
**Newark 50 Project
Community Report
June 20th-23rd 2011**

NEWARK 50 PROJECT

The Newark 50 Project is part of Community Solutions' 100k Homes Campaign, which is committed to house 100K of the most vulnerable street homeless individuals across the nation by July 2013. This project will target fifty of the most vulnerable street homeless residents (those who are most likely to die on the streets) within the City of Newark and commit to provide permanent supportive housing with wrap around services by December 2012.

This initiative serves as a pilot of the "Housing First" model being replicated throughout the country, which addresses the initial need of housing and subsequently combines services such as access to government benefits, intensive case management, life skills, financial literacy, etc in an effort to improve the quality of life.

During the week of June 20, 2011 between the hours of 4am and 6am, six teams made up of over 50 community volunteers canvassed the streets of Newark to locate the city's most vulnerable homeless residents. The volunteer teams used Community Solutions' **Vulnerability Index** to survey and create a by-name list of individuals experiencing street homelessness who are most at risk of premature death.

In addition to systematically gathering the names, pictures, and dates of birth of individuals sleeping on the streets, the teams also captured data on their health status, institutional history (jail, prison, hospital, and military), length of homelessness, patterns of shelter use, and previous housing situation. These data were collected by use of a 38 item questionnaire. The Vulnerability Index was used to identify those who have been homeless the longest and are the most vulnerable. Data collected is then entered into a database that ranks according to vulnerability. This list will be used to target new and available housing and service resources to the most vulnerable in an effort to reduce chronic homelessness in Newark.

The Vulnerability Index is based on research by Dr. Jim O'Connell, founding physician of the Boston Healthcare for the Homeless Program, which shows certain medical conditions place a homeless individual at a higher risk than others for dying if they remain on the streets.

Across the State of New Jersey, Essex County continues to have the largest number of homeless residents. Ninety percent of the homeless residents within the County are found in the City of Newark, which is the largest city in the State. On any given night there are approximately 739 homeless residents in emergency shelters, emergency rooms, abandoned buildings, parks, doorways and other places not fit for human habitation.

In July 2010, Mayor Booker and County Executive Joseph DiVincenzo signed the Essex-Newark Ten Year Plan to End Homelessness, which is a blueprint on how the City and County will move towards eradicating homelessness within the next ten years. The Newark 50 Project is movement in the Ten Year Plan and the initial course of action to move individuals from the street to permanent housing.

Results

- 116 individuals experiencing street homelessness were identified and surveyed in Newark.
- 50 individuals (43%) were found to have health conditions associated with a high mortality risk.
- 55 community volunteers helped administer the surveys.
- 60 pictures were taken as part of the survey.

At-Risk Indicators

Indicator	Percentage
At-Risk Tri-Morbid	18%
At-Risk ER or Hospitalized Over 3X	18%
At-Risk ER over 3X	18%
At-Risk Age Over 60	14%
At-Risk HIV/AIDS	9%
At-Risk Cirrhosis	7%
At-Risk Kidney Disease	5%
At-Risk Cold/Wet Weather Injury	9%

Older Adults

- 6 individuals are over 65 years old.
- The oldest respondent was 79 years old.
- 57 individuals reported being homeless longer than 2 years.
- The longest reported length of homelessness was 31 years.

Years Homeless

- The average years homeless for the vulnerable population is 6 years.
- The average years homeless for the Non-Vulnerable population is 3 years.

Service Needs (Total Surveyed)

- 35 people reported a dual diagnosis of mental illness and substance abuse.
- 92 people reported a history of substance abuse.
- 41 people reported only signs or symptoms of mental illness.
- 74 of respondents report at least one behavioral health issue.

Veterans

- 13 of those surveyed were Veterans.
- 9 of the veterans were honorably discharged.
- 6 of the Veterans met criteria for "Vulnerable."

Youth & Foster Care (Total surveyed)

- 11 respondents report having a history of foster care.
- 4 respondents were under 25 years old.
- The youngest respondent was 20 years old.
- 2 respondents under the age of 25 have increased mortality risks specific to that age group.
(Youth risk factors are HIV/AIDS, drink alcohol everyday for past 30 days, and injection drug use)

Inpatient Hospitalizations

- A total of 87 inpatient hospitalizations were reported in the past year at an average cost of \$6641 (a total of \$577,767). This calculation is based on an average 3 days per hospitalization.

Emergency Room Visits (Total surveyed)

- A total of 149 ER visits were reported by all respondents in the last 3 months for an annual cost of \$865,392 at an average cost of \$1452 per ER visit.
- Inpatient and ER costs combined total over \$1,443,159 annually for 116 people.

Health System Impacts (Total surveyed)

- 70 of those surveyed report having no insurance.
- The majority of respondents go to:
 - UMDNJ University Hospital (28)
 - St. Michaels Hospital (11)
 - Newark Healthcare Clinic (7)
 - Beth Israel Hospital (3)

Income Source

- 11 individuals report working “on the books.”
- 22 individuals report having Social Security Benefits of some sort.
- 5 individuals report having Public Assistance.
- 21 individuals report working “off the books.”
- 19 individuals report income from panhandling.
- 15 individuals report income from recycling.

Violence

- 43 individuals report being a victim of a violent attack since becoming homeless.

Brain Injury

- 15 of those surveyed report suffering from a brain injury.

Chronic Homelessness

- 90 of the individuals surveyed were determined to be chronically homeless.

SPONSOR ORGANIZATIONS

- City of Newark
- United Way of Essex and West Hudson
- Community Solutions 100K Homes Campaign
- Newark Now
- Corporation for Supportive Housing
- One Simple Wish
- Papa John's

PARTNERS

- Bridges Outreach
- City of Newark Dept. of Child and Family Well-Being
- Covenant House
- G.I. G.O. Fund
- Goodwill Rescue Mission
- Healthcare Foundation of NJ
- Mental Health Association of Essex County
- Newark Emergency Services for Families
- Newark Public Schools Office of Attendance Homeless Unit
- The Nicholson Foundation
- NJ Transit Police
- Port Authority NY/NJ Police
- Project Live – PATH Program
- University of Medicine and Dentistry of NJ – Behavioral Healthcare

Newark

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Project

CONTACT INFORMATION

NEWARK 50 PROJECT/CITY OF NEWARK

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COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS

Community Solutions is a newly established, national not-for-profit organization whose mission is to strengthen communities to end homelessness. Based in New York city, Community Solutions partners with community leaders, public agencies, non-profits, property developers and health and human services organizations to create practical, scalable, cost effective solutions to homelessness. Their approach has been featured on "60 Minutes," in the New York Times, the Wall Street Journal and other media, and recognized with the Peter F. Drucker Award for Nonprofit Innovation, the World Habitat Award, and the Rudy Bruner Award for Urban Excellence, among other honors.

For more information visit www.cmtysolutions.org or www.100khomes.org

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CORPORATION FOR SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

For 20 years, CSH has been the leader in the national supportive housing movement. It is a catalyst for housing connected with services to prevent and end homelessness. CSH develops innovative program models, provides research-backed tools and training, offers development expertise, makes loans and grants, and collaborates on public policy and systems reform to make it easier to create and operate high-quality supportive housing. CSH's goal is to help communities create 150,000 units of supportive housing nationwide by 2012. CSH is also a national partner for the 100K Homes Campaign. For more information visit www.csh.org

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