eating Research, <http://healthyeatingresearch.org>
- ^{xix} Ibid.
- ^{xx} *Federal Programs for Addressing Low Income Housing Needs*, Margery Austin Turner & G. Thomas Kingsley, the Urban Institute, 2008
- ^{xxi} National Alliance to End Homelessness, <http://www.endhomelessness.org>
- ^{xxii} Wisconsin's Economy Still Ranks Near Bottom on Federal Reserve Index:
<http://www.wisconsinbudgetproject.org>
- ^{xxiii} Board of directors presentation by Denis Winters, 2013
- ^{xxiv} *MultiFamily Vacancy Rates*, Madison Gas & Electric, <http://www.mge.com/customer-service/multifamily/vacancy-rates/>
- ^{xxv} <http://www.cityofmadison.com/cdbg/documents/2012AnnualReportFinalwebsite.pdf>
- ^{xxvi} Urban Institute, *Housing Assistance Matters*