

Highlighting our achievements in the fight against family homelessness

COVID-19 Response Roundup



A MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

Dear Friends,

The COVID-19 pandemic has made this the most challenging time for a family to experience homelessness. How does one work from home or social distance in a shelter, doubled up, or sleeping in a car?

Despite the obstacles, Family Promise continues to move forward. Focusing on increasing prevention and stabilization services, Affiliates pivoted their programming using resources, volunteers, and innovative approaches to keep families in their homes. In some communities, as other shelters closed, Family Promise Affiliates expanded services.

That said, these are incredibly difficult times for low-income families. Forty percent of households earning less than \$40,000 a year have lost at least one job. We also face the bitter truth that race can define who has housing.

We have a lot of work to do and daunting challenges before us. But the response of Affiliates to this crisis has exceeded anything we could expect. Across the country, our Affiliate communities have lived out these words: "We're all in this together."

We will get through this, and together, we will overcome homelessness.

Very best regards,

Claas Ehlers

The COVID-19 health crisis has been a proving ground for Americans, and no less so for Family Promise, volunteers, and partners who have found unique, creative, and resourceful ways to ensure families continue to receive the support they need while working toward independence.

Without a home, how does a family safely self-quarantine? Just as important, how do they continue to strive for success during a global health pandemic?

Quick to adapt to the "new normal," Family Promise Affiliates have found alternate ways to serve families.

Creative Housing

Family Promise of Greater Savannah, GA: partnering with Airbnb owners to use vacant properties as temporary housing.

Family Promise of Union County, NJ: collaborating with landlords to put families in unoccupied apartments.

Family Promise of Clark County, WA: optimizing Family Promise's national partnership with Motel 6 to house families.



Donations of food, cleaning supplies, gift cards, and gifts for children have helped Family Promise of Greater Savannah make life as "normal" as can be for families.

Family Promise of Gallatin Valley, MT: renovating transitional housing units (painting, replacing windows, building fences, installing washers/dryers) in record time, thanks to volunteers, to make the sites livable for families.

Family Promise of Morris County, NJ: teaming up with other service providers to obtain housing vouchers, coordinate housing with landlords, and furnish properties.

(Continued on page 3)



At Family Promise Metrowest, families moved to hotel suites and volunteers eased the transition with meals, groceries, computer equipment, and more.

NONPROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT 352
BELLMAWR, NJ

FamilyPromise
71 Summit Avenue • Summit, New Jersey 07901

The Summer Surge of Homelessness

As summer arrives and temperatures soar, so do the number of families experiencing homelessness in the U.S. Shelters see great need in winter when people seek protection from the elements. But shelters nationwide report a "summer surge" when applications increase by as much as 25 percent.

Overcrowding and utility bills

For families doubled up with others, the end of the school year can make the crowded living situation untenable with children no longer in school all day. Also, these families

exacerbated the situation, forcing more families who were doubled up to seek shelter.

This trend varies by geographic region—for instance, milder climates are more conducive to sheltering out-of-doors in cars, tents, even on the streets. At Family Promise of Las Vegas, Executive Director Terry Lindemann always sees a summer surge. She notes that in places like Las Vegas, where temperatures can exceed 100 degrees, families must find relief from the heat.

"You can't live without air conditioning here," Lindemann says, noting a \$500 electric bill isn't uncommon. "Come May or June, higher utility bills mean less money for other necessities, like food."

The tax season of homelessness

Many families receive spring tax rebates that last them a few months, but by summer that money runs out. Danielle Butler, executive director at Family Promise of Wake County, NC, observes a pattern every year: Families experiencing homelessness use their refunds to immediately improve their quality of life, but that only tides them over until the summer.

"We call it 'the tax season of homelessness,'" Butler says. "I understand why families would choose to spend that money for a motel. If you're living in your car, you'd rather have somewhere to go. But it's not always the best plan financially. By June, the money's gone."

"A situation like this is exactly why Family Promise emphasizes budgeting and planning," she adds.

Education and eviction

Education also plays a role. Parents may not want to disrupt the school year or will endure poor housing conditions to spare children embarrassment at school (stories abound of landlords neglecting spaces until families are compelled to leave).

