

## **QUALITY OF LIFE**

Purpose: *To improve the quality of life of individuals and families by addressing those services and immediate interventions that target the basic needs of individuals and households including food, shelter and safety.*

### **SERVICE PRIORITIES**

The current trends in the overall reductions to many of the programs that provide basic services to individuals and households are undermining the remains of a safety net for those who are most vulnerable and at greatest risk of homelessness, violence and abuse. *Funding for services which provide for food, shelter and safety will help to maintain and/or improve the physical and mental well-being of individuals.* Those who are at greatest risk of not being able to meet their basic needs are most likely to have multiple issues that must be addressed simultaneously.

The services priorities for food, shelter and safety are:

- 1) Food:
  - Congregate Meals for Children (Summer Months)
  - Legal Assistance for Food Stamps
- 2) Shelter:
  - Legal Assistance to Prevent Homelessness
  - Emergency Shelter
  - Crisis Shelter
  - Transitional Shelter
- 3) Safety (For victims of sexual abuse and domestic violence):
  - Legal Assistance for victims of sexual abuse and domestic violence
  - Case Management
  - Counseling
  - Shelter: Short-term, transitional and permanent housing intervention services

## **1) FOOD**

### **DEMOGRAPHICS**

- 17.8% of all residents and 20.6% of families with children in Pima County were living in poverty in 2010
- 28% of children (68,000) in Pima County were food insecure meaning that their parents struggle to put food on the table (2010).
- 80% of children served by the congregate summer meals program in Pima County are from families with incomes 130% at or below the federal poverty guidelines (2011).
- 305 people sought and received legal assistance with income maintenance and food stamp issues in 2010 and as of September 23, 2011, 286 people sought such assistance this year (Southern Arizona Legal Aid)

### **SERVICE PRIORITIES**

To prevent institutionalization, malnutrition and/or isolation through:

- Congregate Meals: Emergency food services and activities related to serve 2 or more persons a day in a central location
- Legal services: Intervention/civil legal services for individuals and families in need of food stamp assistance

## **UNMET NEEDS**

Congregate Meals for Children (summer months): The congregate summer meals program served at current sites reaches only 9% of eligible children (June 2010).

Legal Assistance: SALA does not maintain a waiting list. However, for every person served one person is either turned away or receives limited services such as legal advice rather than representation to solve the legal problem.

## **IMPACT**

Congregate meals for children (summer months): Over 12,000 meals were served to Pima County children by the congregate summer meals program in 2011. These children live in rural areas where food resources and options are scarce. Extreme summer heat, lack of reliable transportation, absence of safe walking or bike routes, and a paucity of summer activities and programs, all profoundly limit their access to healthy affordable foods.

Legal Assistance: Of the 305 persons who received legal assistance with an income maintenance legal problem, 39 received legal assistance with a food stamp problem such as the denial of food stamp benefits (2010).

## **REGIONAL FUNDING**

Federal: Arizona Department of Education administers the USDA Summer Food Service Program and provides 60% of cost of summer meals program. Pima County provides partial reimbursement per meal through FEMA/EFSP and SSBG, and partial funding for personnel and transportation through PCOA.

## **SERVICE PROVIDERS**

Congregate Meals for children (summer months): In 2011, the Community Food Bank operated 10 summer congregate meals sites serving eligible children in Ajo, Amado, and on the Tohono O'odham Nation.

Legal assistance for food stamps: Southern Arizona Legal Aid

## **2) SHELTER**

### **DEMOGRAPHICS**

- 7,812 unduplicated adults and children accessed homeless services at some point in 2010, according to the Tucson/Pima County Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). 3,457 adults and children stayed at least one night in a homeless shelter, and 2,483 lived in a transitional housing program in 2010.
- Approximately 5,400 children in Pima County schools experienced homelessness at some point during the 2010-11 school year, a 52% increase from the pre-recession 07-08 school year
- Of all homeless children, 1,900 were teens in grades 9-12 during the last school year, and some of these were youth living on their own.
- In FY 2011, Emerge Center Against Domestic Abuse fulfilled 1,231 requests for emergency shelter from victims of domestic abuse and their children, resulting in 40,000 bed nights.
- In 2010, 1,204 Pima County residents sought assistance with legal issues concerning shelter through Southern Arizona Legal Aid, and 803 have sought assistance in 2011 thus far.

## **SERVICE PRIORITIES**

To maintain or obtain safe, decent shelter for individuals who are homeless, at risk of becoming homeless, or living in a dangerous environment

- Legal Assistance: Prevent homelessness by providing consultation and legal services for individuals and families facing eviction or needing landlord tenant mitigation.
- Emergency Shelter: Ensure safety and stability by providing temporary short-term shelter and support services to homeless individuals/families, including unaccompanied youth
- Crisis Shelter: Prevent physical harm by providing shelter for victims or potential victims of sexual assault or domestic abuse
- Transitional Housing: Increase stability and self-sufficiency by providing longer term shelter and support services to homeless individuals/families

## **IMPACT**

When you help someone secure shelter, you help them secure other aspects of their lives including safety, nutrition, health, stability, and gainful employment. Without stable shelter, securing and maintaining all of these other basic needs is difficult to impossible.

## **UNMET NEED**

- In 2011 there were 826 homeless emergency shelter beds in the Tucson area – a fraction of the need. Of these, only 188 beds were available for persons in families with children.
- There were 1,259 transitional housing beds that were designated for homeless persons in 2011; however these programs are unable to serve homeless persons who have no source of income.
- In FY 2011, Emerge! could not fill 425 requests for crisis shelter due to no beds available at the time of the request.
- In August 2011, DES asked local shelter providers to add shelter beds for adolescents because of extreme shortages in shelter, foster and group homes
- According to a 2009 Legal Services Corporation study legal aid in Pima County estimates turning away 50% of those needing help.

