



Abt Associates Inc.

City Council Hearing

General Welfare Committee

"Oversight: DHS's Homebase Study"

December 9, 2010

About Abt Associates Inc.

Abt Associates Inc., founded in 1965, was built on the concept that sound information and empirical analysis are the best foundations for effective decision making. The company was ranked 19th among the top U.S. research organizations and as one of the top 25 global research firms in 2010 by the Honomichi Top 50. Abt Associates is an employee-owned company, with a worldwide staff of 1,700, and has seven offices in the U. S. and program offices in nearly 40 countries.

Abt Associates' work includes nationally recognized research, evaluation, and technical assistance to improve the effectiveness of government programs – both domestic and international - in diverse domains including housing, community development, education, workforce development and health.

For example, our five-year study of the US Department of Education's Reading First program used observational data from 4,400 classrooms and achievement data from 90,000 students to assess the curriculum's influence on reading skills and guide new strategies to improve reading comprehension. Our "Study of Infant Environmental Exposure to Thimerosal and Neuropsychological Outcomes at Ages 7 to 10 Years" examined the relationship between early ethylmercury exposure from thimerosal-containing vaccines and speech and language delays and attentional disorders. The study was published in the New England Journal of Medicine in September of 2007, and won the CDC Behavioral and Social Science Working Group Award for Excellence in Public Health.

Each year, the US Department of Housing and Urban Development contracts with Abt to prepare the Annual Homeless Assessment Report. Drawing on data from a national sample of communities, this report provides HUD with estimates of the number of people using emergency shelters and transitional housing over the course of a year. The results help HUD and communities track patterns and trends in homelessness over time.

Abt Associates has evaluated hundreds of social programs over the past 45 years. Many studies have used designs in which study subjects are randomly assigned either to a treatment group that receives an intervention or a control group that does not receive the intervention. Examples of our housing work include multi-site random assignment studies for the Department of Housing and Urban Development of the Moving to Opportunity Program and The Effects of Housing Choice Vouchers on Welfare Families. These rigorous studies have yielded important data to guide policy by answering critical questions about social programs: What would happen in the absence of the intervention? Is the intervention an appropriate use of scarce public resources? The evaluation of New York City's Homebase Community Prevention program falls into this category.

Lack of Research on the Effectiveness of Homelessness Prevention Programs

Marybeth Shinn of Vanderbilt University, one of the leading researchers in the area of homelessness prevention, has frequently critiqued prevention programs because she has found that it is difficult to identify those households who would become homeless but for services[1]. Shinn's research has indicated that it is difficult to target resources and services to those households who would have otherwise become homeless, so prevention programs would expend considerable resources on families who will remain out of the shelter system anyway.

In 1999, Marybeth Shinn and Jim Baumohl of Bryn Mawr College called for rigorous evaluation to assess the effectiveness of prevention programs. They concluded:

"In 1990, the General Accounting Office (GAO, 1990) reviewed what was known about indicated programs to prevent homelessness and concluded that their effectiveness could not be determined because too few collected the necessary follow up data. Now, nine years later, the same conclusion holds: While a few programs may be promising, none are even near proven. If indicated strategies are to be pursued in the future, we must have more rigorous evaluation designs, including random assignment to treatment and, more important, long term follow up of both those in the treatment group and controls. When programs are unable to meet the demand for services, we see no ethical objection to allocating services by lottery among those eligible."[2]

Since Shinn and Baumohl authored that paper over a decade ago, we have not been able to identify any additional rigorous studies of prevention services that answer the questions of whether homelessness prevention is a cost-effective service delivery strategy. New York City is spending about \$20 million each year on Homebase services. Ensuring that Homebase is an effective and efficient use of public resources is important for both the families it serves and the taxpayers that fund the services. Further, the current study of Homebase provides an important opportunity to contribute to filling this gap in knowledge by testing this community prevention intervention in a rigorous way.

The Homebase Community Prevention Evaluation

Random assignment is frequently described as “the gold standard” in program (or medical) evaluation, because it provides a reliable way of determining what would have happened to the population served by a program in its absence. Given a sufficiently large number of people assigned randomly to a treatment group that the program will serve or to a control group that can access other services in the community (but not the program itself) will provide strong evidence for concluding whether or not the program works.

Prevention of serious conditions such as homelessness is an important goal. However, numerous studies have shown that even well-designed prevention programs, such as the Homebase Community Prevention program, may not be successful or efficient in preventing a condition it is intended to positively affect. One reason that this can occur is the difficulty of targeting—that is, identifying from what is often a very large at-risk population—the relatively few who will actually experience the condition one is trying to prevent. For example, two families might look to the external observer to be in identical circumstances, but one may have access to help from a friend or have a more patient landlord that another might lack, and one of these differences might lead to one family escaping homelessness and the other not.

In the case of Homebase Community Prevention, random assignment is the most accurate and credible way to answer the question of whether the program reduces shelter entry among those who would otherwise use shelter as an option. The fact that there is a low rate of shelter entry by individuals who have accessed Homebase Community Prevention could mean that it reduces shelter use, or it could mean that most families who access its services would have avoided shelter without it.

Provider Training for the Homebase Evaluation

The evaluation design developed for the Homebase evaluation called for enrollment of a total of 400 heads of household; 200 would be assigned to the treatment group to receive Homebase services and 200 would be assigned to the control group.

- Abt Associates staff developed training materials for both Homebase agency directors and for the front-line staff who were involved in study recruitment and administering consent.
- A conference call was held with agency directors in February 2010 to present the study design, answer questions, and solicit feedback on the best ways to integrate study procedures with customary program operations.
- The study tools and procedures were developed and refined in consultation with DHS staff and, once final, consent materials were translated into Spanish and Haitian Creole in preparation for the study launch in June 2010.

- All the study's tools and protocols were reviewed and approved by Abt Associates' Institutional Review Board (IRB).

In-person training for provider staff was held at DHS headquarters in May 2010 with staff representation from all providers.

- Three members of Abt's project staff (the study Project Director, the Task Leader for Study Implementation, and the Study Liaison) presented the study design and the procedures to be used for the study.
- Abt staff provided a thorough explanation of the consent process, including reviewing the consent form in detail and providing suggestions on how to answer questions about the study from applicants.
- Training manuals covering the same material were provided to all staff working on the study.
- Follow-up telephone training was held the following week for the small number of staff that was unable to attend the in-person training.

Study enrollment began on June 9, 2010. Staff at Homebase provider agencies provided information about the study to heads of household who were eligible for Homebase services.

- Abt project staff held conference calls with provider staff during the enrollment phase to review progress and answer questions.
- In addition to the group calls, an Abt liaison was also available to answer individual questions from agency staff by telephone or email as they arose.
- The Abt liaison visited provider agencies in July to meet with staff, observe program services, and answer questions.

Recruitment ended when we reached the study's target enrollment the last week of September.

Conclusion

The evaluation of Homebase Community Prevention meets the ethical standards for the conduct of a social experiment: 1.) The program is not an entitlement, and there are not sufficient resources to serve all who are eligible to participate. 2.) The number of clients served during the enrollment period was not reduced as a result of the evaluation. 3.) There is no reliable evidence that the program achieves its purpose of reducing shelter use. 4.) Individuals in the control group are denied access only to the Homebase program, not to the other substantial services and resources in the city that are designed to avoid eviction and prevent homelessness. 5.) Finally, individuals were informed of the study protocol in accordance with federal regulations and Abt's high standards and voluntarily consented to participate in the study.

New York City is to be applauded for undertaking this evaluation, including its random assignment design. If the program is not achieving its intended results and were it to continue unchanged, the individuals who would be most harmed by this waste would be the very people it is intended to serve. On the other hand, if the evaluation finds evidence that the program is successful in reducing shelter use, the credible evidence that the evaluation will produce will

provide a strong argument for bringing greater resources to bear on behalf of more at-risk families.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify along with DHS and the City University of New York on behalf of this important study that has the potential to provide critical empirical evidence to improve targeting and service delivery for people at risk of homelessness.

[1] Shinn, M., Weitzman, B.C., Stojanovic, D., Knickerman, J.R., Jiminez, L., Duchon, L. & James, S., Krants, D. H. 1998. Predictors of Homelessness from Shelter Request to Housing Stability Among Families in New York City. *American Journal of Public Health*, 88, 1651-1657.

[2] Shinn, Marybeth and Jim Baumohl. 1999. Rethinking the prevention of homelessness. In *Practical lessons: The 1998 National Symposium on Homelessness Research*, edited by Linda B. Fosburg and Deborah L. Dennis. Washington, DC: U.S. Departments of Housing and Urban Development and Health and Human Services.



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
BOROUGH OF MANHATTAN

SCOTT M. STRINGER
BOROUGH PRESIDENT

**Testimony of Manhattan Borough President
Scott M. Stringer**

Before the New York City Council Committee on General Welfare

Oversight Hearing – DHS’s Homebase Study

December 9, 2010

Good morning.

First, let me thank Councilmember Palma and members of the Committee for hosting this important hearing on the Department of Homeless Services’ evaluation of its Homebase Community Prevention Program.

As you know, this concerns an ongoing DHS study which involved the department randomly selecting 400 families who applied and qualified for emergency housing subsidies through Homebase -- then summarily denying those services to half the population as part of some misguided study.

The stated intent was to gauge the effectiveness of Homebase services, which is a perfectly laudable goal. We should always be looking for ways to measure the effectiveness of the services we provide, and to make improvements based on what we learn.

But the method DHS selected is both extreme and unnecessary. They chose to systematically deny critical housing benefits to qualified families in crisis – just to see what happened. Would these families successfully seek help elsewhere? Would they stave off eviction notices? Or would they end up on the street, headed toward a city shelter?

Let me state this as clearly as I can -- the city should not be making guinea pigs out of its most vulnerable citizens, period.

Denying emergency housing benefits to families in crisis is not just bad policy. It is ethically questionable and totally unnecessary from a policy point of view. There are plenty of other ways to measure a program’s success, short of plunging families into the unknown.

The administration needs to end this study now and devote its resources toward helping the 200 families that have already been thrown into this dangerous “control” group.

Since the existence of this study was first revealed last October, I can report that I have had two meetings with senior Administration officials to express my concerns, including Deputy Mayor Linda Gibbs and Department of Homeless Services Commissioner Seth Diamond.

While I thank the Administration for their response to my concerns, neither meeting was satisfactory.

The Administration seems intent on forging ahead with this study, despite substantial expert and academic data suggesting that denying critical services to eligible applicants is not a favored methodology for evaluating safety net services. Indeed, this has been the subject of legal challenge in the past.¹

I can assure you that a broad range of advocates, service providers and researchers have expressed their deep concern to my office about this approach, some stating they have never seen this kind of evaluation method before.

This approach is particularly concerning since Homebase has been significantly effective as a core homelessness prevention program for nearly a decade. Indeed, the Mayor’s Management Report for 2010 reported that Homebase has been a “highly successful” model for homelessness prevention and has been able to “help more than ninety percent of clients in all populations receiving prevention services to stay in their communities and avoid shelter entry.”² While Homebase may still warrant evaluation, its demonstrated effectiveness should weigh further against the extreme experiment of denial currently used.

The Administration argues that their experiment is the same as evaluations often conducted by the federal government and other governments. However, as of yet, they have not been able to produce a study that have the same characteristics as the Homebase evaluation, suddenly denying core emergency benefits to applicants who are homeless or at the brink of homelessness.

I have grave concern with a central feature of this evaluation – that all 200 families were denied benefits only after they gave their “informed consent” to be enrolled in the study group.

I have reviewed these consent forms and have copies here for anyone who would like to evaluate what, if anything, is “informed” about them. To say this was a no-win situation for these families – already wracked by the imminent prospect of losing their homes – is a gross understatement.

If they marked the box that said no, they did not want to participate in the study, they were forced to accept that “my family will be ineligible for Homebase services for the next two years.” They were cut off.

¹ Gillespie v. Herman, U.S. District Court for the District of Montana No. CV 96-180-M-DWM.

² Mayor’s Management Report 2010, p. 41.

But agreeing to participate in the study was little better. Saying yes meant becoming one of 200 families who would be randomly selected to be similarly cut off from Homebase benefits for the same two year period.

In short, there was no way for these families to opt out of the study and be assured of help, and that is wrong. The whole point of consent is to give people a real choice, not force them into a situation where saying yes or no can result in the same bleak outcome.

Further, the legalese used in drafting this document is enough to make a lawyer's head spin, much less a parent in crisis whose command of the English language may or may not be proficient. When I specifically asked the Administration what other languages this alleged consent form was printed in, they were unable to give me a complete answer.

In summary, it is time for the Department of Homeless Services to end this demeaning study and turn its attention toward finding and helping the 200 families that it has cast to the wind. The Department needs to be fully transparent about what happened to these families, and they need to make sure they are provided the exact same services to which they would have ordinarily been entitled.

Anything less would be a travesty for this city.

**Catholic Charities Community Services
of the Archdiocese of New York
Written Testimony to the Council of the City of New York
Committee on General Welfare
Hearing on Oversight
NYC Department of Homeless Services
HomeBase Study T2010-2082, September 20, 2007
Submitted by
Beatriz Dias Taveras – Executive Director
December 8, 2010**

Introduction

Catholic Charities Community Services, Archdiocese of New York (CCCS) seeks to uphold the dignity of each person as made in the image of God by serving the basic needs of the poor, troubled, frail, and oppressed of all religions.

CCCS provides a comprehensive range of professional human services in the New York City boroughs of Manhattan, the Bronx and Staten Island, including homelessness prevention. HomeBase is one of the homelessness prevention programs administered by CCCS. Our HomeBase program is located in the Castle Hill area of the Bronx, and provides services to residents of community districts 2, 9, 10, 11, and 12.

CCCS HomeBase provides an array of homelessness prevention services, including re-housing of homeless families, eviction prevention, and aftercare services for families who have recently exited the shelter system.

The HomeBase Study

In February 2010, the NYC Department of Homeless Services (DHS) informed CCCS of their intention to conduct an evaluation of the effectiveness of the HomeBase community prevention program.¹

DHS decided that random assignment was the best way to determine if HomeBase Community Prevention Program (CP) services would make a difference in reducing shelter utilization, in order to learn what would happen to similar families who do not receive HomeBase CP. DHS also concluded that random assignment would not reduce the number of households receiving HomeBase services, since there are more eligible households than the program is able to serve.²

¹ The purpose of the evaluation was to determine or identify the outcomes of HomeBase CP services for clients, through a comparison of shelter entry/re-entry and mainstream services utilization for clients offered HomeBase CP services to outcomes for equally needy clients who are not offered these services. Evaluation of HomeBase Community Prevention Program, Abt Associates, Inc., February 10, 2010.

² Ibid.

Between March and September 2010, DHS screened prospective clients using an on-line enrollment tool to enter applicant information and generate assignment to either the treatment or control group. Applicants were given a letter of consent from DHS, along with an explanation of its content. The letter of consent was provided by DHS in English, Spanish, and Creole. Clients who were found eligible under the HomeBase guidelines and who were randomly selected by the enrollment tool to be part of the treatment group were referred for CP services. Those selected to be part of the control group were given a letter informing them that they would not be eligible to receive HomeBase CP services for the duration of the study. The letter also included the names and telephone numbers of two legal services providers and five Job Centers of the NYC Human Resources Administration (HRA), where the control group could receive services.

Concerns about the HomeBase Study

CCCS is supportive of the NYC Department of Homeless Services concern in determining the overall impact and cost effectiveness of the HomeBase program. It is important to allocate scarce resources to those programs that provide effective services to the needy.

We are convinced that DHS's reasons for undertaking this study are well founded and relate to legitimate purposes.

CCCS supports research that helps improve programs. At the same time such research must be conducted in a manner that is respectful of the dignity of those who are involved. Most importantly it is critical that in not-admitted families for one type of service – namely HomeBase CP – genuine provision is made for them to receive other services that can assist them. That is why it was essential for our agency to refer those who did not receive CP services to other providers where they could receive similar services. In early meetings with DHC, CCCS and other HomeBase providers recommended this to DHS. This recommendation was accepted. Quite frankly, had this recommendation not been accepted CCCS would not have been able to participate in this study.

Independent of this study, we think that the HomeBase CP program is very successful from both a human and cost-effectiveness perspective. It allows families to stay in their homes by stabilizing their housing, and prevents them from entering the costly shelter system. We understand that, by referring clients to other service providers, the differential in outcomes may not be as great as if they were actually "denied" services and not allowed to receive any support at all.

However, we are also mindful of the concerns that have been raised by homelessness prevention advocates and some elected officials regarding the HomeBase study.

Our main concern lies with the families that were selected to be part of the control group. These are families who most likely are, or will be, at risk of becoming homeless should they not access the other prevention services that are available to them.

Therefore, we believe that DHS has a responsibility to monitor these families, and to work collaboratively with other city and private agencies, particularly the NYC Human Resources Administration, to ascertain if in fact they did obtain the benefits and services they need in order to avoid becoming homeless. The fact that information about other service providers was provided is a good and necessary first step in that direction. However, there is the need to reach out to ensure that there was genuine access to other services.

This is not easy. But it is a challenge that must be met.

CCCS in its many programs is pleased to be part of the caring fabric of New York – particularly for our most vulnerable neighbors. We need to always evaluate the effectiveness of programs to help those in need. We need to use good research methodology. We need to track outcomes. However, all this must be in the context of providing compassionate and respectful help to those who come to us at the most vulnerable times in their lives.



Testimony of

Stephanie Gendell
Associate Executive Director
Citizens' Committee for Children

Oversight: DHS' HomeBase Study
Int. No. 395: A Local Law to amend the administrative code of the city of New York, in
relation to requiring DHS and HRA to track and report to the Council certain data
regarding rental assistance programs for the homeless

Before the
New York City Council
General Welfare Committee

December 9, 2010

Good afternoon. I am Stephanie Gendell, the Associate Executive Director for Policy and Public Affairs at Citizens' Committee for Children of New York, Inc. (CCC). CCC is a 67-year old independent child advocacy organization dedicated to ensuring that every New York City child is healthy, housed, educated and safe.

I would like to thank Chair Palma and members of the General Welfare Committee for holding today's hearing regarding the Department of Homeless Services' (DHS's) study of HomeBase and Local Law 395, which would require DHS and HRA to track and report certain data to the Council regarding rental assistance programs for the homeless. CCC also thanks Council Member Palma, Public Advocate de Blasio, and Council Members Brewer, Chin, Dromm, Ferreras, Fidler, Foster, James, Koslowitz, Lander, Mark-Viverito, Sanders, Jr., Williams, Rodriguez, Rose and Halloran for introducing Local Law 395.

On November 27, 2010, there were 36,654 New Yorkers living in the shelter system. Notably, this includes almost 15,000 children (living with almost 11,000 adults) in the families with children shelter system. As we know, the economic downturn led to a tremendous increase in joblessness and homelessness in New York City, which was compounded by the freeze on Section 8 vouchers.

