



From Homelessness to Happiness

Homelessness Among Women and Children

Nearly half of the children that live in New Orleans live in poverty. A quarter of the children that live in Jefferson Parish also live in poverty. A large majority of them live on the edge of homelessness, and it doesn't take much to push them over the edge.

“When people show up on our doorstep, they have been living on their aunt’s sofa until she just can’t take care of them anymore, or they are living out of their car because they didn’t make the rent and were kicked out of their apartment.” Dawn Bradley-Fletcher, Executive Director, New Orleans Women and Children’s Shelter. “The families that come to us have run out of other options.”

The way people become homeless can be attributed to a complex interplay between a person’s individual circumstances and adverse social and economic factors outside of their direct control, namely:

Unemployment – The unemployment rate in New Orleans is 5.7% compared with a national rate of 4.9%.

Generational poverty – 28% of Orleans Parish residents live in poverty.

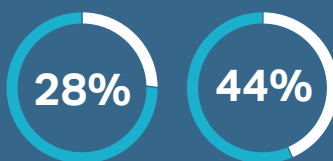
A lack of affordable housing – 36% of Orleans Parish residents are considered “rent-burdened”, meaning they pay 50% or more of their household income for rent and utilities.

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE

New Orleans
5.7% vs National
4.9%

Bureau of Labor Statistics (2014)

POVERTY IN NEW ORLEANS



residents live in poverty

children live in poverty

GNO Community Data Center (2014)

RENT-BURDENED HOUSEHOLDS

36%
of households spend **50%** or more of their income on rent and utilities

GNO Community Data Center (2014)



When the New Orleans Women & Children’s Shelter takes in a family, we focus on the key question: *How do we take this family mired in poverty and transition them to a position where they can take care of themselves?*

The answer lies in a carefully constructed set of programs that address both the mother and the child.

