

SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

Strategies and Tools for Working with
Families

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Acknowledgements

- All the tools and resources in this presentation were adapted from materials available on line. For more information and additional resources please visit:
www.cssp.org
- www.csh.org
- www.urban.org

Session Overview

- Introductions
- Background and Research
- Core Components of Supportive Housing
- Special Considerations for Families
- The Strengthening Families Approach
- Tools and Strategies

INTRODUCTIONS

Background and Research

- (2006) Research illustrated that families in the shelter system that cycled in and out of shelter had more needs and more involvement with child welfare
- (2007-2011) Keeping Families Together Pilot*
 - Goal to end homelessness and child welfare involvement for families
 - Thirty families
 - Long term homeless,
 - Long history of child welfare
 - Mental health (55%) and substance use disorder (96%)

*Keeping Families Together is a project of CSH and the Robert Wood Johnsons Foundation

<https://www.csh.org/resources/keeping-families-together-guidebook/>

Keeping Families Together* Results

- Families stayed housed in single site and scatter site models (96%)
- Reports of abuse and neglect decreased (87%)
- Families reunified (100%)
- Cases closed in 10 months of move-in (60%)
- School attendance increased

*Keeping Families Together is a project of CSH and the Robert Wood Johnsons Foundation

<https://www.csh.org/resources/keeping-families-together-guidebook/>

Similar Work Continues

- (2012-2018) Original pilot sparked federal funding to test the idea in other locations across the country:
 - The State of Connecticut
 - Cedar Rapids, IA
 - Memphis, Tennessee
 - San Francisco, CA
 - Broward County, Florida
- The Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH) and the Center for the Study of Social Policy (CSSP) were funded to provide technical assistance and the Urban Institute conducted the evaluation

For more information go to www.cssp.org, www.csh.org and www.urban.org

Demonstration Family Profile

- High rates of homelessness and housing instability:
 - At time of program entry:
 - 41% literally homeless
 - 35% unstably housed
 - 45% have history of frequent moves
 - 42% have history of past literal homelessness
- Across sites, primary caregivers have high needs:
 - High rates of mental health issues (58%)
 - High rates of substance use (48%)
 - High rates of criminal justice involvement (49%)
 - High rates of domestic violence (32%)
 - High rates of children with high needs (27%)

Referral data from sites, roughly 300 families

ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

Core Components of Supportive Housing*

Support Services
Flexible
Tenant-Centered
Voluntary

Housing Affordable
Non-time-limited
Independent



Case Management Addresses:

- Parenting
- Life Skills
- Substance Abuse
- Mental Health
- Primary Health
- Employment

*As defined by CSH, for more information go to www.csh.org

Principles of Supportive Housing

- **It's home**
 - Leases ensure rights and responsibility of tenancy, and obligations of landlord
 - Design/location of housing maximizes safety, comfort, and community integration
- **Affordable and accessible**
 - Targeted and subsidized for the lowest-income households
- **Services are assertive, focused on housing stability, and emphasize tenant empowerment**
- **Coordination between housing owner/landlord, property manager, and services provider**

Tools incorporates best thinking on supportive housing and family well-being

- CSH's *Dimensions of Quality Supportive Housing*
- CSSP's five protective and promotive factors are approaches that strengthen families and reduce the likelihood of child abuse and neglect.
- The experience of the five sites participating in the federally-funded *Partnerships to Demonstrate the Effectiveness of Supportive Housing for Families in the Child Welfare System*.

Strengthening Families™

- The Strengthening Families framework is a research-informed approach to increase family strengths, enhance child development, and reduce the likelihood of child abuse and neglect
- **Protective Factors:** conditions or attributes of individuals, families, communities, or the larger society that mitigate or eliminate risk
- **Promotive Factors:** conditions or attributes of individuals, families, communities, or the larger society that actively enhance well-being

<https://cssp.org/our-work/project/strengthening-families>

SELF-ASSESSMENT

Design and Build Out: Team Selection and Capacity Building

At least one member of the family supportive housing team has a background in **child development**, family support, or other child and family discipline

All team members receive a basic orientation to:

- Taking a trauma informed approach
- Positive relationship building skills: greeting families by name, active listening, customer service approach to interaction
- Protective and Promotive Factors
- Mandatory reporting of suspected child abuse and neglect

Design and Build Out: Team Selection and Capacity Building

Clear protocols are in place for how to respond when staff suspect crisis issues such as: **child abuse and neglect, domestic violence and substance abuse**

Property and Housing Management: Move-in and Orientation

When families moves in:

- There is a structured effort to welcome them and help them make connections to neighbors
- Information on rules and regulations and how to reach staff and get support is provided
- The orientation manual and materials has been reviewed to ensure it is family friendly and covers key issues that arise for families

Regular Interactions

If housing, property managers or other members of the team accommodate child care needs by:

- Meeting in the tenants apartment
- Letting the parent bring the child to the meeting
- Holding the meeting at a time when child care is not an issue
- Providing toys or activities to keep children's attention while parents are in conversation
- Being sensitive to the fact that parents may need to interrupt the conversation to tend to children's needs.

