



HOUSING FOR ALL!!!

NEWS FROM THE NEW MEXICO COALITION
TO END HOMELESSNESS

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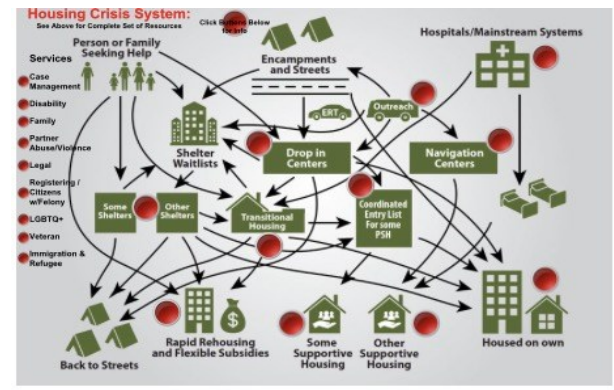
A Better Resource Guide for People Experiencing Homelessness

by Kevin Arthun, Coordinated Assessment Connection Specialist

Resource guides should quickly and accurately navigate end users, but they often do not. They can be hard to find, misdirect with out-of-date information, and lack the navigational details and strategies that are so important to accessing resources. Furthermore, resources may have a number of systemic barriers, which prevent success, such as procedures that are difficult to access, programs that have long wait lists, and so forth. In addition, institutional discrimination may prevent access, so, while another resource guide seems redundant, a new type of resource system, with constant feedback from navigators and end users and the addition of modern technological tools, can transform the process and allow for the user to navigate to a service in ways that save time and maximize effort.

I work with some of the most vulnerable and chronically homeless individuals in Albuquerque. Recently I created the ABQ Coordinated Resource Guide with the intention of its being a fluid resource, one that I, and the others who use it, can continuously shape as a resource. The ABQ Coordinated resource guide solves the issue of outdated or inaccurate material by relying on the regular help of its users. There is a green link at the top of every resource page that users can employ to add new information or update existing listings.

Navigation is enhanced by providing detailed and coherently organized listings. The ABQ Coordinated Resource Guide utilizes relevant ranking criteria, such as wait lists, availability, quality, and so forth. These ranking criteria are based on the feedback of case managers and social workers that are using the resource. This allows the users to see the available resources and best quality resources first. Listings follow clearly defined categories. For example, the housing section follows industry-defined nomenclature to categorize about 225 housing listings, and this makes clear which housing type is being accessed.



The resource guide utilizes the most strategic mapping tools. The guide uses Google Maps for individual listings, but it also incorporates city-wide Google maps. This is important because, as one example, the user can see all of the subsidized housing projects and their respective information on one map. Important documents, such as housing applications or directions for how to get any user's identification in the proper sequence, are built into the system. The ABQ Coordinated Resource Guide is transparent about how old resources are by using a color scale associated with the resource age.

This resource guide contains about 1200 resources that were developed through the assistance of community members, case workers, and other professionals. These resource numbers continue to grow and help to solve individual and community issues. Volunteers for updating resources are always welcome. Please email me at abqcrq@gmail.com for more details, and please help share this guide, which is found on the web at <http://abqcrq.org/>.

From the Executive Director

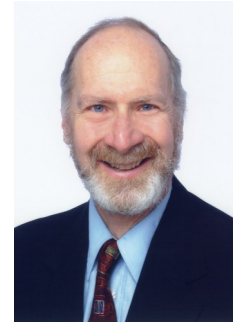
Making a Push to End Youth Homelessness

Youth who find themselves homeless face a myriad of risks, including getting captured by human traffickers or getting caught up in drugs and alcohol. This is in addition to the daily struggle to find food and a place to sleep. It is not surprising that many youth in this situation end up facing years of homelessness, as opportunities to build a satisfying life pass them by.

Fortunately, homeless youth in northern New Mexico are about to get many more opportunities for assistance. Northern New Mexico was one of 11 communities in the U.S. to receive funding under the Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program (YHDP). We are set to receive \$3.37 million over two years to build a system of care that will help prevent youth homelessness in many cases and end it within 30 days when it does happen. The grant covers the 14 northernmost counties in New Mexico.

Two of our member agencies, Youth Shelters in Santa Fe and DreamTree in Taos, broached the idea of applying for YHDP funds over a year ago, and, so, in the spring of 2018, NMCEH applied. We were all delighted to learn that our application was accepted for funding in July. NMCEH is coordinating the year long planning process to decide how best to use the funding. Youth Shelters will be the lead agency for the project. DreamTree will play a significant part in the project, as will Childhaven in Farmington.

Our task in the months ahead is to design a system of care that will locate homeless youth quickly, assess their needs, and get them quickly into housing and any services they need. If you would like to be a part of this process, please contact me at Hank-H@nmceh.org.