To try to combat the level of homelessness in New York City, the Department of Homeless Services (DHS) secured \$74.17 million in economic stimulus funding that was allocated directly to DHS. According to the City's Stimulus Tracker this stimulus funding is allocated for families as follows: \$39.93 million for HomeBase Homelessness Prevention; \$2.6 million for an aftercare helpline; \$2.1 million for anti-eviction legal services; \$9.7 million for expedited rehousing; and \$333,000 for rapid rehousing of youth. CCC applauds DHS and the Mayor's Office their work in securing these critical funds.

In addition, to try to address the loss of Section 8 vouchers as a means for families to achieve permanent housing after living in the shelter system, the City has developed its own local subsidized housing programs—first Housing Stability Plus (HSP) and then Advantage.

While CCC appreciates the efforts DHS has made to secure stimulus funds and develop these local subsidies, we have multiple concerns about the following:

- the numbers of children displaced from their homes and communities,
- the effectiveness of HomeBase and the method being used to evaluate the program,
- the ability of families participating in Advantage to be able to pay their rental share during their two years in the program and the ability for these families to remain in permanent housing when the subsidy ends, and
- the elimination of the Children's Advantage program for families with child welfare history.

DHS's HomeBase Study

CCC believes that a programmatic evaluation of HomeBase, which develops a demographic profile of families assisted by the program, identifies the specific services provided to families, and determines the efficacy of the intervention, would be invaluable to assess the role of HomeBase in preventing homelessness in New York City. CCC has long believed that understanding more about what services or interventions HomeBase is providing and whether the program is preventing homelessness would be critical given the amount of resources the City has committed to this program. On the other hand, CCC is very concerned about the methodology being used in DHS's study of HomeBase. As you know, 200 families found eligible for HomeBase services have received letters telling them that they will not participate in the initiative because they are part of the control group and that they were not chosen in the "lottery."

CCC is very concerned about the methodology employed by DHS and the evaluators with which DHS contracted. Notably, CCC does not believe that it is ethical to find poor, mostly minority families eligible for a service that could help spare them the trauma and instability caused by becoming homeless, but then tell them they cannot receive the service because they are in a control group. This is particularly true if the families were not truly given the ability to decide whether to consent to participate. Given the circumstances facing these families, CCC does not believe that there could have been informed consent to be a human subject in a study if there was no other way to receive HomeBase services but to sign such the consent form. While we understand the scientific value of randomized controlled experiments, we would argue that when a study has very real and potentially harmful impacts on human subjects (in this case parents and children who are in the control group) other methodological approaches should be explored more fully.

To that end, in 2008-2009, CCC began background research in preparation for our own qualitative assessment of HomeBase. We had hoped to collect data on participant demographics and program experiences through survey interviews of providers and focus groups with families that participated in HomeBase. Over several months, we reviewed DHS data, policies and procedures and conducted background interviews with HomeBase providers, shelter providers and DHS staff. We also developed a draft survey instrument that was shared with DHS. Our intent was to conduct a qualitative analysis of the program and then to issue a report similar to what CCC has recently completed for child welfare preventive services.

While CCC met with DHS staff in the summer of 2008 and held a fall 2008 policy briefing on HomeBase that DHS staff participated in, when we met with DHS in early 2009 to share our draft survey instrument, the agency expressed many concerns with our project. Specifically, DHS explained that they did not believe that CCC's work was necessary since they about to undertake their own study of HomeBase and would be engaging an academic institution as the evaluator. Furthermore, they suggested that CCC would be unable to administer our qualitative survey of HomeBase providers without first going through the agency's IRB (Institutional Review Board) process. While CCC continued to believe in the value of our study, we were aware that it would be very time-consuming to go through DHS's IRB process and we did not believe this should be necessary to interview providers. That said, we did not want to go forward, fearing this would be the providers in a precarious position given their contracts with DHS. In addition, we believed going through the IRB process would likely be fruitless since DHS was moving forward with their own evaluation of the program. Clearly, CCC was very disappointed that we were unable to complete our qualitative analysis.

Lastly, it is our understanding that DHS's HomeBase study will only monitor whether or not the 200 families in the control group (and the 200 families receiving HomeBase services) go to PATH seeking shelter over the next two years. We urge DHS to reach out to the 200 families that were turned away from HomeBase to find out where they are living now, whether they and their children are living in a safe environment and to assess whether the family is still in need of HomeBase services—and if so, to provide them.

Local Law 395:

CCC supports Local Law 395 and the requirements it would create for DHS and HRA to track and report certain data to the Council with regard to families that have left shelter to various rental assistance programs. CCC also recommends that DHS track and report on data related to all of those who have re-entered shelter in order to understand what occurred between the time they left shelter and their return to shelter. Taken together, this data would be invaluable to understanding whether the Advantage housing subsidy assistance family is working, the characteristics of families assisted by various programs that are successful/unsuccessful, and to further hone the models to meet the needs of families.

DHS's data, provided in their *Critical Activities Report*, clearly show that most of the families with children that that left shelter in Fiscal Year 2010 (and July and August 2010) did so through one of the Advantage Programs. For example, in August 2010, 708 of the 823 families with children that exited shelter to permanent housing (86%) did so through Advantage. Notably, 176 of those families received Children's Advantage and 127 of those families received Fixed Advantage—programs no longer available to families.

Given the numbers of families leaving shelter to Advantage, it is imperative for the City to track these families and see whether the program is effective. Work Advantage assumes that after two years of assistance, families will be able to pay their rent without a subsidy to assist them, even though their rent is typically \$1000 per month and their family income is typically less than \$35,000 (according to DHS/HRA testimony and answers to questions on June 10, 2010.) While CCC understands the City's financial limits with regard to local subsidies, we must follow these families to see whether Advantage puts families on a pathway to independence or back to the shelter system.

Children's Advantage:

In addition, effective August 2010, DHS eliminated the Children's Advantage Program. CCC continues to have tremendous concerns about the impact this will have on children who have reunified from foster care. Children's Advantage was a housing subsidy assistance program developed specifically for families in which the children have been reunified from foster care and the family is living in a homeless shelter. Thus, the families participating in Children's Advantage are those where the city (ACS) and a Family Court Judge have determined that prior abuse or neglect of the children warranted the child's removal from his/her home, that the child would be in imminent risk of harm if he/she remained in the home, and that placement in foster care was in the child's best interests. Removal from home and placement in foster care is often a traumatic event for children and their parents. It impacts children's attachments to their parents and requires children to spend part of their childhood living in someone else's home.

While the court process can often take years due to an overburdened court system, the goal for many children in foster care is that they eventually return home to their parents. Foster care provide services to foster children in an attempt to meet the children's needs and make it safe for children to live with their parents again. Often times, these services include job training and

employment assistance for the parents. For the families participating in Children's Advantage, not only have the children been in foster care, but also when they return to live with their parents, they are living in a homeless shelter. Children's Advantage has been helping these families obtain permanent housing.

Eliminating Children's Advantage such that child welfare reunification families living in homeless shelters can only obtain permanent housing if a parent works is concerning to CCC. In addition, families currently participating in Children's Advantage do not have to pay rent (even if they are working), but in the new plan, these families will need to pay 30% of their gross monthly income for rent in the first year and 40% of their gross monthly income for rent in the second year.¹

While CCC believes strongly in the value of work and the stability income can bring to a family, we worry that tying permanent housing to employment for child welfare families (and charging 30% or 40% of gross monthly income for rent) will result in more former foster children having to grow up living in homeless shelters, and even more concerning, may jeopardize the stability of some reunifications.

It is important to understand the challenges facing families who have been through the foster care system. The children have often experienced trauma associated with being removed from their homes and experiencing abuse and/or neglect, and often their parental attachments were disrupted while they were living in foster homes. The children often have a range of needs related to their mental health, education and development. Similarly the parents to whom they return also have many needs such as mental health issues and histories of domestic violence and/or substance abuse.

The elimination of Children's Advantage means that there will be additional stressors on these often fragile families, who are not only dealing with the child welfare system but are also struggling with homelessness. For many of the young children in these families, if their parents do indeed get a job to meet the requirements of Work Advantage, they will need to be placed in child care—meaning in the care of another stranger—at a time when the family is working to rebuild and strengthen their relationships to one another. (It also means that ACS will need to spend more money on child care vouchers even though ACS is already struggling to afford their current child care system.) Furthermore, the economic downturn has led to a significantly increased unemployment rate in New York City. Thus, it may be very difficult for parents to find jobs given the sheer number of people looking for jobs and the shortage of jobs created by the economic downturn. While work is often an asset to family functioning, CCC worries that the pressure on DHS and HRA to urge these fragile families experiencing both child welfare interventions and homelessness, to obtain employment as a precursor to permanent housing, may jeopardize the success of reunifications and the safety of the children. We urge the city to reconsider the elimination of Children's Advantage.

¹ In fact, Work Advantage (which will subsume Children's Advantage) had only been charging families \$50 per month in the first year, but DHS has since changed Work Advantage to require a 30% gross monthly income contribution in the first year for all participating families. CCC is also concerned about this increased rent contribution requirement for all families participating in Advantage.

Finally, while not specifically related to the HomeBase study or Local Law 395, CCC thinks it is important to note that in the November Financial Plan, DHS proposes to reduce the broker's fee for Advantage. If this is implemented, it must also be closely monitored. If DHS shelter providers are unable to find housing stock for homeless families (due to the reduced broker's fees), fewer families will be able to exit shelter to permanent housing (and shelter providers will receive less funding due to their performance based rates.)

Thank you for this opportunity to testify. CCC appreciates the City Council's interest in these very critical issues.



**Testimony of Laurel W. Eisner, Executive
Director of Sanctuary for Families
Regarding Intro 395 of 2010
Before the New York City Council
General Welfare Committee
December 9, 2010**

Good afternoon. I am Laurel Eisner, the Executive Director of Sanctuary for Families, which is the largest non-profit agency in New York State dedicated exclusively to serving victims of domestic violence and sex trafficking. We served over 10,000 clients last year with shelter; counseling for adults and children; legal advice and representation in orders of protection, family law, custody, divorce, and immigration law; and with economic empowerment programs designed to help them move into living wage jobs.

Many thanks to this Committee and the sponsors of Intro 395 for holding a hearing on this very important bill regarding New York City's new "Advantage NY" program for those leaving shelters. Those of us who work with the shelter populations have been struggling for months to deal with the "disadvantages", indeed the serious harm that this oddly named program will bring to our clients. You have wisely chosen to seek hard data to support the claims of the Department of Homeless Services that this program will succeed in reducing homelessness, based on their analysis of the earlier programs. That is quite contrary to the experiences of domestic violence shelter providers, and to the findings by the Coalition of the Homeless reported in today's New York Times.

My goal is to discuss the impact of the Advantage NY program on families in domestic violence shelters. Intro 395 unfortunately fails to recognize that Advantage NY does not apply only to the shelters funded and monitored by the Department of Homeless Services (DHS). The program also applies to victims leaving domestic violence shelters, which are funded and overseen by the Human Resources Administration (HRA). There are 60 domestic violence shelters in NYC, housing 2,341 women and children at any given time, for an annual total more than twice that number, as some move out and others come in. There are more than 20 not-for-profit agencies in the City, including my own, that operate domestic violence shelters. All of the shelters are in confidential, carefully guarded locations with heavy security.¹

¹ All of the research of the past decades has shown that domestic violence is the leading cause of homelessness for woman and children and well more than one third of the families in the DHS homeless system are victims of domestic violence. Intimate partner violence is the leading cause of homicide for

Given the size of this program, and the scope and seriousness of the dangers our clients face, I believe it was an oversight to leave them out, and I urge you to correct that as soon as possible.

I also want to tell you why the Advantage NY Program is even more disadvantageous for those leaving the HRA domestic violence shelters than for the homeless in the DHS system. Individuals in DHS homeless shelters can stay for as much as a year or more. Domestic violence victims and their children, in contrast, **MUST LEAVE THE EMERGENCY DV SHELTER IN 135 DAYS**. That is 4-1/2 months. State regulations limit the stays to 90 days, but HRA-- to its great credit -- permits one 45 day extension. A small percentage -- less than 18% of the emergency shelter residents -- move on to one of 8 domestic violence transitional shelters, where they may stay for as much as another six months. The combined stays are still shorter than the typical stay in a DHS homeless shelter.

To grasp the full significance of those time limits, you need understand that domestic violence victims are running for their lives, choosing to gather up their children and escape a violent, abusive and dangerous home where they may get killed and their children may be harmed. Moving to a confidential domestic violence shelter protects them from the batterer, but they give up an enormous amount of personal freedom in exchange -- just to ensure the batterer won't find them. They cannot tell family, friends, neighbors or employers where they are. If they do, even inadvertently, we have to discharge them immediately because the indiscretion threatens everyone's safety. The family must go on public assistance even if they previously were gainfully employed, because public assistance pays the daily rate for their shelter stay and very few could possibly afford the cost on their own. If the batterer knows where they work, they must leave their job.

Their children, even the very young ones, have witnessed the violence, or have been beaten or sexually assaulted themselves. They have lived with the screaming, crying, threats, police visits and enormous tension and conflict. We have seen children who stopped speaking, children who had hallucinations of a dangerous man ordering them to hurt someone, and children who grieve

women 16 years and older in New York State, and in 2009, the NYC domestic violence hotline received 165,921 calls for help.

for the grandmother they can no longer see. The children must suddenly change schools, and cannot bring old or new friends to the shelter.

The mothers are often haunted by grief, and a sense of failure, shame about the failed marriage, and by the disapproval of their families who believe the woman has dishonored the family by leaving. I see these women and children every day in the reception area of our office with a handful of belongings, sometimes in shopping bags, and children holding favorite teddy bears. The depression and the sadness in those early days are palpable.

At Sanctuary for Families, we do everything possible to dispel that hopelessness and self-blame. Every shelter client – children included – receives counseling, emotional support, assistance with child care and medical care, emergency food supplies, emergency cash, legal advice and representation, and help finding a new place to live – far from the batterer, in a new borough, new neighborhood, finding new child care, new doctors and hospitals and friends – and help getting back into the workforce, or into it for the first time despite limited language skills and work experience.

BUT we must do all that for them in a cruel and unreasonably short time frame. NOW, since October 1, 2010 when the so-called Advantage NY Program actually went into effect, our shelter clients must also, during those 135 days, find a job that pays, on the books, no less than minimum wage and no more than the amount that would knock them off public assistance – a figure that varies, of course, by size of family. And they must have proof that they worked at that job at least 20 hours per week for a minimum of 4 weeks while they were in the shelter!

Advantage denies them the option of going into a full time educational or vocational training program, which could prepare them for jobs that will truly pay the bills down the line. They must, rather, get at least a 20-hour per week job as quickly as possible while they are in shelter – often at minimum wage -- which will never cover the rent once the Advantage NY voucher is gone. If they succeed in getting that job, they must find child care. Most of the DV shelters do not have on site full time child care. The moms have to find it somewhere else – hopefully near the job or the shelter and hopefully with an HRA voucher to pay the provider. At best, it will take a few weeks for the child care voucher to come through.

In the meantime, the 135-day clock is ticking. If they miraculously settle their children, get on public assistance, find that job and child care, but have not found an affordable apartment, in a safe location, when the clock strikes 135th Day, they are in trouble and will likely move the children again, a handful going into one of the safe DV transitional shelters but many more going into the homeless system. HRA – to its credit -- has been very accommodating and has permitted clients an extra 30 days post-shelter to find the apartment --if they have a job. After that, the Advantage NY voucher expires!

And if they find an affordable apartment, many landlords will refuse to rent it to someone with an HRA voucher because they know they are domestic violence victims, or will rent it only if the tenant pays another \$ 200 per month or more under the table, even if the apartment is roach and rat infested, has little heat or running water, or has hallways filled with drug dealing and filth. As a reward for finding the job and the apartment, Advantage NY requires them to pay 30% -- I repeat 30% - of their gross wages to subsidize the rent. Let's do the math: A mom and 2 children earning the minimum wage for 20 hours per week will earn \$ 7,488 per year, which is \$ 6,915 after FICA, and must contribute \$ 2,246 per year toward her rent. That leaves her, after FICA, \$ 4,669 per year, or \$ 389 per month to feed and clothe and transport herself and her two children.

For those who are just not superwomen, and unable to get it all together and find the job, the apartment, and the child care, in 135 days, the alternatives are the PATH Center and the homeless system, moving from couch to couch of friends or relatives, or – desperately, going back to the batterer, who will surely punish her mightily for leaving the first time. If this sounds like a Kafkaesque bureaucratic nightmare, it certainly is for the overwhelming majority of domestic violence victims in shelter. If this sounds like a system that provides neither protection nor an Advantage nor hope for a better future with marketable education and skills, it is that as well. Perhaps this is the place to tell you the statistics on DV homicides: In 2009, intimate partner violence was the leading cause of homicide of women 16 years and older in New York State. ²

² In November, 2005, when NYC lost most of the new Section 8 subsidized housing vouchers, there was a precipitous drop in battered women coming into shelter. Faced with the prospect of

Prior to October 1st, the City's Work Advantage system was in effect. In that program, the immediate work requirement was deferred for domestic violence victims for 6 months. They were permitted to move into a subsidized apartment post-shelter and had 6 months to find a job. After that, if they were working for 20 hours per week or more, they were eligible for a second year of the Work Advantage housing voucher. Even under those slightly more lenient rules, our clients were largely unable to settle into affordable apartments and begin moving toward self-sufficiency. The New Destiny Housing Corporation³, which gathers data from shelter providers, found the following. Between July 2009 and June 2010, with 87% of the domestic violence shelters reporting:

- 1700 families left the DV emergency shelters and of those, only 337 (20%) moved into permanent housing. Another 338 (20%) were doubled up somewhere, and **600 (29%) went into the DHS homeless system.**
- For those lucky enough to get a bed in a transitional DV shelter 246 (60%) moved to permanent housing from shelter, partly because they had several more months to find housing. And only **68 (17%) ended up in the DHS homeless system.**
- It wasn't only time that helped those who found permanent apartments through DV Advantage. The educational levels of the victims leaving both types of DV shelters correlated closely with their ability to qualify for the of the Work Advantage voucher. 82% of those adults had at least a high school diploma or a GED and 41% had some college education. Similarly, 82% of those who qualified for the vouchers had moderate or strong work histories. In contrast, the rest of the DV shelter population had far less education and work history. 47% did not even have a high school diploma and 55% had either no work experience, or less than a year of it.

Even more discouraging, of course, are the findings of the Coalition for the Homeless, reported in today's New York Times. The rush to find low wage jobs to get an Advantage voucher did not protect these families from future homelessness. On the contrary, the study found that more

huge upheaval in their lives and ending up homeless anyway.some chose for as long as they could tolerate it, to live with the abuse and pray they wouldn't be killed, and then just go directly into the homeless system, which provides none of the counseling and extra support of the DV system.

