

Focusing a Community on Housing First: The Columbus Experience



Barbara Poppe
Community Shelter Board
www.csb.org

Overview



⌘ CSB Model

⌘ Guiding Principles

⌘ Framework

⌘ Initiatives

- ☒ Front Door Shelter

- ☒ Family Housing Collaborative

- ☒ Tier II Shelter

Community Shelter Board



- ⌘ The Community Shelter Board was created in 1986 to respond to the growing needs of homelessness in Franklin County.
- ⌘ Non-profit intermediary
 - ☑ Funder – shelter, supportive housing, and related services
 - ☑ Planning – Continuum of Care, system, funder collaborative
 - ☑ Coordination of services
- ⌘ *"It is unacceptable for anyone in our community to go without food or shelter for even one night."*

Mel Schottenstein, CSB Founder

Guiding Principles



- ⌘ Housing is basic human need – must be affordable and safe.
- ⌘ Families are better off in “home-like” settings rather than institutions.
- ⌘ Basic needs met first – recovery, parenting, education met after basic needs met.

Guiding Principles (cont.)



- ⌘ Families can set own goals, manage their homes, and take charge of their lives.
- ⌘ Services should be focused on families and individual members of the family.
- ⌘ Healthy families create health communities and healthy communities support healthy families.

Housing 1st Philosophy *(vs.* *Housing 2nd)*



⌘ Housing 1st = Priority is housing placement with services available (voluntary)

☑ Unlike Housing 1st approaches for single adults, additional consideration must be given to ensure safety for children

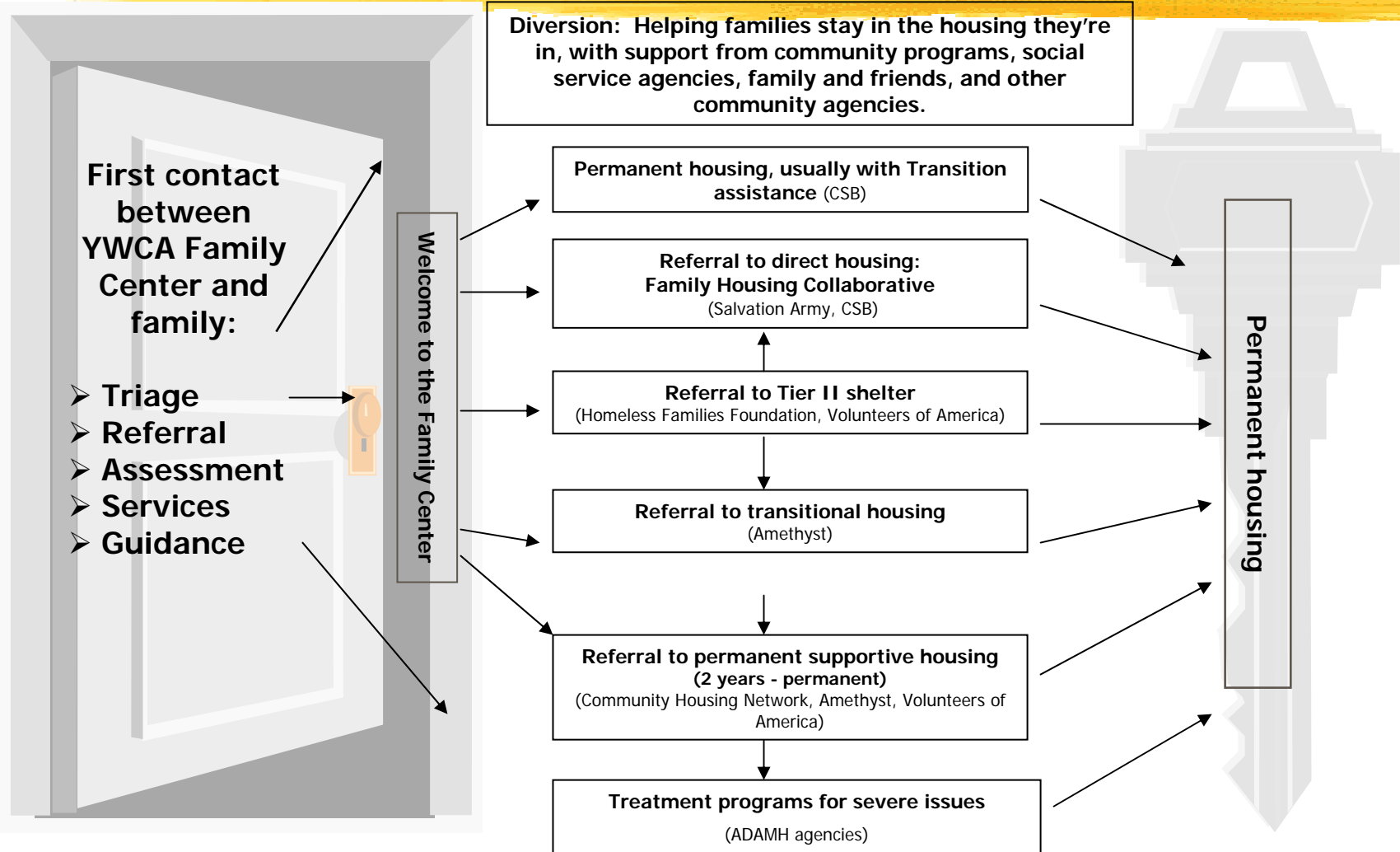
⌘ Housing 2nd = Priority is treatment/rehab (services required) with housing upon completion