There's an eviction component to this cycle, too, explains Executive Director of Family Promise of Monmouth County, NJ, Christine Love. She says landlords may be less hesitant to evict tenants once the weather warms up. The COVID-19 eviction moratorium delays eviction for nonpayment of rent temporarily, and some states have announced short-term rental assistance programs, but their impact remains to be seen.

(Continued on page 2)



Summer can pose additional challenges for families battling homelessness.

usually stay with others from the same income strata, so host families often don't have the means to accommodate long-term guests. The physical distancing requirements brought on by the COVID-19 crisis only

Family Promise Welcomes New Board Members

Sherina Smith is vice president and head of marketing at American Family Insurance and has extensive experience in traditional and digital marketing and branding at Fortune 300 companies. She is based in Madison, WI, and spends time in Dallas, TX. "Now more than ever, we need services like this to help families in need," Smith says. "I'm honored and excited to join Family Promise to combat this cause."

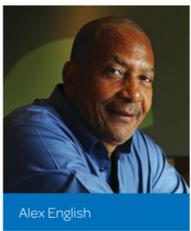
Midlands in Columbia, SC. "I'm humbled and honored to be named to the Family Promise Board and to join the fight to end homelessness," says English. "I'm here to help in any way I can."

Linda Henry is a partner at Ernst & Young Financial Services Organization and a former board member of the Alternative Investment Management Association. She recently relocated to Summit, NJ, from London where she was an

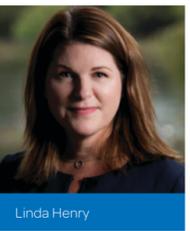
EMEIA Wealth & Asset Management tax leader. "I'm thrilled to bring my experiences to an organization that has such a national impact," Henry says. "As I learn more about the creative ways Family Promise is working to prevent family homelessness, I'm struck by the empathy, passion, and energy displayed by the Family Promise network." ✨



Sherina Smith



Alex English



Linda Henry

Thank You!

Thanks to you, our Coronavirus Emergency Relief campaign was a huge success!

80 Family Promise Affiliates

raised \$770,487 for families impacted by the health crisis

FAMILY PROMISE FOUNDED IN 1988

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER
Claas Ehlers

FAMILY PROMISE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Leah Griffith, *Chair*
Andrew Pierce, *Vice Chair*
Richard Vicens, *Treasurer*
Stacey Slater Sacks, *Secretary*

Nadim Ahmed	Susan Hardwick
Josh Barer	Linda Henry
Kevin Barrett	Robert J. Hugin
Sarah Bird	Kat Lilley
Alex English	Eileen Serra
Regina Feeney	Sherina Smith
David Fleck	Dan Tinkoff
Tim Gamory	Martin Wise

EDITOR: Melissa Biggar
LAYOUT: eminjay design

Family Promise is a national nonprofit, tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization addressing the crisis of family homelessness in the U.S. Through a comprehensive set of solutions involving prevention, shelter, and stabilization, Family Promise empowers families experiencing or at risk of homelessness to reclaim and maintain their independence.

Why I Give

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: SUE BOTTOROFF

It might have been Sue Bottoroff's studies to become a social worker that first attracted her to Family Promise years ago, but today she's as dedicated as ever to serving families in need.

"Family Promise helped me learn about things like housing issues, transportation needs, all the inequities we know exist but can't always be involved in solving," Bottoroff says.

A Westfield, NJ, resident who still maintains a private practice, she has found creative ways to serve families in crisis during the COVID-19 pandemic. When shelter-in-place mandates were initially enforced, she became more aware of families' need for food. Her church, a Family Promise shelter site, established a no-contact food drop-off station, and when someone inquired about providing fresh produce Bottoroff recognized a niche to be filled.

"We asked the community to donate fresh produce and worked out a schedule for

drop-off and delivery to the day center at Family Promise Union County [FPUC] so families could have regular access to fresh food," she explains.

She says families look forward to deliveries every Monday, a day they've designated "Fresh Produce Day," and notes volunteers have been very generous. Since families are temporarily living in apartments, an arrangement FPUC worked out with local landlords, they're able to prepare their own meals, so Bottoroff says volunteers take requests for items beyond traditional fruits and vegetables—"things like fresh ginger and garlic to use for cooking." She says her church has a garden (it's cultivated in large part by Bottoroff's husband, Dan) and soon hopes to contribute home-grown items.

