



Creating Stability and Opportunity for Families

In 1984, two years after our shelter opened its doors to individuals, Simpson Housing Services began serving families experiencing homelessness, complex barriers to stable housing, and generational poverty.

Today, Simpson's Family Housing Program is our largest program. We serve 300 families with 650 children annually, and our program continues to grow in response to the needs of families experiencing homelessness. Geared toward improving housing outcomes and increasing independence, our critical interventions end generational homelessness, one family at a time.

Using a relationship-based approach, our family advocates meet families where they are at, providing housing, support, effective early childhood intervention, and culturally responsive strategies to help each family achieve stability, and new possibilities.

Through our work with families, staff have become keenly aware of barriers faced by parents and children who have experienced homelessness. Increased rates of developmental delays, learning disabilities and emotional and behavioral challenges, including anxiety and depression are common for children and their parents who have experienced homelessness.

Simpson's Family & Youth Programs Director Janelle Leppa underscores the critical impact of Simpson's early childhood programming:

"Early on we recognized how important it is to address needs early in a child's development. Early detection of concerns and early intervention could help a child meet their developmental milestones and prevent issues later in life. Our focus on early childhood development made a huge difference to families, on a personal level. I recall a conversation with a young mom who said, 'Until we started talking about my children, my advocate knew some of me. When she asked me about my children, she knew all of me.'"

In 2012, Simpson hired its first Early Childhood Specialist position focused on serving young families with children up to age five. Ever since, Simpson has used a unique team



Fiscal Year
2018/2019

83%

of families maintained safe,
stable housing for one year

almost half

of families are
long-term homeless

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OUR MISSION

To house, support, and advocate for people experiencing homelessness.

(continued from the cover)

approach, pairing a family advocate and an early childhood specialist with a family, to balance each family's needs related to housing and child development.

Simpson's Young Parent Program

Simpson's Young Parent Program serves young and often first-time parents, 18 to 24 years of age, comprising 18% of families served in Simpson's Family Housing Program. Within our Young Parent Program, a team of family advocates and early childhood specialists focus on helping parents navigate milestones of adulthood and parenthood for time periods ranging from several months up to two years.

Young parents and their children are assisted in one of two settings: scattered site private rental housing in Hennepin County or at Cedar View apartments, a building owned and managed by Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative in Minneapolis.

"From the beginning, we are coming around families fully – supporting them as individuals and working with their children. We're with them during pregnancy, motherhood, going back to work, getting a degree, reaching long-term goals, and talking about their dreams," says Family Advocate Alyssa Bergstedt.

Participants enjoy the sense of community within the Young Parent Program. Residents at Cedar View drop in to talk with the advocates or gather in the community space. Staff offer community breakfasts, literacy activities, cooking classes, and frequent opportunities for families to gather. The atmosphere is relaxed and supportive. With the staff team's presence and voices of many parents and children, it feels like home.

Make a Greater Impact in Supporting Simpson

Give your employer a chance to participate in your generous commitment to Simpson Housing Services.

Two ways to participate:

Workplace Giving: Workplace giving is an easy way to make a donation to Simpson Housing Services. Check with your employer to learn if you can make a donation to Simpson automatically from your paycheck.

Matching Gifts: Your gift to Simpson Housing Services could be matched dollar for dollar by your employer! Many employers offer matching gift programs and will match your donation or volunteer hours. To find out if your company has a matching gift program, visit our "Ways to Help" page at www.simpsonhousing.org or check with your human resources department.

Below is a partial list of current companies that support Simpson Housing Services.

Abbott Fund | Allina Health Community Engagement | Ameriprise Financial | Best Buy
Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota | Boston Scientific | Cargill | CoBank
General Mills | Greater Twin Cities United Way | H.B. Fuller | Intel Foundation
Medtronic | Microsoft | Polaris Industries | Sammons Retirement Solutions
Target | TCF Foundation | Thrivent Financial | Two Harbors Investment Corp.
United Health Group | US Bank | Voya Financial | Wells Fargo

A Community Partnership Supports Health Care Needs of Families

In 2015, Simpson and the University of Minnesota's Pediatric Residency Program started a unique partnership that has resulted in improved access to quality health care for families in Simpson's Young Parent Program.

Dr. Tom Scott, a pediatrician and professor at the University of Minnesota (U of M), wanted to provide an opportunity for pediatricians to go out into the community and better understand the needs of patients who face significant challenges. His colleague, Dr. Andy Barnes, MD, MPH, an Assistant Professor of Pediatrics at the U of M Medical School and Developmental-Behavioral Pediatrics Fellowship Program Director, had been working on a sleep study with Simpson families.

