



Selling Your Program: Landlord Engagement & Rental Assistance Strategies

By Shakeita Boyd
Community Housing Program Director



DASH Mission

- DASH is an innovator in providing access to safe housing and services to survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault and their families as they rebuild their lives on their own terms.
- No matter what the situation, we meet survivors where they are and strive to eliminate all barriers that prevent them from accessing safe housing. We work to ensure that all survivors have the tools and skills they need to be exactly who they choose to be and to create and maintain safe homes.
- We support partner agencies in the national capital region and throughout the United States in increasing their capacity to assist survivors in accessing safe housing. DASH educates policy makers and service providers nationwide on the principles and best practices of successfully assisting survivors of domestic violence in recognizing that they are empowered and whole.



Presentation Objectives

- ✓ Identify successful strategies for engaging Landlords through a rental assistance program;
- ✓ Demonstrate how to encourage participants to establish working relationships with their Landlord partners; and
- ✓ Provide a basic overview of how domestic violence impacts the Tenant/Landlord relationship.



Landlord Partnerships Strengthen DASH Programs:

- **The Empowerment Project** is a 2 year transitional to permanent scattered site housing program where we provide a rental subsidy for survivors of domestic violence with a focus on safe stable housing and financial independence. Apartments are leased by landlords directly to participants.
- **The Housing Resource Center (HRC)** is the hub of DASH's efforts to prevent homelessness among domestic violence survivors. We assist survivors in completing housing applications, obtaining safety transfers, navigating the public housing system, and making connections to community services.



To work with Landlords your program must have...

- confident and assertive staff.
- staff who can foster effective partnerships.
- resilience.



A Confident and Assertive Approach Includes:

- Expressing expectations for both parties clearly and directly;
- Expressing program ideas and guidelines without feeling guilty or intimidated regardless of your role; and
- Exhibiting self-confidence when communicating, standing firm by your program mission and treating everyone as equal partners.



Foster Effective Partnership





DASH's Strategies for Fostering Effective Landlord Partnerships

1. Keep all lines of **communication** open while protecting the confidentiality of the participants.
2. **Educate** both landlords and participants about the dynamics of everyone's role.
3. Encourage participants to be accountable and adhere to all of the terms and conditions of their lease.
4. Provide advocacy and **support to the Landlord through** frequent site visits and phone calls.
5. Provide advocacy and **support to the Survivors/Participants through** home visits, assistance with establishing a budget for paying rent on time and encouraging great tenancy.
6. **Plan** to offer on-going training and technical assistance to landlords and their staff.



Offer Landlords More Than a Rent Check

1. Support Landlords to incorporate the SAFETY of their tenants into every aspect of their property management.
2. Educate Landlords on best practices for responding to DV (or the specific dynamics of your subgroup) on their property, understanding that their role is not the “social worker.”
3. Offer DASH (or your organization) as a referral to Landlords or property managers who have tenants who have social service needs.
4. Assist Landlords with making the application process and all other processes “survivor friendly” or accessible to diverse populations.
5. **PAY RENT ON TIME.**



Participant Program and Landlord Relationship

PARTICIPANT

+

RENTAL ASSISTANCE
PROGRAM

+

LANDLORD
PARTNERSHIP

=

OVERALL SUCCESS



PARTICIPANT/ PROGRAM /LANDLORD INCENTIVES

Participant Incentives	Program Incentives	Landlord Incentives
Re/establish good rental history despite common barriers	Meet mission of providing safe and affordable housing for survivors	Consistent rent payment and less issues with tenants who are receiving a host of services and supports
Opportunity to be a lease holder of a property and community of their choice	Meet mission to help participants be the leader of their own lives	Has the support of the program that encourages the tenant to adhere to his/her lease agreement
Permanent housing	Support survivors/participants to be able to maintain their units upon program completion	Tenant has the resources and tools necessary to be a great neighbor and a phenomenal tenant



Key Points to Rental Subsidy

- Educate your landlords about your program model .
- Educate your potential participants about program expectations before they apply.
- Allow the participant to be involved in unit selection.
- Pay Security deposit and first months rent for everyone.
- Every month the participant should be expected to contribute a portion of their rent.
- Participant contribution is determined by the participant and their housing advocate(the staff person who does weekly home visits).
- Rental subsidy decrease as participant portion increase over time.
Rental Subsidy is key and can a move a family from transitional to permanent housing.



A Dynamic Partnership and Success Story with using Rapid Re-housing and Voluntary Service Model

E&G Properties and DASH work together to house and support DV victims on several levels.



THANK YOU!

email: sboyd@dashdc.org

web address: www.dashdc.org

phone: 202-742-1728