Bottoroff would like to think the produce drive brings people closer to the workings of Family Promise and the people they're helping. She regularly updates volunteers so they know they're making a difference.



Bottoroff hopes a local garden will supplement weekly groceries for families in need.

"Sometimes it can feel a little remote if you're not helping in person. This is a way to bring things closer to people," she explains.

In her years with Family Promise, Bottoroff has seen the organization grow and appreciates its multifaceted approach to fighting family homelessness.

"I'm nearing the end of my career, but this is something I can always do," she says of her volunteer work with Family Promise. ✨

COVID-19 RESPONSE ROUNDUP

(continued from page 1)

Community-minded solutions

In addition to meeting Family Promise families' needs, Affiliates have found solutions to local issues resulting from the pandemic. In Pulaski County, AR, Family Promise placed handwashing stations throughout the community for those without ready access to sanitary supplies. At a community diaper drive in Hall County, GA, an area with a significant Hispanic presence, a Family Promise mom who speaks Spanish served as a liaison and translator.

Coronavirus and employment

Even during the COVID-19 crisis, Family Promise has helped many parents find jobs and manage challenges like finding—and affording—child care.

"Parents might be terminated if they don't show up for work," explains Greater Savannah's Executive Director Katrina Bostick, who helped working parents make childcare arrangements. "These parents want to stay viable in the workforce. They don't want to experience another episode of homelessness."

"When this is all over, there will be so much need in the community. We have to be prepared so when that surge comes, we're ready."

Family Promise is also helping families cope with the emotional side of the crisis. Affiliates provide remote case management and regularly check on families. Volunteers have provided meals and necessities for



Family Promise of Morris County moved families into apartments so they could safely "shelter at home" during the pandemic.

BEING THERE

Numerous businesses and organizations came to the aid of families battling homelessness during the COVID-19 crisis:

KIA MOTORS donated \$350,000 for relief to those affected by COVID-19.

KENJI KASAHARA, founder of the photo-sharing app **FAMILY ALBUM**, donated \$5,000 to support the health and well-being of families impacted by COVID-19.

WORLDWIDE ERC'S FOUNDATION FOR WORKFORCE MOBILITY raised awareness and more than \$50,000 for Family Promise.

Magician and motivational speaker **ANDREW BENNETT** hosted online "Happy Hours for Hope" that entertained and inspired audiences and raised awareness and support for Family Promise.

MATCH ME PARTNERS, a realtor referral firm, created a fundraising model that gives Family Promise a bonus for every referral that results in a real estate transaction.

STUDENT ATHLETES from the **NEW ENGLAND SMALL COLLEGE ATHLETIC CONFERENCE** donated more than \$12,000 from an Xbox video game tournament fundraiser to benefit Family Promise.

MOE'S SOUTHWEST GRILL donated more than 1,000 taco dinner kits to Affiliates in the South.

Fashion retailer **FOREVER 21** donated 21,000 face masks to Family Promise Affiliates.

A Los Angeles music producer and **THE RESET PLAYERS** released a cover version of Tom Petty's 1989 hit "I Won't Back Down," dedicating proceeds to Family Promise.

International sneaker and streetwear retailer **SNIPES USA** and hip hop artist **DJ KHALED** ran a promotion that donated proceeds of online sales to Family Promise.

Various **SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS** have promoted Family Promise and the crisis of family homelessness to their followers.

Several **ONLINE SHOPPING SITES** have dedicated profits of sales to Family Promise.

THE PREM RAWAT FOUNDATION, known for supporting humanitarian efforts abroad that foster world peace, learned of Family Promise's impressive work and made a gift of \$25,000.

ALLERGAN awarded two unsolicited grants totaling \$50,000 for operating costs and COVID relief efforts.

Multinational coffee and doughnut company **DUNKIN'** awarded a \$15,000 emergency COVID-19 grant through its **JOY IN CHILDHOOD FOUNDATION**.

doorstep deliveries or curbside pickup, made Easter baskets, supplied crafts and toys for children, created online buddy programs for moral support, helped families manage school-from-home... making life as normal as possible.

