



A Message from Our CEO

They say an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. At Family Promise, we incorporate this wisdom into our everyday practice. Our approach to family homelessness isn't just about providing shelter. It's about building a safety net that catches families before they fall and ensuring they have the resources to keep walking.

By intervening when a family first encounters obstacles, we spare them the long-term trauma of homelessness or a shelter experience and give them the opportunity to quickly regain stability. Last year, we served more than 13,000 families with prevention services. That's 13,000 families who didn't have to face the loss of their home or spend a night in a shelter.

Today, prevention programs are a cornerstone of support at more than 75 percent of our locations. In this issue, we highlight two newly established prevention initiatives that exemplify our evolving approach to addressing family homelessness at its roots. Our vision is to integrate robust prevention programs at all Family Promise locations. We're actively working toward this goal, enhancing programming, conducting training sessions, and sharing proven strategies across our network.

Friends like you make this work possible. Together, we're not just preventing homelessness – we're preserving dignity, stability, and the precious bonds of family.

With gratitude,

Cheryl Schuch
CEO



Stopping Homelessness Before It Starts

Families facing homelessness ask themselves endless worrying questions: What happens if we lose our home? Where will we go? How will it affect our kids? Today's affordable housing shortage, uncertain economy, and slowing labor market only add to the confusion and stress and make the prospect of recovery daunting to families in crisis.

But what if they didn't have to ask any of these questions?

The value of preventing the trauma of homelessness or a shelter experience led Family Promise to develop programming specifically designed to support families at the first sign of a housing crisis. Assistance with landlord mediation, lease agreements, rent and utilities, career development, and other supports offered through Family Promise's prevention program enable families to meet an emerging crisis head on and quickly regain stability. A growing number of families (more than 50,000 over the past five years) have found the support and resources they need through this initiative.

Now, to meet increased demand and provide sustainable options for more families at risk of homelessness, Family Promise is helping its locations across the country expand prevention programming using a model that can be scaled for any community.

Affordability vs. Accessibility

In the three short years since launching a prevention program, Family Promise of Wayne County in Lyons, NY, has supported 50 households annually with prevention services. While the cost of living in the Finger Lakes Region is below the national average, families still face economic hardship. According to Executive Director Evonne Pomerantz, the housing market is reasonable, but low employment and lack of transportation are significant challenges that make housing inaccessible to low-income families. Pomerantz and her team intercede before a family loses their home, helping them build skills and access resources that ensure long-term stability.

Continued on page 3



Family Promise of Wayne County serves 50 families a year in its prevention program.



Chief Executive Officer
Cheryl Schuch

Board of Trustees
Betsy Bernard, *Chair*
Michael Moody, *Vice Chair*
Stacey Slater Sacks, *Secretary*
Linda Henry, *Treasurer*

Joshua Barer Robert J. Hugin
Kevin Barrett Christopher King
Sarah Bird Mary Mullett
Alex English Stephen Wallace
John Ferrie Rev. Vernon Williams
Tim Gamory Lori Winkler

Editor **Contributor**
Melissa Biggar Mitch Petit-Frere

Layout
DK Creative

Family Promise is a national 501(c)(3) nonprofit addressing the crisis of family homelessness in the U.S.

Why I Give: Jenna Tennyson, Family Promise Mom

Jenna and her children learned about Family Promise at just the right time. They had lost their home and needed a place to stay.

She recalls, "We didn't have enough money for hotels. So, you get on the city bus and let your kid sleep on your lap. And you stay on the bus as long as possible."

Family Promise became more than just a shelter for the family.

With Family Promise's support, Jenna regained stability and secured permanent housing. She also gained an appreciation for the connections Family Promise helped her make along the way. Through Family Promise volunteers, she met people who helped her set some life goals.

Her experience at Family Promise inspired her to create a support network for people in her community who were facing similar struggles.

"I took everything I learned from Family Promise about nonprofits and giving back to the community," Jenna said. "I used that knowledge to start my own nonprofit."



Jenna started a nonprofit counseling service in 2022, and through it, she has been supporting her local community ever since.