³ A not-for-profit agency that builds shelter and affordable housing for domestic violence victims.

than one-third applied for shelter after the voucher terminated, and 25% ended up in the homeless system.⁴

Despite these terrible results – tragic for the families and a huge waste of resources for government -- the City has now imposed a much more complex and onerous set of eligibility requirements for domestic violence and homeless families to move into permanent housing. If the overwhelming majority could not find apartments and jobs required under the prior program, and a large percentage came searching for shelter again, why repeat the same mistakes? Clearly, until families are not only permitted, but actually helped to gain necessary education and work skills, the cycle of poverty will continue to repeat itself, for them and for many of their children.

So what does all this tell us about Intro 395? I commend you for seeking answers to so many important questions about the past programs as well as the new one. I would urge you, however, to narrow the focus to look intensively at the new program, since it just began and it will be possible to get an understanding now of how it is working. The most important questions, in my view, are listed below.

1. How many families in the HRA DV shelter system received a work advantage voucher each quarter of the fiscal year?
 - Of those, how many were able to sign a lease on an apartment before the voucher expired?
 - Of those who obtained Advantage-supported apartments, how many were able to maintain the cost of the apartment (including payment of their 30% of income share, after
 - How many cycled back and APPLIED to return to either the homeless or DV shelter system

2. How many families in the HRA DV shelter system, left shelter WITHOUT an Advantage NY voucher?
 - How many were unable to find a job?
 - How many were able to find a job that did not meet the Advantage requirements (off the books, too few hours, low pay)
 - Of those, how many moved into
 - Transitional shelter
 - The PATH homeless system
 - Safe location with friend or family

⁴ J. Hernandez, “Despite the Mayor’s Homeless Program, Many Return to Shelters, Critics Say”, New York Times, December 9, 2010, p. A43.

- Went back to the batterer or another unsafe location

3. How many who received an Advantage NY voucher was able to remain in the apartment and pay the rent on their own after the voucher expired? Where did they go if they could not pay the rent?

4. What were the median and average wages of those who met the Advantage NY work requirements during their shelter stay? Were they earning a living wage that would enable them to keep the apartments and to raise their children without public assistance?

In closing, thanks again for listening and for your concern about this program.

My Documents/testimony/2010/Intro 395

2141/2403

TESTIMONY BEFORE CITY COUNCIL

December 9, 2010

By: Louise Seeley, Executive Director, Housing Court Answers.

DHS HOMEBASE STUDY

Good afternoon. I am Louise Seeley, the Executive Director of Housing Court Answers. First, I want to thank the City Council for addressing this issue.

Our organization runs a hotline for the Emergency Rent Coalition where people facing eviction can call to see if they qualify for rental assistance and we run information tables in housing court where we help people navigate the court process. We speak to tens of thousands of New Yorkers every year. The two main types of eviction prevention programs we work with are those that provide legal assistance and those that provide financial assistance. Some people facing eviction only need legal assistance, some financial, others both. When we talk to people on our hotline or at our tables we assess what type of help they need and if help is available we explain to them how to access it.

Our organization is one of the organizations which families denied Homebase services were referred to for help.

We are appalled that the city undertook this study and demand that the families in the control group be contacted and given any assistance they qualify for. We also support the bills requiring city agencies to provide this body with accurate and complete data, for it is that data that should be looked at, not the data created by this terrible study.

First on a human note – speaking to some of the families who were denied services I can attest that they were shocked to receive a letter which basically said “sorry you didn’t win the lottery so we can’t help you.” Some of these families we were able to connect with other services, others we could not and had to tell them that in all likelihood they would be evicted. For some the services they needed are only provided by Homebase – such as short term rental subsidies. We had no way to help these tenants.

The harms associated with homelessness are well known – children’s education is severely hampered, maintaining employment is difficult, health deteriorates and families are torn apart. Homebase was set up to help prevent homelessness and received a substantial amount of funds, both city and federal to provide eviction prevention assistance. While I agree that programs should be reviewed for effectiveness the study conducted by DHS is both flawed and unethical.

The study is flawed for numerous reasons. According to a DHS document the purpose of the study is to “understand the impact of the Homebase community prevention program on participant’s use of homeless shelters and use of mainstream services – which I think refers to HRA and ACS and other city agencies. The study also purports to be measuring the effectiveness of eviction prevention services.

The study proposes to do this by taking 400 people trying to get help from Homebase and splitting them into two groups – those in treatment and those in control. Those in treatment will

get help, those in control will be ineligible for Homebase help for two years. They are given a list of other places to try and get help.

If people in either the control group or the treatment group enter the shelter system they will be flagged and this event will be passed on to the researchers. This is the only outcome the study appears to be tracking. DHS indicates it will try and coordinate with HRA and ACS to see if any of the study participants received services from these agencies but there is nothing to indicate whether this was done or what data they are seeking from these agencies.

This methodology will not successfully answer the questions the study appears to be asking.

First, the study will determine the success and failure of Homebase looking at whether a family stays out of shelter. But families are given a list of other agencies which might help. Thus, a family in the control group may get assistance from a charity or a one-shot deal and avoid eviction. The fact that there are other programs providing some of the same services as Homebase doesn't mean Homebase is not effective it just means that eviction prevention can work. Or a family in the control group may be unable to get assistance anywhere and get evicted but not enter a shelter. They may end up on the street, in an illegal basement apartment with horrendous conditions or worse. Since they didn't enter shelter the study will assume that they avoided eviction thus wrongly indicating that they didn't need eviction prevention services.

By not tracking what happens to the families in the control group unless they enter shelter the study has no way of determining whether the eviction was prevented and how. Thus they cannot really determine whether Homebase is effective or not.

The study was also conducted in a sloppy manner which will put any results in question. People in the control group were given a list of other organization where they could go for help. There does not appear to be any coordination among the Homebase sites to create similarly useful lists. Some of the lists had our name, some did not. Some had phone numbers and contact information for groups some did not. One seemed to just give out directions to PATH and a list of realtors thus indicating to the participant that there was no way to avoid eviction. According to people I talked to some of the Homebase sites walked those in the control group over to other parts of their agencies to receive services thus making the likelihood of the person avoiding eviction much greater. Others just gave the letter and the list and sent the client off to fend for themselves, thus increasing the likelihood of homelessness.

DHS defends the study in part by saying the participants gave their consent. But the choice given was participate in the study and see if you are lucky enough to win the lottery and get help or don't get help at all. That is not voluntary consent.

Studies on human beings should be conducted extremely carefully and with strict protocols. The study should have a defined purpose and should establish that it will mean that purpose. This study does not seem to have a clear purpose nor does it seem it will provide any useful data. Today's NY Times article comparing this study to other studies is misleading and wrong. Medical studies conducted on people are usually done with new drugs or medical procedures. Eviction prevention programs are not new. I am not sure how this study is at all comparable to having videos in classrooms in India. Participants must also voluntarily consent – something not done in this study. I am not a social researcher but understand studies involving humans

need to be reviewed by an Institutional Review Board. I would ask the council to inquire with CUNY as to whether this procedure was followed.

Eviction prevention work is crucial and saves money. Keeping families out of shelters is not the humane thing to do it is cost effective thing to do. While I do not think the results of this study will result in any useful data I am concerned how the City will use it. Will the Homebases that actively helped families receive other services be penalized because the difference between their treatment and control groups utilizationization of shelter will be less that those who did little to assist? If the overall difference between control groups and treatments groups is not that great because the control group were able to get other eviction prevention program be used by the City as a rational to cut eviction prevention programs? And given the City's history of putting up road blocks for families seeking shelter will people control group be treated differently if they go to PATH?



City Council Hearing
General Welfare Committee
"Oversight: DHS' Homebase Study."
Thursday, December 9, 2010

Good afternoon. I am Seth Diamond, Commissioner of the Department of Homeless Services (DHS) and joining me on our panel today are representatives from two of the Nation's leading research institutions and accordingly, our partners in evaluating the City's community-based prevention program. Seated with me is Dr. John Mollenkopf, Distinguished Professor of Political Science and Sociology and Director of the Center for Urban Research at The Graduate Center of the City University of New York (CUNY), Gretchen Locke, Senior Associate at Abt Associates and Dr. Howard Rolston, Principal Associate and Researcher in the Social and Economic Policy Division at Abt Associates.

DHS has previously testified before the Council about the need to study prevention efforts and the importance of using proven strategies to fight homelessness in New York City. In fact, when the Public Advocate chaired this committee, then Councilman de Blasio discussed the need for funding proven prevention efforts rather than subsidizing new shelters. The City's Independent Budget Office (IBO) further presented this committee a report in 2008 which called on policymakers at Homeless Services to regularly evaluate the effectiveness of prevention programs throughout the City.

Additionally, following this hearing, I will submit testimony to this same committee regarding two pieces of legislation which seek to reinforce data, measurement and evaluation as the centerpiece of both the Bloomberg Administration and the New York City Council. These bills and my presence here today makes clear the correct intention of this body to use data to most effectively deliver services and spend tax-payer dollars. I'm pleased that we have these important values and goals in common.

I am also pleased to report that our groundbreaking study to evaluate the effects of community prevention services on the shelter system is now underway at the Department of Homeless Services. This study is proof of DHS' commitment to work with the Council to find and fight the causes of homelessness. It demonstrates in deed -- rather than words -- our dedication to advancing our mission to prevent homelessness whenever possible.

What is the Homebase study and why was it commissioned by DHS?

As explained to this Committee on several occasions, the Homebase service model began as a pilot with six offices in 2004 to help families and individuals overcome immediate housing issues that could result in becoming homeless. After an expansion of the prevention model, New Yorkers at-risk of homelessness now have 13 store-front locations throughout the five boroughs

to call on if they are experiencing a housing crisis. These offices are run by the most experienced and responsible providers in our City. It's the Catholic Charities of New York, HELP USA, Palladia, Partnership for the Homeless, Ridgewood Bushwick and CAMBA who partner with the City to invest in your communities and help New Yorkers remain in their homes.

Homebase represents a \$20 million annual investment of taxpayer dollars and gives New Yorkers at-risk of homelessness a community-based option to assist them in reaching self sufficiency. Homebase's comprehensive service model has been recognized by Harvard with the Ashe Center's *Innovations in American Government Award*, HUD and the American Planning Association's *Secretary's Opportunity & Empowerment Award*, and the National League of Cities' *Municipal Excellence Award* for its innovative packaging of benefits and services so that households at-risk of becoming homeless can "one-stop shop" for services to prevent homelessness. Homebase case managers have developed an expertise in the array of benefits and services available throughout the City that can help families quickly resolve their housing crisis.

The Homebase evaluation seeks to answer three central research questions:

1. What is the impact of Homebase prevention services on subsequent shelter utilization?
2. Is Homebase cost effective compared to shelter costs?
3. Is Homebase effective in linking clients to mainstream programs?

The agency worked with CUNY Professor John Mollenkopf to plan this program impact study. CUNY hired Abt Associates, one of the leading research firms in the country to help us learn everything we can about what works at Homebase and how to maximize the programs impact. Abt Associates assigned Howard Rolston, Ph.D. to the project. Dr. Rolston is a highly regarded social researcher who changed the way federal programs for children and families are evaluated. In fact, Dr. Rolston spearheaded the use of innovative research techniques as a senior official at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) for over three decades.

Dr. Rolston and his colleagues at Abt designed an evaluation that uses a randomized process to study Homebase services. This study design has been fully endorsed by leading researchers in the field of homelessness from Columbia University, the University of Pennsylvania, Vanderbilt University and the Urban Institute. It has also been endorsed by our community partners in this process at Homebase, whom your offices regularly consult with. I am pleased to have their letters of support and endorsements which I have appended at the conclusion of my testimony.

How is the study being conducted?

From June to September of this year, 400 households were enrolled in two groups – 200 in the treatment group and 200 in the control group. Researchers will follow the study participants for

the next two years to determine their patterns of shelter use, employment status and use of work supports.

In implementing this study, Abt Associates made sure that the highest ethical and legal standards were met. To start off, the study design was reviewed and approved by the Abt Institutional Review Board (IRB), a committee whose sole responsibility, as established by Federal guidelines, is to ensure that the welfare and rights of study participants are fully protected. When it came time to implement the random assignment process, Abt staff conducted extensive training at our community-based Homebase offices and provided technical assistance to front-line staff.

Staff received training on the proper procedures for obtaining informed consent from study participants, how to make referrals, assuring confidentiality, and how to handle grievances. Consent forms were available in three languages, English, Spanish and Creole. Homebase staff carefully explained the study process to each applicant, emphasizing that they did not have to participate in the study but could receive referrals to other community resources located throughout the City that could assist them in remaining stably housed.

I want take a moment here to explain some details about the evaluation. First you should know that Homebase has limited funding and cannot fully serve all of its current applicants. In fact, over the course of a year, approximately 1,500 applicants cannot receive the full spectrum of services that Homebase has to offer. Those applicants do however receive information and referrals to other well known community-based resources to assist them. Let me be clear, we did not reduce the number of people served for the sake of this study. Instead of referring people to other city-wide services when Homebase caseloads fill up -- which as I just explained, they do throughout the year -- this summer, we randomly determined those who will receive Homebase services. In September, when the study enrollment process was completed, we went back to allocating resources the way we always do -- by giving "overflow" applicants information and referral on where else they may obtain services throughout the City.

Similarly, the control group members received an extensive listing of existing city-wide services such as well-known community resources like the Legal Aid Society and the Human Resources Administration (HRA) to obtain emergency funds to prevent eviction as well as assistance from other not-for-profit organizations throughout the City.

Some have asked us why individuals who did not consent to participate in the study did not receive Homebase services, but were instead provided with a listing of services available in the community. This methodology is routinely used in other evaluations of social services.

For example, HUD and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) jointly funded a study to examine the impact of providing existing HOPWA (Housing Opportunity for Persons with Aids) rental assistance for homeless people living with HIV. Those assigned to the treatment group received immediate HOPWA housing assistance. Both control group members and those refusing to participate in the study did not receive HOPWA's housing assistance but did receive the usual housing and case management services available to them in the community.

Data generated through examinations of intervention services like the study I just mentioned will undoubtedly improve service delivery throughout this City and the Nation.

Conclusion

For the past six years, the Department has carefully monitored and publicly reported on Homebase's outcomes. Data is also always available through the monthly reports incorporated in the Mayor's Management Report (MMR) and the City-wide Performance Report (CPR). This data includes the success rate of those who use Homebase services and avoid shelter. While these results are impressive, our current data does not however, answer the critical question of whether or not we are assisting the clients who would have entered shelter if they had not received Homebase services.

Homeless services in New York City have potential for great transformation. There is no question that we are on the correct course to combat homelessness, as we know it today. However, moving forward requires partners with expertise to produce the most accurate evidence-based data, as well as the courage and support from the community to take the steps necessary to identify strategies that will truly make a difference in the lives of New Yorkers. We have the opportunity to shift from a system of spending billions of dollars to build and maintain shelters in more and more communities throughout New York City, to a system of solutions.

I am counting on your commitment to progress which will lead to support in this endeavor.



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December 1, 2010

Seth Diamond, Commissioner
New York City Department of Homeless Services
33 Beaver Street, 17th Floor
New York, NY 10003

Dear Commissioner Diamond:

I am writing to support DHS' use of a randomized field trial to test the efficacy of the Homebase program (community-based homelessness prevention). As a researcher in this field, I can assure you that there is no other method that can conclusively demonstrate whether or not this program is efficacious, and therefore deserves to continue, or even expand. Those of us in this field have long called for a more prevention-oriented approach to homelessness assistance, believing it will be more effective and cost-effective. However, it is an area fraught with targeting challenges. Some believe that community-based prevention is the only way to reduce homelessness; others believe that it can't be targeted effectively at a community level, and must be eligible only to newly homeless households. Both arguments have merit. Yet, until there is an experimental test of this approach, we won't know for sure whether successes are achieved because of this program, or because of the people who seek it out, or even because of the selective behaviors of providers who decide whom to serve (sometimes through subtle and unstated decision rules). Scholars have urged the federal government to test this experimentally for the last several years. Indeed, in response, HUD has recently contracted with the Urban Institute to develop a study methodology similar to what is being done in New York now, and which they will presumably implement in the near future. A randomized field trial is the gold-standard of evidence in the social sciences, education, health, and human services.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dennis P. Culhane".

Dennis P. Culhane, Ph.D.
Professor of Social Policy



VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY

*Marybeth (Beth) Shinn, Professor and Chair,
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Box 90, Peabody College of Education & Human Development
Nashville, TN 37203-5701
beth.shinn@vanderbilt.edu*

Seth Diamond
Commissioner
New York City Department of Homeless Services
33 Beaver Street, 17th Floor
New York, NY 10003
December 1, 2010

Dear Commissioner Diamond:

I am writing with respect to the evaluation of the Homebase prevention program.

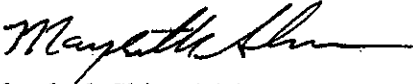
A number of years ago I co-authored an article evaluating the status of evidence about programs to prevent homelessness and concluded that, although programs might do useful things to help needy people, there was little evidence that they actually prevented people from becoming homeless. The problem is that it is very hard to show that something has been prevented. Some program designers have argued that if people who get services do not show up in shelter, the services must have been effective. However, most poor people, even desperately poor people, do not go to shelter. If the only evidence is what happens to people who are served, a program could be made to seem even more effective by giving the services to people who don't need them. The situation has improved little since then. We now have experimental evidence from the national welfare voucher study (a randomized experiment) that giving people section 8 vouchers prevents homelessness, but that is a very expensive intervention, and Congress has not funded nearly enough vouchers to serve everyone who is eligible. Whether or not less expensive short-term help suffices to prevent homelessness is thus a pressing question, and a rigorous evaluation of promising prevention programs, such as Homebase, is long overdue.

The best way to establish whether a prevention program works is to randomly assign people who meet program criteria to receive the services or not, and to follow them to understand what happens to them. To what extent are episodes of homelessness prevented? To what extent are they merely postponed a few months at considerable cost? To what extent do people who fail to receive services (but who are energetic and savvy enough to seek them out) avoid homelessness in other ways? A randomized trial, the methodology being used in New York City's evaluation of Homebase, is the gold standard methodology for answering such questions.

People sometimes argue that random assignment is unfair because not everyone who needs services gets served. We allocate services to people differentially all the time – by geography, by serving people who apply until money runs out, by following service providers' hunches about who will benefit. Homebase has never been able to serve all who apply. When there are not enough funds to serve everyone a lottery (among needy people) is arguably the fairest way to allocate services. And a lottery is essentially random assignment, allowing us to learn whether services work as intended.

The taxpayers of New York City deserve to know whether their investment in preventing homelessness works. The Homebase evaluation will provide rigorous evidence about whether such targeted, community-based efforts succeed. Like most researchers in the area, I fervently hope that the answer is yes, so that policy makers will be motivated to continue to invest in this program. But if the program is not effective, we need to know that too, so that we can try other approaches that may work better. Either way, the Homebase evaluation will contribute in important ways to the ultimate reduction of homelessness in New York and elsewhere.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Marybeth Shinn".

Marybeth Shinn, Ph.D.