System Framework



- ⌘ Prevention
- ⌘ Diversion
- ⌘ Minimize shelter stay
- ⌘ Move to appropriate housing quickly
- ⌘ Create permanent supportive housing
- ⌘ Measures results and manage for outcomes

Franklin County Family System



System Design Characteristics



- ⌘ Extensive housing partnerships, including subsidized housing
- ⌘ Access to short-term rental assistance
- ⌘ Highly collaborative
 - ☑ Regular system meetings
 - ☑ MOA's among agencies
 - ☑ Shared resources

System Design Characteristics (cont.)



⌘ High accountability among shelters due to transparency

- ☑ Shared HMIS

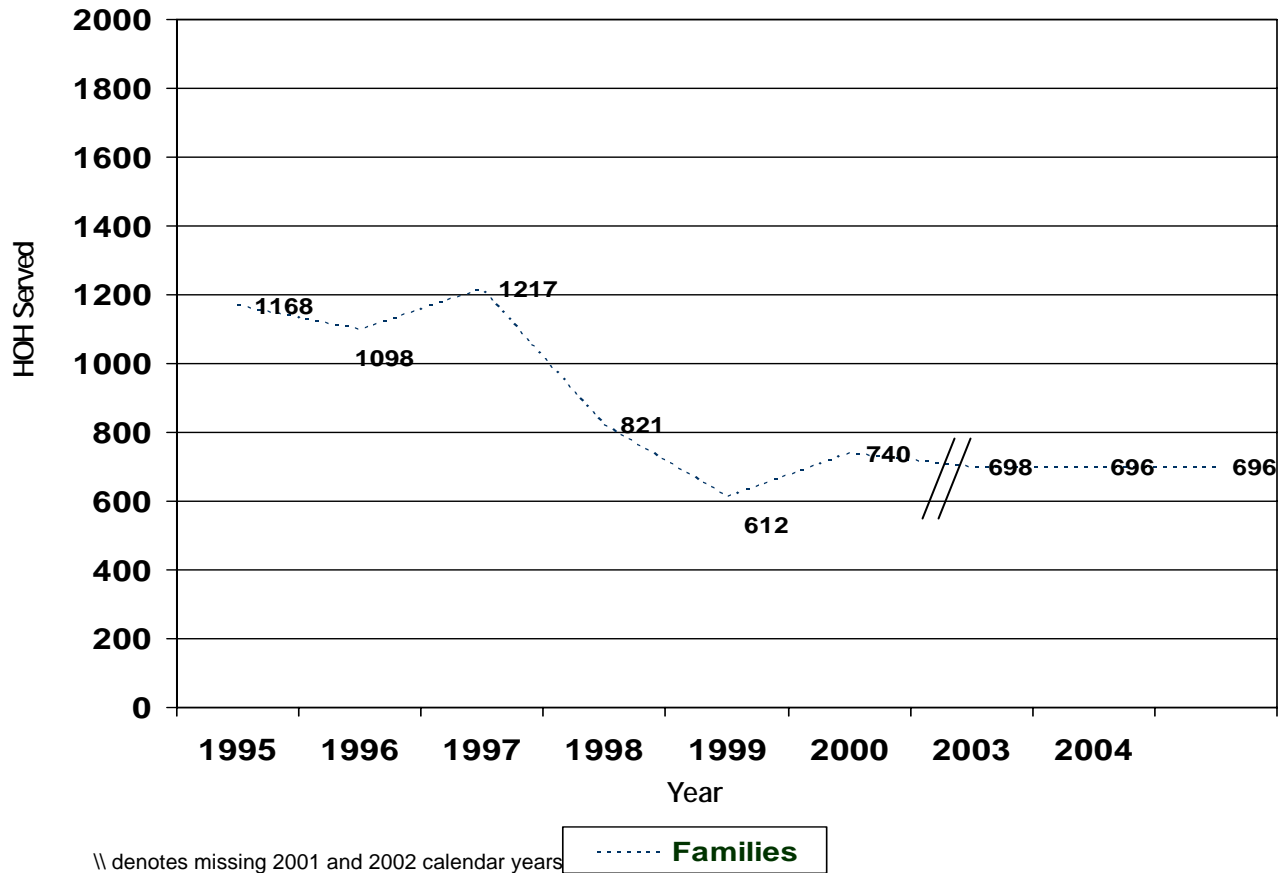
- ☑ Daily bedlist

- ☑ Quarterly indicators

- ☑ Annual program evaluations

System Trends

Households* Served in Emergency Shelter System,
CY 1995-2004

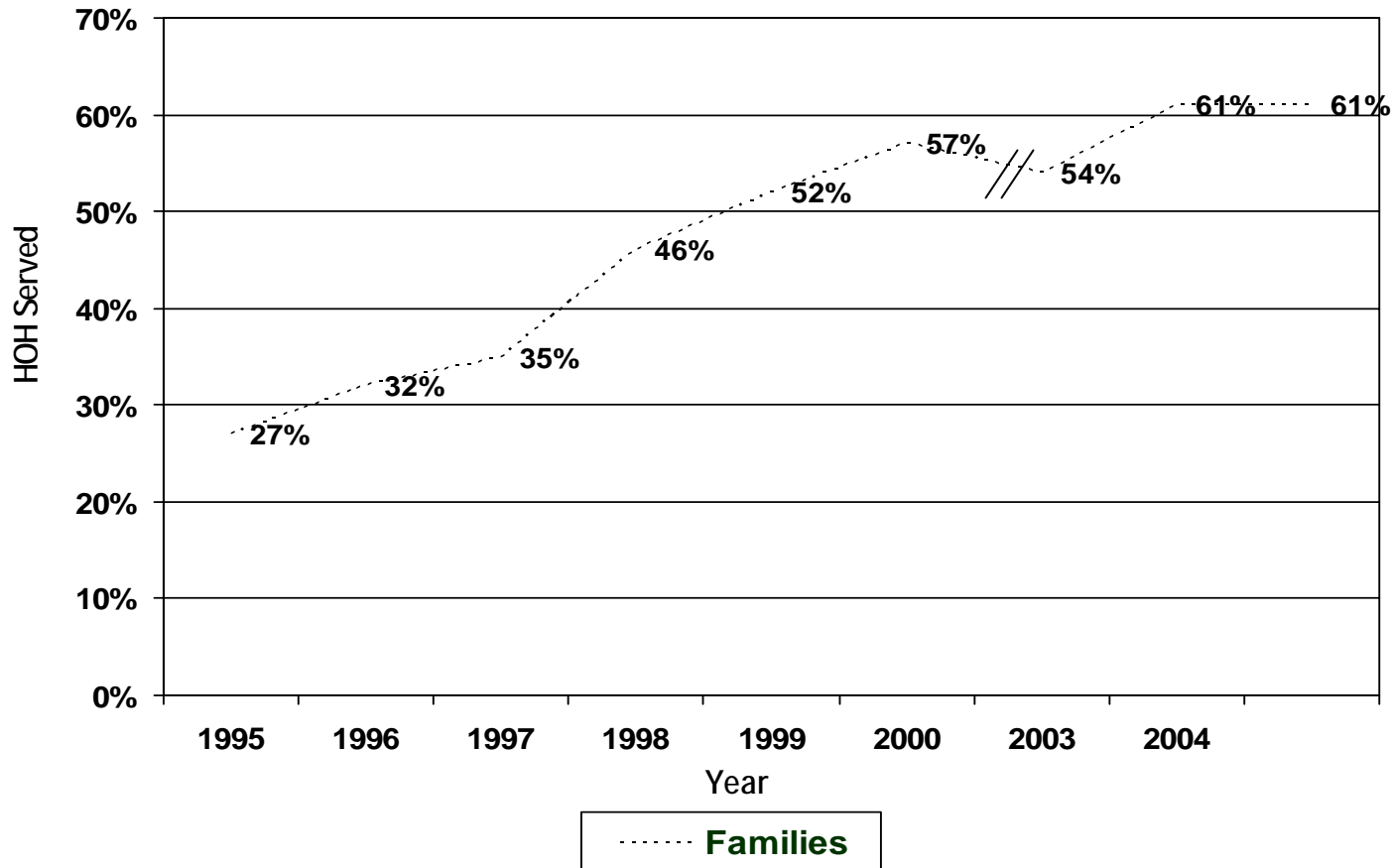


*Households are based on head of household for the family system and all clients for single adult systems.

