Housing First & Rapid ReHousing for Survivors:
Creating and Supporting Safe and Stable Housing for Survivors of Domestic and Sexual Violence

Presented by
National Alliance for Safe Housing (NASH)

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National Alliance for Safe Housing (NASH)

- A project of the District Alliance for Safe Housing (DASH – a local safe housing program in D.C.)
- A national Technical Assistance and Training project (launched October 2015)
- Project Partners: Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence, DC Coalition Against Domestic Violence
- Part of the federal Domestic Violence and Housing Technical Assistance Consortium (DVHTAC)
NASH

NASH provides programs and communities with the tools, strategies and support necessary to improve coordination between domestic and sexual violence services and homeless and housing providers, so that survivors and their children can ultimately avoid homelessness as the only means of living free from abuse.
### Webinar Series to Support DV/SA Safe Housing Options for FY17 CoC Program Competition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Webinar Title</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Developing Well-Designed Safe Housing Projects: A Review of the Continuum of Care and Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) Process</td>
<td>May 30 ~ 12:00pm ET</td>
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<tr>
<td>A Primer on the NOFA Application: Review of the FY17 Application, HUD Priorities, and Funding Opportunities for DV/SA Projects</td>
<td>TBA (1 week after NOFA release)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rapid Re-Housing/Housing First: Innovative Practices</td>
<td>June 2 ~ 3:00pm ET</td>
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<tr>
<td>Survivor Safety and Coordinated Entry Systems</td>
<td>June 5 ~ 2:30pm ET</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DV, Housing and Homelessness 101: An Overview</td>
<td>June 7 ~ 3:00pm ET</td>
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### Accompanying Webinars from NAEH:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Webinar Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preparing for the 2017 CoC Program NOFA</td>
<td>May 31 ~ 2:00pm ET</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the Transitional Housing-Rapid Re-Housing Joint Component?</td>
<td>June 15 ~ 2:00pm ET</td>
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Webinars to be recorded and made available online. A link will be circulated once the recordings are posted.
SAFE HOUSING PARTNERSHIPS
The new website for the Domestic Violence and Housing Technical Assistance Consortium

• Data, infographics, literature reviews, and reports that describe the intersections between domestic violence, sexual assault, homelessness, and housing
• Strategies for building effective and sustainable partnerships across systems and case studies of successful collaborations
• In-depth resource collections organized around four key approaches to addressing and preventing housing instability among survivors
• Access to relevant federal laws, regulations, and policies

Have questions? Need TA? Want training?
Contact the Consortium directly through the site!
Learning Objectives

• Understand the basics of a “Housing First” approach
• Examine how new approaches employed by a growing number of victim services programs can support safe and stable housing for survivors
• Explore how modifications to the Rapid Re-housing model can boost its effectiveness with survivors
• Highlight a successful example of a statewide effort to increase safe housing for survivors in rural, urban and tribal communities
Today’s Agenda

• Why focus on housing for survivors?
• Housing First philosophy and its application to survivors
• DV Housing First: Service delivery approaches for survivors within the Housing First context
• Applying a Rapid Re-housing approach with survivors
• Housing First in action: Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence’s Domestic Violence Housing First (DVHF)
Why Focus on Housing?

Housing is key to safety for survivors; it provides protection against continued abuse and is linked to a host of positive health outcomes in survivors and children.
Permanent Housing Options for Survivors

- Prevention (Diversion)—Survivor may choose to stay in the home or may leave temporarily if safety is a concern
- Subsidized housing with services available
- Permanent supportive housing
- Rapid ReHousing ➔ Flexible Engagement
What Is the Housing First Approach?

• Housing is a right
• Housing FIRST not Housing READY
• No barriers for housing access
• Assessment done to identify and eliminate potential barriers
• Tailored, voluntary services provided to retain housing
Could This Work for DV/SA Survivors?

- Safety?
- Abuser Sabotage?
- Legal Issues?
- Trauma?
- Housing Discrimination?
- Drug/Alcohol Use?
- Adequate Income?
DV Housing First: The Approach

Overview

Domestic violence is a leading cause of homelessness for women and children.

The Domestic Violence Housing First approach focuses on getting survivors of domestic violence into stable housing as quickly as possible and then providing the necessary support as they rebuild their lives.