Columbia University
MAILMAN SCHOOL
OF PUBLIC HEALTH

CENTER FOR HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION STUDIES • Carol Caton, PhD
Director

October 2, 2010

To the editor:

Re: "Officials slam 'callous' Dept of Homeless Services program that uses 200 families as test subjects" (October 1).

The Department of Homeless Services acted correctly and responsibly in subjecting the program here to rigorous independent evaluation. Housing is too important to go ahead with a program without finding out whether it really helps the people who need it.

And the Department's evaluation is no "Tuskegee experiment." Everything in this experiment has been vetted by independent bodies to make sure it meets strict federal guidelines on how people in experiments should be respected.

Just as we would not want to trust our own health and that of our families to medicines that have not been shown to be safe and effective, the city should not blindly gamble on untested programs when it tries to assist its most vulnerable citizens.

But that is just what they would be doing if they did not try to make sure that programs actually work. Now, that would be callous.

Sincerely,

Carol Caton

Carol Caton, Professor of Clinical Public Health, Columbia University

Brendan O'Flaherty

Dan O'Flaherty, Professor of Economics, Columbia University

The authors have occasionally evaluated DHS programs and will probably do so in the future.



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Arnold S. Cohen
President & CEO

Jessye Norman
National Spokesperson

VIA FACSIMILE AND REGULAR MAIL

December 8, 2010

Hon. Annabel Palma
Chairperson
Committee on General Welfare
The New York City Council
250 Broadway – Suite 1781
New York, New York 10007

Re: Evaluation of the City's HomeBase Program

Dear Councilmember Palma:

For nearly three decades, we've been at the forefront of providing services and support to individuals and families who are homeless or are at-risk of becoming homeless, working with some of the most vulnerable New Yorkers: families with children, older adults and individuals living with HIV and AIDS. Over this time, we've also been witness to a myriad of efforts by the City to deal with homelessness - efforts that have largely focused on shelter and other emergency, stop-gap measures. Attempting to solve the problem has been virtually ignored. There has been little or no regard for rigorous analysis of what drives people to lose their homes in the first place, and no significant efforts to implement data-driven solutions to address these drivers.

As a result, policies and practices have relied on anecdotal information, at best. Programs have not been evaluated to test their efficacy and, certainly, replicable 'best practice' models have not been developed.

Surely, over several administrations, the City collected data about who uses the shelter system. But without focusing on the important question of "why", the City's responses have often ignored causation – and, as we see, the problem has only continued to grow.

We're hopeful that this is now changing, if only in a limited context.

We know that the Department of Homeless Services has begun to acknowledge the need for engaging in evidence-based program development. One of the agency's first steps along this path is the recently-concluded study of the impact of its HomeBase programs. This study was designed by

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and done in collaboration with CUNY's Center for Urban Research University, and employed a randomized study design - a design which is among the most effective at determining the impact of services. And we're hopeful that the results of this study will be analyzed with an eye toward developing "best practice" models of prevention and funding more robust models.

So, while we certainly share the concerns of the City Council about conducting social science research, especially when human beings are involved, we should not assail the City for conducting the study, but instead determine whether they employed the necessary safeguards and followed ethical guidelines.

So, for example, it will be important to understand the types of review undertaken prior to its implementation. Who was involved in the study design? Was there external review of the design to insure that it met acceptable levels of care for study participants? What randomization scheme was used and what were the reasons for doing so?

Additionally, we need to know what families were told about the study, about their ability to opt out of the study, and the impact, if any, of their decision to opt out. What alternatives were established to minimize the harm to those families placed in the comparison group? Were criteria established to determine when families placed in the comparison group could receive enhanced services to prevent them from experiencing irreversible harm?

The City's historical approach to ending homelessness has clearly not worked. Fresh ideas, based on evidence of what causes homelessness are needed if we are to begin to truly change the public perception that homelessness is simply an inevitable part of our urban landscape.

Given that our resources are limited, particularly now, those resources should be directed toward the most effective solutions. Rigorous studies, conducted with the proper safeguards, are an important tool in deciding which solutions should be given priority. While we must hold the City accountable for employing these safeguards, we should also support their desire to develop evidence-based programming.

If you have any further questions, please feel free to speak with me.

Sincerely,



Arnold S. Cohen
President & CEO



December 8, 2010

Seth Diamond
New York City Department of Homeless Services
33 Beaver Street
New York, NY

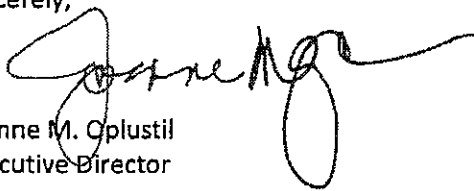
Dear Commissioner Diamond:

As practitioners in homelessness prevention, we understand and support the efforts of DHS to evaluate program models in an effort to ensure that clients receive the best and most effective services. In an era of limited resources, we share DHS' desire to target services to those most at risk. Yet, targeting prevention services continues to be a great challenge. We know that we are highly successful with the clients we serve; over 90 percent do not enter shelter. We do not know, however, if these clients would have entered shelter without our services. We also don't know what happens to the clients that we cannot serve due to resource limitations. It is only through a carefully designed and implemented random assignment study that we will ever know just how successful we are at actually reducing homelessness.

In our opinion, Abt Associates, the research firm contracted to conduct the study, the Department of Homeless Services and the staff at our local offices have exhibited a high level of professionalism in conducting the study. Prior to implementing the study, our staff received extensive training about study recruitment and consent to participate. It is our hope and expectation that the study will provide evidence of the efficacy of our services and thus may support an expansion of services. For this reason, we fully support the City of New York in undertaking this study.

The Homebase program began in 2005. From the beginning, this has been a learning collaboration between DHS and not-for-profit organizations such as ours. This evaluation is the logical next step in our common quest to find the answer to the question "what works and for whom."

Sincerely,


Joanne M. Oplustil
Executive Director

Martha R. Burt
Affiliated Scholar

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Seth Diamond
Commissioner
New York City Department of Homeless Services
33 Beaver Street, 17th Floor
New York, NY 10003

December 2, 2010

Dear Commissioner Diamond:

As a scholar in the field of social science, I am acutely aware of the need to conduct rigorous evaluation to determine what works. Random assignment studies, more than any other type of analysis, helps us to know whether the intervention truly makes a difference and for whom. That is why random assignment has been widely used in social science research over the past 25 years. It has helped build a solid foundation of evidence about the effectiveness of government-funded interventions in many areas of social policy, including job training, home visitation, and teen pregnancy prevention.

We believe that a rigorous examination of homelessness prevention is long overdue. We are pleased that the City of New York is undertaking this study, which we have called for on the federal level for many years. Random assignment, the methodology employed in the New York City study of the Homebase program, is the gold standard in program evaluation and is the same method long used by the Food and Drug Administration to assess the efficacy of new drugs, devices, or medical procedures. If random assignment is highly desirable for some types of evaluation, it is absolutely essential for testing an intervention that is trying to *prevent* something. Only through random assignment studies will we ever be able to document true homelessness prevention.

Given current funding constraints at the federal, state and local levels, it is more important than ever for public officials to build knowledge so that spending decisions are based not only on good intentions but on strong evidence that targeted investments will yield desired results.

Sincerely,



Martha R. Burt, Ph.D.



*City Council Hearing
General Welfare Committee
"Intro. XXX: Census Reporting Legislation"
Thursday, December 9, 2010*

Good afternoon. I am Seth Diamond, Commissioner of the Department of Homeless Services (DHS). I appreciate the opportunity to speak to you today about the various populations DHS serves and our public reporting process.

Increasing transparency and making data available to a broad audience is a trademark of the Bloomberg Administration. Since 2002, City agencies have made a marked improvement in making information about city services widely available. DHS is among the most transparent of all City agencies as demonstrated by the more than 300 data points reported both on our website and on www.nyc.gov.

Moreover, DHS provides a "Daily Report" detailing the DHS shelter census and clients engaged in other DHS services. We refer to it as the daily report because we update it each business day to provide the most timely information available. The report can easily be accessed through two different access points on the DHS website, including the homepage.

Additionally, the Department of Homeless Services regularly reports a great deal of supplementary information to the Council. On a monthly basis, DHS provides the Council with the *Homeless Management Emergency System*, better known as the *HOMES* report, outlining the homeless family census and length of stays, as well as the *Flex Fund* update which describes the financial assistance provided by Homebase through the use of the DHS created fund to assist those who were affected by the Section 8 shortfall. As you know, the Agency's *Critical Activities Report* (CAR) is also updated publicly on our website and reflects a vast number of indicators including population, length of stay, housing placements, facility operation, safety and cleanliness among others.

Quarterly, as required by §21-311, DHS reports on our hotline statistics as well as housing placements, and length of stay disaggregated by population. Also quarterly, as required by §612, DHS reports to Council the outreach and non-shelter population housing placements. Annually, as required by §19-613, the Agency reports all transitional housing including the name and borough of shelters, capacity and operator status also disaggregated by population.

Conclusion:

Thank you for the opportunity to allow me to discuss this process with you. While I do not believe that legislation is necessary in this instance, DHS will continue to be transparent and responsive to this Committee's requests.



City Council Hearing
General Welfare Committee
“Intro. 395: Rental Assistance Reporting Legislation”
Thursday, December 9, 2010

Thank you, members of the General Welfare Committee, for the opportunity to testify before you this afternoon regarding the rental assistance tracking and reporting legislation introduced by Chair Palma and Public Advocate de Blasio. I’m Seth Diamond, Commissioner of the Department of Homeless Services (DHS) and I’m pleased to be joined today by my colleague and DHS’ partner in serving the clients of the City’s shelter system, Robert Doar, Commissioner of the Human Resources Administration (HRA).

Employment is the cornerstone of successful welfare policy and now employment assistance and placement is a critical component of the City’s efforts to help move homeless families and individuals in temporary emergency shelter back to independence. Together, Commissioner Doar and my predecessor at Homeless Services, Commissioner Hess, testified before this committee in April of this year to announce modifications to the Advantage rental assistance program. The revised requirements are consistent with the City’s successful cash assistance program.

As you know, HRA’s East River Job Center and HRA’s employment vendors have been valuable resources to homeless households in this undertaking every day, providing clients with tools to maximize the Advantage rental supplements and help them return to homes in the community. The job center has facilitated 8,714 job placements – which is 17 percent more clients placed than at the same time last year. The East River Job Center is on pace to achieve nearly 10,000 job placements by the end of 2010. Moving that many shelter clients to employment is quite a remarkable achievement. East River has been the highest placing job center of all of the HRA centers for five consecutive years. There is no question that people in shelter can work and want to work.

Over 21,000 households have exited the DHS shelter system on Advantage. Less than 10 percent of those families and individuals who completed two years of Advantage have returned to shelter. Together, DHS and HRA continue to move families out of shelter and towards self-sufficiency.

As I have just explained in my prior testimony regarding data collection, one of the primary tenets of this administration has been to increase access to information about City services and be transparent with the public. Tracking and reporting data has been a central component of the work both DHS and HRA carry out on a daily basis. To bolster efforts to provide public information to New Yorkers, the DHS website contains over 300 data points, many of which are updated on a daily basis to reflect real time data within our system. Additionally, the HRA web

site displays key statistics on both caseload dynamics as well as agency performance on the programs it administers. In addition, the Citywide Performance Report (CPR) at www.nyc.gov not only provides monthly updates on a series of critical performance measures for all city agencies including DHS and HRA.

Conclusion:

Since the program's inception, both DHS and HRA have provided data and outcomes to the City Council. We will continue to be responsive to your requests.

Commissioner Doar and I look forward to your questions.

Testimony of
Coalition for the Homeless
and
The Legal Aid Society

on

**How the City of New York Reports Data About Homelessness and
Rental Assistance Programs, and
the City's Evaluation Study of the Homebase Program**

Presented before

The New York City Council,
Committee on General Welfare

Patrick Markee, Senior Policy Analyst
Coalition for the Homeless

Jane Sujen Bock and Joshua Goldfein, Senior Staff Attorneys
Homeless Rights Project
The Legal Aid Society

December 9, 2010

Coalition for the Homeless and the Legal Aid Society welcome this opportunity to testify before the New York City Council in support of legislation that would require the City of New York to report full and accurate data about homelessness and rental assistance programs, and to offer our views of the City's controversial and misguided evaluation study of the Homebase program.

About the Coalition and the Legal Aid Society

Coalition for the Homeless: Coalition for the Homeless, founded in 1981, is a not-for-profit advocacy and direct services organization that assists more than 3,000 homeless New Yorkers each day. The Coalition advocates for proven, cost-effective solutions to the crisis of modern homelessness, which now continues past its third decade. The Coalition also struggles to protect the rights of homeless people through litigation around the right to emergency shelter, the right to vote, and appropriate housing and services for homeless people living with mental illness and HIV/AIDS.

The Coalition operates twelve direct-services programs that both offer vital services to homeless, at-risk, and low-income New Yorkers, and demonstrate effective, long-term solutions. These programs include supportive housing for families and individuals living with AIDS, a job-training program for homeless and formerly-homeless women, a Rental Assistance Program which provides rent subsidies and support services to help working homeless individuals rent private-market apartments, and apartment buildings in Manhattan which provide permanent housing for formerly-homeless families and individuals. Our summer sleep-away camp and after-school program help hundreds of homeless children each year. The Coalition's mobile soup kitchen distributes more than 900 nutritious meals to street homeless and hungry New Yorkers each night. Finally, our Crisis Intervention Department assists more than 1,000 homeless and at-risk households each month with eviction prevention assistance, client advocacy, referrals for shelter and emergency food programs, and assistance with public benefits.

The Coalition also represents homeless men and women as plaintiffs in Callahan v. Carey and Eldredge v. Koch. In 1981 the City and State entered into a consent decree in Callahan in which it was agreed that, "The City defendants shall provide shelter and board to each homeless man who applies for it provided that (a) the man meets the need standard to qualify for the home relief program established in New York State; or (b) the man by reason to physical, mental or social dysfunction is in need of temporary shelter." The Callahan consent decree and Eldredge case also guarantee basic standards for shelters for homeless men and women. Pursuant to the decree, the Coalition serves as court-appointed monitor of municipal shelters for homeless adults.

The Legal Aid Society: The Legal Aid Society, the nation's oldest and largest not-for-profit legal services organization, is more than a law firm for clients who cannot afford to pay for counsel. It is an indispensable component of the legal, social, and economic fabric of New York City – passionately advocating for low-income individuals and families across a variety of civil, criminal and juvenile rights matters, while also fighting for legal reform.

The Legal Aid Society has performed this role in City, State and federal courts since 1876. It does so by capitalizing on the diverse expertise, experience, and capabilities of 850 of the brightest legal minds. These 850 Legal Aid Society lawyers work with 600 social workers, investigators, paralegals and support and administrative staff. Through a network of borough, neighborhood, and courthouse offices in 25 locations in New York City, the Society provides comprehensive legal services in all five boroughs of New York City for clients who cannot afford to pay for private counsel.

The Society's legal program operates three major practices — Civil, Criminal and Juvenile Rights — and receives volunteer help from law firms, corporate law departments and expert consultants that is coordinated by the Society's Pro Bono program. With its annual caseload of more than 300,000 legal matters, the Legal Aid Society takes on more cases for more clients than any other legal services organization in the United States. And it brings a depth and breadth of perspective that is unmatched in the legal profession.

The Legal Aid Society's unique value is an ability to go beyond any one case to create more equitable outcomes for individuals and broader, more powerful systemic change for society as a whole. In addition to the annual caseload of 300,000 individual cases and legal matters, the Society's law reform representation for clients benefits some 2 million low income families and individuals in New York City and the landmark rulings in many of these cases have a State-wide and national impact.

Intro. 395:

Requiring the City of New York to Share Data about the Advantage Program and Other Rent Subsidy Programs

With some changes that we will recommend to the committee, we strongly support Intro. 395, a bill which would require the City to report information and data about the Advantage program and other City-administered rental assistance programs.

Since it was launched three years ago, there has been a lingering and fundamental dispute about the effectiveness of the Advantage program – a program which provides only two years or less of rental assistance and which is the City's primary tool for re-housing homeless New Yorkers. On the one hand, Bloomberg administration officials tout the program as an unqualified success and claim that only a small percentage of Advantage households have returned to the municipal shelter system.

On the other hand, people working on the front lines, shelter providers, eviction prevention service providers, legal services organizations, local elected officials, landlords, and affected families themselves see a dramatically different reality. We all see a program that is, by design, destined to fail vulnerable children and adults by cutting them off of rental assistance when they lack incomes sufficient to afford apartment rents. We see a program under which large numbers of former Advantage recipients have become homeless again, with many of them forced to seek shelter again. And we don't believe that the administration's claims about the success of the program are credible. This is especially true because the administration fails to describe how many Advantage households out of

those not receiving rental assistance of any kind have fallen back into homelessness – because ultimately that is the only way to evaluate the success of a time-limited subsidy like the Advantage program.

In the midst of this three-year-old debate, Bloomberg administration officials have consistently and stubbornly refused to provide basic data and information about the outcomes of the program, data that the administration already has in its possession. In fact, to date, City officials have never publicly revealed the number of Advantage households that have returned to the municipal shelter system – one of several fundamental measures of the success of the program, though not the only one. Indeed, we understand that the Department of Homeless Services has even refused requests for this information from this very City Council committee, which has oversight over the program, as well as from other public officials at the State and local level.

Even though the City is spending millions of dollars on the Advantage program and imposing increasingly more restrictive conditions on recipients, the Department of Homeless Services has released precious little data relating to the stability of families once they leave the Advantage program. The attached graph and table – which was compiled from data manually tabulated from printouts provided by DHS pursuant to freedom of information law (FOIL) requests from the Legal Aid Society -- show an alarming increase in re-applications for shelter from families who were previously in Advantage apartments.

The DHS data establishes that from April 2007 (the start of the Advantage program) through September 2010:

- 3,144 re-applications for shelter were filed by families who previously had Advantage apartments.
- 1,401 of those applications resulted in determinations that the family was eligible for shelter.

In addition, the graphed data shows that the number of Advantage families applying for shelter has been increasing sharply since the spring of 2009, as more and more families' Advantage one- or two-year subsidies expire.

This graph illustrates exactly why it is so important for the City Council to require DHS to provide data necessary to evaluate the effectiveness of this taxpayer-funded program. It took Legal Aid staff members four FOIL requests, several follow-up requests, multiple copying fees, and dozens and dozens of hours to manually count, tabulate, and confirm the data contained in the graph. This data relating to whether formerly homeless families can maintain their apartment once they lose their Advantage subsidies should be central to any decisions on how to modify or extend the Advantage programs or explore alternative means of stabilizing homeless families in permanent housing, and yet none of this data was made publicly available at the time that DHS determined last summer to drastically decrease the availability of the Advantage program and the amount of the subsidy.

It is also important to point out that the numbers above undoubtedly include multiple applications filed by the same family, since DHS routinely finds families ineligible for shelter before conceding their eligibility, as this committee knows from testimony presented at a recent oversight hearing. Because of the way that the City produces the FOIL data, it is impossible for us to determine the actual number of families who re-applied and who were found eligible, which is why a reporting bill is critically needed.