System Trends

Successful Housing Outcomes by Shelter System, CY1995 -

2004



\\ denotes missing 2001 and 2002 calendar years

Front Door Shelter



- ⌘ Single point of entry to family system – toll free number; 24/7 access.
- ⌘ Supply of shelter beds expands to meet demand – no family turned away due to lack of space.
 - ⌘ 50 family capacity at center
 - ⌘ Additional motel capacity as needed
- ⌘ Triage before intake – call or walk in clients
- ⌘ Housing First philosophy – assertive and quick housing placement
- ⌘ Coordinated with Tier II shelters, direct housing, supportive housing, subsidized housing and other housing resources

YWCA Family Center

eliminating racism
empowering women **ywca**

MOODY·NOLAN, INC.
FORMS OF INTEGRITY



YWCA Family Center & Child Care Facility
Exterior Perspective



YWCA Family Center



⌘ Supportive services

- ☑ Individualized case management
- ☑ Resource center
- ☑ Life skills

⌘ Child & youth programming

- ☑ Licensed childcare
- ☑ Out of school programming
- ☑ Recreation and leisure

YWCA Family Center



⌘ Collaborative partnerships

- ☑ Housing
- ☑ Health care
- ☑ Legal
- ☑ Public assistance

⌘ Facility design

- ☑ New construction with design for families and children

Front Door Shelter Results



Reduces homelessness

- 40-50% of contacts don't need to come to shelter
- 43% Decline in family homelessness since 1997

Successful in re-housing within short time

- 65% families sheltered move to next step housing
- Average length of stay = 20 days

Achieves long-term success

- Recidivism < 1%



Family Housing Collaborative



- ⌘ Direct housing approach to quickly relocate families to permanent, affordable housing, followed by home-based case management
- ⌘ Short-term transitional housing assistance
- ⌘ Service Provider, Front Door Shelter, and Fiscal agent

FHC Target Population



⌘ Homeless families staying at the YWCA Family Center --

- desire an independent, stable apartment;
- have or will have, within 30 days, income and community-based supports sufficient to be independent;
- are appropriate for permanent housing; and
- are ***unable*** to obtain or maintain an apartment due to barriers primarily related to income, employment, debt and/or previous evictions.

FHC Results



Quick re-housing

- Assessment and referral time shortened as the project progressed – typically <30 days.

Successful housing outcomes

- 77-90% successful in securing permanent housing

Breaks the cycle of homelessness

- < 1% do not have subsequent shelter stay

Cost effective

- \$1,065 FHC vs. \$6,410 - Tier II shelter (per hh served)

Tier II Shelter



- ⌘ Referrals from Front Door Shelter
- ⌘ Short-term apartment setting
- ⌘ Case management and community linkages
- ⌘ Housing First philosophy – assertive housing placement
- ⌘ No sobriety/treatment requirements for admission

Homeless Families Foundation



- ⌘ 46 furnished studio, 1, 2, 3, and 4-bedroom apartments
- ⌘ Individualized case management
- ⌘ Extensive children and youth programming
- ⌘ Collaborative partnerships



Tier II Shelter Results



Serves hardest-to-serve families

- About one-half are actively using at time of admission
- Multiple barriers to housing (credit, legal, etc.)

Successful in re-housing

- 87% families sheltered move to permanent housing
- Average length of stay = 71 days

Achieves long-term success

- Recidivism < 1%

Family System Successes



⌘ Seamless system for families

- ☑ Single point of access
- ☑ Clear admission practices
- ☑ Continuity of services

⌘ Shared values & shared goals

- ☑ Value unique role for each
- ☑ 100% commitment to housing outcomes as primary purpose
- ☑ 100% commitment to increasing community resources for families

Family System Successes



- ⌘ Problem solve well both outside and within the shelter system
 - ☑ Partnership with Columbus Public Schools has significantly reduced school mobility
 - ☑ New demonstration program provides wrap around services for children with severe needs

Family System Successes



⌘ Responsive & nimble to changes

☑ Demand for shelter fluctuations

☑ Created replacement program upon 90 days notice of family shelter closing

⌘ Generally high trust among agencies and CSB

Challenges



- ⌘ Lack of affordable housing
- ⌘ Services for actively using families
- ⌘ Declining household incomes
- ⌘ Families with multiple episodes and/or long-term homelessness
- ⌘ Very young mothers with limited skills
- ⌘ Mobility of kids in schools

Wish List

- ⌘ More affordable housing and more transitional supports for families exiting shelters
 - ☑ New direct housing pilot for Tier II shelters
- ⌘ Supportive housing for actively using families
 - ☑ Exploring new partnerships and program designs
- ⌘ More community prevention resources
- ⌘ Better paying jobs, quality education, and better community supports for families



Focusing a Community on Housing First: The Columbus Experience



Barbara Poppe
Community Shelter Board
www.csb.org