Regular Interactions

All staff members take a strengths-based supportive approach in their regular interactions with families by:

- Lifting up successes and validating good decisions.
- Acknowledging children when they encounter them—even when their primary business is with parents or on apartment matters that are unrelated to children.

WELCOME HOME

Design and Practice Guidance for Supportive Housing for Families with Children

[An online copy of the guide and all related and materials available at https://www.csh.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Welcome-Home.pdf](https://www.csh.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Welcome-Home.pdf)

Primary Components of Supportive Housing



Infuses P&P Into Quality Supportive Housing

Protective and Promotive Factors

- Parental Resilience
- Social connections
- Knowledge of parenting, and child development
- Concrete support in times of need
- Social and emotional competence of children

[An online copy of the guide and all related and materials available at https://www.csh.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Welcome-Home.pdf](https://www.csh.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Welcome-Home.pdf)

METHODS

Building Parental Resilience in Housing

Provide positive, strengths based support

- Name and notice individual strengths and positive parent action. Celebrate family milestones and validate good decisions.

Connect family members to clinical resources as needed

- Use assessment and case management tools that record strengths and tie them to action plans.

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Building Parental Resilience in Housing

Support families as decision-makers and build decision-making skills

- Use decision-making models that place families in the center (e.g. **Family Team Conferences/Meetings, Motivational Interviewing**).

Support and promote cultural, ethnic and racial pride

- Allow, encourage and support families to engage in cultural expression in how they decorate their homes, what foods they cook, and the holidays they celebrate
- Ask questions about family members' cultural background and seek to learn about their perspectives

Building Resilience

Do you use Motivational Interviewing?

What other ways are parents put in the center of decision-making?

Strengthening Social Connections

Support families in developing a plan to strengthen positive social connections

- Use eco-maps, genograms or other tools to help families intentionally evaluate which social relationships are positively contributing to their lives and which are not and make a plan for nurturing the positive connections in their lives.
- Embed prompts that help families think about how they could engage friends or family members as supports
- **Prepare to deal with social conflict**

Strengthening Social Connections

What works in your practice? How do you encourage parents/families to connect and not isolate?

Building Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development

Increase parents knowledge and understanding of:

- physical, cognitive, language, social and emotional development
- signs indicating a child may have a developmental delay and needs special help
- discipline and how to positively impact child behavior
- understanding parenting and its role in development
- how to read and understand their child's cues
- specific strategies on how to deal with challenging parenting issues

Knowledge of Parenting and Child Development

- Connect families to parent education classes, parent child activities, and other community resources designed to support parents and parenting **CT-Check in on what parents are learning*
- Create a resource library with books, videos. fact sheets and other information
- Provide information and resources to adolescents that will help them understand their own developmental processes

Parenting and Child Development

How do you build parents' knowledge of child development? What about adolescents?

What kinds of parenting supports do families have access to?

Concrete Supports in Times of Need

- Make help seeking a sign of strength— be responsive and positive when families ask for support, even if you cannot get them connected to the resources they are asking for.
- Provide coaching and support in understanding service systems and how to access services.

Concrete Supports in Times of Need

- Leverage your trusting relationships with families to help them connect to services that may have a stigma attached to them. A “warm hand-off” can help families connect to needed services they might not otherwise be willing to access.
- Help family members practice what they will say to a service provider, what questions they will ask, and how to advocate for what they need.

Concrete Supports in Times of Need

“Bring the parent something useful, like a crockpot, food boxes, diapers and toilet paper! Go to an NA meeting with them, go shopping with them, help clean their apartment when, offer rides to school and appointments and use the ride and waiting room time to get to know them and learn how you can help.”

-Family Supportive Housing Program Director

Concrete Supports

What concrete supports do you provide in your work with families?

Supporting Families while Accessing Concrete Supports

Case managers can act as a “bridge” in building and maintaining trust in the new provider relationships, especially when issues arise.

*–INTENSIVE SUPPORTIVE HOUSING FOR FAMILIES,
CONNECTICUT*

Social and Emotional Competence of Children

- Screen children for social emotional delays (tools for social emotion screening <http://www.ecmhc.org/tools/screening.html>)
- Ask parents if they have any concerns about their child and their emotions, ability to get along with others, etc.
- Coach parents on how simple things, playing with children, asking them about their feelings, comforting them when they are hurt help support social emotional development.
- Help parents think about how they create spaces in their home that help children to feel safe, explore safely and learn

Support Youth as they Develop Cognitive and Social Emotional Skills

- Identify opportunities for youth to participate in new experiences, take positive risks
- Encourage youth to be engaged in at least one ongoing activity (sports, arts, community service) or place (school, recreation center, faith institution) that builds on a unique talent or strength
- Talk with youth about their future and involve them in setting goals and making decisions about their own lives, especially thinking about education and employment.
- Build relationships with youth-serving organizations that address the needs of adolescents specifically

Support Youth as they Develop Cognitive and Social Emotional Skills

What works to shore up older children and teenagers?

