



**GENERAL**

## **A Letter from our Director: Help us End Family Homelessness**

**2018-03-29**

As you might have noticed, our focus this newsletter is on homeless families with children. Many are experiencing housing instability while others are unable to access permanent housing regardless of how hard they work. Most families we see in our shelters are simply struggling to find their way out of poverty and provide their children with stability and hope for their own future.

Young children are undoubtedly innocent victims impacted by their parents' circumstances. And while that remains a reality, I'm celebrating that our service system has begun implementing tested strategies that will make homelessness for children an avoidable experience in some cases, and a very brief experience in others.

Since 2016, HousingASAP- a consortium of family homeless providers sponsored by Hawaii Community Foundation, is working to reduce family homelessness in Hawaii. In January 2016, there were an estimated 805 homeless family households on any given day across Hawaii. The January 2017 count indicated family homelessness dropped 18% and the January 2018 count will likely show a greater reduction.

As Hawaii's largest and most comprehensive homeless provider, we are committed alongside our HousingASAP partners to end family homelessness by the end of 2018. The goal is for our service system to help any family experiencing a crisis to find permanent housing within 30 days or less. But we need your kokua!

IHS needs to raise \$100,000 this year to do our part in making that goal a reality. We need flexible housing funds to help divert families from homelessness who are not eligible for government assistance. We also need to bolster case management to help families while in shelters. This will expand our capacity to link families with the resources they need to break the cycle of homelessness. Services will include budgeting, using credit responsibly and saving for a family goal -- skills that will prevent another episode of homelessness.

As always, I like to end my remarks by thanking you- our IHS Ohana who continue to invest in our work with your time and resources. Mahalo for continuing to believe that change is possible when we work toward solving homelessness together. Will you join us in creating a system that can end family homelessness quickly so that no child needs to live without a stable home?

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