



Families Forward

2019 ANNUAL REPORT



PRIMO CENTER

for WOMEN and CHILDREN



Letter from Our CEO Christine Achre



Dear Friends of the Primo Center,

Do you ever find yourself making the same resolution every new year? We do here at Primo Center, and it is simple: End family homelessness in Chicago. While we have yet to reach this ambitious goal, we are not discouraged. In fact, our resolve, persistence and incredible staff are helping make significant progress. More families with children are receiving comprehensive support through Primo Center every year, but there's still much to be done to bring homelessness to functional zero. I believe in my heart that we can succeed, and let me share with you why I'm optimistic.

Entering the new decade, I reflect on the significant changes I've witnessed during my career regarding different approaches to addressing housing instability for families with children. Nearly 25 years ago, when I started working as a clinician in child mental health and welfare issues, I witnessed a high prevalence of trauma for children and families and its deep and lasting impact on their lives. Those experiences and insights changed me and the way I approach the complex issues of homelessness.

In the last 40 years, Primo Center has evolved and grown to become the largest provider of services and homeless shelter for families and children in Chicago, distinguished by our comprehensive and innovative approach to care. This means we partner with, and care for parents and children across all life domains—health, education and housing. We make it a priority to provide integrated physical, dental and mental health services for children and families through partnerships with federally qualified health providers. Our trauma-informed approach allows us to meet our families where they are and develop a plan that meets the needs of individual family members, and empowers parents to support their children and families.



“There is no more powerful gift than to change the life of a child and family by helping provide shelter and a pathway out of homelessness.”

We know these innovative approaches work. Primo Center consistently places more than 90% of clients in permanent housing, with only a 5 percent rate of return to homelessness. This in contrast to Chicago’s overall return to homelessness rate of 18 percent. We help ensure every family can access resources and support needed to feel empowered in order to get back on their feet and reach their full potential. And we stay connected. For example, when Primo Center families transition into permanent housing, they often stay in touch and continue to benefit from Primo Center family support services.

In 2020 Primo Center will continue addressing the needs and causes of family homelessness; building and expanding our partnerships; increasing the number of beds in interim housing from 297 to 350; and sharing our model and insights with partners in other cities. For example, I serve as a technical advisor to teams in New York City working to address family homelessness.

There is no more powerful gift than to change the life of a child and family by helping provide shelter and a pathway out of homelessness. I encourage you to resolve in 2020 to join our efforts by applying to be a volunteer at one of our facilities in North Lawndale, West Humboldt Park, Auburn Gresham and Englewood.

I hope that you will stay in touch with us by frequently visiting our website for news and following us on social media. I know that one year soon we will accomplish our resolution to end family homelessness in Chicago.

With gratitude,

Christine Achre, MA, LCPC
Chief Executive Officer

Our Impact in 2019

1,131
INDIVIDUALS
SERVED

90%

OF FAMILIES IN INTERIM
HOUSING (SHELTER)
WERE PLACED IN STABLE
PERMANENT HOUSING



OF THE FAMILIES PLACED IN
PERMANENT HOUSING,

90%

CONTINUE TO RECEIVE FOLLOW-
UP SERVICES, INCLUDING CASE
MANAGEMENT, PSYCHOTHERAPY,
PSYCHIATRIC AND HOME-
VISITING EARLY CHILDHOOD
DEVELOPMENT SERVICES



83%

OF THE MOTHERS TESTED
SHOWED A REDUCTION
IN TRAUMATIC STRESS
SYMPTOMS



82%

OF THE 0-5-YEAR-
OLD CHILDREN TESTED
SHOWED IMPROVEMENT IN
SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL
FUNCTIONING

85%

OF THE MOTHERS TESTED
DECREASED THEIR
PARENTAL STRESS FROM
THE BASELINE ASSESSMENT



92%

OF THE FAMILIES
PLACED IN STABLE
HOUSING REMAINED
HOUSED

Kids Connected

Kids Connected is a groundbreaking initiative to create a holistic system of care for homeless children and their families. Kids Connected finally removes the barriers to primary, preventative and mental health services for this severely underserved population, creating a streamlined system that puts the family at the center of their care and wrapping all needed services and supports around the family. The Primo Center hopes that this approach will result in improved health outcomes for mothers and children, better school outcomes, and more stable housing. Kids Connected combines three key strategies that have been tested and refined across the country and validated through research, but which have never been used with homeless families — systems of

care, wraparound services, and integrated health homes. **Kids Connected melds all three strategies for the first time to deliver seamless support to homeless children with mental health needs and their families.**