"I couldn't have done any of this without Family Promise," she says. "Where I am today is because of Family Promise and its incredibly generous and supportive community."

Double Your Impact, Double the Hope

Does your employer offer a matching gift program?

A matching gift can double your impact for families facing homelessness at no additional cost to you. Imagine your \$100 gift becoming \$200 or transforming \$500 into \$1,000. That's twice the support for families to find stable housing, twice the support for children to thrive, and twice the hope for a brighter future!

Don't miss the opportunity to maximize your gift.

Check with your employer, use the QR code here, or go to familypromise.org/donate and see "Other Ways to Give"



Our newest location opening:

Family Promise of Scotland County, NC

Stopping Homelessness Before It Starts *(continued from page 1)*

“Prevention work allows us to serve more families,” Pomerantz says. “We’ll work with families and landlords to work out a plan so families don’t have to deal with an eviction.”

A grant through Family Promise’s national partnership with manufactured home builder Clayton earlier this year has augmented their prevention work. And prevention programming has helped raise awareness of family homelessness in the community, which has led to increased support from local businesses.

When Doing Everything Right Isn’t Enough

Recognizing a surge in calls about imminent evictions, Family Promise of Carbon County in Nesquehoning, PA, is another site that recently launched prevention services.

“It was a little slow going at first connecting with landlords and property managers,” recalls Executive Director Cathy Lamm. “But they quickly realized Family Promise is there for families and landlords alike. People are happy to work with us when they see the effort being made to help everyone succeed.”

Considered a resort area, rural Carbon County, nestled in the Pocono Mountains, isn’t immune to inflation. Affordable housing inventory is low. Lamm says property management firms have converted many homes into pricey vacation units. And like communities across the country, salaries simply haven’t kept pace with rising costs, hindering the ability for many to make ends meet.

“Most of the time, families are doing everything right. They’re working, but it’s not enough to support a family,” Lamm notes.

The prevention program stops the domino effect a single emergency can have on low-income families that can culminate in homelessness.

“By intervening before things become a major crisis, we help families get back on track as quickly as possible,” says Lamm. “A lot of the time, the kids never even realize there was an issue. That’s a positive outcome.”

The program’s impact is illustrated by one mom whose family received prevention services at Family Promise. Her words encapsulate the transformative journey so many families experience: “Thanks to Family Promise, we did what we set out to do – give our family a home.”



Thanks to Family Promise, we did what we set out to do – give our family a home.

—Family Promise mom



Cathy Lamm

Executive Director,
Family Promise of Carbon County
Nesquehoning, PA

Cathy Lamm says in today’s economy, families who face homelessness are often doing everything right but still can’t make ends meet.

Upcoming Events

REIGNITE!

October 7–10, 2024

The Family Promise network will come together in Indianapolis this October 7-10 for REIGNITE, our national conference. Family Promise staff from across the country will have the opportunity to connect and enjoy an exciting slate of speakers, workshops, and roundtables.

Family Promise Week

October 21–25, 2024

1 in 30 children in the U.S. experiences homelessness, putting them at increased risk for health challenges, academic failure, and ongoing struggles. Mark your calendar for Family Promise Week, October 21-25, when we’ll be raising awareness about the crisis of family homelessness and how you can make a difference in your community and beyond.

Save the Date:

STARLIGHT GALA
LOOK TO THE STARS!

Friday, October 25, 2024

Join us in New Jersey on Friday, October 25, to support families at Family Promise Union County, our founding location where Family Promise got its start! Visit familypromise.org/fpucgala for info and tickets.



71 Summit Avenue • Summit, NJ 07901

NONPROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
NEW BRUNSWICK, NJ
PERMIT #1

Stay Connected

-  908-273-1100
-  info@familypromise.org
-  www.familypromise.org
-  FamilyPromise
-  family.promise
-  Family Promise, Inc.

News from Family Promise

“
Family Promise is like the extended family we never had. Because of their support and encouragement we went from homeless to hopeful.

—Family Promise mom