Another way to look at the dramatic re-application and eligibility rates of former Advantage families is by compiling the "summary" data that appears at the end of each of the four data sets that DHS produced pursuant to FOIL. According to these summaries (re-printed below), between April 1, 2007 and October 15, 2010, there were

- 2,069 "reapplications" of families with prior Advantage exits, and
- 1,298 "eligible families".

Since these numbers are lower than the total number of applications and total number of eligible applications listed in each data set, they appear to represent the number of unique (or unduplicated) families who applied and were found eligible in each period. Again, since DHS has not publicly reported these measures in a transparent way, a reporting bill is needed so that the Advantage program may be properly evaluated.

Recently we were also able to obtain a Department of Homeless Services report, never made available to the public, which includes similarly troubling outcomes data (through September 30, 2010) about the Advantage program. The DHS Advantage outcomes report confirms the Legal Aid Society analysis of documents produced pursuant to a FOIL request. This data summarized is in the table presented here.

ADVANTAGE PROGRAM OUTCOMES THROUGH SEPT. 30, 2010	
(Source: DHS report on Advantage program through 9/30/2010)	
Advantage families who've applied for shelter	1,613
Advantage families deemed eligible for shelter	1,111
Advantage families not receiving Advantage subsidy	6,271
Advantage families with Section 8 vouchers	1,744
Total Advantage families with no rental assistance (no Advantage subsidy or Section 8 voucher)	4,527
Percent of Advantage families with no rental assistance who've applied for shelter	35.6%
Percent of Advantage families with no rental assistance deemed eligible for shelter	24.5%

All in all, the information obtained from the DHS Advantage outcomes report suggests that at least one of every four Advantage households who are not receiving rental assistance has returned to the shelter system. And at least one of every three such Advantage households has applied for emergency shelter.

Simply put, this is an alarming failure rate for a program that is only three years old and is the centerpiece of the City's approach to rising homelessness.

For this reason among others, we strongly support legislation that will require the City to make public basic data and information about not only the Advantage program, but also other rental assistance programs administered by the City. We believe that, in its current version, Intro. 395 is a major step in that direction. However, we believe the bill can be significantly improved in order to ensure that complete and accurate data is made available to the public, and we will recommend such changes to the committee in a separate communication.

Intro. 444:

Requiring the City of New York to Provide Accurate and Complete Data about the Number of Homeless People Residing in Municipal Shelters

With some changes that we will recommend to the committee, some of which are discussed below, we also strongly support Intro. 444, a bill which would require the City of New York to report accurate and complete data about the number of homeless people residing in municipal shelters – something which the City currently fails to do.

It is vitally important that municipal government agencies report accurate and comprehensive information to New York City residents about major public policy issues like homelessness. The City of New York's agency websites and the City Charter-mandated Mayor's Management Report are two prominent examples of how the City communicates vital information to students, the news media, researchers, and policymakers, as well as to the general public. And the City has an obligation to ensure that this information is accurate, complete, and free of error.

It is therefore troubling that the City has failed to meet this obligation with regards to information about homelessness. Indeed, in recent years the Department of Homeless Services has excluded important data about homelessness in New York City from its website and its publicly-available reports, including the Mayor's Management Report. These incomplete reports create the false impression that the homeless shelter population in New York City is smaller than it actually is.

The following examples illustrate how DHS provides incomplete, misleading data to New York City residents.

1. Inaccurate data reported on the DHS website:

Earlier this autumn the DHS website reported that, on the night of November 1, 2010,

there were 36,217 “total individuals” residing in municipal shelters (see copy of DHS “Daily Report” for that date attached). This figure included 14,540 children and 8,386 single adults.

However, DHS reports obtained by Coalition for the Homeless – reports which are not made available to the general public and which are not posted on DHS’s website – report a significantly larger shelter population, illustrated in the table here. (See copies of these DHS reports attached.)

NYC Homelessness Data:		
Comparison of Incomplete NYC Department of Homeless Services Reports and Actual Homeless Shelter Census Reports		
	DHS "Daily Report" 11/1/2010	DHS census reports 10/31/2010
Total Homeless Shelter Population	36,217	37,987
Number of Homeless Families	9,452	9,696
Number of Homeless Children	14,540	14,982
Number of Homeless Adults in Families	13,291	13,743
Number of Homeless Single Adults	8,386	9,262
	Mayor's Management Report, FY 2010	DHS census reports, FY 2008-FY 2010
FY 2008 Average Daily Census of Single Adults	6,737	6,850
FY 2009 Average Daily Census of Single Adults	6,526	7,078
FY 2010 Average Daily Census of Single Adults	7,167	7,901

For the night of October 31, 2010 – only one night before the DHS website’s report – the total shelter population was actually at least 37,987 people. This more comprehensive and accurate figure includes 14,982 children and 9,262 single adults. (Unfortunately a direct comparison between both dates is impossible because DHS does not post a “Daily Report” on its website for every day and does not archive past reports. For instance, as of yesterday, December 8th, DHS’s website still had the “Daily Report” for November 26th)

In short, DHS’s website inaccurately reports a municipal homeless shelter population that is at least 5 percent smaller than the actual population. That is, DHS fails to report on at least one of every twenty municipal shelter residents in New York City.

Why is the shelter census reported on DHS’s website at least 5 percent lower than the

more comprehensive figure included in non-public DHS reports? This is because the DHS website routinely excludes data about more than a dozen municipal homeless shelters and their residents. The excluded shelters include “safe haven” shelters for long-term street homeless individuals; shelters for homeless veterans; and shelters for homeless families administered by the NYC Department of Housing Preservation and Development (HPD). (Note that data about HPD shelters has been included in every homeless family census report issued by the City since the early 1980s.)

On October 31st, for instance, there were 478 homeless people residing in “safe haven” shelters, 373 homeless people in veterans shelters, and 207 homeless families (with 419 children and 418 adults) in HPD shelters. In addition, DHS administers another group of shelters for homeless single adults, called “stabilization beds,” whose data has never been publicly reported, meaning that the actual number of homeless people in municipal shelters is even larger than what is discussed here.

Thus, when the general public, news media, and policymakers visit the DHS website they are falsely informed – even on the site’s home page – that the municipal homeless shelter population is nearly 2,000 people smaller than it actually is. This is the reason why the New York Times and other news organizations have in recent years reported a smaller homeless shelter population than the true number, thus inadvertently misinforming New Yorkers about the genuine scale of the homeless population in New York City.

2. Inaccurate data in the Mayor’s Management Report:

The City Charter-mandated Mayor’s Management Report (MMR) also includes incomplete, misleading data about the size of the homeless shelter population.

For example, the MMR for FY 2010 reports that the “average number of single adults in shelter each day” in FY 2008 was 6,737 people and in FY 2009 was 6,526 people, suggesting that the average number of homeless single adults in shelter each night declined by 3.1 percent during that period.

However, like the DHS website, the MMR does not include data for homeless single adults residing in City-administered “safe haven” shelters and veterans shelters. In fact, when data for these shelters is included, the average number of homeless single adults in FY 2008 was 6,850 people and in FY 2009 was 7,078 people. Thus, the average number of homeless single adults residing in shelters actually increased by 3.3 percent during that period, not the decrease falsely claimed by the incomplete MMR data.

Similarly, the MMR reports a FY 2010 average shelter census of 7,167 homeless single adults, and thus claims an increase from the previous year of 641 adults, a 10 percent increase. However, DHS census reports that include “safe haven” shelters and veterans shelters show a larger average census of 7,901 adults in FY 2010. And the increase from the previous year was larger – up 823 adults, a 12 percent increase.

The arbitrary exclusion of data about “safe haven” shelters and veterans shelters is particularly troubling because many of those facilities are actually longstanding municipal shelters for adults that have merely been given a different label and, in some instances, a different service model – and are actually included in past MMR data, thus distorting the historical accuracy and comparability of the City’s data. In recent years DHS officials have repeatedly spoken to the news media and at City Council hearings about both “safe haven” and veterans shelters, making their exclusion from the MMR even more puzzling. In addition, as noted above DHS administers another group of shelters for homeless single adults, called “stabilization beds,” whose data has never been publicly reported, meaning that the actual number of homeless single adults in municipal shelters is even larger than the figure cited above.

3. Additional municipal shelters for homeless New Yorkers:

In addition, the City has never provided complete and accurate reporting about homeless New Yorkers residing in municipal shelters which are not directly administered by the Department of Homeless Services – but which, like the HPD shelters described above, may have homeless people who were referred by DHS. And many of the agencies that administer those shelters fail to provide accurate and complete data about those facilities.

As this committee knows, for various historical and programmatic reasons the City provides shelter and other services to some specific sub-populations of homeless people through agencies other than DHS. These include:

- Shelter for victims of domestic violence, which is administered by the Human Resources Administration;
- Shelter (including emergency and so-called transitional housing) for homeless people living with HIV/AIDS, which is administered by HRA’s HIV/AIDS Services Administration; and
- Shelter for homeless youth, which is administered by the Department of Youth and Community Development.

(And, as noted above, the Department of Housing Preservation and Development administers shelters for people who become homeless due to fire, flood, or vacate order.)

Finally, DHS itself administers or plays a significant role in the provision of overnight accommodations for homeless people through two other programs: drop-in centers and so-called faith-based shelters. Data and information about those programs ought to be made public as well.

No one disputes that the children and adults residing in these taxpayer-funded and City-administered shelters are homeless. Nevertheless, for reasons having more to do with

agency labels and acronyms than with good public policy, their numbers have never been reported in a complete and accurate way.

Mayor Bloomberg and administration officials have, on many occasions, lauded the value of basing public policy on data and research, and the importance of measuring the results of City policies and practices. We agree strongly with these principles. And we believe that it does a disservice to New York City residents to provide them with misleading information about major problems like homelessness.

For this reason among others, we strongly support legislation that will require the City to make public accurate and complete data about homeless people residing in municipal shelters. We believe that, in its current version, Intro. 444 is a major step in that direction. However, as noted above, we believe the bill can be significantly enhanced to ensure that complete and accurate data about homelessness is made available to the public, and we will recommend such changes to the committee in a separate communication.

The City's Controversial and Misguided Evaluation Study of the Homebase Program

In closing, we welcome the opportunity to share our views of the City's controversial and misguided evaluation study of the seven-year-old Homebase program – a study that has resulted in 200 needy, at-risk families who sought help from the City being denied homelessness prevention services for at least two years. The study is, simply put, unethical and poorly-designed, and could and should have been conducted in a way that does not cause harm to vulnerable children and families.

The City's Homebase study was the subject of a September 29th article in the New York Daily News which reported that, as part of the study, some 200 vulnerable, at-risk households have been denied homelessness prevention services for up to two years as a "control group"; another 200 families were provided with prevention services. The Daily News article (please see copy attached) described one of the families who had applied for Homebase services and denied help for two years:

Single mother Angie Almodovar wasn't too pleased when she got the one-page form letter in August.

"It was like playing Russian roulette," said Almodovar, 27, who is pregnant and lives in a one-bedroom apartment in Mount Hope in the Bronx with her 8- and 1-year-old daughters.

She said she has called the agencies listed in the letter, and none could help.

Almodovar lost her job at an alarm company in 2008 and ran out of unemployment benefits over the summer. She went to Homebase in August while facing eviction because she owes \$3,400 in back rent, she said. "Homebase was my only chance," she said.

At a time of high unemployment and record homelessness in New York City, there is no question that prevention services are more needed than ever. There is also no question that City government should evaluate the effectiveness of services like those provided by the seven-year-old Homebase program. Indeed, we believe there is already strong evidence for the efficacy of prevention services like long-term rental assistance, legal services, and emergency grants to pay for rent arrears (although, unfortunately, the Homebase program provides only the latter of these services, and then in only a limited fashion).

However, such evaluations of City programs and services should never result in harm to needy people seeking help. Indeed, knowing what we do about the impact of homelessness on health and education, one wonders about the effect on the children and adults in the “control group” who will suffer homelessness, housing crises, and other hardships in the two years that they are denied services.

Unfortunately, in distressingly typical fashion, Bloomberg administration officials responded to the news reports and to widespread criticism of the study from elected officials and advocates by stubbornly, inflexibly, and aggressively defending the study. And just as unfortunately, administration officials have not been entirely forthcoming in their defense of the study.

Following are some of the claims that administration officials have made in defense of the Homebase study, along with some “reality-checking” of those claims:

- Informed consent: City officials have stated that the 200 households in the “control group” consented to join the study and, presumably, agreed to lose services for two years. Nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, affected families report that they were told they had to sign consent forms in order to have any chance at getting services – if they did not sign, they would be turned away. Thus, desperate families facing homelessness felt that they had no choice but to sign the so-called consent forms. And to make matters worse, the families in the control group have not been given the choice of opting out of the study, something which is routine practice in research studies.
- Necessity of the study and of its current design: City officials have also claimed that the study is necessary to determine the effectiveness of the Homebase program, and that the current study design is the only way to do that. Again, nothing could be further from the truth. Countless social science research studies are conducted without, in effect, creating a “control group” by denying aid to people in crisis who are actively seeking help. Indeed, as a researcher recently commented, there are millions of poor New Yorkers and therefore no need to create a “control group” to study programs assisting low-income people; all the Homebase researchers had to do was find similarly-situated households who, for whatever reason, had never availed themselves of Homebase services. And, while there is no denying the need to evaluate the outcomes of government programs, it is curious that Bloomberg administration officials waited seven years to study the Homebase program, a program that they’ve effusively lauded for years in public testimony and in comments to the news media.

- Availability of Homebase services: City officials have also contradictorily claimed that, on the one hand, Homebase services are available elsewhere, so the denial of services for two years to the 200 “control group” households is not harmful; and second, many families are routinely turned away from Homebase programs, so these 200 families are no different than other turned-away families. The first claim is, on its face, not true – City officials know all too well of the scarcity of homeless prevention services provided by overwhelmed and under-funded community organizations. But it also begs the question, Why should we have the Homebase program at all if its services are so widely available? The second claim fails to acknowledge that the “control group” households were, indisputably, eligible for Homebase services and would have received them if not for the existence of the study. Indeed, if Homebase programs do indeed turn away so many families, it raises another question: Why weren't some of those families included in the “control group”?
- Responsibilities of the researchers: City officials have touted the expertise of the City University of New York (CUNY) Graduate Center researchers and their private contractors, who are conducting the study. But while no one has questioned their academic expertise, there are troubling ethical questions about the design of the study. Indeed, the study design would seem to violate the human subject research guidelines which are posted on the CUNY Graduate Center's website. And it is unclear whether CUNY's Institutional Review Board ever reviewed or approved the study and how it created its “control group”; today's New York Times, in fact reports that the study was reviewed only by the private contractor hired to conduct it.
- Role of the Obama administration: Perhaps most aggravating of all, Bloomberg administration officials have injected politics into this debate by claiming, first, that the “Obama administration” made them do the study, and second, that the Federal government is doing the same kind of study nationwide. To the first point: While it is certainly true that the Federal Homelessness Prevention Program and Rapid Re-housing (HPRP) funds that currently finance most Homebase services did include funding for evaluation, it is absolutely untrue that Federal officials (much less “the Obama administration”) directed the City of New York to conduct its study by denying help to needy families. And to the second point: The Federal study, which includes some 3,000 families nationwide, evaluates the success of the “rapid re-housing” portion of HPRP-funded services and studies the impact of such housing assistance on currently homeless families. In addition, it allows families to opt out of the study at any time. Thus, the Federal study does not deny help to families in crisis, and it is modeled on dozens of other proven, ethically-designed research studies about housing assistance.

It is also essential to recognize that the Homebase program has completely changed its functions over the years and is now in its third incarnation. These complete transformations were implemented without study or consultation with service providers. For instance, as a consequence of City budget cutbacks in FY 2009 which eliminated some case management services in hotels, Homebase offices now work to relocate families in hotels into permanent housing and no longer work with families applying for shelter at the PATH intake office in

order to divert them from the shelter system. Why did that change occur? There is much confusion in the community about what Homebase services are available and how one qualifies for services, quite apart from the study that is the subject of the hearing.

Indeed, from what we know, the Homebase study at issue is only looking at one variable: Did the household receive Homebase services or not. In fact, the various Homebase offices provide a range of services, and the effectiveness of the various services should be evaluated. (For example, some providers require families to undergo extensive financial counseling, to open a bank account, and to cut certain types of spending before they will provide rent arrears grants. How do we know whether or not such requirements are effective?)

Finally, the study ignores the impact of DHS's performance-based contracts, whereby the Homebase providers are reportedly paid around 40 percent of their budgets to relocate families from hotels – \$3,000 if families are relocated before 120 days, and far less if after 120 days. These contracts should also be evaluated. Providers report far less ability to serve families and individuals in the community who are at risk of homelessness because of these performance-based contracts, which consume resources that could be more effectively used to prevent homelessness.

We conclude with perhaps the only piece of good news regarding this troubling issue. Coalition for the Homeless, with the assistance of a Legal Services New York attorney, managed to halt the eviction of Ms. Almodovar and her family – and this is largely thanks to a rent arrears grant funded by the City Council's Homelessness Prevention Fund.

But there are still at least 199 other "control group" households in crisis, and the City knows how to reach those families. We urge the City to halt the misguided Homebase evaluation study and immediately provide vital prevention services to the children and families in the "control group."

Thank you for the opportunity to share this testimony. And, as always, we look forward to working with the committee and the City Council in the coming months and years on efforts to reduce New York City's homeless population and help homeless children and adults.

