



This year in America, more than 2.5 million children & their parents will experience homelessness.

## THE CHALLENGE

Families with children make up 35% of the people who experience homelessness in this country. Family homelessness is a non-partisan issue at the core of American values—the family. We all agree that **every child deserves a home**.

## OUR MISSION

Our mission is to help homeless and low-income families achieve **sustainable independence** through a community-based response. We are the leading national nonprofit organization providing a comprehensive set of solutions to this critical issue.

## OUR SCOPE

Founded in Summit, New Jersey in 1988, Family Promise today comprises more than 200 Affiliates in 43 states, engaging 180,000 compassionate volunteers who want to make a difference in the lives of families in need. Through our innovative approach, we **keep families together** and serve more than 60,000 children and adults every year.

## OUR VISION

We envision a nation in which every family has a home, a livelihood, and the chance to build a **better future**.



## OUR IMPACT



## OUR STORY

A chance meeting in 1982 between Karen Olson, a marketing executive in New York City, and Millie, a homeless woman on the street, sparked a nationwide movement. On impulse, Karen bought her a sandwich. The woman, Millie, accepted the sandwich but asked for something more – a chance to be heard. Karen listened to what Millie had to say. What she heard convinced her that a simple, personal connection can make a profound difference.

When Karen learned that homelessness was affecting families right in her own community in New Jersey, she decided to leave her marketing career and focus on the issue. Because of their mandate to serve, she reached out to the religious community. Local congregations agreed to use their houses of worship for shelter and meals. The YMCA provided space for showers and a family day center. Volunteers contributed their skills, knowledge, and compassion to help their homeless neighbors find employment, reconnect with society, and restore their dignity. The first **interfaith hospitality network** opened on October 27, 1986.

As word spread, more New Jersey congregations established a second network, or Affiliate. Other congregations were inspired to develop similar programs in Pennsylvania and Ohio. In 1988, the National Interfaith Hospitality Network (NIHN) was formed. In addition to shelter, meals, and housing, our Affiliates began developing programs for job skills training, transitional housing, childcare, and homelessness prevention.

In 2003, we changed our name to Family Promise to better reflect the broad range of programs being offered. The name refers to the promise communities make to families in need. But it also refers to the promise, the potential, inherent in every family.

## OUR WORK

Our flagship **Family Promise Program** addresses family homelessness cost-effectively by utilizing existing community resources. Congregations provide space in their buildings to serve as temporary homes. Day centers, where families can take showers, receive case management and look for housing and jobs, can be located at a house of worship or local agency. There are multiple options for transportation to get families from the host congregations to the day center, jobs and school. With volunteers giving their time, making meals, and sharing hospitality, family homelessness is addressed without the creation of expensive shelters.



These volunteers are the core of the program. They share food, spend the night, play with children and lend their passion and expertise to help families get back on their feet. They prove that motivated people can solve family homelessness.

Other core programs include:

- **Family Mentoring:** trained volunteers provide vital support to families in need as friends, advocates and bridges to the community, helping them achieve sustainable independence.
- **Community Initiatives:** Affiliates nationwide have created more than 1,500 targeted partnerships and initiatives to address specific challenges in the fight against homelessness at the local level.
- **Just Neighbors:** an interactive, educational curriculum that raises awareness of poverty and homelessness while inspiring communities towards engagement.
- **Voices Uniting:** an advocacy program that mobilizes and supports advocates for public policies that alleviate homelessness and promote economic stability of low-income families.



## FACTS AND FIGURES

- Family Promise was founded in Summit, NJ in 1988 by Karen Olson, who currently serves as President Emeritus.
- More than 6,000 congregations and organizations are involved in Family Promise programs.
- 200+ Affiliates in 43 states: AK, AL, AR, AZ, CA, CO, CT, DE, FL, GA, HI, IA, ID, IN, IL, KS, KY, LA, MA, MD, MI, MN, MO, MS, MT, NC, NH, NJ, NM, NV, NY, OH, OK, OR, PA, SC, TN, TX, UT, VA, WA, WI and WY.
- More than 180,000 volunteers are involved in Family Promise Affiliates.
- More than 750,000 men, women and children have been helped through Family Promise programs.
- On average, 74% of guest families secure permanent or transitional housing in less than nine weeks.
- In a typical Affiliate, 60% of the guests are children, most of whom are under six years old.
- Through the mobilization of existing community resources and thousands of volunteers, Family Promise provides comprehensive services to families at a fraction of the cost of government programs.
- As an outgrowth of the Family Promise Program, 1,500+ direct service and housing programs have been developed.
- In 2016, for the fourth consecutive year, Family Promise was rated a Four Star Charity by Charity Navigator.
- Family Promise has been nationally recognized for our excellence, including the President's Annual Points of Light Award for being one of the top twenty volunteer agencies in the country.



For more information or media requests regarding Family Promise, please contact: Christopher Kaul, Director of Marketing and Media Relations at 908.273.1100 x43 or [ckaul@familypromise.org](mailto:ckaul@familypromise.org).

# Family Promise Affiliates

