

Research Moment

June 2009

Bridges to Housing (B2H) is a regional initiative aimed at moving high need homeless families out of the cycle of homelessness by providing permanent affordable housing and intensive case management services that build on the strengths of family members. Clark County in Washington State and Multnomah, Washington, and Clackamas Counties in Oregon joined together (along with cities and Public Housing Authorities) to develop Bridges to Housing. In addition to supporting families in their efforts to obtain permanent housing and progress towards self-sustainability, Bridges to Housing is developing regional solutions to family homelessness. At the coordinating and governance levels, B2H focuses on stimulating policy changes and the re-alignment of public resources and needed systems. The first Bridges to Housing families were enrolled and housed in October of 2006 in Clark County. The project has rolled out gradually across the four jurisdictions as housing and resources for case management have become available. As of July 2009, over 260 families had enrolled in B2H.

Promising Outcomes at 12-Months from the 2008 Bridges to Housing Year-End Report:

- Success in stabilizing families in housing.
 - From history of multiple moves (almost half had moved two or three times in six months prior to enrollment), to
 - Very few moves after enrolling (two within B2H housing).

- Children stabilized in child care/education settings
 - 35% had attended two or more settings in the 6 months prior to enrollment.
 - Moves in care/education settings dropped to 10% at 12 months.

- Sharply reduced incidence of domestic violence
 - Nearly half of the families reported domestic violence in the six months prior to enrollment.
 - Reduced to 7% of families at 12 months.

- Need for foster care
 - 17% of families had a child placed in care in 6 months prior to enrollment.
 - Down to 2% (one family).

- Gradual increases in employment and related activities
 - By 12 months, about a third of heads of households employed, and
 - 40% in education or job training program or both.

For the full report, go to: http://www.rri.pdx.edu/bridges_to_housing.php