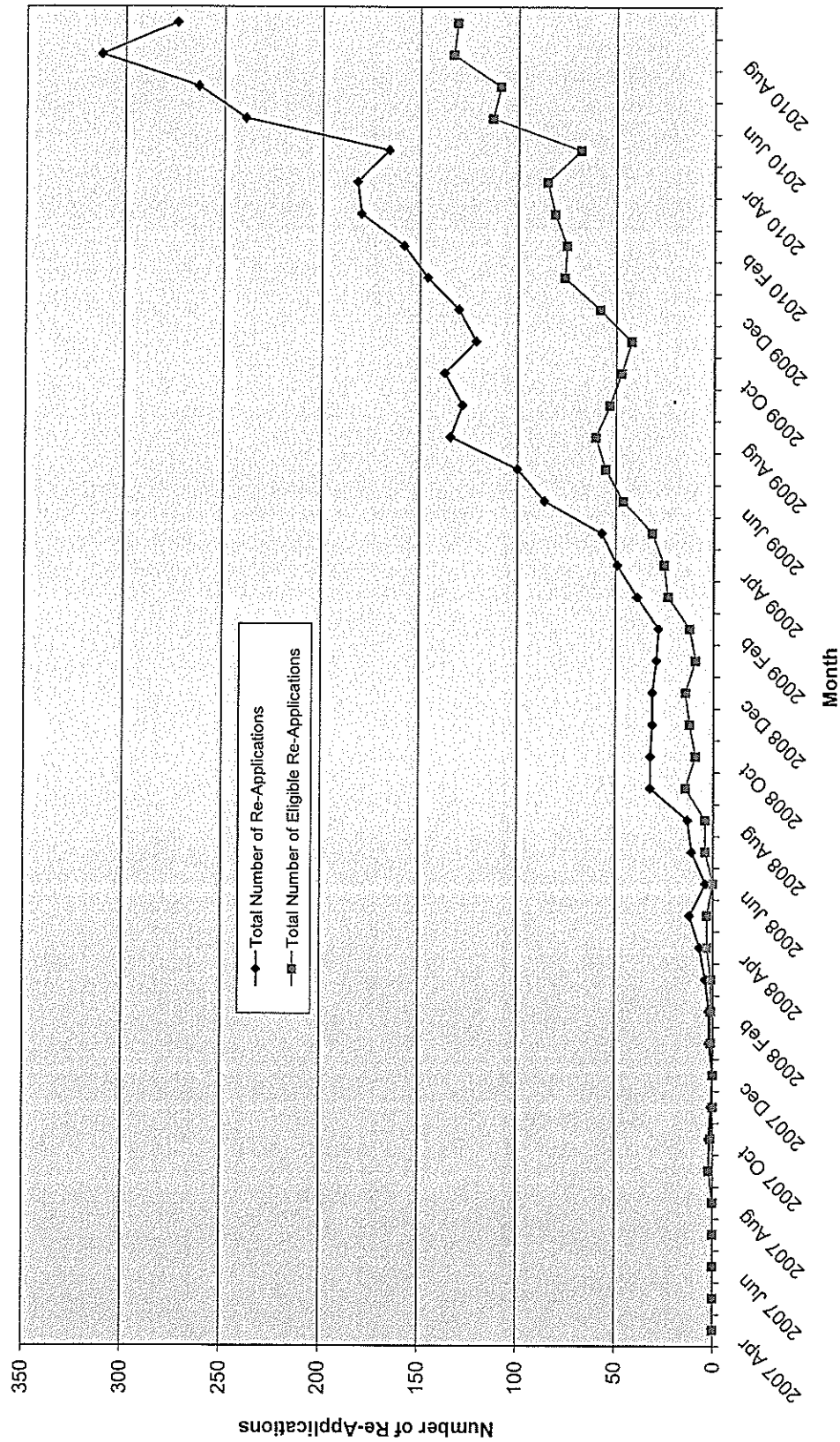
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Re-Applications for Shelter by Families who had Advantage Apartments; Eligible Shelter Applications from Families who had Advantage Apartments



Source: Department of Homeless Services "Reapplications of Families with Prior Advantage Exits", April 1, 2007- September 30, 2010.

RE-APPLICATIONS FOR SHELTER BY ADVANTAGE FAMILIES, APR 2007-SEPT 2010

Month	Total Number of Re-Applications	Total Number of Eligible Re-Applications
2007 Apr	0	0
2007 May	0	0
2007 Jun	0	0
2007 Jul	0	0
2007 Aug	0	0
2007 Sep	2	2
2007 Oct	2	1
2007 Nov	1	0
2007 Dec	0	0
2008 Jan	2	1
2008 Feb	2	1
2008 Mar	4	1
2008 Apr	7	3
2008 May	12	3
2008 Jun	4	0
2008 Jul	11	4
2008 Aug	13	4
2008 Sep	32	14
2008 Oct	32	9
2008 Nov	31	12
2008 Dec	31	14
2009 Jan	29	9
2009 Feb	28	12
2009 Mar	39	23
2009 Apr	49	25
2009 May	57	31
2009 Jun	86	46
2009 Jul	100	55
2009 Aug	134	60
2009 Sep	128	53
2009 Oct	137	47
2009 Nov	121	42
2009 Dec	130	58
2010 Jan	146	76
2010 Feb	158	75
2010 Mar	180	81
2010 Apr	182	85
2010 May	166	68
2010 Jun	239	113
2010 Jul	263	109
2010 Aug	312	133
2010 Sep	274	131
TOTAL	3144	1401

Source: Department of Homeless Services "Reapplications of Families with Prior Advantage Exits", April 1, 2007- September 30, 2010.

DHS defines "families" as including families with children under 21, single pregnant women, and childless couples.

Attachments to

Testimony of
Coalition for the Homeless
and
The Legal Aid Society

on

**How the City of New York Reports Data About Homelessness
and Rental Assistance Programs, and
the City's Evaluation Study of the Homebase Program**

Presented before

The New York City Council,
Committee on General Welfare

December 9, 2010



DAILY REPORT

11/3/2010

(Data from Monday, November 1, 2010)

SINGLE ADULTS	
Drop-in Center Clients Served	477
Drop-in Center Overnight Census	106
Faith Bed Census	279
Outreach Contacts	215
Outreach Placements	14
Safe Haven Utilization	484
Veterans In Short-term Housing	371

FAMILIES	
Families Requesting Temporary Housing at PATH	158
Adult Families Requesting Temporary Housing at AFIC	18
Families Placed in Overnight Accommodations	0
Families w/children at PATH Overnight (pre 10PM)	0

TOTAL SHELTER OVERNIGHTS	
Adults	21,677
Children	14,540
TOTAL OVERNIGHTS	36,217

SINGLE ADULTS OVERNIGHTS	
Men	5,794
Women	2,592
TOTAL SHELTER ADULTS	8,386

FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN OVERNIGHTS	
Families	8,161
Adults	10,609
Children	14,540
TOTAL OVERNIGHTS	23,310

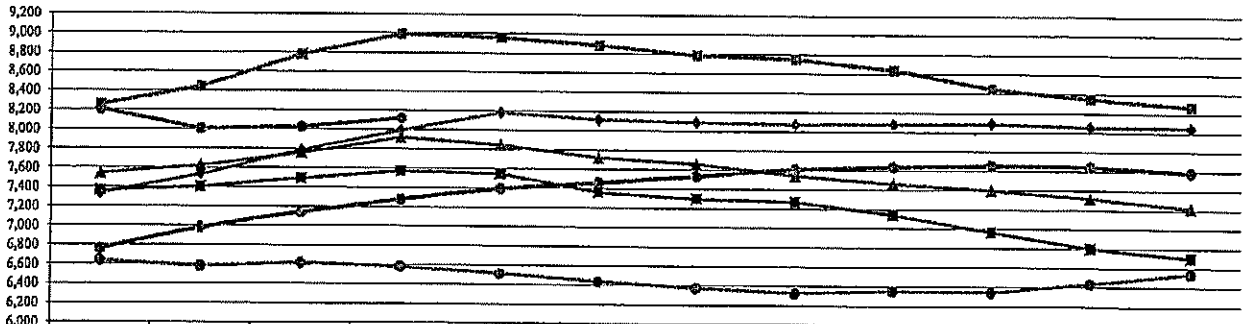
ADULT FAMILIES OVERNIGHTS	
Families	1,291
Individuals (Adults)	2,632

* As HPD families have been reported separately of the DHS census since October 2005, the Daily Report will no longer include updates as to HPD specific data.

* Beginning with the 11/5/08 report, DHS is distinguishing Safe Haven capacity from single adult shelter capacity. Safe Havens are a new "Housing First" model targeted to chronically street homeless individuals who have chosen not to enter traditional shelter.

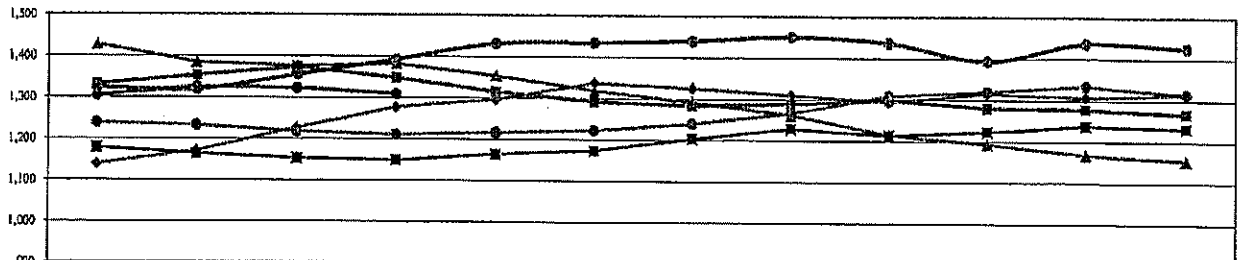
* Beginning with the 11/5/08 report, DHS is distinguishing the capacity of short-term housing programs for homeless veterans from single adult shelter capacity.

DHS Families with Children Census



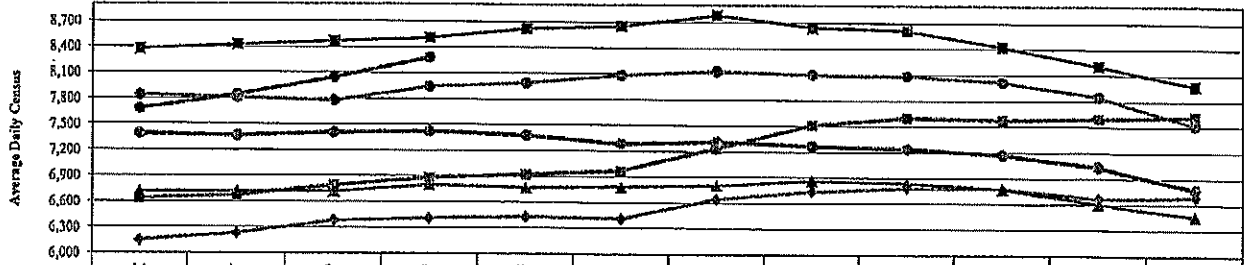
	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June
FY 11	8,204	8,006	8,024	8,117								
FY 10	8,255	8,441	8,776	8,991	8,957	8,814	8,716	8,748	8,639	8,449	8,348	8,268
FY 09	7,334	7,531	7,784	7,993	8,180	8,115	8,090	8,073	8,081	8,087	8,055	8,049
FY 08	7,541	7,624	7,755	7,919	7,843	7,719	7,658	7,543	7,462	7,400	7,319	7,219
FY 07	6,761	6,981	7,142	7,278	7,395	7,458	7,533	7,609	7,637	7,653	7,646	7,587
FY 06	6,642	6,582	6,619	6,584	6,516	6,437	6,377	6,329	6,353	6,345	6,414	6,541
FY 05	7,365	7,405	7,492	7,572	7,548	7,365	7,298	7,270	7,143	6,968	6,802	6,704

DHS Adult Family Census



	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June
FY 11	1,305	1,328	1,323	1,309								
FY 10	1,332	1,353	1,374	1,348	1,315	1,293	1,284	1,280	1,209	1,280	1,278	1,288
FY 09	1,139	1,171	1,227	1,277	1,287	1,337	1,328	1,310	1,285	1,318	1,307	1,315
FY 08	1,428	1,385	1,378	1,392	1,354	1,310	1,292	1,282	1,215	1,193	1,107	1,154
FY 07	1,324	1,319	1,365	1,392	1,432	1,455	1,440	1,451	1,437	1,384	1,437	1,420
FY 06	1,299	1,233	1,218	1,211	1,217	1,223	1,240	1,287	1,309	1,320	1,334	1,315
FY 05	1,179	1,184	1,153	1,140	1,164	1,174	1,204	1,229	1,214	1,228	1,239	1,232

DHS Single Adult Shelter Census



	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
FY 11	7,679	7,841	8,046	8,278								
FY 10	6,624	6,674	6,793	6,880	6,926	6,967	7,234	7,510	7,597	7,574	7,592	7,619
FY 09	6,150	6,235	6,381	6,414	6,432	6,412	6,648	6,737	6,780	6,780	6,665	6,684
FY 08	6,719	6,719	6,718	6,801	6,771	6,781	6,804	6,863	6,839	6,771	6,602	6,460
FY 07	7,392	7,365	7,484	7,422	7,379	7,282	7,313	7,263	7,235	7,171	7,035	6,775
FY 06	7,839	7,812	7,775	7,942	7,988	8,081	8,133	8,095	8,085	8,016	7,849	7,520
FY 05	8,372	8,426	8,464	8,511	8,618	8,650	8,783	8,646	8,612	8,421	8,204	7,976

HOMELESS FAMILY CENSUS INCREASED BY 153 DHS FAMILIES**

At the end of October, there were 9489 DHS families living in emergency housing in New York City. This represents an increase of 153 lodged DHS families from the end of September. There were 2521 DHS families residing in 61 hotels, 1090 DHS adult families residing in 13 adult residences and 1462 DHS families residing in 11 cluster site facilities.

On October 31, 2010 there were 4416 DHS families housed in 72 Tier II facilities. This represents 46.54% of the total number of DHS families in temporary housing.

A total of 1556*** DHS families were lodged in the system, who were either newly homeless (582) or had returned after an absence of more than 30 days (974).

LENGTH-OF-STAY of DHS FAMILIES*** (Excludes conditional placements)

The average length-of-stay (system-wide) for the period ending October 31, 2010 was 251.25 days. The figure decreased by 2.56 days from the end of September (253.81 days).

* This is a snapshot of the last day of the month.

** Does not include HPD families in HPD facilities. Does include DHS families in DHS facilities.

*** Families are counted once even though they have applied and been placed multiple times within the month.

II. THE BASIC FAMILY STATISTICS (October)

	DHS Only		DHS & HPD	
TOTAL NUMBER OF FAMILIES	9489		9696	
TOTAL NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS	27888		28725	
TOTAL NUMBER OF ADULTS	13325		13743	
TOTAL NUMBER OF CHILDREN	14563		14982	
AVERAGE FAMILY SIZE	2.94		2.96	
<hr/>				
FAMILIES IN HOTELS	2521	26.57%	2521	26.00%
FAMILIES IN CLUSTER SITE FACILITIES	1482	15.41%	1462	15.08%
FAMILIES IN ADULT RESIDENCES	1090	11.49%	1090	11.24%
FAMILIES (DHS) IN TIER II's & FAMILY CENTERS	4416	46.54%	4416	45.54%
FAMILIES (DHS) IN HPD FACILITIES	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
FAMILIES (HPD) IN HPD FACILITIES			207	2.13%
Total:	9489	100.00%	9696	100.00%
<hr/>				
FAMILIES IN MANHATTAN	2030	21.39%	2094	21.60%
FAMILIES IN BROOKLYN	2796	29.47%	2866	29.56%
FAMILIES IN QUEENS	1153	12.15%	1153	11.89%
FAMILIES IN THE BRONX	3465	36.52%	3538	36.49%
FAMILIES IN STATEN ISLAND	45	0.47%	45	0.46%
Total:	9489	100.00%	9696	100.00%

THE BASIC FAMILY STATISTICS (September)

	Change		Change	
ALL FAMILIES	9336	153	9544	152
FAMILIES IN ADULT RESIDENCES	1146	-56	1146	-56
FAMILIES IN HOTELS	2506	15	2506	15
FAMILIES IN CLUSTER SITE FACILITIES	1423	39	1423	39
FAMILIES (DHS) IN TIER II's & FAMILY CENTERS	4261	155	4261	155
FAMILIES (HPD) IN HPD FACILITIES			202	5

	CHANGE of CENSUS since 06/30/2010	HOMES CENSUS 10/31/2010	CHANGE of CENSUS since 10/15/2010	HOMES CENSUS 10/15/2010	HOMES CENSUS 09/30/2010	HOMES CENSUS 09/15/2010	HOMES CENSUS 08/31/2010	HOMES CENSUS 08/15/2010	HOMES CENSUS 07/31/2010	HOMES CENSUS 07/15/2010	HOMES CENSUS 06/30/2010	HOMES CENSUS 06/15/2010	HOMES CENSUS 05/31/2010	HOMES CENSUS 05/15/2010
TOTAL-DHS FAM LODGED	153	9489	62	9427	9338	9359	9328	9269	9345	9566	9609	9541	9577	9683
TOTAL-DHS FAM LODGED & INTAKE CNTF	124	8561	40	8514	8430	8456	8469	8325	8480	8662	8691	8645	8633	8753
TOTAL-DHS & HPO FAM LODGED	162	8996	62	8934	8844	8987	8930	8947	8947	9768	9711	9743	9779	9965

TIER II SHELTERS & FAMILY CENTERS

CHILDREN RESCUE FUND HOUSE EAST	MAN	98	0	98	95	95	97	93	88	96	93	89	97	97
CLINTON FAM INN	MAN	79	-1	80	78	79	79	72	78	80	77	79	77	80
HAMILTON FAMILY RESID	MAN	161	5	146	140	144	142	131	133	143	142	134	138	145
HELEN HOUSE	MAN	16	2	14	14	14	18	12	15	16	15	16	13	14
HUNTINGTON HOUSE	MAN	19	1	18	18	18	18	16	14	15	15	16	14	17
JENNIE CLARKE RESIDENCE	MAN	70	-1	71	71	69	68	60	67	69	70	67	68	72
LIFE	MAN	75	12	63	58	42	25	27	35	29	33	43	50	60
MILBANK HOUSE	MAN	29	1	28	27	29	27	28	27	30	32	33	32	32
NAZARETH HOMES	MAN	11	-1	12	12	9	12	13	13	13	10	11	11	11
REGENT FAMILY RESIDENCE	MAN	93	4	89	89	86	82	78	79	84	97	118	137	137
ROBERT FOX	MAN	17	0	17	16	16	13	14	16	14	16	17	17	17
SAMUEL PROCTOR	MAN	25	0	25	25	23	23	22	21	24	22	24	24	26
SINERGIA	MAN	3	0	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	0	0	0	0
URBAN FAM CENTER	MAN	79	2	77	77	81	78	78	78	78	74	81	81	78
WEST END INTERG	MAN	53	0	53	52	49	52	45	52	49	52	54	61	50
MANHATTAN TOTAL		818	24	794	777	768	731	888	719	743	748	779	810	825

