



# RAPHAEL HOUSE OF SAN FRANCISCO

Moving Families from Crisis to Community

## STRATEGIC PLAN

JANUARY 2013

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# SECTION ONE: INTRODUCTION

Last year, 32% of Raphael House residents cited job loss as their primary cause of homelessness, and a recent survey of former residents who elected not to participate in our AfterCare Program showed more than 60% are either unemployed or subsisting on entitlement programs.

**A**t any given time in San Francisco there are hundreds of families in need of shelter and supportive services. Within the month of January 2013, the San Francisco waitlist for family shelter was at an all time high reaching 267 families. The United States Conference of Mayors Hunger and Homelessness Survey reported family homelessness in San Francisco increased by 22% in 2011 and is expected to increase even further. The causes of homelessness include poverty, unemployment, mental health issues, substance abuse, and lack of affordable housing. Amongst major cities in America, families with children comprise a third of the homeless population.

Children who experience homelessness often lack a sense of permanence — a key component of healthy childhood development. It is challenging for children in homeless families to stay enrolled in the same school and to establish regular study habits due to their family's unpredictable circumstances. On average, half of all homeless children attend three different schools each school year, and 75% of them perform below grade level in reading. Consequently, children may not advance to the next grade level on time or even graduate from high school.

As these stark facts illustrate, without intervention for these families, the generational cycle of poverty and homelessness is all but guaranteed to continue.

Even so, Raphael House remains undaunted: the results of our programming demonstrate we are in a unique position to meet these challenges. Not only are we independent from shrinking government support, but we have tremendous capacity to build increased commitment from the individuals, corporations, and foundations that have always been the bedrock of our support. With a family-centered model and needs-responsive approach, we are well positioned to expand our highly successful model of services for homeless and low-income families. Our model operates on core outcomes that exceed those of comparable social service organizations by at least 20%. With highly effective programming, a robust and loyal donor base, and long-term financial stability, we continue to achieve our goal of moving families beyond homelessness and poverty permanently.

Regardless of our success, we know our work is no longer simply about providing shelter to those who are homeless. We must focus more on rapidly re-housing homeless families and helping those families who are one paycheck away from living on the streets. Our ability to swiftly respond to the growing needs of the community's population while maintaining our competitive edge and expanding our donor base will determine whether or not we thrive as one of San Francisco's leading safety net organizations.

# SECTION TWO: MISSION, VISION AND VALUES

## Mission

The mission of Raphael House is to help at-risk families achieve stable housing and financial independence while strengthening family bonds and personal dignity.

## Vision

We strive to move families beyond homelessness and poverty.

## Values

Our core values inspire and guide our actions in all aspects of our operations. We believe each individual has the capability to define their own success. We customize our programming and support to the needs of each family, but the work is collaborative. We expect individuals to take the lead in defining and creating better futures for themselves. We believe in personal accountability and ownership. We partner with families to assist them in creating the foundation upon which they build better futures. We value success, dignity, diversity, family, and partnerships.

### Success

We believe in the power of self-determination and know every individual is capable of defining and achieving their own success. We promote personal accountability, honesty, and ownership.



### Dignity

We treat every individual at Raphael House with dignity and respect. We provide our services in a healing environment where individuals are empowered and supported in making their own choices and paving the way to success.

### Diversity

Our staff and Board of Directors embrace the diversity of the community we serve. We seek to create an environment that is inclusive of all backgrounds, beliefs, and abilities.

### Family

We create a safe, stable home that sets the stage for families to bolster strength and independence. We foster deep relationships with our families, staff, Board, and supporters that strengthen the ability of each individual to create positive change.

### Partnerships

We partner with our families by providing the resources and support needed for their individual success. Our partnering approach involves building a strong network of individuals, businesses, non-profits, and patrons and results in positive change for the community at large.