*Hank Hughes,
Executive Director*



Mini-Grants Awarded to Address Homeless Youth and Children

NMCEH has two volunteer groups helping to raise funds to help end homelessness. The Albuquerque NMCEH Fundraising Committee recently awarded two mini-grants in the amount of \$454.00 each to SAFE House and to CLNKids to address the needs of homeless children and youth. The committee voted to award a mini-grant to SAFE House

for the purchase of playground equipment and to CLNKids for the purchase of art supplies and other items for youth. Both are members of the New Mexico Coalition to End Homelessness, and both agencies are located in Albuquerque.

The Santa Fe based NMCEH Advisory Board also directed their grants to agencies assisting homeless children and youth awarding grants ranging from \$1,000 to \$1,764 to Youthworks in Santa Fe, Roswell Homeless Coalition, Supporting People in Need in Silver City, DreamTree Project in Taos, High Mountain Youth Project of Lincoln County, Youth Shelters in Santa Fe, People Assisting the Homeless in Farmington, Samaritan House in Las Vegas, El Refugio in Silver City, St. Elizabeth Shelter in Santa Fe.

Twenty-five percent of the funds raised by these groups help fund NMCEH's governmental advocacy.

Our Sincere Gratitude Goes Out to These Individuals & Organizations

Thank You to Our Individual and Business Supporters (since previous newsletter)

Michael Armstrong
Admiral Jon Barr
John & Betty Baxter
Jean Bergeron
Thomas Claffey
Susan Dixon, in memory of Susan Kelly
Patricia Feather, in memory of Susan Kelly
James Hammerberg
Sheila Hewitt
Louis & Georgia Hoffmann
Laura Holt
Terry Ihnat and Nick Harrison, in memory of Susan Kelly
Alexandra Kirk
Patricia Lollar
Frank Mulholland
Claire Lynne Siwula
Paul White

And, **Special Thanks to:**
our Albuquerque Fundraising Committee for their going support!

Susan Kelly

We are sorry to report that our good friend and Advisory Board member, Susan Kelly, passed away recently. Several of her friends and family have made donations to NMCEH in her memory for which we are very grateful. Susan's interest in homelessness went back 30 years to the founding of St. Elizabeth Shelter in Santa Fe. In recent years, she helped NMCEH with two birdhouse auctions. All of us at NMCEH will miss her cheerful presence and her down to earth efforts on behalf of homeless people.

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Member Organizations and Individuals: For a list of our 80 members, please go to www.nmceh.org



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The New Mexico Coalition to End Homelessness

- *Creating more housing for homeless people*
- *Quickly connecting homeless people to housing*
- *Holding governments accountable*

A Car is No Place to Raise Two Girls

by Rebecca POE, AmeriCorps VISTA Leader

As we sat together for lunch, Ashelyn beamed as she talked about her two girls and how they enjoyed watching movies together, doing their nails, and just being together in their apartment. While this is their norm now, it wasn't always that way, and life was not always so carefree. In 2016, Ashelyn lost her apartment, and, although she was working, found it impossible to afford housing for herself and children.



Ashelyn managed the best she could, but she found herself living in her car with her daughters. One morning, Ashelyn's manager at work noticed her car in the parking lot, well ahead of when she would have needed to arrive. The manager already suspected that something else was going on with Ashelyn, but that was the day that Ashelyn would admit how she was living with her girls. On Ashelyn's behalf, her manager reached out to the New Mexico Coalition to End Homelessness' Coordinated Entry Staff to see if there could be some assistance for Ashelyn and her family.

Although Ashelyn noted that it was hard to get up the courage to meet with Bee Chavez at the Coalition. She said she found Bee to be very supportive, very nonjudgmental, and instantly someone who put her at ease. With Bee's assistance, Ashelyn was able to obtain hotel vouchers so that she and her children would not have to stay in their car. Even when she was in the car, Ashelyn noted that Bee would reach out to make sure that the family was safe. Bee worked diligently to find help for Ashelyn and her family, and she was able to connect Ashelyn with CLNKids.

CLNKids is 501(c)(3) non-profit organization in Albuquerque, whose mission is to help lift families out of homelessness through programs for children and their parents. The program was a perfect fit for Ashelyn and her family. She was able to leave her children in a high-quality early childhood education program while she worked. CLNKids helped with clothing and other items for her children and even provided Ashelyn's girls with Christmas presents. Parents in the CLNKids program receive job training, life-skills training, and other resources to help them get back on their feet. Ashelyn wanted to be self-sufficient and be able to provide for her family, and it was through the CLNKids' rental assistance program that she was able to get an apartment and accomplish her goals. In the program, the amount of rental assistance gradually decreases until the participant is able to fully pay for rent, which is the case for Ashelyn now.

The young single mother stated that she feels very blessed and happy. Ashelyn enjoys her career and is expecting to advance in her field. She also plans to go to college. Her daughters are thriving and doing well in school, and they all are very happy and healthy. Ashelyn stated that she feels secure in her ability to provide for herself and her family, and she looks forward to an even brighter future.