

# Drawing Upon Family Experience for Policy and Practice Change

We recently released **a report**, presenting results from a survey Homes for Families conducted with families in Emergency Assistance shelters, that made the case for family-centered care. At our last **Policy Action Team** meeting we took a closer look at what data from the report inspired further conversation, analysis of current practice, and policy action. Below is some of what the group highlighted. Let us know if you have other thoughts or answers to the questions posed under "Practice/Policy Questions"!

## Issue Area and Noted Data Points

## Practice/Policy Questions

### Demographics

**14%** of respondents identified as **LGBT** (p. 9)

- Are we doing enough to support the LGBT population?

### Children's Issues

**1 in 4** respondents indicated that they had additional **children not with them in shelter** (p. 10)

A striking number of children had **SWITCHED SCHOOLS** (p. 16)

**21%**

**47%**

**32%**

Switched schools at least once

Did not switch schools

No school age children

- How can we better support family re-unification and serving the needs of the whole family?
- How can we better address issues related to **children switching schools**?
- Where can we do better by children and families by making needed supports for children truly accessible, while keeping families intact?

### Community Connections

Families in congregate shelter were less likely to feel shelter staff helped them become aware of **community resources** (p. 18)

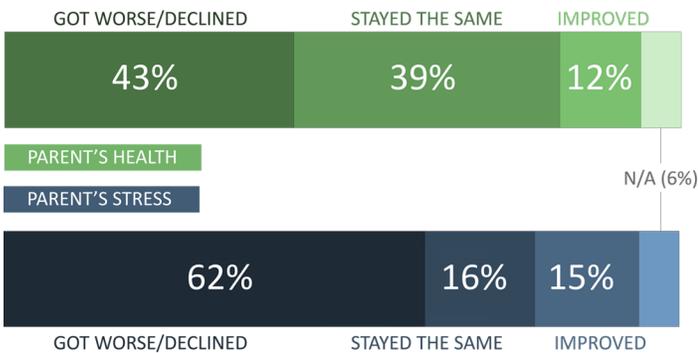
- How can organizations support well-connected relationships between families and community resources?

Health & Wellness



**Mental health** is captured as a contributing cause of homelessness (p. 13)

A high percentage of parents reported their **health and stress** got worse after entering shelter (p. 13)



- How can programs move toward addressing clinical needs?
- How can serving mental and emotional health needs be built into practice?
- How can we create a system that allows for greater **flexibility and more specialization** of services?

Housing & Homelessness History

Nearly **10%** of heads of households surveyed spent time in foster care (p. 11)

**A QUARTER** had experienced homelessness as children or had lived in subsidized housing (p. 11)

- Where do we need to focus our attention to **prevent homelessness** and **better understand multi-generational cycles**?

## Next Steps

In considering how we continue to work together to pursue important practice and policy change that benefits the system, **PATs highlighted the need for:**

- a family centered approach
  - cross-agency collaborations
- ↪
- information sharing
  - accountability

Where can all **relevant state agencies** do a better job at **taking ownership in addressing the needs** families have that are beyond, yet support a path toward, housing?

The policy action team's analysis of what they found to be key data points in the report will inform our continued conversations regarding **re-procurement of the EA system.**

Where can we take action now to **assess and change practice?**

Where are there **policy action opportunities** via the fiscal year **2019 budget process** underway?

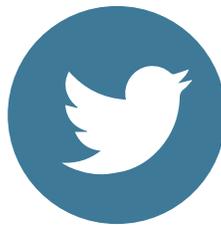
Where do we need more **research** and **dialogue?**

We will be engaging families and continuing the discussion on social media and the **HFF blog**

## Please Share Your Thoughts!



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