# SECTION THREE: DEVELOPMENT OF A STRATEGIC PATH

To help Raphael House navigate its long-range planning process, the Board of Directors partnered with Abbott Consulting. Many of our key findings are included here. This report outlines the strategic direction of Raphael House through 2015, which will guide the agency through a period of growth over three phases where it will continue to build on its strengths and deliver more comprehensive programming aimed at helping more families overcome homelessness and build stable futures.

The planning process identified two primary challenges to overcome:

- Develop ways to meet the ever-growing need for services in the midst of a highly competitive funding environment.
- Develop strategies to maximize fundraising efforts in a way that does not significantly increase administrative costs.

It also noted three unique strengths:

1. Raphael House operates on a highly successful private-funding model and has a proven track record of financial stability.

Raphael House is truly a community-supported venture. **It successfully engages over 2,000 volunteers in all aspects of the program each year and is 100% privately funded.** The organization has cultivated significant support through large planned gifts and has facilitated a very successful endowment campaign. This funding model is key to our success and puts us at an advantage in relation to other comparable non-profit agencies in San Francisco.

2. Agency leadership ensures high-caliber programs and outcomes.

Raphael House's long-term impact is evident as program goals are surpassed: 85% percent of all families departing Raphael House's residential shelter move to stable housing, a percentage far exceeding the 65% benchmark set by city-funded homeless programs.

The pioneering AfterCare and Children's programming is designed to make sure Raphael House families avoid falling back into homelessness, and that the children of these families have strong support for the continued development of their physical, mental, social, and emotional well being. **Of the families who depart residential shelter and continue accessing Raphael House services through AfterCare, a stunning 97% maintain stable housing.**

3. Raphael House is family-centered at its core and very responsive to the emerging needs of the community.

Since its founding, Raphael House leaders have actively educated themselves on the nature of homelessness and have led in best practices for the provision of services. The face of homelessness has changed over the years with children and single parents making up an increasingly large percentage of the homeless population, even in San Francisco, where families have decreased as a percentage of the overall population. As the needs of families have expanded, so has Raphael House: what started as a place of shelter has grown into a center for emotional support and counseling, parental coaching, financial education, workforce development, child development, and educational advocacy.

Raphael House has been helping Bay Area families for more than 40 years. Its longevity speaks to the efficacy of its programs: 85% of families who depart residential shelter find and maintain stable housing—and the entire team looks forward to expanding the scope of our services in the years to come.

## Strategic Directives

In response to the findings of the Strategic Planning Team, the committee developed the following directives that will drive long-term goals and objectives:

- Become recognized as a leading model for the prevention of family homelessness and poverty.
- Expand services that enable families in the community to maintain permanent housing, increase their income, achieve educational goals, develop financial literacy and improve overall family functioning.
- Prioritize educational and developmental services for children so entire families are given the support they need to stop the generational cycle of poverty and homelessness.

Based on these directives, the Team adopted five goals. The goals and objectives we developed will provide our Board and management a road map for leading the organization over the course of the next several years. The five adopted goals were directly informed by the needs identified in the community and the internal and external analyses of the agency's strengths and unique ability to respond to those needs.

## Five Adopted Goals

- I. Grow and preserve Raphael House services to enable homeless and low-income families to acquire, secure, and maintain permanent housing, increase their income, achieve educational goals, improve family functioning, develop financial literacy, and plan for more stable futures.
- II. Grow revenue to achieve a marked increase in operational funds, endowment, and targeted funding for programs to sustain current operations and support planned growth.
- III. Expand branding/marketing in order to become broadly recognized as a leading model for the prevention of family homelessness and poverty.
- IV. Build partnerships and collaborations to expand our relationships with corporations and educational institutions to further program development, fund development, and develop future supporters and leadership for the organization.
- V. Adopt a model of proactive planning for facility and technology needs and multi-year financial capacity.

# SECTION FOUR: PROCESS

In the fall of 2012, the Board and management of Raphael House engaged Abbott Consulting as part of their long-term planning strategy. The goals of the process were:

1. To identify the unmet needs among homeless families in San Francisco.
2. To strategize how Raphael House may be in a position to (better) respond to those needs.

