

Project Hope's Eviction Prevention Program

What makes our eviction prevention program unique?

- ❖ Place-based
 - Our office is located in the community we serve, and over 75% of the families we served through our eviction program in FY14 and FY15 live in either Dorchester or Roxbury.
- ❖ Grounded in relationships with community partners
 - Of the 89 families we helped to avoid eviction in FY14 and FY15, 60% were referred to us by a partner management company or school.
- ❖ Providing wrap-around services
 - 24% of the 89 families we assisted were participants in one of Project Hope's Adult Education or Workforce Development programs, and they were referred by their case manager to prevent an eviction and enable them to successfully complete the program.
- ❖ Case management component
 - We provide 12-18 months of case management to all of the families who receive eviction prevention assistance.
- ❖ Primarily serving tenants of subsidized housing
 - Preventing evictions from subsidized housing is particularly critical because, in most cases, families who have been evicted from subsidized housing will be deemed ineligible for EA shelter.
- ❖ Timing of payments
 - Whenever possible, we make payments in installments instead of in one lump sum to encourage families to stay engaged with case management.

Main Funding Sources

- ❖ Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG), City of Boston
- ❖ United Way
- ❖ Small Can Be Big
- ❖ Family-to-Family Project
- ❖ Small private foundations

Outcomes

- ❖ Project Hope prevented evictions for **89 families** in FY14 and FY15.
- ❖ The average amount of funding needed to prevent an eviction in FY14 was \$761. In FY15, it was \$861. The average cost across the two years was **\$812**.

- ❖ Of the 89 families we assisted, 78 families have kept in contact with us, and **94%** of those families remain housed.

**Families Receiving Eviction Prevention Assistance in FY14 and FY15
by Outcome**

	#	%
Still housed	73	94%
Moved in with friends or family	4	5%
Re-entered shelter	1	1%
TOTAL	78	100%

Note: We were unable to get in touch with 11 of the 89 families we assisted.

Promising Practice

Project Hope has partnered with various community organizations/institutions that are well-positioned to detect housing instability early on and can connect families to Project Hope for housing assistance:

- ❖ **Management Companies:** partnerships with Winn Management and Maloney Properties, who have properties within the Dudley Street neighborhood
- ❖ **Schools:** partnership with the Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative (DSNI) and three Boston Public Schools as part of the Boston Promise Initiative/No Child Goes Homeless
- ❖ **Health Centers:** partnership between Children’s HealthWatch, Project Hope, Boston Housing Authority, Medical-Legal Partnership, Nuestra Comunidad, and others as part of a Health Starts at Home grant from The Boston Foundation; families will be screened for housing insecurity in the emergency room at Boston Medical Center

Policy/Advocacy Idea

In most (but not all) parts of the state, property owners have the option of filing for an eviction in District Court or in Housing Court. However, Housing Courts offer tenants valuable resources that aren’t available in District Courts (e.g., Housing Specialists, Tenancy Preservation Program, Lawyer for the Day). Housing Court judges also have the expertise to address complex housing issues and are more likely to suggest mediation as an option.

- ❖ **Policy/Advocacy Idea:** Support efforts to expand Housing Courts to all parts of the state, and explore strategies for educating tenants about their right to have their eviction case transferred from District Court to Housing Court.