Kids Connected is a joint initiative of the Primo Center along with Heartland Alliance Health and Catholic Charities. The initiative has received a six-year commitment of implementation funding from the Illinois Children’s Healthcare Foundation and additional support from Crown Family Philanthropies. Hopefully, Kids Connected will be replicated across the country to accelerate progress in ending family homelessness.





Englewood Community Kitchens

Englewood Community Kitchens is the Primo Center's new full-service commercial kitchen and 50-seat classroom designed for hands-on cooking classes and nutrition and wellness events for adults, children and families.

"Englewood Community Kitchens was six years in the making, and we are thrilled it's finally built and ready for use to benefit our families and all residents of Greater Englewood," notes Christine Achre, Primo Center CEO. "Through nutrition education, we can enable healthier food decisions."

Once considered a food desert with very limited access to healthy food, the Greater Englewood community now has opportunities to improve nutrition education at Englewood Community Kitchens, which was unveiled at a November 7, 2019 grand

opening event with community stakeholders sponsored by the project's lead donors, Whole Foods Market and Whole Cities Foundation.

Englewood Community Kitchens expands the Primo Center's capacity to offer health and wellness opportunities for homeless families and amplifies the efforts of organizations working in Greater Englewood to improve health outcomes like Teamwork Englewood's Health and Wellness Task Force. The Primo Center will work with community partners to offer hands-on cooking classes, demonstrations, nutrition education and eventually, on-site job training. Learn more about Englewood Community Kitchens at www.primocenter.org/eck.

The Madison Residence

The Madison Residence is the Primo Center's new interim housing facility for families, set to open in mid-2020 in Chicago's Austin community. This beautiful vintage courtyard building is undergoing a complete renovation by our development partners East Iden Capital, Dicosola Group and Cubed Construction, and will accommodate more than 200 mothers, fathers and children in large apartments.

The residence will offer an early learning room, a courtyard garden and play area, and a family health services hub offering behavioral health services such as parent-child psychotherapy. Partnerships with local health and social service providers, including the Peace Corner Youth Center, will allow the Primo Center to offer holistic care to every family. Please stay tuned for an invitation to the grand opening ceremony with community leaders and elected officials!



Financial Statements

STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES	
SUPPORT AND REVENUE	
SUPPORT: Foundations, Corporations and Religious Community	\$3,625,174
Government Grants	\$3,648,124
Individuals	\$58,518
Total Support	\$7,331,816
REVENUE: Special Event, Net of Expenses	\$76,530
Rental Income – Permanent Housing	\$18,997
Debt Forgiveness – Neighborhood Stabilization Program Loan	\$144,147
Interest	\$7,707
Miscellaneous	\$1,368
Total Revenue	\$248,749
TOTAL REVENUE AND SUPPORT	\$7,580,565
FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES	
Program	\$4,105,746
Management and General	\$1,482,639
Fundraising	\$186,010
Total Functional Expenses	\$5,774,395
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	\$1,806,170
NET ASSETS, Beginning of Year	(\$150,690)
NET ASSETS, End of Year	\$1,655,480
STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES	
ASSETS	
Cash	\$878,861
Grants Receivable	\$1,067,776
Prepaid Expenses	\$36,618
Property and Equipment, Net	\$1,877,893
Security Deposits – Rental	\$52,217
TOTAL ASSETS	\$3,915,365
LIABILITIES	
Accounts Payable	\$152,375
Accrued Expenses	\$306,444
Security Deposits	\$6,500
Loans Payable	\$1,794,566
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$2,259,885
NET ASSETS	
Without Donor Restrictions	\$1,585,480
With Donor Restrictions	\$70,000
TOTAL NET ASSETS	\$1,655,480
TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	\$3,915,365

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For more information, please call or visit:
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www.primocenter.org

Donations may be made online or mailed to:
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