Abbott Consulting, a practice specializing in housing and homelessness policy and program development, set out to strategize, conduct, and document meetings with individuals and organizations identified as stakeholders. Abbott Consulting then distilled the research into a needs assessment report for Raphael House to use in the development of its Strategic Plan.

Raphael House empowered its Strategic Planning Committee to guide the planning process with key staff and Abbott Consulting. Other Board members were consulted and interviewed during the assessment and as part of the development of the Strategic Plan.

External stakeholders and current and former residents were asked to provide input on community needs and how Raphael House meets those needs and, more broadly, fits in the community. This feedback is incorporated in the Community Assessment portion of this document in Section Seven.



# SECTION FIVE: STRATEGIC PLAN

## Strategy Review

The staff and Board reviewed the Community Assessment and best practices information and evaluated potential strategies based on the following key factors:

- Consistency with Raphael House mission
- Playing to Raphael House strengths in client services
- Financial feasibility
- Representing growth
- Building on current capacity
- Improving Raphael House's standing in the community
- Promoting sustainability
- Best use of resources

## Strategy

The following goals were articulated through this strategic path process:

### Goal I

Grow and preserve services to enable homeless and low-income families to acquire and maintain permanent housing, increase their income, achieve educational goals, improve family functioning, develop financial literacy, and plan for more stable futures.

1. **AfterCare Program Goal:** Expand our housing assistance, Workforce Development, and support services scope to serve 500 families within the next three years from current base of 300 families.

Objectives:

- Over three phases add a total of two Case Managers and one Housing Specialist to provide increased case management, housing assistance, and client education and training.

- Provide diversion and homelessness prevention services by increasing our housing assistance-focused case management, financial literacy education, and flexible financial assistance.
- Grow our capacity to rapidly re-house families by expanding our housing assistance fund and creating a short-term rental subsidy program.

2. **Workforce Development Goal:** Increase long-term stability outcomes for homeless and low-income families by expanding the depth and breadth of our Workforce Development Program in order to serve 90 individuals per year.

Objectives:

- Increase staffing model to create a Job Developer position.
- Increase activity levels of vocational, educational, and employer partnerships within the community.
- Enhance and formalize program curriculum in order to leverage the support of more community volunteers.

3. **Residential Services Goal:** Enhance intern structure by restructuring the Mental Health Intern Program and recruiting and retaining more Residential Community Interns.

Objectives:

- Sustain current staffing, with increased internship and volunteer opportunities.
- Enhance intern structure by restructuring the Mental Health Intern Program and recruiting and retaining more Residential Community Interns.
- By the end of phase one, increase capacity for client mental health services by 30%.

4. **Children's Program Goal:** Further develop capacity in Children's Program and Mental Health Services by focusing on early childhood development, parent education, and strengthening family bonds. Continue to serve 625 children.

Objectives:

- Increase internship/volunteer positions to provide support to staff.
- Maintain scholarship, tutoring funding, and number of children served.
- Increase a partnerships to create a more robust offering of community events for families.
- Add para-professional position to provide support to ChildReach Program.

## Goal II

Grow revenue to achieve marked increase in operational funds, endowment, and targeted funding to sustain current programs and support planned growth.

Objectives:

- Continue to raise 100% of our annual operating budget from private sources.
- Increase support from major donors by 5% in phase one, 5% in phase two, and 1-5% in phase three.
- Increase development staff by 1.0 full-time employee to support increase in revenue.
- Increase corporate support by 15% each year.
- Increase grant revenue by 10% in phase one, 3% in phase two, and 4% in phase three.
- Raise a minimum of \$400,000 annually from special events.
- Launch a formal mechanism for annual renewal of at least 100 new donors with a target of 30-50 major donors (\$1,000+) each year.
- Further develop and market our Planned Giving Program.
- By phase two, begin to raise more targeted funds for our endowment in order to endow core staff positions and long-term benefits.
- Create a plan to utilize a percentage of earnings on current invested monies to help fund our housing subsidy program.
- Utilize evidence-based development practices.