This approach has been shown to promote long-term stability, safety and well-being for survivors and their children.
Working flexibly and in the community with survivors. Survivors lead the process. Advocates focus on the survivor, not only the domestic and/or sexual violence.
Survivor-Driven Mobile Advocacy

• Offers options, not opinions or mandates
• Considers the unique needs and strengths of each survivor
• Asks “what do you need” instead of “these are our services”
• Meets survivors literally where they are—and helps them navigate other support systems
• Considers a survivor’s culture and community to increase safety and rebuild connections
“Taking the time to do home visits, going with people to court or other places communicates ‘I’m here for YOU’ and makes a connection that is unique. Other services just aren’t structured that way.”

- DV Advocate
Mobile Services Can Be....

- Going with your client to appointments
- Housing search
- Transporting your client to help her/him get something done
- Help bridge a language barrier (such as with landlords)
- In-person advocacy
- Home visits
- Meeting at a coffee shop, workplace, wherever is good for client
Why is This a Great Approach?

• Appointments not always easy for survivors
• Services can happen anywhere!
• Face-to-face more effective
• Enter survivor’s world = better understanding
• Break social isolation
• Advances know-how, collaboration and partnerships
Home Visiting

• Be sure it’s welcome
• Be clear it’s not about home inspection
• Travel light
• Don’t visit at mealtime
• Be clear about goals
• Check again about the visit before you arrive
• Give yourself time to get lost
Safety Planning is Key

- Thoroughly discuss where it’s best to have visits
- Know how survivor wants you to handle being seen together
- Have a plan for chance encounter with abuser
- Avoid home visits if abuser knows housing location or is stalking
- Ensure your program knows where you are
- Keep cell phone charged and handy
- Follow your instincts
Trauma-Informed Approach

- Trauma awareness - relationship with provider key
- Emphasis on safety/awareness of potential triggers
- Rebuild control—choice and power sharing
- Strengths-based
Unrestricted funds used to support survivors become stably housed.
Flexible Financial Assistance

• Funds are used to support housing, employment, survivor safety, and other critical needs
• Level of need and amount of financial assistance determined in full partnership with survivor
• Additional assistance may be provided based on changing needs of survivor
• No requirements to meet goals or participate in services
Flexible Financial Assistance

- Rent, Deposit, Utilities
- Reduce Debt
- Transportation
- School or Work
- Back Rent
- Children
- Many Others!
Working in and engaging with the community to build connections to support survivors’ safety, independence and housing stability.
Community Engagement

• Develop strong relationships with housing authorities and landlords
• Cultivate relationships with community members, businesses and service providers
• Educate community members about domestic and sexual violence and increase awareness of survivor needs
Community is vital for restoration of social network.

Community is vital for a survivor to heal from trauma and for children to build resiliency.

Community is vital for connection to resources and relationships.

Community is vital for safety.
Housing Advocacy: A Critical Component

• Offers a spectrum of housing options that meet a survivor’s unique needs
• Addresses housing needs first and then works with survivors on stability, safety, and self-sufficiency
• Provides direct support by accompanying survivors to housing appointments, negotiating lease agreements, and acting as liaison between survivors and landlords
What is Rapid Re-housing?

- An intervention designed to help people to quickly exit homelessness and return to permanent housing.
- Assistance is offered without preconditions (such as employment, income, absence of criminal record, or sobriety)
- Resources and services provided are tailored to the unique needs of the household.

- National Alliance to End Homelessness
Core Components of Mainstream Rapid Re-housing (RRH)

• Housing Identification
  Recruit landlords, address barriers to participation, assist households to secure appropriate housing

• Rent and Move-In (Financial) Assistance
  Financial assistance that supports immediate move out of homelessness and stabilization in permanent housing; typically six months or less

• RRH Case Management and Services
  Identify best housing options, address barriers, make supports available to aid stabilization
Is Rapid Re-Housing a Good Idea For Survivors?

• Some survivors need/want confidentially-located shelter

• Some face high barriers and may need long-term subsidy or master-leasing

• Others want to return to/remain in previous housing once abuser vacates

• Many survivors want to establish themselves and their children as soon as possible in a neighborhood setting – Rapid Re-housing may be a good fit
Housing Identification Challenges for Survivors

- Landlords may anticipate trouble
- Survivors may have poor housing history
- Survivors may have pets they can’t leave behind
- Housing in high-crime areas may trigger trauma
- Some locations are dangerous due to abuser’s proximity
Financial Assistance Challenges for Survivors

• Debt and arrears
• Dislocation from social supports and resources
• Spotty employment record
• Complex aftermath of systems involvement/trauma impacts may hamper income development
Services and Support Survivors May Need

• Trauma-specific supports
• Civil/immigration legal
• Social supports
• Employment/financial (survivor-specific)
• Criminal history
• Chemical dependency
• Stalking-prone abuser
What Modifications to the RRH Model Are Needed for Survivors?

