



ACHIEVEAbility, Dignity Housing, Drueding Center, Episcopal Community Services/St. Barnabas Mission, Families Forward Philadelphia, Friends Rehabilitation Program, HELP Philadelphia/PHMC, Philadelphia Interfaith Hospitality Network, Jane Addams Residence/Lutheran Settlement House, PathWays PA, People's Emergency Center, Public Health Management Corporation, Project H.O.M.E., Red Shield Family Residence and Reed House/Salvation Army, Visitation Homes/Catholic Social Services, Women Against Abuse

Family Homelessness in Philadelphia,

A briefing for our City Leaders, February 2016

1. City priorities in ending homelessness reflect federal funding priorities as established by HUD. Philadelphia competes for HUD funding through its annual application for consolidated funding through the “Continuum of Care” (CoC) process. HUD’s priorities in recent years have included:
 - a. Ending Chronic Homelessness
 - b. Ending Veterans Homelessness.
 - c. Ending Youth Homelessness

2. HUD determines funding priorities and measures progress through the annual “Point-In-Time Count,” a process in which staff of the Philadelphia Office of Supportive Housing (OSH) and volunteers identify and count people experiencing homeless according to a specific definition. The definition does not include families who are living in doubled up situations, in cars, hotels, or out of sight. People are only counted if they are in shelter or are visible on specific streets and in specific public spaces. The count excludes the majority of homeless and housing insecure families, who are generally living nomadic lives as “couch surfers,” staying for short term visits at the mercy of others. Many trade food stamps, sex or limited incomes for a place to stay.

3. Family homelessness is a result of an insufficient supply of affordable housing. According to the Federal Reserve Bank Of Philadelphiaⁱ, there are 36 units of affordable housing for every 100 households in need (renter households with incomes \leq 30% Median Family Income, 2012). This figure includes many employed and underemployed households who are trying to “play by the rules” but their wages do not keep pace with housing costs. Many working families end up on the wrong side of “a paycheck away.”

4. The shortage of affordable housing means that the programs serving low income families in shelter are stuck in shelter. According to the most recently and reliable dataⁱⁱ, more than 1,500 families, including more than 4,000 children and youth, slept at least one night in Philadelphia shelter. Without enough affordable housing opportunities, there are fewer exit options out of shelter. This also means that families experiencing a new housing crisis cannot get into shelter.

For more information, call the Family Services Provider Network at 267.777.5851, or email at jwillard@pec-cares.org.

The Family Service Provider Network (FSPN) is an advocacy coalition of agencies that provide service to homeless families and children in the Greater Philadelphia region. <http://www.pec-cares.org/index.php?page=leadership>



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5. The waiting list for shelter and services has grown over the past years, while funding has remained fairly flat.
6. In October, 2015, OSH reported that **100 families a week** are not able to be accommodated and are sent away with minimal services. These are families who have come to OSH in search of a safety net. To remain on the waiting list, the families must communicate daily. Many get lost in the process.
7. Office of Support Housing Class 200 line item, General Fund (pays for contracts for emergency and transitional housing)

OSH Budget **	FY 2008 Actual (5)	FY 2009 Estimated (5)	FY 2010 Actual (4)	FY 2011 Estimated (4)	FY 2012 Actual (3)	FY 2013 Estimated (3), (2)	FY 2014 Actual (3)	FY 2015 Estimated Obligations (1)	FY 2016 Obligation Level (1)***	Total Growth '08-'16
OSH Class 200	\$33.9M	\$32,528,537	\$31,697,539	\$30,237,138	\$30,415,823	\$34,511,621	\$36,866,677	\$35,586,621	\$36,586,621	
YOY Growth		(\$1,394,897)	(\$830,998)	(\$1,460,401)	\$178,685	\$4,095,798	\$2,355,056	(\$1,280,056)	\$1,000,000	\$2,663,187
YOY Growth %		-4.11%	-2.55%	-4.61%	0.59%	13.47%	6.82%	-3.47%	2.81%	7.85%
OSH General Funds	\$40.5M	\$39,650,143	\$38,386,664	\$36,446,625	\$38,347,615	\$42,695,555	\$45,115,805	\$45,226,928	\$45,244,382	
YOY Growth		(\$893,930)	(\$1,263,479)	(\$1,940,039)	\$1,900,990	\$4,347,940	\$2,420,250	\$111,123	\$17,454	\$4,700,309
YOY Growth %		-2.20%	-3.19%	-5.05%	5.22%	11.34%	5.67%	0.25%	0.04%	11.59%

** Source:

<http://www.phila.gov/finance/pdfs/Operating%20Budget%20In%20Brief%20FY%202014%20Approved%20By%20The%20Council%20June%202013.pdf> ***City of Philadelphia Fiscal 2016 Operating Budget



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8. When there is public will and the investments that follow, we can end family homelessness. The City successfully ended veteran's homelessness in 2015 and is hopeful to end chronic street homelessness in 2016. They accomplished this because of concerted effort to build the public will and with new funding and other resources.
9. However, there was no focus on families, resulting with an increase in the numbers of families are sent away with limited services and supports. Eight years ago, no family with children was turned away. Today, over 100 families with children are **turned away each week**.
10. Housing is essential to ending homelessness, but it is not sufficient. Families need basic supports beyond decent affordable housing to thrive: food, education, employment, child care, transportation, health and mental health care, trauma-informed care, and children's services. Families can prosper in communities that provide social, faith-based, and cultural supports, and when they are connected to networks of family, friends, and neighbors. Families experiencing homelessness are no different, but their needs are made worse by extreme poverty and the unrelenting stress and trauma of homelessness. We support a growing national movement to highlight the importance of services coupled with housing:

Not one child. Not one night. Services Matter.

ⁱ Federal Reserve Bank of Philadelphia: ***Affordability and Availability of Rental Housing in the Third District: 2015***

ⁱⁱ City of Philadelphia Office of Supportive Housing Annual Homeless Assessment Report, 2013