**Staffing and Benefits Goal:** Continue to attract and retain a high-caliber, loyal, and qualified workforce.

Objectives:

- Invest in leadership development and consistent training for staff, Board, and volunteers on an annual basis.
- Continue to budget annually for merit-based increases to annual salaries based on our performance evaluation system.
- Increase the number of paid staff from 37 to 42 to support our ability to provide needed services for each phase of our expansion plan, and increase the number of regular professional-level volunteers.
- Analyze fringe benefits package on an ongoing basis and identify ways of meeting employee needs.
- By the end of phase one, develop a formal succession plan for senior staff positions. Devise and implement cross-training process for integral staff positions.

**Board of Directors Goal:** Develop and maintain an effective and informed board that governs and supports Raphael House towards the continued achievement of its mission.

Objectives:

- Continue to develop a board and emeriti board that is committed long-term to the extended Raphael House community.
- Recruit and develop diverse board leadership that represents the population we serve, meets our “give or get” fundraising policy, and provides key connections to assist with major donor and corporate fundraising.
- Develop a process for the board to perform an annual self-assessment in order to highlight annual accomplishments.
- Increase board membership with individuals who possess the skills and expertise needed to help Raphael House achieve its goals.

### Goal III

Expand branding/marketing in order to become broadly recognized as a leading model for the prevention of family homelessness and poverty.

Objectives:

- Develop a higher corporate profile.
- Build public awareness of Raphael House in the Greater Bay Area.
- Increase media coverage by 25% by strategically marketing our special events, creating a more formal marketing plan, and investing in communications staffing.

### Goal IV

Build partnerships and collaborations to expand our relationships with corporations and educational institutions to further program development, fund development, and develop future supporters and leaders for the organization.

Objectives:

- Further develop partnerships with corporations to receive pro-bono professional services and create a pipeline that feeds board committees, recruiting at least two committee or board members from this pool each year.
- Increase our collaboration with the city of San Francisco, County Continuum of Care, and Bay Area housing and service agencies to increase visibility and maximize access to client services.
- Establish 2-5 formal relationships with corporate partners for client job placement.
- Continue to grow our volunteer pipeline in order to engage at least 2,000 volunteers annually and increase involvement in our corporate volunteer program.

### Goal V

Adopt a model of proactive planning for facility, technology, and multi-year financial needs.

Objectives:

- Create a comprehensive space-use plan that optimizes our space for highest and best use.
- Continue to build on and fundraise for our multi-year capital improvements plan to maintain a beautiful and safe home for our families, and budget for the service goal expansion we are trying to reach.
- Assess technology needs annually, create a technology plan and budget each year in order to provide the technology and equipment necessary to expand efficient, quality, and effective services.

