INNOVATING SERVICES FOR ADULTS AND YOUTH

Housing Opportunity and Services Together (HOST), launched by the Urban Institute with the support of the Open Society Foundations, is an innovative approach to coordinating services and programs for adults and youth in public and mixed-income housing. HOST goes into low-income neighborhoods to confront parents’ key barriers to self-sufficiency—poor physical and mental health, addictions, low literacy and educational attainment, and historically weak connections to the labor force—while integrating services for youth, to improve their lives and communities. The results of the multisite research project may influence how the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, local housing authorities, and private housing developers create place-based, supportive environments for their residents.

CUTTING-EDGE EVIDENCE TO INFORM POLICY AND PRACTICE

Few demonstrations model a range of service delivery options for public housing residents, and even fewer focus on those deemed hardest to house. Housing authorities want to understand how to engage residents, empowering them to improve their lives. With mixed-income communities becoming more common, housing authorities also need information on how setting affects resident outcomes. Federal policymakers and practitioners are heavily investing in place-based models (such as Choice and Promise Neighborhoods) and looking for new strategies and programs that demonstrate positive results.

PROJECT DESIGN

HOST is designed as a three-year research demonstration with four goals

1. Implement and expand various models of supportive services through intensive case management (low caseloads and frequent contact), tailoring the services and intensity of engagement to the needs of each individual.

2. Model and test innovative services for both youth and adults around mental and physical health, employment, parenting, and education within a place-based and multigenerational framework.

3. Test these models in carefully selected sites in diverse settings—from high-poverty public housing to newly developed mixed-income neighborhoods.

4. Disseminate findings from process and outcome evaluations to replicate and inform new multigenerational models of supportive services for vulnerable residents.

In conjunction with BT REACH, DCHA, the Urban Institute, and the University of California San Diego, with funding from the Kellogg Foundation and the National Institutes of Health, are implementing the Promoting Adolescent Sexual Health and Safety (PASS) project. PASS is heavily community-based with active involvement and input from Benning Terrace residents to develop an evidence-based service model addressing the chronic sexual threats and pressures experienced by neighborhood youth. The ultimate goal of the PASS project is to improve the lives of vulnerable adolescents.

DC Housing Authority and HOST—

DCHA's Office of Resident Services currently works to enrich the lives of adults and youth through building capacity and coordinating special projects with their resident councils—elected boards of community members that provide leadership to individual properties. HOST, locally called BT REACH for Benning Terrace Residents Empowered to Achieve, provides on-site, comprehensive case-management services to residents with children age 9 to 18 through a partnership between DCHA and East River Family Strengthening Collaborative.
BT REACH targets 160 households with children between the ages of 9 and 18 to provide intensive case management and clinical mental health services to both youth and adults. Adult services aim to address such needs as rent delinquency, unemployment, substance abuse, mental or physical health challenges, and low literacy levels, while youth services aim to improve such educational and behavioral outcomes as truancy and graduation rates. PASS, using a community-based participatory research model, will target all 300 youth with programming designed to decrease teen pregnancy, risky sexual behavior, and sexual assault or coercion. Committees made of adult and youth residents will decide, through a needs assessment and rigorous screening process, which service providers should implement a sexual health and safety curriculum on site for targeted youth.

**NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS**

160

**TARGET POPULATION**

Benning Terrace households with youth between the ages of 9 and 18

**SITE-SPECIFIC YOUTH PROGRAM FOCUS**

Promoting Adolescent Sexual Health and Safety (PASS) for youth age 9–18

**SERVICE PROVIDER**

EAST RIVER FAMILY STRENGTHENING COLLABORATIVE*

*East River Family Strengthening Collaborative: 20 years of experience linking families with community-based services that provide crisis intervention, financial development, and parenting/adolescent services to DC's most vulnerable populations.

**HOST OPERATES WITH FOUR PARTNER SERVICES AND SITES**

Chicago Housing Authority at Altgeld Gardens, Chicago’s last remaining large public housing development.

Home Forward (formerly Housing Authority of Portland) at New Columbia and Humboldt Gardens mixed-income developments.

DC Housing Authority at the Benning Terrace housing development.

New York City Housing Authority at the Brownsville community.

**OUR FUNDERS**

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