Together, Dr. Scott and Dr. Barnes teamed up with Simpson's Early Childhood Program Manager Nedra Robinson to design and launch the pediatric resident home visiting program at Simpson.

"This was a great opportunity for residents to be in families' homes, getting to know someone who doesn't have good access to health care or time to seek medical care, who doesn't trust doctors, or may have been mistreated by the health care system. These home visits give a voice to families," says Dr. Barnes.

Building Relationships

Pediatric residents participate in a required one-day shadowing experience with Simpson staff during their residency program. Accompanied by a Simpson Early Childhood Specialist, a physician participates in multiple home visits with families. During the home visits, parents have a safe space, for an hour or longer, to ask questions about their children's health and development.

Hawa, mother of two-year-old Hassan, shares her experience with the program:

43 families
with
68 children
were served through
the Early Childhood
Home Visiting Program

"Instead of talking in an office, doctors come here. I can breathe. I can tell them anything, ask anything, and not feel judged. It's really good. The doctors talk to me as a person, one-on-one as a patient – not just a number.

Participants appreciate the opportunity to voice their concerns and receive responsive care.

"I want straight up, information. Tell me, be honest. The doctors are up front with me. They are straight forward. They make everything simple and understandable. They take time to explain," says Hawa.

Dr. Alec Duffy, a pediatric and internal medicine resident at the U of M who recently participated in the home visits, shares how the model enhances the physician-patient relationship and creates an opportunity for more comprehensive, patient-driven care:

"The meetings are much less formal. It's easier to have a conversation. We have time to talk and learn about her life, to talk about her concerns and address them in a meaningful way, instead of being rushed. I can help validate concerns and explain thoroughly."

The U of M pediatric residents also offer quarterly workshops to parents in the Young Parent Program, providing information and small group discussions about relevant health topics, such as breastfeeding, good nutrition, common illnesses, and when to seek medical attention for children. Striving to increase access to community resources, the U of M residents also plan community outings, like a summer visit to a neighborhood farmer's market.

Creating Positive Outcomes

The Simpson U of M Residency Program continues to be a mutually beneficial partnership.

"Our parents are getting more attention than they would have received in the doctor's office. They gain confidence and ask questions that they never would have been able to ask," says Nedra. "We give doctors experiences that they haven't had. They realize that life isn't the same for everyone."

Ultimately, families in Simpson's Young Parent Program have experienced better access to quality healthcare. Through this collaboration, parents, Simpson staff, and U of M physicians have helped create healthy and stable outcomes for children and families.

According to Nedra, that is what matters: "Any time we can get one person face-to-face with a health professional, if we have one family who learns something new, that's a success."



Dr. Duffy meets with Nikkita and Rayshon.



82%
of children received
an early intervention



Hawa, participant in Simpson's Young Parent Program



Simpson Advocates, Tamekia and Alyssa



Ways You Can Support Simpson Housing Services

Donate



Make a donation online at simpsonhousing.org: Your financial gift helps Simpson achieve our mission – serving people experiencing homelessness. Find out if your employer will match your gift!



Organize a donation drive: We welcome donations of high-quality items for Simpson's shelter and supportive housing programs. In-kind donations may include household items, food, school supplies, gift cards, and more.

Volunteer

Find a volunteer opportunity that's just right for you:



Meal Server: Gather a volunteer group to prepare and serve a healthy meal for shelter guests.



Shelter Support Volunteer: Share hospitality with shelter guests, distribute supplies, and assist with shelter tasks.



Tutor/Mentor: Provide one-on-one support to a child or youth to promote academic success, stability, and well-being.



Sandwich Provider: Prepare sandwiches for afternoon takeaway meals at the shelter.



Art 4 Shelter Volunteer: Donate art or volunteer at Simpson's largest annual fundraising event.



Advocacy Volunteer: Engage your legislators and participate in activities that promote safe, affordable, and accessible housing for all.



Volunteers are at the heart of Simpson's work. We provide a variety of individual and group volunteer opportunities that directly support the needs of our participants and match the diverse interests and talents of our volunteers.

For more information, go to our website:
simpsonhousing.org.





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We're in this together. Stay healthy.



COVID-19 does not discriminate and together we can do our part to slow down the spread of the virus.

During these challenging times, our focus is to sustain our mission, operate our programs, and ensure the safety of our staff, shelter guests, and participants.

We thank the Simpson community for their support during this time of shared concern.

Make a donation, and your gift will be matched.

Thank you to our partner, the Richard M. Schulze Family Foundation, for generously contributing a \$25,000 match for COVID-19 relief.

To make a financial gift to Simpson, please visit us at simpsonhousing.org or use the enclosed envelope to make a donation.