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Examples from Welcome Home

Project Administration and Design

FAMILY SUPPORTIVE HOUSING QUALITY INDICATOR

Policies and procedures are developmentally appropriate, trauma informed, and do not undercut protective and promotive factors.

Window of Opportunity	Desired Result	Tools
Move-In and Orientation	Move-in and orientation process engages the entire family—parents and children—and helps families succeed in housing by clarifying expectations and supports.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Language for tenants' manual• Move-in orientation checklist• Sample tenants' handbook
Everyday Interactions	In large and small interactions with families staff members engage in a way which helps to: reinforce protective and promotive factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Signs and Symptoms of Trauma in Children by Age• Everyday actions to reinforce protective and promotive factors

Project Administration and Design

Window of Opportunity	Desired Result	Tools
When Conflict and Issues Arise	Housing stability is encouraged because property management and supportive services work together effectively to address family issues that are contributing to conflict and issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Training and tools for conflict and crisis• Addressing child behavioral issues• Overview of de-escalation strategies for traumatized children and youth• Creating a stability plan with families• Responding to child abuse and neglect: Creating a protocol for your program• Taking a team approach to resolving problems with families

Supportive Services

FAMILY SUPPORTIVENESS QUALITY INDICATOR: Supportive services staff and service partners respond to families in a way that is trauma-informed, developmentally appropriate and builds protective and promotive factors

Window of Opportunity	Desired Result	Resources and Tools
Housing Search	Family characteristics and needs are a structured part of the search process. Family friendly properties are prioritized.	Family Housing Search Form Landlord questions
Move-in and Orientation	Engages the entire family. Helps families reflect and set goals; deepens case managers understanding of families	Maintaining a clean and safe home Move-in and orientation checklist Eco-map tool Using protective and promotive factors to help identify relevant strengths factors

Supportive Services

Window of Opportunity	Desired Result	Tools/Resources
Helping Families Access Services and Supports	Services are matched to family strengths and needs and staff work effectively as a team with service partners to support family members	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Planning Worksheet for Family Services• Protective and Promotive Factors Action Sheets• Using Protective and Promotive Factors to Develop Case Plans• Staying Alert to Developmental Issues and Trauma• A Housing and Shelter Provider's Guide to Developmental and Behavioral Screening

CORE ELEMENTS OF SERVICES

In Supportive Housing for Families

Core Elements of Services in Supportive Housing for Families

ENGAGEMENT:

- developing and maintaining rapport and trust
- creating a safe and supportive environment for family members
- inviting them into a change process
- valuing and making central the power, perspectives, abilities and solutions families offer.

ASSESSMENT:

- dynamic process of gathering and reflecting on the strengths, needs and change process of family members to help family members make decisions.
- Assessment processes need to be structured to focus on understanding the needs and strengths of the entire family
- Information is collected on existing protective and promotive factors

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Core Elements of Services in Supportive Housing for Families

TEAMING:

- working with the family to build a network of both informal and professional supports to help them achieve identified goals

PLANNING/LINKING TO SERVICES:

- working with the family to develop clearly defined, realistic and measurable goals and designing plans accordingly
- ensuring family members are connected to the necessary and desired services.
- Service plans should reflect the needs of the full family—and the recognition that accessing services for one family member will have rippling effects for all family members.

Core Elements of Services in Supportive Housing for Families

ADVOCACY:

- speaking out for families in order to support them in strengthening their family and developing their ability to advocate for themselves.

TRACKING AND ADJUSTING:

- ensuring the team's plan is implemented with the necessary people, intensity, and quality to achieve the desired outcomes and adapting the plan as necessary given the progress being achieved

Essential Resources

- Welcome Home
- <https://www.csh.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Welcome-Home.pdf>
- Practice Framework
- <https://www.csh.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Practice-Framework.pdf>
- Tenant Manual and Orientation
- <https://www.csh.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/Tenant-Manual.pdf>

TOOLS FOR ASSESSMENT

And Measuring Impact

Measuring Program-level Impact

Housing
Stability

Family
Functioning

Child Safety
and
Permanence

Service
Engagement

Community
Safety

Measuring Individual and Program Impact

Evidence-based Assessment Tools

Child Outcomes:

- **Developmental Milestones** measured by the [Ages and Stages Questionnaires](#)
- **Social-Emotional-Behavior Status**-can be measured by the Child Behavioral Checklist (CBCL)

Family/caregiver Outcomes

- **Parenting Skills/Family Functioning** can be measured by the Parenting Stress Index
<http://www4.parinc.com/WebUploads/samplerpts/Fact%20Sheet%20PSI-4.pdf>
- **Parental Functioning** - mental health symptoms, trauma, substance use, domestic violence, skill acquisition, employment, financial management, physical health, etc., can be measured by the North Carolina Family Assessments (NCFAS)
http://www.nfnp.org/Portals/0/Documents/assessment_tools_overview.pdf

ACTION PLANNING

REPORT OUT

THANK YOU!

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