



# IDHS Homelessness Prevention Program Success Stories

**The Homelessness Prevention Program needs \$2 million in additional funding in FY19 to assist even more people prevent and end their homelessness in many different types of temporary crises.**

In FY17, the Homelessness Prevention Program assisted 9,345 individuals in 5,053 households. Forty-six percent of all the people benefitting; 4,292, were children. The average cost per household was \$789 and, based on a follow-up survey, 78.4% of households retained their housing after receiving assistance from the Homelessness Prevention program. These are some of the many success stories.

## **Homelessness Prevention works when people become unemployed...**

An unemployed woman was experiencing homelessness, at times living in her car. She found employment but was having a hard time finding an apartment because of her poor credit history and lack of savings. We have relationships with a few landlords that are willing to work with people in this kind of situation. Our Prevention Specialist advocated for this woman with one of these landlords, and he agreed to rent to her. A Homelessness Prevention grant assisted with the security deposit and first month's rent. The woman is now housed and employed, thanks to state funds and a helpful landlord. — Connections for the Homeless, Evanston

## **Homelessness Prevention works when women flee domestic violence...**

We had a client who was fleeing a domestic violence relationship. She relocated to Evanston and was living on her sister's couch, along with her two children. She started a new job but hadn't received her first pay check yet. Using Prevention funds, we helped her with a security deposit and 1st-month rent. She is doing well now in her own 3-bedroom apartment, which she is able to sustain now that she is working. Because of the Homelessness Prevention funding, she was able to avoid homelessness and entry into the shelter system. — Connections for the Homeless, Evanston

## **Homelessness Prevention works when unexpected illness strikes...**

A 45-year-old woman with a daughter in college became unable to work after being diagnosed with a life-changing illness in the early part of 2018. The loss of income resulted in the threat of eviction from the family home because she fell two months behind paying her rent while waiting for disability benefits to be approved. Homelessness Prevention funds allowed her to catch up her rent and have a safe and comfortable home in which to get medical care and recover from her illness. — Respond Now, Chicago Heights

A woman in her mid-thirties suddenly had to scramble to keep her apartment this January. As other families were celebrating the holidays, her husband was diagnosed with cancer. Suddenly she was the sole breadwinner as her husband was undergoing surgeries, chemotherapy, and radiation. Childcare had not been needed until now, since she and her husband worked different shifts. The household's income had been halved and most of her income was going towards childcare. By the time she had

secured subsidized child care, the family was two months behind on rent and facing homelessness. Rental assistance did not solve her biggest problem--her husband's prognosis was not good, but it did allow the family to focus their energy on making the most of the time they have left. — BEDS Plus Care, LaGrange

### **Homelessness Prevention works when a natural disaster happens...**

After the July 2017 floods in Lake County, many residents were forced out of their homes, including a woman in her early 20s, living with her two children. With her two young sons, she watched the flood waters rise to a total of 18 inches before going to a stay with a friend. About a month later, when she came to Catholic Charities, her stay with her friend had reached its limit and she was placed in a motel shelter. Unable to return to her previous apartment because of the damage, the woman finally found a new apartment she could afford after searching for more than 3 months. Homelessness Prevention funds paid for the security deposit and first month's rent and the family was able to move into their new home in December. Most importantly, the assistance she received made it possible for her to once again be in control of her family's life. —Catholic Charities of Lake County

### **Homelessness Prevention works when people are facing uninhabitable housing conditions...**

A single mother came in requesting assistance for her and her two children. She had been forced to evacuate her apartment in the middle of winter due to a water pipe bursting. She was able to locate a new apartment but did not have sufficient funds to cover the first month's rent or security deposit. Homelessness Prevention funds assisted her with the expenses to move in to the new apartment and helped her and her family move into a warm and stable home. — All Chicago

### **Homelessness Prevention works when people have been displaced due to a fire...**

A single mother requested assistance with her security deposit. She and her family had been victims of a fire and were living in hotels and temporary shelters. The mother was working part-time and could afford her rent, but she needed extra help with the security deposit. Homelessness Prevention funds helped this young mother and her two children move into stable housing. — All Chicago

### **Homelessness Prevention works when families are working to reunite...**

A Veteran was dealing with several issues—divorce from his wife, a child who had been placed in foster care when the Veteran was on active duty, difficulty getting the VA benefits due to him upon discharge, and his own homelessness. He received shelter and services from the Veterans Administration, and Homelessness Prevention funds helped him get stabilized in his own apartment. Having housing, in turn, allowed him to begin the process of regaining custody of his son. The Veteran was able also to take in his own mother and sister after they became homeless due to Hurricane Harvey in Texas. — Catholic Charities of Lake County

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