# SECTION SIX: FINANCIAL ANALYSIS

	TOTAL Fiscal Year 2012 - 2013	Expansion Plan Phase 1	Plan Phase 2	Plan Phase 3	Prior Fiscal Year 2011 - 2012*	Prior Fiscal Year 2010 - 2011*
Individual Contributions	\$770,000	\$808,500	\$844,957	\$850,127	\$636,754	\$674,584
Fundraising Events	\$360,000	\$400,000	\$400,000	\$400,000	\$392,265	\$317,077
Corporate Contributions	\$200,000	\$230,000	\$264,500	\$304,175	\$132,762	\$156,729
Planned Giving	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$779,903	\$26,013
Foundation Grants	\$726,500	\$779,065	\$803,108	\$838,263	\$779,070	\$779,070
Total Support	\$2,106,500	\$2,267,565	\$2,362,565	\$2,442,565	\$2,720,754	\$1,953,473
Donated Professional Services	\$68,000	\$68,000	\$68,000	\$68,000	\$130,694	\$55,212
Program Client Fees	\$18,000	\$18,000	\$18,000	\$18,000	\$6,895	\$10,227
Thrift Store Consignment	\$5,565	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$4,827	\$7,158
Rental Income	\$0	\$85,000	\$70,125	\$47,278	\$0	\$0
Interest and Dividends	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$20,000	\$35,017	\$312,665
Total Other Revenue	\$111,565	\$196,000	\$181,125	\$158,278	\$177,433	\$385,262
Net Assets Released from Restriction	\$172,500	\$167,400	\$170,000	\$187,822	\$0	\$0
<b>Total Support and Revenue</b>	<b>\$2,390,565</b>	<b>\$2,630,965</b>	<b>\$2,713,690</b>	<b>\$2,788,665</b>	<b>\$2,898,187</b>	<b>\$2,338,735</b>
Personnel Expenses	\$1,480,916	\$1,633,916	\$1,698,916	\$1,748,916	\$1,541,141	\$1,587,951
Non-Personnel Expenses	\$724,649	\$804,649	\$834,649	\$864,649	\$715,111	\$702,799
Total Specific Costs	\$2,205,565	\$2,438,565	\$2,533,565	\$2,613,565	\$2,256,252	\$2,290,750
Total Expenses (Before Depreciation)	\$2,205,565	\$2,438,565	\$2,533,565	\$2,613,565	\$2,256,252	\$2,290,750
Depreciation	\$185,000	\$192,400	\$180,125	\$175,100	\$173,959	\$167,989
Total Expenses	\$ 2,390,565	\$2,630,965	\$2,713,690	\$2,788,665	\$2,430,211	\$2,458,739
Change in Net Assets	\$0	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$467,976	(\$120,004)

\* Represents audited financials.

# SECTION SEVEN: COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT

## San Francisco Homeless Population

San Francisco continues to struggle with homelessness to a larger degree than many urban areas, in part because of the high cost of housing. In 2011, 635 individuals in families (with at least one child under 18) were counted during the Homeless Point-In-Time Count, compared to 549 in 2009.

Of the homeless families, 85% stayed in shelter on the night of the count. The remaining 15% were counted on the street. With 95 people in families located on the street, San Francisco saw a large increase in its unsheltered population in the two years since the last Homeless Point-In-Time Count.

### San Francisco Homeless Count Comparison: 2009 to 2011 <sup>1</sup>

	Single Individuals		Persons in Families	
	2009	2011	2009	2011
Street	1,269	1,882	25	95
Emergency Shelter	1,206	1,194	310	285
Transitional Housing	785	541	179	255
Treatment Centers	262	241	31	0
Resource Centers	233	145	0	0
Stabilization Rooms	307	202	0	0
Jails	394	317	0	0
Hospitals	94	169	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,550</b>	<b>4,691</b>	<b>549</b>	<b>635</b>

<sup>1</sup> San Francisco Human Services Agency. (2011) San Francisco Unsheltered Homeless Count, San Francisco, CA. San Francisco Human Services Agency. (2011) San Francisco Sheltered Homeless Count, San Francisco, CA. as reported by Applied Survey Research, 2011

### Research on Homeless Families

Primary causes of family homelessness identified by the National Alliance to End Homelessness include:

- Lack of affordable housing
- Extreme poverty
- Decreasing government supports
- Domestic violence
- Fractured social supports

Single women head most homeless families. Many of the adults in homeless families struggle with limited education, lack of job experience, high rates of domestic violence, and mental illness. <sup>2</sup>

Families of color are overrepresented in the national homeless population. <sup>3</sup>

- 43% are African-American
- 38% are White, non-Hispanic
- 15% are Hispanic
- 3% are Native American

### Key Research Findings

In 2007, HomeBase CCC, a non-profit technical assistance organization in San Francisco, compiled a research summary that synthesized studies conducted on homeless families and their needs. Beyond the findings cited above, highlights of the HomeBase research include:

