

LONG-TERM HOUSING MODELS FOR SURVIVORS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Domestic Violence Housing First:

This approach focuses on getting survivors of domestic violence into stable housing as quickly as possible, and then providing the necessary support as they rebuild their lives. The philosophy is low barrier and with focus on housing first versus housing ready. Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence started their DVHF program in 2009 and expanded it in 2011 to include more rural areas of the state.

Basics components of DVHF:

- Survivor driven mobile advocacy
- Flexible financial assistance
- Community engagement
- Housing stability

Recent findings:

- 96% of survivors retained their housing 18 months after entering the DVHF program. Flexible financial assistance and services driven by participants' unique needs allowed advocates to help survivors stay in their current home or access other housing, and then retain that housing.
- 84% of survivors surveyed strongly agreed that DVHF increased their safety and the safety of their children. At final follow-up with participants, 76% were receiving minimal services from the DVHF program at a low cost to the agency.

For more information: <http://wscadv.org/projects/domestic-violence-housing-first/>

Volunteers of America Home Free Program

In 1998 Volunteers of America expanded from a shelter to a community outreach approach after a study completed found that only 15% of families surviving domestic violence accessed a hotline or a shelter. Since that time they have found that working in the community has helped them broaden their services to a more diverse group of survivors. Home Free found that two shelter nights for a family of four was nearly equivalent to providing a month's rent for the same family. Currently, the program provides rapid re-housing assistance to 80 to 100 households annually.

Two components of their housing program:

- Emergency Housing:
 - Hotel voucher program (provides 4 times as many families with shelter)
 - Community-based mobile advocacy
- Permanent Housing:
 - Assist to secure permanent housing and to stay there
 - Flexible funding
 - Community-based mobile advocacy
 - Financial subsidy is commonly provided for 6 months to one year

*Also providing supportive services at each stage (e.g. Address confidentiality, court accompaniment, home visits, support groups for adults and children, etc)

For more information: <http://www.voao.org/home-free>

Community Advocacy Project (CAP)

The Community Advocacy Project involves providing home-based and community-based advocacy services for survivors of intimate partner abuse. Highly trained paraprofessionals, receiving intensive supervision, work with survivors of domestic abuse (and their children), helping them obtain the community resources and social support they desire. CAP provided some of the earliest evidence for the effectiveness of community-based mobile advocacy.

- Key Components:
 - The orientation to the ‘whole person’
 - Unconditional validation and acceptance
 - Genuinely caring
 - Strengths-based
 - Action orientation

- CAP provided evidence that mobile advocacy leads to:
 - Higher social support
 - Decreased risk of re-abuse
 - Access to needed resources
 - Higher quality of life
 -

For more information: <https://cap.vaw.msu.edu/>

Flexible Funding with Brief Advocacy

District Alliance for Safe Housing’s Empowerment Project (DASH) in Washington D.C. has used flexible funding with brief advocacy in housing survivors of domestic violence since 2007.

DASH provides a variety of services, including a Survivor Resilience Fund (Flexible Funding Services)

Basic components/questions of flexible funding with brief advocacy:

- Can any other organization provide this resource?”
- “Will this grant help this person to retain housing, not just today, but over time?”
- Process is survivor---centered, accessible, and respectful
- Process is *quick* to respond to urgent situations’
- Housing assistance search, time-limited rental assistance
- Home visiting with advocate
- Survivor determines services wanted

Outcomes:

- 95% retention rate at 3 months
- 87% retention rate at 6 months
- Survivors surveyed reported: Stress relief, hope, stability, child-wellbeing.

For more information: <http://dashdc.org/>