

For Immediate Release

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Stimulus Dollars Working in Ohio to Keep Homelessness at Bay, New Study Suggests

Preliminary research indicates that federal stimulus dollars intended to reduce homelessness are working in Ohio and should be continued, according to a new policy brief released today by the Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio.

The inaugural issue of “Beyond the Data: COHHIO Issues Brief,” explores the upside down nature of increased poverty and unemployment with decreased homelessness in some Ohio communities. “All the forces exist to make homelessness a more likely outcome for many Ohioans,” said policy brief author Erica Mulryan, COHHIO’s Housing & Services Coordinator. “Yet indicators point to the fact that homelessness isn’t increasing– at least temporarily – in Ohio. Our study led us to believe that HPRP dollars are likely the reason,” Mulryan said.

HPRP, the newly implemented Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program, is a part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA), the federal government’s economic improvement and jobs creation program. Of the \$1.5 billion allocated to HPRP, Ohio received \$65.6 million for financial assistance and supportive services for homeless and those most at risk of becoming homeless. Local experts reported that the HPRP program has had a significant and positive impact on homelessness in their communities.

“Beyond the Data” included information from homeless services provider agencies in Columbus, Cincinnati, Youngstown, Marion County, Richland County, and Licking County. The communities were chosen because of their geographic and economic diversity.

These periodic briefs will take a more nuanced look at Ohio homelessness and provide more qualitative information in the form of local experts’ opinions, observations, and anecdotes, as well as select HMIS (Homeless Management Information Systems) information on relevant topics. Among the highlights in the February 2010 issue:

- Ohio families are increasingly vulnerable, facing growing unemployment and poverty.
- Ohio families entering shelters are presenting with decreasing monthly income and more complicated situations overall, including higher rates of underemployment and unemployment.
- Yet, Ohio communities are largely not reporting increases in family homelessness.

The goal of the briefs, said Mulryan, is to “highlight numerous different homelessness topics over the course of one year and to explore specific aspects of Ohio homelessness in a more in-depth fashion.”

To view the full report, click here: http://www.cohhio.org/pdf/Policy_Brief_proof_10p.pdf