## **REGIONAL FUNDING**

Several programs throughout the community assist homeless individuals through the use of HUD, HHS/ACF, CDBG and Pima County Outside Agency funds. The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act has provided communities with Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-housing (HPRP) funds, a program to help those at risk of homelessness. During its first 18 months, the Tucson/Pima County HPRP program served 1,215 adults and children in 453 households. However, this funding source will end by the spring of 2012.

## **SOME LOCAL PROVIDERS of Housing and Supportive Services**

Primavera, Gospel Rescue Mission, Community Partnership for Southern Arizona, City of Tucson, City of South Tucson, Behavioral Health Agencies, Comin' Home, Southern Arizona Legal Aid, Inc., Our Family Services, Open Inn, Emerge! Center Against Domestic Abuse, New Beginnings for Women and Children, Salvation Army, Old Pueblo Community Services

### 3) SAFETY

#### DEMOGRAPHICS

Measuring the prevalence of domestic violence and sexual assault crimes is very difficult as law enforcement statistics will not include unreported crimes. Many individuals do not report their victimization for fear of retaliation, fear that the criminal justice system will not work for them, and/or fear of being persecuted or blamed for becoming a victim in the first place.

- Nationally, it's estimated that 1 in 6 women and 1 in 33 men will be sexually assaulted in their lifetimes, but fewer than 1 in 6 rapes are reported to the police
- The Tucson Police Department (TPD) responded to 8,833 calls for service on domestic violence in 2010. Pima County Sheriff's Department reports 4,017 calls for service regarding domestic violence in 2010.
- In fiscal year, 2010-2011, Emerge! Center Against Domestic Abuse answered 4,339 hotline calls. Emerge! also fulfilled 1,231 requests for emergency shelter, 1,176 requests for community-based (non-residential) services, and 80 requests for transitional/permanent housing.
- 3,012 individuals in Southern Arizona received civil legal assistance with ending domestic violence in 2009 (SALA). As of September 23 2011, 2,168 sought such assistance.

#### SERVICE PRIORITIES

To provide basic support services that promote the physical and mental health and well-being of individuals and households that are unable to meet their basic needs, or are victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, or substance abuse. Leaving an abusive relationship is often the most lethal time for a victim. Having safe, secure, confidential destinations is imperative for ensuring that women and their children survive the process.

- Legal Assistance: Intervention/civil legal services for victims of sexual abuse and, domestic violence and homelessness
- Case Management: Intervention services for victims of sexual abuse and, domestic violence including safety planning to prevent and escape violence
- Counseling: Intervention services for victims of sexual abuse and, domestic violence
- Shelter: Short-term, transitional and permanent housing intervention services for victims of sexual abuse, domestic violence

#### UNMET NEEDS

Legal Services: Arizona's attorney to client ratio is 1 attorney for every 1,250 residents, well below the national average of 1/1,060 (Arizona State Bar Association). A 2007 legal needs study found that only a small percentage of family civil legal problems, where physical or emotional safety was at issue, are addressed with the assistance of a lawyer, whether the lawyer charges a fee, reduced fee, or is pro bono (AZ Found. for Legal Services & Educ.).

Shelter Beds: Due to lack of beds available, Emerge! Center Against Domestic Abuse could not fill 425 emergency shelter requests from victims of domestic violence in FY 2010-2011.

Case management: Funding cuts in 2009 led to the elimination of two full-time positions in the outreach/community-based at Emerge! Center Against Domestic Abuse, reducing the capacity to serve victims of domestic violence seeking supportive/case management services in community-based (non-residential) settings.

Availability of Trauma Mitigation Services for Sexual and Domestic Violence Victims: Both the Southern Arizona Center Against Sexual Assault and Emerge! struggle to meet the need for trauma mitigation services with other organizations also losing funding and/or operating at or above capacity. This is particularly true with low-

cost therapeutic and counseling services.

## **IMPACT**

Providing victims with greater access to legal assistance and civil protection orders are essential strategies in reducing abuse. Studies show that access to legal services helps victims escape from abusive relationships, and that access to counseling has reduced domestic violence by as much as 21%.

Victims of both domestic abuse and sexual violence commonly experience symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder. Case management and trauma mitigation together help victims to participate in once-routine social interactions or maintain gainful employment.

## **REGIONAL FUNDING**

The US Department of Justice Offices on Violence Against Women and Victims of Crime provides relatively stable federal funding for a variety of local programs and services. State funding for sexual and domestic violence has taken a substantial hit, particularly in the last two years. The AZ Department of Economic Security provides the majority of funding for domestic violence shelter beds in Arizona; this funding has endured severe cuts in the past few years.

## **SERVICE PROVIDERS**

Domestic Violence: Emerge! Center Against Domestic Abuse (formerly The Brewster Center Domestic Violence Services and Tucson Centers for Women and Children); New Beginnings for Women and Children (not specifically for DV survivors), Wingspan Anti-Violence Program

Sexual Violence: Southern Arizona Center Against Sexual Assault; Southern Arizona Legal Aid, Inc. the behavioral health networks (COPE, CODAC, La Frontera) do offer specialized sexual trauma treatment services to enrolled members. Homeless youth services - Our Family Services and Open Inn.

## **SERVICES NOT RECOMMENDED FOR FUNDING**

Education and Training, Information and Referral, Child Care/Children, Home Repair, Cross Over Services: Family Planning, Home Health, Home Based Services, Independent and Transitional Living, Recreational, Residential Treatment