ARBOR INN	BKLN	43	1	42	42	44	44	41	43	43	43	40	43	43
AUBURN FAMILY RESIDENCE	BKLN	100	-1	101	98	95	74	76	86	86	79	80	80	78
BRIDGE FAMILY RESID II	BKLN	109	2	107	109	104	104	103	100	104	100	108	105	108
BUSHWICK FAM RES	BKLN	86	3	82	81	83	82	79	79	88	83	87	85	84
DEAN STREET	BKLN	12	0	12	12	12	12	12	8	10	8	9	8	9
DUMONT FAM RESID (Rose McCarthy)	BKLN	34	1	33	38	34	34	31	27	33	33	34	35	38
FLAGSTONE FAMILY RESIDENCE	BKLN	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	58	56	59	60	59
FLATLANDS FAM RES	BKLN	81	12	69	69	65	26	31	76	20	29	32	35	41
FLUSHING AVENUE	BKLN	93	3	90	87	89	89	95	90	98	94	95	97	95
HELP 1	BKLN	182	3	179	176	100	178	180	175	178	176	170	184	180
JUNIUS ST. FAM RES	BKLN	212	4	208	207	204	202	197	200	208	203	208	208	206
KIANGA HOUSE	BKLN	18	-1	17	16	17	16	13	13	14	14	15	16	17
LIBERTY AVENUE RESID.	BKLN	190	-2	192	187	184	184	195	190	198	196	193	190	193
LINDEN FAMILY RES	BKLN	13	-1	14	11	13	10	9	10	15	12	11	15	14
MCDONOUGH FAM RES	BKLN	0	0	0	0	0	13	13	11	13	13	11	11	14
MONICA HOUSE IIWIN	BKLN	37	-5	42	43	40	41	42	39	40	39	41	41	40
PARK AVENUE MANOR	BKLN	67	0	57	56	57	51	54	58	66	65	65	57	56
PROV. HOUSE 1	BKLN	4	0	4	4	3	2	3	2	3	2	3	3	4
PROV. HOUSE 2	BKLN	4	-1	5	3	4	2	3	2	4	3	6	6	5
PROV. HOUSE 7	BKLN	16	0	15	14	13	15	15	13	14	14	15	13	12
ROSE F KENNEDY	BKLN	14	0	14	14	9	9	9	11	11	12	13	13	14
ST JOHNS FAM RES	BKLN	95	1	94	93	91	90	88	90	91	87	89	94	92
STOCKHOLM FAM CEN	BKLN	24	-1	25	25	25	25	23	23	23	24	24	25	26
TILDEN HALL FAMILY RESID.	BKLN	111	-3	114	113	112	110	110	105	114	115	112	115	109
URBAN TRANS(FANNIE BARNES)	BKLN	31	1	30	30	32	29	27	28	32	30	28	31	33
URBAN STRAT(MATERNITY)	BKLN	7	-4	11	12	17	18	14	18	18	19	19	18	16
BROOKLYN TOTAL		1569	12	1557	1534	1527	1457	1403	1497	1570	1639	1556	1683	1584

CONCOURSE HOUSE	BX	42	1	41	41	42	41	40	41	40	40	41	41	40
CROTONA INN	BX	81	2	79	80	69	62	59	68	58	57	68	67	85
FREEMAN FAM RES	BX	22	0	22	21	21	21	21	18	22	21	21	22	21
HELP - BRONX CROTONA	BX	96	0	98	91	92	95	95	94	96	96	95	95	95
HELP BRONX MORRIS	BX	208	-1	207	206	204	206	205	207	202	202	204	198	207
HELP CYPRESS FAMILY CENTER	BX	19	-1	20	18	18	20	19	20	20	20	20	20	20
ICAHN HOUSE	BX	81	-2	83	85	62	84	62	62	63	62	63	65	62
JACKSON FAM RES	BX	93	-2	96	94	92	89	88	89	90	91	94	91	85
LEE GOODWIN RES	BX	31	-1	32	31	30	26	28	31	29	32	31	29	28
MONTEFIORE RES	BX	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
NELSON FAM RES	BX	73	1	72	68	69	68	68	68	68	68	72	71	70
PROSPECT IN-FTH	BX	84	-2	86	85	87	83	83	81	81	84	79	85	85
SAMMON B.U.I.L.D	BX	40	0	40	43	43	43	36	44	40	42	42	43	44
SENECA	BX	72	1	71	72	74	73	71	69	73	73	72	72	73
SETON HOUSE	BX	17	0	17	17	18	15	17	16	18	16	17	17	17
SHEARSON-WIN	BX	24	-2	26	23	24	24	21	23	28	24	26	25	24
SIENA HOUSE	BX	28	1	25	26	26	21	24	24	25	24	27	24	23
SOJOURNER TR.HSES	BX	32	0	32	30	31	32	30	31	33	31	32	32	28
ST. PETERS AVENUE BASICS RESID	BX	38	5	33	37	38	37	37	36	36	37	37	36	34
THERESA'S HAVEN	BX	36	0	36	35	35	35	36	35	37	38	37	36	34
THORPE RESIDENCE	BX	16	1	15	16	16	12	13	14	15	15	15	15	14
TOWN & COUNTRY*	BX	55	15	40	29	26	37	42	48	68	73	76	95	94
UNIVERSITY RES	BX	67	3	64	63	61	64	61	65	62	63	67	69	66
VALENTINE HSE. CHB	BX	7	-1	8	8	7	5	6	7	5	6	7	7	7
VOA FAMILY RESID	BX	33	1	32	33	31	28	25	32	32	31	32	34	33
WILLIAM BRIDGE	BX	80	3	85	87	88	88	86	88	88	88	88	84	85
WILLOW AVENUE FAM RESID	BX	101	0	101	101	98	102	101	100	101	98	100	102	101
BRONX TOTAL		1460	22	1438	1426	1401	1393	1370	1397	1425	1392	1424	1459	1451

* Town & Country was formerly a 1001 - 11018

BRIARWOOD FAM RES	QNS	84	-2	86	83	85	87	85	80	88	88	85	89	87
HILLSIDE HOUSE	QNS	59	1	58	53	55	55	47	57	59	57	53	57	63
JAMAICA RESIDENCE	QNS	47	7	40	32	39	23	24	23	23	21	22	29	34
PROV.HOUSE 3	QNS	5	1	4	3	4	1	0	3	2	3	3	3	3
SARATOGA IN-FTH	QNS	252	8	246	234	248	243	236	252	239	248	234	251	248
SPRINGFIELD GDN	QNS	77	0	77	75	79	78	74	87	73	79	71	74	76
QUEENS TOTAL		624	13	511	480	602	484	469	481	485	493	468	503	501

	CHANGE of CENSUS since 06/30/2010	HOMES CENSUS 10/31/2010	CHANGE of CENSUS since 10/15/2010	HOMES CENSUS 10/15/2010	HOMES CENSUS 09/30/2010	HOMES CENSUS 09/30/2010	HOMES CENSUS 08/31/2010	HOMES CENSUS 08/15/2010	HOMES CENSUS 07/31/2010	HOMES CENSUS 07/15/2010	HOMES CENSUS 06/30/2010	HOMES CENSUS 06/15/2010	HOMES CENSUS 05/31/2010	HOMES CENSUS 05/15/2010
TOTAL-DHS FAM LODGED	163	9488	62	9427	9336	9359	9328	9269	9345	9666	9609	9641	9577	9683
TOTAL-DHS FAM LODGED & INTAKE CNT#	124	9554	40	9514	9430	9466	9459	9325	9490	9882	9691	9845	9633	9753
TOTAL-DHS & HPD FAM LODGED	162	9696	62	9634	9544	9567	9530	9471	9547	9788	9711	9743	9779	9885

SI-RESPITE CTR	S.I.	46	0	45	46	46	43	45	43	42	43	44	42	44
STATEN IS. TOTAL		45	0	45	45	46	43	45	43	42	43	44	42	44
TOTAL - TIER II		4418	71	4345	4281	4232	4100	4035	4137	4265	4215	4270	4397	4405

HPD SITES - HPD FAMILIES

AMBOY I	BKLN	70	0	70	70	70	69	88	85	88	68	68	68	68
CONVENT AVE	MAN	64	0	64	65	65	65	65	65	65	65	65	65	65
FOX STREET (RUTH FERNADEZ)	BX	73	0	73	73	73	69	69	69	69	69	69	69	69
TOTAL - HPD		207	0	207	208	208	202	202	202	202	202	202	202	202

ADULT RESIDENCES

ALADDIN	MAN	140	-2	142	148	145	140	139	132	128	136	129	133	131
ED HARRIS RES	BKLN	0	0	0	0	0	18	37	33	46	46	45	43	60
ELCAMINO	QNS	121	-8	127	131	135	132	134	136	135	139	140	129	141
GRACEY INN	MAN	33	0	35	38	39	34	35	35	35	36	38	33	29
GRAND CONCOURSE RESIDENCE	BX	106	-2	108	111	111	102	100	97	106	111	104	106	101
HOE FAMILY RESIDENCE	BX	48	0	48	48	49	49	50	47	48	40	34	31	32
INFINITI FAMILY RESIDENCE	BKLN	34	0	34	34	31	34	32	34	32	30	30	31	31
LEX HOTEL	MAN	15	1	14	19	19	14							
MILLENNIUM CARE	BX	60	-5	55	55	50	52	50	57	59	55	58	50	78
PARK OVERLOOK	BX	58	-4	62	63	61	62	61	57	58	60	60	61	61
PARKVIEW HOTEL	MAN	189	-2	191	193	195	182	178	178	180	173	178	182	189
STAR BRIGHT RESIDENCE	BKLN	170	0	170	172	171	170	171	172	170	170	166	170	168
STEBBINS HOTEL	BX	33	-1	34	35	35	32	32	29	29	31	31	31	35
WASHINGTON HOTEL	MAN	51	-3	54	59	55	57	57	57	59	59	52	57	61
TOTAL - ADULT RESIDENCES		1090	-24	1114	1146	1137	1131	1130	1104	1121	1114	1091	1086	1093

HOTELS

ALAN'S HOUSE	MAN	55	-3	58	57	57	58	51	56	53	59	58	56	54
APOLLO HOTEL	MAN	47	0	39	43	46	42	45	51	42	43	43	45	46
EAST RIVER FAM RES	MAN	136	2	134	138	137	138	141	140	141	144	139	132	141
ELLINGTON	MAN	69	-8	76	71	66	61	70	68	79	82	82	88	70
FRANT HOTEL	MAN	90	9	81	72	83	85	63	93	91	88	89	69	90
JULIO HOUSE-MANH	MAN	19	2	17	19	18	18	17	16	17	18	18	19	16
LENOX	MAN	54	1	53	61	57	54	55	53	58	57	57	55	57
MAZARETH HOUSE HARLEM	MAN	33	1	32	32	30	33	32	31	33	33	33	31	32
NEW BROADWAY	MAN	48	-1	49	50	51	48	50	53	55	53	53	51	56
NEW DAWN HOTEL	MAN	64	-7	61	61	53	60	60	59	61	63	62	63	62
PARNOSA HOTEL	MAN	12	-4	16	19	22	19	19	21	22	21	21	20	16
PING HOTEL	MAN	25	2	23	28	30	31	30	30	33	29	30	32	30
TOWER HOTEL	MAN	35	0	35	37	38	35	30	32	35	31	31	32	33
WEST HARLEM RESIDENCE	MAN	32	-6	30	38	30	37	37	37	39	38	37	35	33
MANHATTAN TOTAL		709	-2	711	714	718	719	726	739	757	759	753	726	738
BAYCHESTER	BX	34	-1	35	32	30	31	29	31	34	31	33	34	34
BRONX BRIDGE 1	BX	22	2	20	22	21	22	20	22	22	23	23	21	23
BRONX BRIDGE 2	BX	21	-3	24	24	24	25	24	24	24	25	25	24	23
CALLAWAY FAMILY RESIDENCE	BX	30	-1	31	31	33	28	28	30	30	31	30	29	30
CAULDWELL HOTEL	BX	50	-2	52	62	54	49	50	47	53	51	52	54	52
CLEVELAND FAMILY RESIDENCE	BX	29	1	28	26	25	26	28	29	30	29	29	29	28
CONCOURSE RESID	BX	53	4	49	52	51	49	50	51	52	51	51	53	51
CROSS BRONX	BX	93	-2	95	94	95	98	90	95	96	97	99	93	97
EDEN HOTEL	BX	22	0	22	23	19	24	27	26	26	22	19	22	21
FORDHAM FAMILY RESIDENCE	BX	19	-1	20	19	21	20	19	19	21	20	21	16	17
HALL FAMILY RESIDENCE	BX	42	-1	43	41	41	42	40	44	43	44	43	39	40
HENWOOD HOTEL	BX	40	1	39	39	38	41	41	40	39	41	40	39	40
JULIO FAM RESID	BX	20	-3	23	24	24	23	22	20	23	24	22	23	23
LEX BRONX RESID	BX	28	2	26	24	22	22	25	26	29	31	31	30	28
MIKE'S HOUSE	BX	15	0	15	15	15	13	15	14	13	14	14	15	15
MIKE'S HOUSE ANNEX	BX	16	0	16	15	16	14	18	15	16	13	14	14	15
PARK OVERLOOK	BX	1	0	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	3	3	1	
RAMSEY'S PLACE	BX	34	0	34	34	34	34	20	20	23	22	21	23	21
RAINBOW FAMILY RESIDENCE	BX	0	0	0	0	0	0	33	33	34	34	34	34	34
SOUTH BRONX RESIDENCE	BX	53	-1	54	53	55	55	53	55	58	58	55	61	54
ST. PETER'S AVE. BASICS RESID	BX	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	32	32	37	37
STADIUM HOTEL*	BX	0	-1	1	1	89	70	67	72	71	71	72	71	71
TELLER FAMILY RESIDENCE	BX	14	1	13	15	15	16	15	15	16	16	16	15	15
TREMONT PLAZA FAMILY RESIDENCE	BX	17	0	17	18	19	17	18	19	19	19	19	19	18
WALTON HOTEL	BX	21	0	21	18	20	20	19	21	21	21	21	21	21
WEBSTER FAMILY RESIDENCE	BX	59	3	56	58	55	52	58	55	58	54	58	55	56
BRONX TOTAL		733	-2	735	731	798	790	818	824	848	875	875	862	884
ALICE BRANCH PLAZA	BKLN	65	1	64	62	63	65	63	60	63	63	63	63	65
BAY FAMILY CENTER*	BKLN	93	-8	90	95	92	97	97	90	96	97	98	97	98
BEDCO MANOR	BKLN	17	-1	16	14	16	16	17	16	17	16	16	16	18
BEDCOURT FAMILY RESIDENCE	BKLN	58	1	57	64	63	64	66	65	66	63	66	66	69

	CHANGE of CENSUS #Incs*	HOMES CENSUS	CHANGE of CENSUS #Incs*	HOMES CENSUS	CHANGE of CENSUS #Incs*	HOMES CENSUS	CHANGE of CENSUS #Incs*	HOMES CENSUS	CHANGE of CENSUS #Incs*	HOMES CENSUS	CHANGE of CENSUS #Incs*	HOMES CENSUS	CHANGE of CENSUS #Incs*	HOMES CENSUS	CHANGE of CENSUS #Incs*	HOMES CENSUS
	09/30/2010	10/31/2010	10/15/2010	10/16/2010	09/30/2010	09/16/2010	09/30/2010	09/16/2010	09/30/2010	07/31/2010	07/16/2010	06/30/2010	06/15/2010	05/31/2010	05/16/2010	
TOTAL-DHS FAM LODGED	153	9489	62	9427	9336	9359	9328	9269	9345	9558	9509	9541	9577	9683		
TOTAL-DHS FAM LODGED & INTAKE CNTF	124	9554	40	9514	9430	9458	9459	9325	9460	9662	9591	9845	9833	9753		
TOTAL-DHS & HPD FAM LODGED	152	9898	62	9834	9544	9507	9530	9471	9547	9768	9711	9743	9779	9885		
CLERMONT	BKLN	19	-3	22	23	23	19	18	20	21	19	20	21	21		
ELDERT FAMILY RESID	BKLN	9	0	9	8	8	9	8	9	9	9	9	8	9		
FLAGSTONE FAMILY CENTER (FORMERLY FMS)	BKLN	69	0	59	69	67	68	58	55							
FLATBUSH FAM RESID	BKLN	11	-1	12	10	12	12	12	12	12	11	12	12	12		
HOUSING BRIDGE NEIGHBORHOOD RES	BKLN	58	15	41	39	40	48	50	51	49	52	49	48	50		
JOHN'S FAMILY CTR	BKLN	8	1	7	7	8	0	7	7	8	8	8	8	8		
KINGSTON FAMILY RESID	BKLN	40	1	39	43	38	39	41	45	44	45	46	48	48		
LEX BKLYN RESIDENCE	BKLN	16	2	14	18	10	12	11	14	18	16	19	18	18		
PACIFIC PLACE	BKLN	39	1	38	38	38	37	38	38	39	39	39	37	40		
PULASKI FAMILY RESIDENCE	BKLN	19	1	18	18	18	19	18	18	20	19	19	18	20		
VAN SICLEN FAM RES	BKLN	20	1	19	20	19	19	20	19	20	18	20	20	20		
WOODRUFF FAM RES	BKLN	42	-5	47	50	46	47	42	48	49	50	49	48	51		
BROOKLYN TOTAL*		671	8	583	556	540	557	555	565	521	515	521	516	536		
* Brooklyn 634 Cluster moved to Hotel section																
BELT FAMILY CENTER	QNS	73	3	70	73	73	71	73	71	73	70	75	68	76		
COLONIAL	QNS	38	-3	39	38	39	48	48	48	62	49	48	42	48		
KINGS INN MOTOR LODGE	QNS	81	-5	86	78	78	87	92	97	86	99	98	96	96		
LAGUARDIA FAM	QNS	42	0	42	42	46	43	45	45	43	45	44	43	48		
LINCOLN ATLANTIC	QNS	62	6	47	48	54	53	50	50	56	54	51	52	54		
METRO FAMILY RESIDENCE	QNS	70	11	58	66	69	73	68	74	72	72	65	71	71		
PARK FAMILY RESIDENCE	QNS	81	5	78	74	80	82	78	75	79	80	81	79	81		
SKYWAY	QNS	73	-9	82	86	88	90	80	88	87	90	91	90	88		
QUEENS TOTAL		508	7	501	505	527	545	545	548	558	559	551	541	580		
TOTAL - HOTELS		2521	11	2510	2506	2583	2611	2642	2676	2685	2708	2700	2644	2697		

CLUSTER SITE FACILITIES

HALE HOUSE	MAN	18	2	18	19	16	17	15	16	17	17	18	18	17	
MANHATTAN - Basics Cluster	MAN	56	2	53	48	46	61	57	48	58	49	49	54	58	
MANHATTAN TOTAL		73	4	69	67	62	78	72	64	73	66	67	72	73	
BRONX ICAHN Cluster Annex	BX	52	-4	58	49	57	54	48	45	53	50	53	60	61	
BRONX - Basics Cluster	BX	81	4	77	74	69	58	61	56	63	66	62	61	62	
BRONX - Basics Cluster II	BX	241	-6	247	219	214	246	253	247	254	260	257	268	264	
BRONX NEIGHBORHOOD - Agulla Cluster	BX	210	-2	212	200	196	208	211	196	211	203	202	187	187	
BRONX NEIGHBORHOOD - Annex Cluster	BX	138	1	137	147	151	157	133	137	143	138	140	149	153	
CHILDREN RESCUE FUND CL MODEL PRG	BX	215	-1	216	225	225	233	235	232	247	264	248	238	246	
BRONX TOTAL		937	-8	945	914	912	958	939	913	971	969	962	959	973	
BEDCO CLUSTER	BKLN	5	-1	6	7	7	0	9	10	10	12	13	14	15	
BROOKLYN BASICS CLUSTER	BKLN	109	4	105	105	99	111	112	109	104	97	100	102	102	
BROOKLYN CAMBA CLUSTER	BKLN	338	5	333	330	327	334	330	332	337	328	338	303	305	
BROOKLYN TOTAL*		452	8	444	442	433	454	451	451	451	437	451	419	422	
* Brooklyn 834 Cluster moved to Hotel section															
TOTAL - CLUSTER SITES		1462	4	1458	1423	1407	1478	1482	1428	1495	1472	1480	1450	1468	
INTAKE CENTER FAM (Includ. overnights)		65	-22	87	94	97	131	86	116	96	82	104	68	90	