No one can predict how long such modifications will be necessary, but Affiliates are using their experiences with COVID-19 to prepare for the future. Family Promise of Hall County Executive Director Lindsey McCamy says, "When this is all over, there will be so much need in the community. We have to be prepared so when that surge comes, we're ready." ✨



There are clean hands throughout the community thanks to Family Promise of Pulaski County, AR.

Why I Give

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT: PAUL DELANEY

Paul Delaney is the first to say that when you own a pickup truck you become popular pretty quickly. Delaney, a self-employed contractor from Summit, NJ, owns two trucks and has been *extremely* popular with Family Promise since the COVID-19 pandemic hit the country.

Since March, Delaney has been putting miles on his trucks helping families in the Family Promise Union County (FPUC) program in New Jersey. When quarantine restrictions impacted Family Promise's rotational shelter model, FPUC worked with local landlords to arrange for families to use four vacant apartments. For the past several months, Delaney has been picking up donated furniture and moving it

"Our family was brought up to help people. It's second nature to me—if you see somebody who needs help, you help."

into the apartments. From beds to tables, even a stove and a refrigerator, Delaney's efforts have enabled families to make their apartments feel like home.

"Our family was brought up to help people. It's



Delaney is dedicated to making a difference.

second nature to me—if you see somebody who needs help, you help," he says.

He has seen an increased need for support since the health crisis and is glad he can be there for those in need. Delaney says his five siblings are all dedicated to giving back to their communities, noting that he learned about Family Promise five years ago from his sister who volunteered with the Morris County, NJ, Affiliate.

Delaney also helps at a local food pantry and serves as vice president of the board of trustees at a recovery home for women. But he's humble about his work and grateful for the opportunity to serve others.

"The more I do, the more I get," he says. ✨

THE SUMMER SURGE OF HOMELESSNESS

(continued from page 5)

No school = no support

Many children struggle academically, and Love has seen them fall behind after the summer hiatus. Lack of access to technology can prevent children from keeping up during the break, a challenge many families also experienced with this spring's remote education.

Also, in summer parents must provide more meals for children who received free or reduced-price meals during the school year, and working parents with young children must find affordable child care. Few daycare centers have remained open during the health crisis, and at centers that are accepting children, the risk of infection is real. Do parents continue working to provide for their families and risk exposing their children to disease, or do they abandon their

jobs to protect their family's health? Like many of the choices low-income families must make, there's no easy answer.

So, what can be done about the summer surge?

Family Promise Affiliates have found creative ways to handle the overflow. For example, Family Promise of Greater Cleveland, OH, rents unused building space at a deep discount to shelter more families. Family

"If we can keep families from becoming homeless, we've solved part of the problem."

Promise of Great Falls, MT, has partnered with a local university to shelter families in dorms that normally sit vacant all summer. Family Promise of Monmouth County recruits retired teachers to tutor students,

and all Affiliates help families hone budgeting skills to avoid common financial pitfalls.

But these are Band-Aids. The problem is a larger and complex issue and the root cause of most homelessness in the U.S.—a lack of affordable housing.

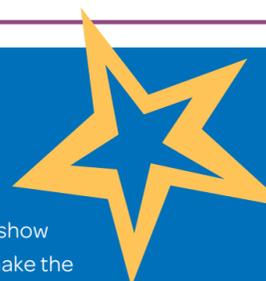
An ounce of prevention

Perhaps the most effective way to address the seasonal increase in homelessness is prevention, Love stresses, explaining that Family Promise's prevention and diversion programs prevent families from losing housing in the first place.

"We can help with financial support—security deposits, rent—but also comprehensive support like life skills, job searches, school issues," Love says. "If we can keep families from becoming homeless, we've solved part of the problem." ✨

Make the Most of Your Charitable Donations:

DONOR-ADVISED FUNDS



Donor-advised funds (DAFs) are the fastest growing form of philanthropy today because they're easy and flexible. Think of a DAF as a personal charitable savings account. DAFs simplify charitable giving, minimize your tax burden, and maximize your donations. Your financial planner or DAF sponsor can show you how to make the most of your gifts to Family Promise.

To learn more, go to www.familypromise.org/donate and select "Other Ways to Give."