Breaking the Cycle of Homelessness

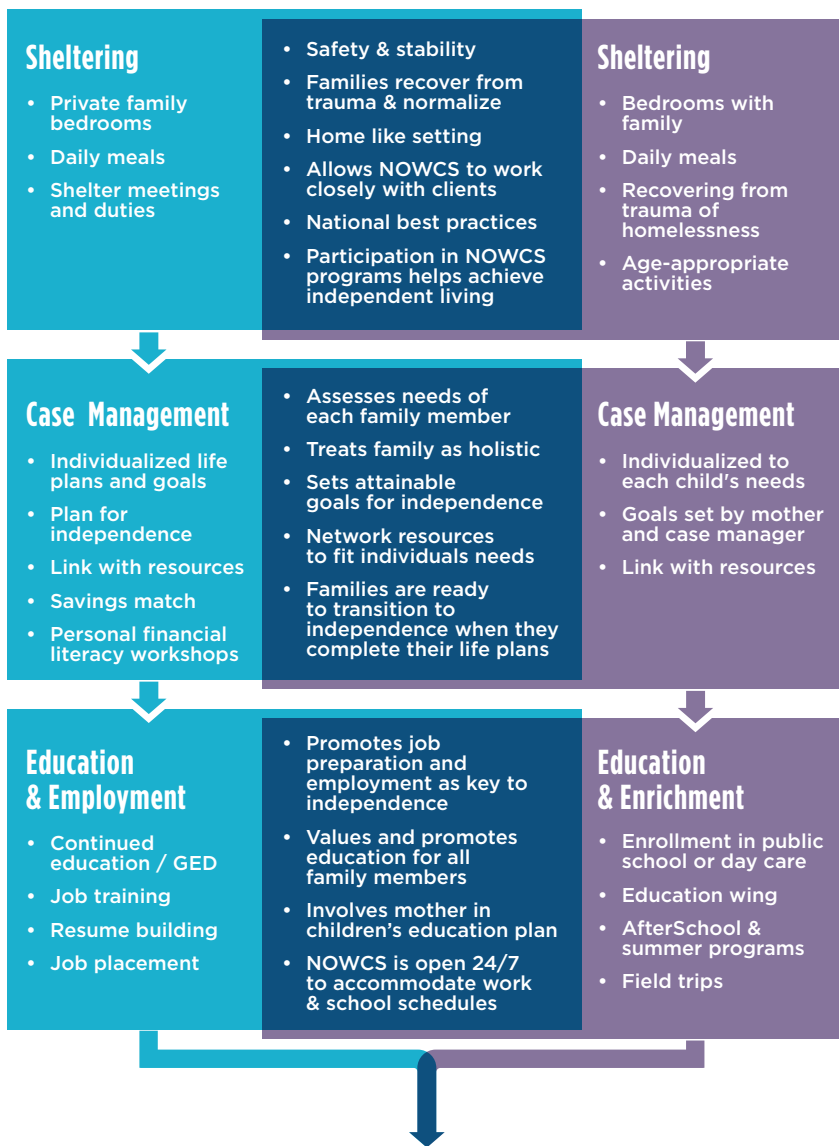
ONE FAMILY AT A TIME

Now in its tenth year of operation, New Orleans Women & Children's Shelter has helped more than 1,200 homeless women and children transition from living on the street to safe, affordable housing.

Sheltering is the essential first step and provides a trusted infrastructure. Case management for all family members assesses the family's needs. Wrap-around services from a network of government and community-based organizations fills the gaps in physical and mental health care, and other needed services. Employment and education services help residents gain skills and obtain meaningful employment. Children participate in education and enrichment services to help them overcome learning losses. Post-graduation, the Shelter stays in touch with families through its Transition Assistance Program.

WOMEN'S PROGRAM

CHILDREN'S PROGRAM



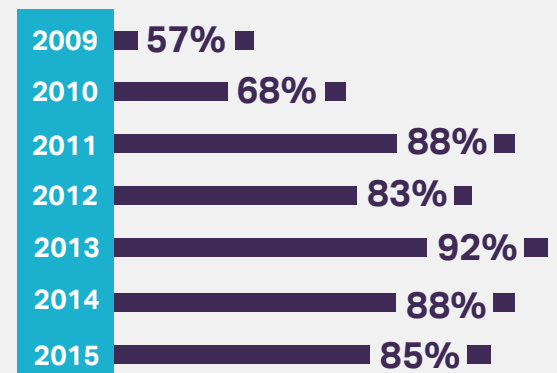
Post-Graduation / Transition Assistance Program

Safe affordable housing, stability in home setting, continued link with resources, ongoing case management with a NOWCS Transition Assistance Program (TAP) case manager to keep on track with goals - all barriers to prevent a return to homelessness



Success Rates 2009-2015

Since 2007, an average of 88% of families served by the Shelter transitioned to independence and stability.



"I'm really grateful for the things they are helping me accomplish." – Shelter Resident

Looking Ahead

With the startling number of families living in poverty in Greater New Orleans, there is an increasing effort by public officials, as well as intergovernmental agencies and local shelters to come together to address poverty and homelessness in the city on varying levels.

The need is great. There are thousands of people who do not have a place to live, and hundreds of them are children with well-meaning caretakers who typically do not have the education, income or life skills to provide for them.

Beyond the programs that the New Orleans Women and Children's Shelter already provides, its leaders are at the forefront of the broad-based community effort to develop even more resources to address the ongoing needs. Expanding capabilities and services for even more women, children and families remains a primary objective for the Shelter.

True progress will only come with the growth and expansion of broad-based community efforts by government, business, foundations and individuals that recognize and support this issue.

“We are determined that this vulnerable population not be left behind. The circumstances that have created these problems can and must be addressed in a comprehensive approach to move each family from homelessness to independent sustainable lifestyles.”

— Dan Silverman, Shelter Co-Founder and Board Chair.



THROUGH THE YEARS AT THE SHELTER