- The risk of homelessness is highest among children under the age of six. Pregnancy and recent delivery are also significant risk factors.
- The residential histories of homeless families typically reveal high mobility and instability, and living in a variety of doubled-up and other housing arrangements.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.endhomelessness.org/pages/families>

<sup>3</sup> Burt, M. et al, 2000 Homelessness: Programs and the People They Serve: Summary Report - Findings of the National Survey of Homeless Providers and Clients. Washington, DC: The Urban Institute

- One study revealed homeless families moved an average of five times in the 18 months prior to entering a homeless program.
- Family separations are a common occurrence with homeless families, both before and after the homeless episode.
- In one study, 44% of homeless families had a child separation, compared to only 8% of low-income, never-homeless families.<sup>4</sup>

## Demographics of Homeless Families in San Francisco

Similar to national patterns, 89% of homeless individuals with children were female in San Francisco’s 2011 count:

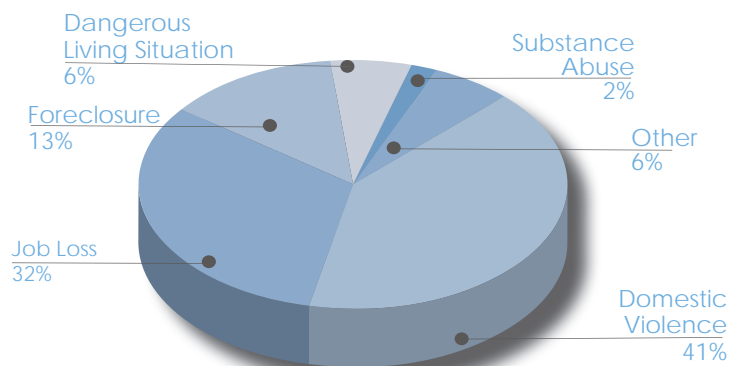
- 33% reported the loss of a job as the primary event that led to their homelessness.
- Drug and alcohol use was cited by 28% of families as their primary cause of homelessness.<sup>5</sup>

## Raphael House Demographics

The demographics of the population Raphael House served differed from local and national patterns. Raphael House did not serve families who lost housing due to substance abuse, or at least did not serve families who self-reported that way. Raphael House did serve a high number of non-White families, but they were more likely to be Latino (37%) than African American (31%).

2011-2012 Unduplicated	Totals	Shelter	Housing First	AfterCare
People Served				
Total Individuals	972	131	160	917
Adults	347	56	63	313
Children	625	75	97	604
Families	303	47	53	273
Family composition (%)				
Single mothers	74	71	73	78
Single fathers	4	6	6	2
Couples	22	23	21	20
Other		0	0	0
Ethnicity (%)				
Hispanic	37	41	22	37
African-American	31	20	55	34
Caucasian	16	11	5	15
Asia-Pacific Islander	9	10	11	9
Multiracial	6	18	5	4
Native American	1	0	2	1

## Original Cause of Homelessness



<sup>4</sup> <http://www.homebaseccc.org/PDFs/RSC/7.20.07.Homeless%20Families.1.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> San Francisco Human Services Agency. (2011) San Francisco Unsheltered Homeless Count, San Francisco, CA. San Francisco Human Services Agency. (2011) San Francisco Sheltered Homeless Count, San Francisco, CA. as reported by Applied Survey Research, 2011

## Focus Group Results

Current and former residents were asked to provide input on community needs and how Raphael House meets those needs. Focus group participants were primarily concerned with income and housing barriers. A number of current residents expressed great frustration with the difficulties in trying to secure housing; they cited high costs and landlords unwilling to accept people with subsidies as their primary barriers. Residents also said jobs at their skill level are very hard to come by.

Both residential and the AfterCare participants spoke highly of Raphael House's services for children, indicating the services and availability were well-matched to their needs.

