



## SAFE & STABLE HOMES

### Why It's Important

United Way started working with an advisory council of experts on homelessness six years ago. We learned:

- About 5,000 students were reported as homeless during a typical school year in our four-county school districts.
- Around 40-50 families entered our local shelters each month, and in Wisconsin, 1/3 of the population experiencing homelessness were families with at least one child under the age of 18.
- School mobility can create behavioral issues and lowers educational achievement for that student.

**WE CAN'T ALWAYS CHANGE  
THE REASONS FOR FAMILY  
HOMELESSNESS, BUT WE  
CAN CHANGE THE WAY  
OUR SYSTEM RESPONDS  
TO THESE REASONS.**

### What We're Doing Together

**Our goal: End family homelessness in our four-county footprint by 2025.**

According to the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness: A community has ended family homelessness when you can show you are preventing homelessness whenever possible, and when it isn't possible, you are ensuring that it is rare, it's brief, and it's a one-time experience.

Safe & Stable Homes is guided by these strategies:



**Centralized resources.** The Rental Housing Resource Center is a central resource center for landlords that might be considering filing an eviction but want to know what other options exist, and for tenants that have been or feel they might be served an eviction notice and want to know their next steps.



**Legal aid.** EvictionFreeMKE is paired with the Eviction Defense Project to provide no-cost housing attorneys for low-income parents to prevent evictions.



**Flexible financial assistance.** Progressive tiers of flexible financial assistance and housing case management are available for families that would otherwise be using crisis services to avoid homelessness. The Family Flex Fund has prevented or ended homelessness for over 300 families since its launch in 2021.



**Wraparound support.** This focus identifies students in schools experiencing housing instability and connects their whole family with wraparound supportive services. The goal is to keep children in their homes so they can focus on their learning.



## How We're Changing Lives

In 2023-24, United Way provided funding to 22 organizations, focused on:

- Providing community case management.
- Offering financial assistance.
- Covering closing costs for homeowners.
- Coordinating access to resources and supportive housing for individuals and families.
- Delivering wraparound supportive services for families.

### Our community saw the following results in 2023-24:

- Over 650 households benefited from mediation between tenants and landlords.
- Nearly 3,500 households had housing attorneys in their eviction cases at no cost to them.
- Over 1,000 tenants and landlords were supported with eviction prevention resources from The Milwaukee Rental Housing Resource Center.
- Over 20 programs were in place across our four counties offering flexible financial assistance to meet families' unique needs to remain stably housed.
- Seven families become first-time homeowners through Habitat for Humanity in Waukesha.

## IMPACT IN ACTION



Molly knew she needed a place for her family to thrive. "We were struggling. My son has cerebral palsy and recently had some surgeries. We needed a place that was affordable, but also accessible."

United Way-funded Habitat for Humanity of Waukesha & Jefferson Counties' vision is to create a world where everyone has a decent place to live.

Safe & Stable Homes plays an important role in the Habitat for Humanity process.

"There are so many obstacles to home ownership, especially for low-and-moderate-income buyers," said Melissa Songco, CEO at Habitat for Humanity of Waukesha & Jefferson Counties. "United Way's Safe & Stable Homes helps make sure we get to the closing table, using the funds for closing costs or anything that comes up. We want to be able to support our families all the way to the very end of the home ownership journey. United Way makes this a reality."

### 2025-26 Grantees

Advocates of Ozaukee  
Cathedral Center  
Community Action  
Coalition for South  
Central Wisconsin  
Community Advocates  
Family Promise  
of Ozaukee County  
Family Promise  
of Washington County  
Family Promise  
of Waukesha County  
FRIENDS  
Guest House  
of Milwaukee

Habitat for Humanity  
of Waukesha  
& Jefferson Counties  
Hebron Housing Services  
Hope House of Milwaukee  
Legal Action of Wisconsin  
Legal Aid Society  
of Milwaukee  
My Way Out  
Pathfinders  
Rooted & Rising  
Salvation Army Waukesha  
Sojourner Family  
Peace Center  
VetsNet



**UNITED WAY**  
Greater Milwaukee  
& Waukesha County