• Safety planning throughout, including careful housing location and limited data-sharing
• Prepare survivors to talk directly with landlords about impact of DV/SA on credit, housing history
• Flexible length of rental subsidy
• Second housing placement if safety becomes compromised
• Trauma-informed, survivor-driven services and support
• Partnerships to ensure connection to community resources your agency may not have
• Know the federal, state and local laws that protect survivors
Housing First in Action:
Washington State Domestic Violence Coalition
WSCADV DV Housing First Pilot

Cohort One
1. WomenCare Bellingham, Whatcom County
2. Lifewire Bellevue, King County
3. Kitsap County YWCA Bremerton, Kitsap County
4. Family Resource Center Davenport, Lincoln County

Cohort Two
5. New Hope DV/SA Services Moses Lake, Grant & Adams Counties
6. Kalispel Tribe of Indians Usk, Pend Oreille County
7. Spokane Tribe Family Violence Wellpinit, Stevens County
8. Lummi Victims of Crime Bellingham, Whatcom County
9. Salvation Army Domestic Violence Program Seattle, King County
10. InterimCDA Seattle, King County
11. Healthy Families of Clallam County Port Angeles, Clallam County
12. Forks Abuse Program Forks, Clallam County
13. Crisis Support Network Raymond, Pacific County
Final Follow-up: September 2014

681 survivors participated

Advocates entered available follow-up data for 657

438 were reached for follow-up interviews

wscadv.org/projects/domestic-violence-housing-first/
Living Situation at Program Entry

Figure A. Cohort 2: Living Situation at Program Entry

- Rent: 43%
- Shelter/voucher: 11%
- Temporary arrangement/transitional housing: 17%
- Homeless: 17%
- Owned their own home: 7%
- Other: 5%

N = 681
88% Obtained Permanent Housing

Figure C. Cohort 2: Permanent Housing Status At Final Follow-Up N = 438

- Yes, obtained or maintained housing: 88%
- No, obtained housing, but it is no longer permanent housing: 5%
- No housing yet, we are working on it: 7%
96% Retained Housing After 18 Months

Figure D. Housing Retention at 6, 12 and 18 Months of Advocacy Services

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Yes (%)</th>
<th>No (%)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6 months</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 months</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 months</td>
<td>96%</td>
<td>4%</td>
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N=235, N=173, N=121

NATIONAL ALLIANCE FOR SAFE HOUSING
### Race, Ethnicity, Immigrant Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic</th>
<th>N=681</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hispanic or Latino/a</strong></td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Race</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American/African Descent/Black*</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian/European American/White</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American/Alaska Native</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific Islander/Native Hawaiian</td>
<td>2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Multiracial</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not reported</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Immigrant/Refugee</strong></td>
<td>22%</td>
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33% of Survivors Living in Urban Communities

- 82% survivors of color
- 69% immigrant and refugee survivors
- More likely had lived in domestic violence shelter, emergency shelters or transitional housing prior to program entry
- Lack of affordable housing in urban communities
- “Sometimes survivors have to make the decision between unsafe housing or being homeless.” - Advocate
67% of Survivors Living in Rural Communities

- 53% survivors of color
- 42% Native American/Alaska Native
- More likely struggling with chemical dependency, CPS involvement, and all types of disabilities at program entry
- Difficulties with mobile advocacy due to distance
- Lack of housing in rural communities
Key Findings from Pilot Project

- Survivor-driven advocacy contributes to housing retention
- Housing stability rebuilds lives, leads to independence
- Independence leads to safety
- Housing stability and advocacy improve health & well-being and restore dignity & self-worth
Key Findings from Pilot Project

- Safety and stability contribute to nurturing environments for children
- Flexibility supports adaptability of culturally responsive services
- Community engagement enhances collaboration and sustainability
Stable Housing in Safe Communities Contributes to Safety

“I’m safer—not just from the abuser, but I moved away from a bad neighborhood.”

- Survivor

“I feel a lot safer. Nobody knows where I live. I don’t have to worry if I’m being followed.”

- Survivor
Demonstration Project Regions

**SOUTH CENTRAL REGION**
- YWCA of Yakima
- DV Services of Benton & Franklin Counties
- New Hope DV/SA Services
- Lower Valley Crisis & Support Services

**KING COUNTY**
- Lifewire
- New Beginnings
- Northwest Network of BLTG Survivors of Abuse
- Interim Community Development Association
Innovation for Long-term, Systemic Change

- Improved health and well-being for survivors
- Housing systems that better meet the needs of survivors
- Increased level of evidence
Contact Us

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