



ECHO

FIERCELY COMMITTED TO ENDING HOMELESSNESS

CAN Presentation

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August 15, 2011

ECHO Vision

A community fiercely focused on ending homelessness

ECHO Mission

To provide dynamic, proactive leadership that engages policy makers and the community to end homelessness

ECHO History

- Mid 1980' s homeless organizations began to meet
- Became an Issue Area Group of CAN
- Kirk Watson named the Homeless Task Force in the mid 1990' s
- Plan to End Chronic Homelessness released in 2004
- Joining of Chronic Homelessness and Homeless Task Force into ECHO in 2007

Key ECHO Tasks

- Serve as the homeless planning entity for the community; Coordinate annual HUD Continuum of Care application (2010 – \$4.4 million);
- Conduct annual homeless count;
- Provide outreach through annual Homeless Fairs;
- Sponsor Hunger & Homelessness Awareness Week;
- Provide oversight of HMIS & homeless data; and
- Advocate for homeless issues

Definition of Homelessness

- an individual living outside or in a building not meant for human habitation or which they have no legal right to occupy, in an emergency shelter, or in a temporary housing program which may include a transitional and supportive housing program if habitation time limits exist.
- *A chronically homeless person* is an unaccompanied homeless individual, or adult in a family, with a disabling condition who has either been continuously homeless for at least 12 months **OR** has had at least 4 episodes of homelessness in the past 3 years.

Who is not homeless

- Persons or families living in motels.
- Persons doubled up, living with relatives, and moving frequently.
- Persons living in substandard housing.
- Persons that are paying an excessive amount for housing.
- Wards of the state.
- Persons being discharged from an institution that is required by the State to provide or arrange for housing upon release.

Scope of the Problem

- 2011 annual count measured approximately 2,350 homeless individuals
- Approximately 800 (34%) of which are chronically homeless
- 2011, 227 homeless individuals in jail on night of count
- AISD reports approximately 980 homeless families
- HMIS reports between 6,000-8,000 unique individuals per year

Recent ECHO Accomplishments

- Released “Plan to End Community Homelessness”
- Active committees
- Past three years surpassed CoC threshold & added 107 permanent supportive housing beds
- More than tripled PSH capacity for chronically homeless – 57 -183 beds in three years
- Served as conduit for \$2 million federal grant for homeless veterans
- Produced report on services for Permanent Supportive Housing for the City of Austin

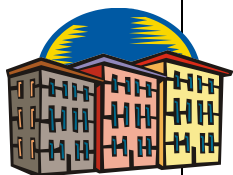
Continuum of Care Grant

HUD CoC funding is a set of three competitively-awarded programs created to address the problems of homelessness in a comprehensive manner with other federal agencies.



Supportive Housing Program (SHP)

SHP helps develop housing and related supportive services for people moving from homelessness to independent living. Program funds help homeless people live in a stable place, increase their skills or income, and gain more control over the decisions that affect their lives.



Shelter Plus Care (S+C)

The S + C program provides rental assistance that, when combined with social services, provides supportive housing for homeless people with disabilities and their families. The program allows for a variety of housing choices such as group homes or individual units, coupled with a range of supportive services (funded by other sources).



Single Room Occupancy (SRO)

Provides Section 8 rental assistance for moderate rehabilitation of buildings with SRO units single-room dwellings, designed for the use of an individual, that often do not contain food preparation or sanitary facilities. A public housing authority makes Section 8 rental assistance payments to the landlords for the homeless people who rent the rehabilitated units.

How many homeless are in our community?

- On January 23rd, 2011, ECHO conducted the annual, HUD mandated, physical point-in-time count of those homeless persons who were both sheltered and unsheltered. On that same night, there were 227 individuals who reported being homeless residing in the Travis County Jail. As the community increases the consistency of the count, we will be able to gauge if we are making an impact. As the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) is enhanced, it will also provide a resource for determining the number of homeless.

Count Totals

	2007	2009	2010	2011
Sheltered	1,305	1,345	1,254	1,353
Unsheltered	2,146	1,223	833	1004
TOTALS	3,451	2,568	2,087	2,357

Current Status

- 2,357 homeless persons annual homeless count + 227 in jail
- 722 Emergency Shelter beds
- 577 Transitional housing beds
- 699 Permanent housing beds
- 183 PSH dedicated for the chronically homeless
- 16 Safe Haven beds for people with severe mental illness

Sources: 2011 HUD HDX for the Continuum of Care & Travis County Jail

Local Findings

- The 2011 Count discovered that **793 of these individuals are chronically homeless** meaning that they have been homeless for at least a year or four times in the last three years and have a disability.
- In 2008, the Austin Travis County Reentry Roundtable conducted a study that conservatively identified **over 1,100 individuals that were incarcerated, homeless, and had a disability**. 814 of these individuals were at the Travis County Jail.
- In 2011, the Austin Independent School District estimates that there are **about 980 homeless families within the school system representing approximately 1,300 children**.

Barriers / Challenges

- NIMBY
- Multiple housing barriers (criminal histories, substance abuse, et. al.)
- Funding cuts
- Data collection for multiple funders

Strategies for Ending Homelessness

- Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)
- Prevention
- Improved access to mainstream benefits
- Optimize HMIS
- Collaboration (VA, SAMHSA, et. al.)
- Secure commitments w/ hospitals, jails

Opportunities

- Participate on Membership Council
- Participate in Independent Review Team
- Facilitate donations for housing units
- Participate in 100,000 Homes Campaign (www.100khomes.org)
- Visit: www.austinecho.org