TOTAL-DHS FAM LODGED	153	9489	62	9427	9336	9369	9328	9269	9345	9558	9509	9541	9577	9683
TOTAL-DHS FAM LODGED & INTAKE CNTF	124	9554	40	9514	9430	9458	9459	9325	9460	9662	9591	9845	9833	9753
TOTAL-DHS & HPD FAM LODGED	152	9898	62	9834	9544	9507	9530	9471	9547	9768	9711	9743	9779	9885
TOTAL-ADLT FAM from all DHS LODGED FAC** (Adults include children >=18 yrs old. Extracted from DHS FAM LODGED)**	1293	-22	1315	1318	1318	1333	1334	1291	1307	1295	1270	1280	1280	

FAMILIES (DHS Only)	PERCENT OF TOTAL	BORO	HPD TIER I	ADULT FAM.	TIER II	HOTELS	CLUSTER	TOTAL
MANHATTAN	2030 21.39%	MANHATTAN	0	5	15	14	2	36
BRONX	3466 36.62%	BRONX	0	5	28	23	6	60
BROOKLYN	2796 29.47%	BROOKLYN	0	2	24	16	3	45
QUEENS	1163 12.16%	QUEENS	0	1	6	8	0	15
STATEN ISLAND	45 0.47%	STATEN ISLAND	0	0	1	0	0	1
TOTAL-DHS FAM LODGED	9489 100.00%		0	13	72	61	11	168

FAMILIES HOUSED IN	FAMILIES	ADULTS	CHILDREN	INDIVID.	FAMILIES	INDIVID.
RES/ADULT FAMILIES	1090	2202	0	2202	1084	2100
HOTELS	2521	3098	3476	6574	30	77
CLUSTER SITES	1462	2223	3711	5834	32	82
TIER II	4416	5802	7378	13178	147	338
TOTAL-DHS FAM LODGED	9489	13326	14663	27888	1293	2607
INTAKE CNTR FAMILIES (Includ. overnights)	65	85	96	181	5	10
TOTAL-DHS FAM LODGED & INTAKE CNTF	9554	13410	14659	28069	1298	2697
HPD TIER I's	207	418	419	637	13	38
TOTAL-DHS & HPD FAM LODGED	9896	13743	14982	28725	1306	2725

(Adults include children >=18 yrs old. Extracted from DHS FAM LODGED)**

IV. LENGTH OF STAY

	<u>NUMBER OF FAMILIES</u>	<u>PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL</u>
7 YEARS OR MORE	3	0.04%
6 to 7 years	4	0.05%
5 to 6 years	7	0.08%
4 to 5 years	24	0.29%
3 to 4 years	77	0.93%
2 to 3 years	298	3.58%
1 1/2 to 2 years	429	5.16%
1 to 1 1/2 years	1098	13.20%
11 months to 1 year	236	2.84%
10 to 11 months	266	3.20%
9 to 10 months	383	4.61%
8 to 9 months	343	4.12%
7 to 8 months	415	4.99%
6 to 7 months	455	5.47%
5 to 6 months	525	6.31%
4 to 5 months	758	9.11%
3 to 4 months	766	9.21%
2 to 3 months	943	11.34%
1 to 2 months	833	10.02%
0 to 1 month	453	5.45%
Total*	8316	100.00%

Average Length of Stay at All Facilities (Days)* 251.25

*Does not include conditional placements. As of 01/31/2004, does not include HPD families in HPD facilities. Does include DHS families in HPD facilities.

V. LODGED THIS MONTH

	MONTH	DAILY AVERAGE
Number of families lodged (new or returning after 30 days)	1556 **	50.19

** Families are counted once even though they have applied and been placed multiple times within the month. As of 01/31/2004, does not include HPD families in HPD facilities. Does include DHS families in HPD facilities.

AS Shelter Statistics for the

Evening of: 10/31/2010

	Bed Type	Cap acity	Beds Reserv	Beds Off Line	Actual Capacity	Census	Vac	% of ActCap	Surge Use/Cap
MEN									
126TH STREET									
General	G	95	0	0	95	95	0	100.0%	
30TH STREET									
83rd Street Annex	G	50	0	0	50	48	2	96.0%	
95th Street Annex	G	130	0	0	130	127	3	97.7%	
Assessment	A	230	0	2	228	228	0	100.0%	
Davidson Annex	G	51	0	0	51	51	0	100.0%	
General	G	533	0	0	533	533	0	100.0%	
Special Population	SP	87	0	3	84	43	41	51.2%	
ATLANTIC									
Assessment	A	364	14	0	350	348	2	99.4%	
BARBARA KLEIMAN RESIDENCE									
Employment/Security Academy	E	58	0	0	58	58	0	100.0%	
Employment/Support Program	E	28	0	0	28	28	0	100.0%	
Employment/SWP	SA	51	0	0	51	51	0	100.0%	
Substance Abuse/Clean & Sober	SA	63	0	0	63	63	0	100.0%	
BARRIER FREE									
Medical	MD	24	0	0	24	23	1	95.8%	
BOWERY MISSION									
Substance Abuse	SA	77	0	0	77	77	0	100.0%	
BRC RECEPTION									
Mental Health	MH	20	0	0	20	20	0	100.0%	
Reception Center	R	42	0	0	42	42	0	100.0%	
BRC-PALACE									
Annex	G	8	0	0	8	8	0	100.0%	
Special Population	SP	72	0	0	72	72	0	100.0%	
CAMBA/ATLANTIC HOUSE									
Mental Health/MICA	MH	200	0	0	200	199	1	99.5%	
CLARKE THOMAS									
Next Step	NS	234	0	0	234	234	0	100.0%	/40
CREATE YOUNG ADULT									
Special Population/Young Adult	SP	50	0	0	50	50	0	100.0%	
FORBELL									
Substance Abuse/MMP	SA	20	0	0	20	20	0	100.0%	
Substance Abuse/SWP	SA	174	0	0	174	174	0	100.0%	
FT. WASHINGTON									
Mental Health/CSS	MH	75	0	0	75	75	0	100.0%	
Mental Health/MICA	MH	125	0	0	125	125	0	100.0%	
GATES AVE									
Employment	E	40	0	0	40	40	0	100.0%	
GEORGE DALY									
Special Population	SP	55	0	0	55	55	0	100.0%	
HARLEM									
Employment	E	198	0	0	198	198	0	100.0%	/85
HELP SEC									
Substance Abuse/Employment	SA	200	0	0	200	200	0	100.0%	/60
KEENER									
Assessment	A	246	0	0	246	246	0	100.0%	
Mental Health/CSS	MH	46	0	0	46	46	0	100.0%	
KINGSBORO MICA									
Mental Health/MICA	MH	126	0	0	126	125	1	99.2%	
KINGSBORO STAR HOUSE									
Substance Abuse/TC	SA	221	0	0	221	218	3	98.6%	
LINDEN									
General	G	72	0	0	72	72	0	100.0%	
OPPORTUNITY HOUSE									
General	G	62	0	0	62	62	0	100.0%	
PAMOJA									
Next Step	NS	200	0	2	198	198	0	100.0%	
PETER J. SHARP CTR/ PORTER AVE									
Criminal Justice	G	45	0	0	45	45	0	100.0%	
R. W. A. Employment	E	217	0	0	217	217	0	100.0%	

Evening of: 10/31/2010

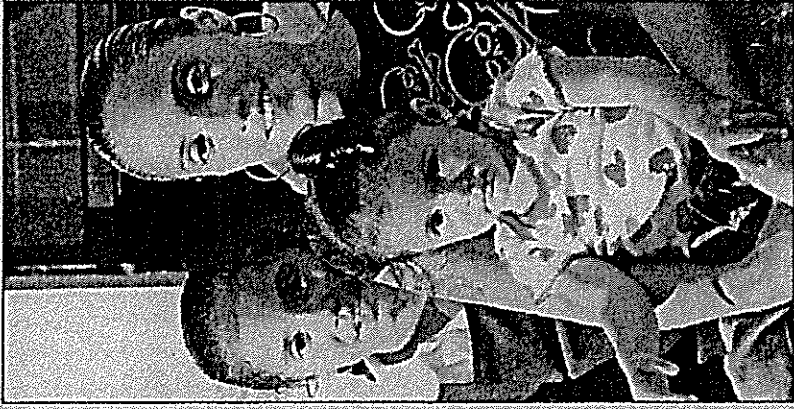
	Bed Type	Capacity	Beds Reserv	Beds Off Line	Actual Capacity	Census	Vac	% of ActCap	Surge Use/Cap
Next Step	NS	65	5	0	60	60	0	100.0%	
NEW PROVIDENCE		130	0	0	130	129	1	99.2%	
Mental Health/MICA/TLC	MH	65	0	0	65	65	0	100.0%	
Substance Abuse/TC	SA	65	0	0	65	64	1	98.5%	
PARK AVENUE ARMORY		100	0	0	100	100	0	100.0%	
Mental Health/45+	MH	100	0	0	100	100	0	100.0%	
PARKSLOPE		70	0	0	70	70	0	100.0%	
Mental Health/MICA	MH	70	0	0	70	70	0	100.0%	
RENAISSANCE		200	0	0	200	197	3	98.5%	
Mental Health/MICA	MH	200	0	0	200	197	3	98.5%	
SARATOGA		106	0	0	106	106	0	100.0%	
Annex	G	40	0	0	40	40	0	100.0%	
Employment/Rapid Housing	E	66	0	0	66	66	0	100.0%	
SCCW TLC (350 LAF.)		43	0	0	43	43	0	100.0%	
Mental Health/TLC	MH	43	0	0	43	43	0	100.0%	
SUSAN'S PLACE		200	0	0	200	199	1	99.5%	
Medical	MD	60	0	0	60	60	0	100.0%	
Mental Health/MICA	MH	140	0	0	140	139	1	99.3%	
THE FANE		66	0	0	66	64	2	97.0%	
General	G	66	0	0	66	64	2	97.0%	
TILLARY STREET		200	0	0	200	199	1	99.5%	
Mental Health	MH	200	0	0	200	199	1	99.5%	
TURNING POINT		37	0	0	37	36	1	97.3%	
Young Adult Special Population	SP	37	0	0	37	36	1	97.3%	
VALLEY LODGE		42	0	0	42	42	0	100.0%	
Special Population	SP	42	0	0	42	42	0	100.0%	
WESTON		20	0	0	20	20	0	100.0%	
Mental Health/TLC	MH	20	0	0	20	20	0	100.0%	

Totals for the Evening of: 10/31/2010		Capacity	Beds Reserv	Beds Off Line	Actual Capacity	Census	Vac	% of ActCap	Surge Use/Cap
MEN									
Assessment	A	840	14	2	824	822	2	99.8%	
Employment	E	541	0	0	541	541	0	100.0%	/85
General	G	1235	0	0	1235	1229	6	99.5%	
Medical	MD	104	0	0	104	103	1	99.0%	
Mental Health	MH	899	0	4	895	890	5	99.4%	
Next Step	NS	822	0	2	820	820	0	100.0%	/40
Reception	R	42	0	0	42	42	0	100.0%	
Substance Abuse	SA	1076	0	0	1076	1073	3	99.7%	/60
Special Population	SP	326	0	3	323	282	41	87.3%	
Total MEN		5885	14	11	5860	5802	58	99.0%	/185
WOMEN									
Assessment	A	389	0	0	389	374	15	96.1%	/51
Employment	E	164	0	0	164	163	1	99.4%	
General	G	709	0	3	706	687	19	97.3%	
Medical	MD	93	0	0	93	93	0	100.0%	
Mental Health	MH	975	0	0	975	960	15	98.5%	
Next Step	NS	65	5	0	60	60	0	100.0%	
Reception	R	15	0	0	15	14	1	93.3%	
Substance Abuse	SA	113	0	0	113	111	2	98.2%	
Special Population	SP	149	0	0	149	147	2	98.7%	
Total WOMEN		2672	5	3	2664	2609	55	97.9%	/51
Grand Total		8557	19	14	8524	8411	113	98.7%	/236
Authorized Signature / Date									

VETERAN'S SHORT TERM HOUSING

Date (CAPACITY)	BORDEN		PORTER		TOTALS		GRAND TOTALS
	(215)	(28)	(138)	(0)	(353)	(28)	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	
10/1/2010	211	28	137	0	348	28	376
10/2/2010	203	26	138	0	341	26	367
10/3/2010	209	28	138	0	347	28	375
10/4/2010	209	27	138	0	347	27	374
10/5/2010	215	27	138	0	353	27	380
10/6/2010	215	27	138	0	353	27	380
10/7/2010	215	27	138	0	353	27	380
10/8/2010	215	27	138	0	353	27	380
10/9/2010	214	26	138	0	352	26	378
10/10/2010	215	25	137	0	352	25	377
10/11/2010	213	25	138	0	351	25	376
10/12/2010	215	24	138	0	353	24	377
10/13/2010	215	25	138	0	353	25	378
10/14/2010	215	25	138	0	353	25	378
10/15/2010	215	26	128	0	343	26	369
10/16/2010	213	26	136	0	349	26	375
10/17/2010	214	26	138	0	352	26	378
10/18/2010	211	27	138	0	349	27	376
10/19/2010	215	27	135	0	350	27	377
10/20/2010	215	27	136	0	351	27	378
10/21/2010	215	27	138	0	353	27	380
10/22/2010	215	27	131	0	346	27	373
10/23/2010	215	27	137	0	352	27	379
10/24/2010	214	27	136	0	350	27	377
10/25/2010	214	27	133	0	347	27	374
10/26/2010	214	27	138	0	352	27	379
10/27/2010	214	26	133	0	347	26	373
10/28/2010	215	27	132	0	347	27	374
10/29/2010	215	26	134	0	349	26	375
10/30/2010	215	26	136	0	351	26	377
10/31/2010	213	26	134	0	347	26	373

200 denied aid are being treated like 'rats in a lab experiment'



Angie Almodovar, with daughters Emerald, 8, and Jazlyn, 1, at home in Bronx, says Homebase program was her "only chance." Photo by Ken Goldfield

City's cruel test for poor families

THE CITY has told 200 families on the brink of homelessness to fend for themselves in an experiment that has cruelly turned them into virtual lab rats.

In an attempt to test how well a one-stop assistance program is working, the Department of Homeless Services split 400 struggling families into haves and have-nots.

The "haves" get rental assistance, job training and other services through a program called Homebase.

The other half wasn't so lucky.

Those people — chosen at random — were dubbed the "control group" and shut out of Homebase for two years. Instead, they were handed a list of 11 agencies and told to hunt for help on their own.

The city will still be watching them, but for a whole different reason.

EXCLUSIVE

BY TINA MOORE
DAILY NEWS STAFF WRITER

For two years, researchers will track the separate groups by their Social Security numbers to see how each "uses city services . . . such as shelter, public assistance, foster care," city documents state.

Some advocates for the homeless called the \$568,000 taxpayer-funded analysis a study in callousness.

"These are real parents and children, not rats in a lab experiment," said Patrick Markee, a senior analyst with the Coalition for the Homeless.

City Councilwoman Annabel Palma, who heads the General Welfare Committee, said vulnerable New Yorkers "should never be steered away from the services and benefits for which they are eligible."

Starting in August, letters went out to 400 families and individuals applying to join Homebase, telling them they would be part of the study. Those picked make up about 5% of the 7,700 families that used the program last year. The city defended the plan.

"We serve thousands of people through this program, and this study is only looking at 400 people," Deputy Homeless Services Commissioner Ellen Howard-Cooper said.

Researchers will watch both groups to see if the "control group" families find help through other agencies or wind up in shelters, officials said.

Homeless Services Commissioner Seth Diamond said the study could reveal flaws in the Homebase program, which costs \$25 million a year. Improved homeless-prevention programs would, in the end, keep families or individuals out of shelters, he said.

"Not doing it would risk putting the city in a position where it's building shelters and condemning communities to building shelter when there's a better way to serve people," he said.

Single mother Angie Almodovar wasn't too pleased when she got the one-page form letter in August.

"It was like playing Russian roulette," said Almodovar, 27, who is pregnant and lives in a one-bedroom apartment in Mount Hope in the Bronx with her 8- and 1-year-old daughters.

She said she has called the agencies listed in the letter, and none could help.

Almodovar lost her job at an alarm company in 2008 and ran out of unemployment benefits over the summer. She went to Homebase in August while facing eviction because she owes \$3,400 in back rent, she said. "Homebase was my only chance," she said.

Researcher John Mollenkopf, director of CUNY's Center for Urban Research, is managing the study. He said for the test to work properly, it had to be random.

"By doing the research, we learn something that's going to be extremely valuable for a much larger population," he said.

tmoore@nydailynews.com

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Stephanie Gendell

Address: _____

I represent: Citizens' Committee for Children

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. ³⁹⁵444 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 12/9/2010

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: PATRICK MARLEE

Address: 129 FULTON ST. NY, NY 10038

I represent: COALITION FOR THE HOMELESS

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Lavonne Johnson

Address: _____

I represent: Homeless Nation

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Natalie Johnson

Address: _____

I represent: Homeless Nation

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Mashon Barnes

Address: ~~_____~~

I represent: Home Nation / Homeless NATION

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: AMINTHIA NELSON

Address: _____

I represent: HOMELESS NATION / Homeless NA

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 12/9/2010

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: ~~Harve~~ Borough President Scott Stringer

Address: 1 Center Street

I represent: _____

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 395 Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: LAUREL EISNER

Address: 362 W 84th St NY 10024

I represent: Sarah of In Family

Address: DC 1706 Wall St NY 10268

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Jane Boche Acting of Police Museum

Address: Legal Aid Society Cool K

I represent: _____

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: _____

Name: Seth Diamond (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 33 Beaver St

I represent: DHS

Address: _____

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: _____

Name: HOWARD KOLSON (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 929 N LEXANDON ST, ARLINGTON VA

I represent: Aht ASSOCIATES

Address: 4550 Montgomey Lane, Bethesda, MD

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____
 in favor in opposition

Date: _____

Name: John Mollenkopf (PLEASE PRINT)

Address: 365 Fifth Avenue, NY NY 10016

I represent: CUNY GRADUATE CENTER

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Gretchen Locke

Address: 55 Wheeler St Cambridge MA 02138

I represent: Abi Associates Inc

Address: as above

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Robert Doak, Commissioner

Address: 180 Water Street

I represent: Human Resources Administration

Address: _____

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: 12-9-10

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Linda Brilliant

Address: none

I represent: myself

Address: none

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

**THE COUNCIL
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. _____ Res. No. _____

in favor in opposition

Date: _____

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Louise Seely, HC Answers

Address: 125 Marden Lane # 227 E11151

I represent: Housing Court Answers

Address: 125 Marden Lane NY NY

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms