

One Family, One Year, One Home: Tenant
Based Rental Assistance for Homeless
Families with School Age

Florida Housing Finance Corporation

Special Needs Housing: Combating Homelessness

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Florida Housing Finance Corporation (Florida Housing) developed the One Family, One Year, One Home model to ease the obstacles that homeless children and families are forced to endure. In collaboration with local partners, Florida Housing dedicated resources to assist homeless households with school aged children access rental housing paired with supportive services. This model is both innovative and effective, showing increases in school attendance and promotion as well as housing and income stability. This model can serve as a best practice in combating homelessness.



Safe, affordable housing is a commodity that strengthens communities and provides stability for families. The barriers of cost burden and a shortage of affordable housing contribute to families across the country being homeless. A family's ability to regain stability and self-sufficiency is even more challenging if they lack informal and formal supports. In Florida, there is a significant need for affordable, permanent housing options for homeless families with school age children. In many of these families, the lack of stable housing impedes the children from attending school on a consistent basis or causes their transition to one or more schools during their homeless episode.



According to the National Center for Homeless Education, the national rate of homelessness among school children has seen a steady increase in recent years, the same is true in the state of Florida. As of the last count, (2018) there were over 95,000 homeless school children in the Sunshine State. The definition of homelessness is in accordance with the Federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act, meaning that children who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence are considered homeless. To receive federal and state Homeless Education Program resources, these children and youth must live in a shelter, motel, campground, on the street, in abandoned buildings or doubled up with relatives or friends.

The McKinney Vento Act mandates that "Each State educational agency shall ensure that each child of a homeless individual and each homeless youth has equal access to the same free, appropriate public education, including a public preschool education, as provided to other children and youths." These student resources include:

- *Transportation to and from school;*
- *Free school meals and access to other nutritional programs for a student and their family;*
- *Assignment to a Homeless School Liaison to assist a homeless student access and retain public education resources and programs that non-homeless students have access to such as sports and school activities;*
- *Expanded public school nursing, social work and tutor services;*
- *Assistance for the student or their family to access education programs for non-school age children or those with disabilities; and*
- *Information and referral services related to household stability resources, including housing.*

The Florida Department of Education (FDOE) does not receive resources nor have the authority to directly provide households resources or services related to accessing stable housing or meeting other

needs due to their homelessness. The exception is that Homeless Education Programs (HEPs) may provide housing information and referral services. Homeless school liaisons work with and rely on their local homeless continuums of care (COCs) to assist the student or/their family address the broader needs related to their homelessness.

Recognizing that having a home not only provides children a place to lay their head, but also consistent healthy meals and access to community resources, Florida Housing collaborated with partners in Santa Rosa county. Santa Rosa county is located in Northwestern Florida made up primarily of rural and small communities in the northern part of the county; while the southern part of the county's rental housing are short-term or expensive beach community rentals. These types of communities generally have fewer formal resources or housing options than families living in larger communities. Rural families' children are also at greater risk of having to leave their schools because of a lack of temporary housing options and the inability to access permanent housing.

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Program Objectives

- Develop and implement a pilot to assist rural homeless families with school-age children to quickly re-house in permanent rental housing using federal HOME Tenant Based Rental Assistance.
- Partner with the FDOE and local Homeless Education Programs for their capacity to identify, screen, prioritize and refer homeless households to a designated public housing authority to apply for and access HOME TBRA.
- Local Homeless Education Programs and Homeless Continuums of Care will work together to provide supportive services, as applicable, to assist these households remain in and stabilize in these communities.
- Meet the Florida Housing Finance Corporation strategic objective to enhance opportunities for special needs and homeless households to access rental housing paired with supportive services.
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Program Specifics

- \$750,000 of HOME funds for a housing pilot in Santa Rosa County to provide rental security deposits, as well as, 12 months or less of rental assistance to the eligible families.
- Intended to serve at least 75 families over a three-year period.
- The amount of rental assistance per family depends on the amount a family can pay for rent and the cost of the monthly rent.
- Participating families are required to: meet with program administrators, provide financial information, create a family sustainability plan, agree to the attendance policy, participate in case management, and be responsible for utilities and a minimum of \$50 of rent per month.
- A collaborative effort with local community partners.

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The One Family, One Year, One Home pilot project was able to serve 60 students during the 2018-19 school year. The students had a 98% promotion rate, with 100% (2/2) earning a high school diploma, an 11% decrease in chronic absenteeism, an 11% increase in attendance, and an increased grade average for 18% of the students.

The adult participants also showed remarkable success in the following areas: 70% attended monthly case management meetings, 87% saw an increase in housing stability, 87% gained job stability, 39% increased their incomes, 43% increased their income stability, and 78% were able to have better access to transportation.

These exceptional statistics demonstrate a successful housing and services collaboration that is not only innovative but effective. The One Family, One Year, One Home model is an efficient use of resources in meeting Florida Housing's goal to enhance opportunities for special needs and homeless households to access rental housing paired with supportive services.

Please click the following links for examples.



[One Family, One Year, One Home](#)

Santa Rosa County		
YEAR	HOMELESS STUDENTS	UNACCOMPANIED YOUTH
2010-2011	1,467	100
2011-2012	1,530	110
2012-2013	1,703	155
2013-2014	1,806	115
2014-2015	1,704	86
2015-2016	1,301	76
2016-2017	1,104	82
2017-2018	1,033	89
2018-2019	1,136	93
2019-2020	656	35

*As of December 19, 2019

[Santa Rosa County Stats](#)



[TBRA - A Community Effort](#)



Santa Rosa County pilot program for homeless kids to be replicated throughout Florida

Kevin Robinson,
 Pensacola News Journal

April 10, 2020

Click [here](#) for the full article.

Also shared [here](#) on MSN.com

Housing the homeless: Local pilot housing program sees success

Jamie Gentry,
 Navarre Press

April 15, 2020

Click [here](#) for the full article.