## Raphael House in the Community:

*How do we fit in the system of care for homeless families?*

Overall, other community shelter providers said Raphael House plays a similar role to the other 3-6 month residential shelters. Some families are referred from city-funded shelters as they reach their maximum stay. Others are referred from the centralized waiting list maintained by Connecting Point. Finally, some families approach Raphael House directly to apply for assistance. Families are interviewed and told about the program, then given a return appointment. Some families choose not to enter.

## Population Served

The target demographic is homeless families with children under 18 years of age (including single parent families who are currently homeless). Before referring potential residents to Raphael House, agencies look at how functional a family is and whether they are likely to meet Raphael House's requirements. Families are cautioned that Raphael House has program rules, such as no televisions, early curfew, etc.

## Raphael House Outcomes

In fiscal year 2011-2012, Raphael House provided 31 families (34 adults; 56 children) with housing assistance funds and 97% of them remained stably housed. The housing assistance program provides families who are experiencing a monetary barrier to housing, such as a security deposit, with the funds necessary to move quickly into their own home without the burden of having to stay in shelter. Case Managers then work with families on their long-term goals that focus on the health of the family and increasing earned income through Workforce Development. Families can also access additional financial resources through Raphael House to prevent eviction or pay off debt that is exacerbating their situation. Despite the current economic climate, the number of families moving into stable housing from the Residential Program has remained consistently above 80%, a rate higher than many transitional housing programs that allow up to two years before placement.



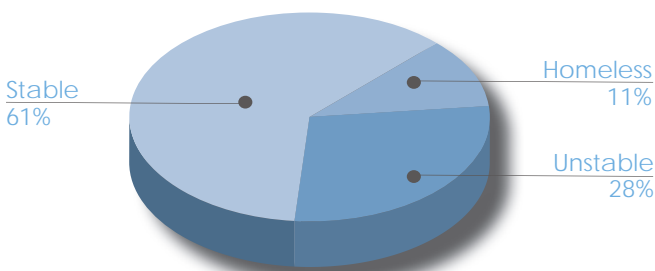
## Comparative Placement Rates

Shelter/Program	Housing Placement %	Length of Stay
Raphael House	85%	137 Days
Hamilton Family	71%	Max 90
Connecting Point	67%	Up to 6 months

Raphael House has a successful AfterCare Program that assists many of its former residents. The Raphael House AfterCare Program helps families maintain the stability they have through long-term case management; financial and material resources; mental health counseling; Workforce Development services; and educational classes in areas such as parenting, financial literacy, and fitness and nutrition. Families also access services through a myriad children’s programming via AfterCare.

Of those who participate in AfterCare, a stunning 97% maintain stable housing. However, due to geographic locations, work schedules, or other barriers such as lack of child care, not all former residents are able to participate in AfterCare. In order to seek out information on those families and how they have fared, Raphael House staff attempted to contact all former residents from 2009. *Through these interviews, it became clear that clients who choose not to participate in AfterCare and/or do not receive housing subsidies are likely to lack long-term stability in housing.*

## Current Outcomes for Families Who Exited Raphael House in 2009



## Review of Practices and Models

**Shelter:** Residential shelter is still thought of as a necessary component in the homeless system of care. In San Francisco, where rapid re-housing programs struggle with the high cost of rent, it may be difficult to move away from a system of care that includes shelter. In fact, providers and government staff have indicated they would be very happy to have additional residential shelters and family-focused services available in the city.

**Shelter and Housing Placement Best Practices:** At a recent conference analyzing the effectiveness of current homeless services systems, representatives from the Corporation for Supportive Housing said programs that offer flexibility and wraparound support are likely to achieve better outcomes for people who have significant barriers to stable housing, and they are likely to be most effective when aligned with housing assistance for vulnerable families.

