



**BUILDING  
CHANGES**  
END HOMELESSNESS  
TOGETHER



## Washington Families Fund at a Glance

### Family Homelessness in Washington State

On any given night in Washington state, more than 20,000 people do not have a safe place to sleep—and nearly half are families with children. Children who are homeless experience significant trauma that affects their ability to succeed in school, and because they lack access to vital opportunities early in their lives, today's homeless children often become tomorrow's homeless parents. Despite spending millions of dollars per year in Washington state, family homelessness continues to rise.

### A Successful Public-Private Partnership

In 2004 the Washington State Legislature created the Washington Families Fund, an innovative public-private partnership dedicated to funding services to help homeless families. The Fund supports affordable housing paired with supportive services including job training, parenting classes, and financial planning that help connect families to the opportunities they need to stabilize their lives and become self sufficient.

Building Changes has led the Washington Families Fund since its inception.

Investments in the Fund to date total \$26 million: \$12 million from the State of Washington and more than \$14 million from 23 private funders. The Fund has distributed five- and ten-year grants totaling \$15.8 million to 43 nonprofit providers in 15 counties across Washington state.



Counties Receiving Washington Families Fund Grants 2005-2009

### Real People, Real Impact

In the last five years, Washington Families Fund programs have served 1,009 homeless families—composed of 1,181 adults and 1,860 children.

- **The majority of families secured a permanent home:** After completing the program, 73 percent of families moved into permanent housing.
- **Children achieved dramatically more stability in school:** On average school-age children attended two schools per year prior to entering the program. Once they had stable housing, school stability improved by 80 percent with 73 percent staying in the same school.
- **Families improved their economic stability:** By the time they completed Families Fund programs, the number of families who were employed increased by 53 percent, and income from employment increased by 27 percent.

In the next ten years, Building Changes projects that the Washington Families Fund will permanently house 5,000 families. With the certainty of housing, 10,000 children will be enrolled and regularly attend school statewide. And 2,500 families will be gainfully employed.

## Funders

*Paul G. Allen Family Foundation*

*Aven Foundation*

*The Boeing Company*

*Ben B. Cheney Foundation*

*Campion Foundation*

*Community Foundation of North  
Central Washington*

*Enterprise Community Partners*

*Forest Foundation*

*Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation*

*Greater Tacoma Community  
Foundation*

*Inland Northwest Community  
Foundation*

*Kawabe Memorial Fund*

*Medina Foundation*

*Meyer Memorial Trust*

*Microsoft Corporation*

*Norcliffe Foundation*

*OneFamily Foundation*

*The Seattle Foundation*

*United Way of King County*

*Washington State Department of  
Commerce*

*Windermere Foundation*

*Workforce Development Council of  
Seattle-King County*

*Yakima Valley Community  
Foundation*

## A Collaborative New Approach

In 2009 Washington Families Fund partners, including Governor Chris Gregoire, Building Changes, the executives of Pierce, Snohomish and King counties, the mayors of Tacoma, Everett and Seattle, and private funders joined together to change the way we address family homelessness and committed to reducing the number of homeless families with children by 50 percent by 2019. Each agreed to align existing family homelessness funding streams so that resources are used as effectively as possible, and to provide new resources wherever possible.

While statewide work continues, this expansion of the Families Fund will fund programs in Pierce, Snohomish and King counties. We will share lessons learned from these projects with other communities across Washington state.

### Five proven strategies guide our work:

- Early Intervention and prevention
- Coordinated access to support services
- Rapid re-housing
- Tailored programs
- Increased economic opportunity

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## About Building Changes

Building Changes has supported individuals and families throughout Washington state for more than 20 years, and has led the Washington Families Fund since its creation in 2004. Guided by a belief that everyone deserves the opportunity for a home, a healthy life and a good job, the Seattle-based nonprofit unites public and private partners to create innovative solutions, delivering expert advice, grant making and advocacy for lasting change. Building Changes' programs impact the lives of 8,000 people annually, including individuals and families with children who are experiencing homelessness, and the housing and service providers who support them. For more information, visit [BuildingChanges.org](http://BuildingChanges.org).