

Project Homeless Connect

Minneapolis/Hennepin Co.

December 4th, 2006

Minneapolis and Hennepin County held their third Project Homeless Connect event on December 4th, 2006 at the Minneapolis Convention Center in downtown Minneapolis. This event, based on a nationally implemented model, is designed as a one-stop shop of services for people experiencing homelessness. This all-day event was organized by the Minneapolis/Hennepin County Office to End Homelessness in partnership with the Family Housing Fund and a dedicated steering committee made up of community members, service providers, and persons who have experienced homelessness.

This Project Homeless Connect event brought together nearly 100 service providers and over 500 volunteers to create connections in minutes or hours – connections that would normally take days or months. Most of the guests were single (74%), African-American (53%) men (65%; average age: 43), many with significant disabilities (39%), many met the state's definition of long-term homeless (30%), and many had no income (30%). The majority was from Minneapolis (78%), and people came into the event seeking, mainly: housing assistance, employment, and dental assistance. Six people got into housing on the day of the event, and many more filled out housing applications. The following additional demographic statistics were taken from Minnesota's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), which was used as the primary reporting tool for the event. It is likely that more people were served than reported below, but the demographic information is based only on completed intake forms. Additional information also follows: services provided, as tracked by participating service-provider agencies; consumer feedback, as reported by guests in exit surveys; and a list of participating agencies.

Demographics:

We were able to collect data about 1218 people, with 1050 heads of household filling out intake forms.

Age:

Primary intakes were completed by 1050 people, of those

- 13 were under the age of 15-17 (1%)
- 69 were 18-21 (7%)
- 48 were 22-24 (5%)
- 149 were 25-34 (14%)
- 297 were 35-44 (28%)
- 323 were 45-54 (31%)
- 92 were 55-64 (9%)
- 11 were 65 years or older (1%)
- 48 were of unspecified ages (5%)

Gender:

- 691 men (65%)
- 352 women (33%)

- 22 persons of unspecified gender (2%)

Race:

- 563 African Americans (53%)
- 276 Caucasians (26%)
- 116 American Indians (11%)
- 31 persons identified as multi-racial (3%)
- 11 Asians (1%)
- 6 Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islanders (.5%)
- 62 persons of unidentified racial background (5.5%)

Family Makeup:

- 74% of guests were single adults
- 17% were families, both parents and children present at the event
- 1% were unaccompanied youth ages 15-17

Other Characteristics:

- 39% had a disability of long duration
- 12% were veterans
- 14% had been to a Project Homeless Connect event before
- 78% came from Minneapolis
- 10% came from St. Paul or another suburb
- 12% did not say what city they came from
- 24% did not have a State ID

Status of Homelessness:

- 18% were not currently homeless
- 4% were living with friends or family
- 8% were homeless, but duration unknown
- 28% were 1st time homeless, and less than one year without a home
- 11% had been homeless multiple times,
- 30% were homeless at least one year or four times in the past three years

Income of Participants:

- 30% reported receiving no income
- 16% reported receiving income from regular employment
- 34% reported receiving General Assistance (\$203/mo)
- 9% reported receiving Social Security Disability Insurance

Other Assistance:

- 53% reported receiving Medical Assistance
- 37% reported receiving food stamps
- 10% reported receiving Medicare
- 7% reported receiving Public Housing

Services Received:

People attending Project Homeless Connect reported their service needs as follows:

- Housing (60%)
- Employment (44%)
- Dental care (31%)
- Eye care (24%)

- Haircut (22%)
- All other services received responses under 16%

Housing:

- Over 900 housing referrals were given
- 117 people received information on emergency shelters
- 157 housing applications were submitted
- 6 people were placed into housing on the day of the event

Medical:

- 221 people received primary and specialized care procedures
- 56 people were seen by an eye care professional and 52 received free eyeglasses
- 42 people were seen by a dentist who performed root canals, extractions, and restorations
- 55 people received necessary medications
- 26 people received massages
- 7 people received flu shots

Legal:

- Over 90 people received legal services including expungements and warrant checks

Education:

- 42 people received Community College admissions financial aid information
- 21 people received free GED vouchers

Advocacy

- 12 applications for SSDI were completed, 20 replacement Social Security cards were requested, and over 70 people inquired about the status of a claim
- 36 Veteran specific service contacts were made
- 124 people received vouchers for free state IDs
- Over 100 youth specific service contacts were made

Community Services:

- 443 people received shoes
- 71 clothing vouchers were distributed
- 62 voicemail boxes were set up
- 9 people signed up for new e-mail accounts
- 78 people signed up for library cards
- 145 families received gifts from Toys for Tots
- 48 children received free child care
- Over 1200 ten dollar bus cards were distributed
- Well over 300 haircuts were given
- Over 1500 meals were provided
- Over 1000 cups of Starbucks coffee was served

Consumer feedback:

We received a total of 878 consumer feedback surveys at the end of the day. 877 of 878 people stated that it was worth their time to come to the event. Similarly, 97% stated that they learned about new services on the day of the event. When asked the “most

important thing you received today”, the responses were, in order; bus cards, medical care, food, housing assistance, employment assistance, and haircuts.

Participating Service Providers:

Housing:

Dept of Housing & Urban Development, Minneapolis Public Housing Authority, HousingLink, Community Action Partnership for Suburban Hennepin County, Spectrum Homeless Project, Ascension Place, Catholic Charities, St. Stephens Human Services, Cabrini Partnership, Tasks Unlimited, Simpson Housing Services, Salvation Army Hope Harbor, Salvation Army Harbor Light Center, Our Saviours Housing, Community Involvement Program

Health care:

Hennepin County Health Care for the Homeless, Lens Crafters, ADT Dental

Mental/ Chemical Health:

Hennepin County Mental Health Center, Hennepin County COPE, Hennepin County Behavioral Health Rule 25 Assessors, Hart Community Services, ACCESS WORKS!, Alcoholics Anonymous, Vail Place, Rape and Sexual Abuse Center, Turning Point, Brain Injury Association of MN, Mental Health Association of MN

Employment:

People Serving People, St Stephens Human Services, Catholic Charities Branch III, Goodwill Easter Seals, At Home Group, Minneapolis Employment and Training, Twin Cities Community Voice Mail, Mall of America Employment Services

Education:

Minneapolis Public Schools, Minneapolis Public Schools Contract Alternatives, Minneapolis Community & Technical College, Minneapolis Public Library

Benefits:

Social Security Administration, Chamberlin-Edmunds, Salvation Army Social Security Outreach Program, Hennepin County Eligibility Supports, Hennepin County Child Support, Alliance for the Streets, Driver and Vehicle Services, Metro Area Agency on Aging

Child Development:

Minneapolis Public Schools, Parents in Community Action, Hennepin County Child and Teen Checkups

Veteran’s services:

Veterans Administration Medical Center, Department of Veterans Affairs, Minnesota Assistance Council for Veterans, Hennepin County Veterans Service

Youth:

Minneapolis Employment and Training, Hope Street Shelter, YouthLink, Freeport west/Project Solo, StreetWorks, Kulture Klub, Seen on da Streets, Face To Face – SafeZone, HHH Job Corp, Genesis II for Families, District 202, The Bridge for Runaway Youth, Avenues for Youth

Legal Services:

Legal Aid Society of Minneapolis, Central Minnesota Legal Services, Fagre and Benson, Hennepin County Public Defender’s Office, Council on Crime and Justice

Community Services:

Basilica of St Mary, Hennepin Avenue Methodist Church Dignity Center, Catholic, Charities Counseling Division, Homeless against Homelessness, Center for Asian and Pacific Islanders, AMICUS “Reconnect”

Other Services:

Project Homeless Connect also had two massage therapists, Distributed toys through Toys For Tots, and provided haircuts through community volunteers.