Such programs offer additional support during transitions and provide opportunities for people to try again after being unsuccessful with a job or training, or after a break in participation due to personal or family challenges.<sup>6</sup>

**Critical Time Intervention:** The Critical Time Intervention model (CTI) targets people who are thought to be at higher risk for homelessness because they are exiting institutions. CTI provides intensive services during the transition period, with a focus on setting up a support network that will assist the client in stabilizing in the longer term. CTI case management is time limited. According to CTI developers, it does this by “strengthening the individual’s long-term ties to services, family, and friends; and by providing emotional and practical support during the critical time of transition. An important aspect of CTI is that post-discharge services are delivered by workers who have established relationships with patients during their institutional stay.”<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.csh.org/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/Silos-to-Systems-Summary-Report.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> Critical Time Intervention: Model, Accessed in 2013, <http://www.criticaltime.org/model-detail/>

CTI studies are primarily oriented toward populations with mental illnesses in addition to homelessness among households where children are not present. The model is designed as a nine-month intervention, where clients are transferred to outside service providers when CTI ends.<sup>8</sup>

**Progressive Engagement:** Many homeless service agencies are looking into a Progressive Engagement strategy to provide case management. The goal is to only provide as much assistance as needed, rather than providing the same dosage of case management for all clients, regardless of their level of need.

If it becomes clear that the household will not exit homelessness with short-term assistance, then additional assistance is provided, which might include rental assistance in the form of subsidy, and more intensive case management.

If, at the end of a predetermined period of time, it is clear that the family is entering a period of housing instability, then additional assistance can be provided, such as a medium-term or long-term rental assistance and more intensive case management and supportive services.

As with CTI, Progressive Engagement advocates stress the efficacy of maintaining a relationship with a single case management program, saying that the continuity among service providers will increase the likelihood of stabilization for vulnerable populations.

## Strengthening Outcomes through Housing Supports and Subsidies

Most programs trying to end homelessness have come to rely on rental assistance, whether permanent, such as in supportive and affordable housing, or temporary, as with transitional housing and scattered site subsidy programs with time limits.

HomeBase Center for Common Concern reviewed numerous studies on family homelessness presented at the

<sup>8</sup> For a list of studies completed and cited by CTI: <http://www.critical-time.org/publications/>

National Symposium on Homeless Families<sup>9</sup> and concluded that subsidies were a key component in permanent housing solutions for homeless families with children.

Studies show housing subsidies are strong indicators of exits out of homelessness for families. Additionally, families receiving subsidies after leaving shelters are less likely to return to shelters than families receiving some other type of housing placement<sup>10</sup>. Subsidies have also been shown to improve the quality of neighborhoods where formerly homeless families live. Finally, research also suggests housing subsidies are important to families exiting transitional housing, and one study indicated almost all families needed some kind of subsidy to secure permanent housing.

The San Francisco Human Services agency funded housing subsidies for 294 families within the 2011-2012 fiscal year. Within that reporting year, programs were forced to turn away many eligible applicants because the allotted funds were insufficient to meet the tremendous need within the community. Considering that currently there are 267 families just waiting for shelter placement who will then also need additional financial resources to secure housing, it is obvious there is a significant need for an increased investment in programs that can provide short- and long-term housing subsidies.

Families exiting shelter with a subsidy have positive housing outcomes regardless of the length of shelter stay. ***Additionally, the cost of a long-term shelter stay for one family is equivalent to several years of housing assistance for that family or short-term subsidies for multiple families. The reinvestment of current resources could serve more families or the same family for longer, in a more normalized setting.***

<sup>9</sup> Debra J. Rog, PhD, Westat, Rockville, MD John C. Buckner, PhD, Children's Hospital Boston, Harvard Medical School, Boston, MA November 2007 <http://aspe.hhs.gov/hsp/homelessness/symposium07/rog/> Accessed in September, 2012

<sup>10</sup> HomeBase Memorandum form its Regional Steering Committee meeting on Family Homelessness, July 2007 <http://www.homebaseccc.org/PDFs/RSC/7.20.07.Homeless%20Families.1.pdf> Accessed in September, 2012