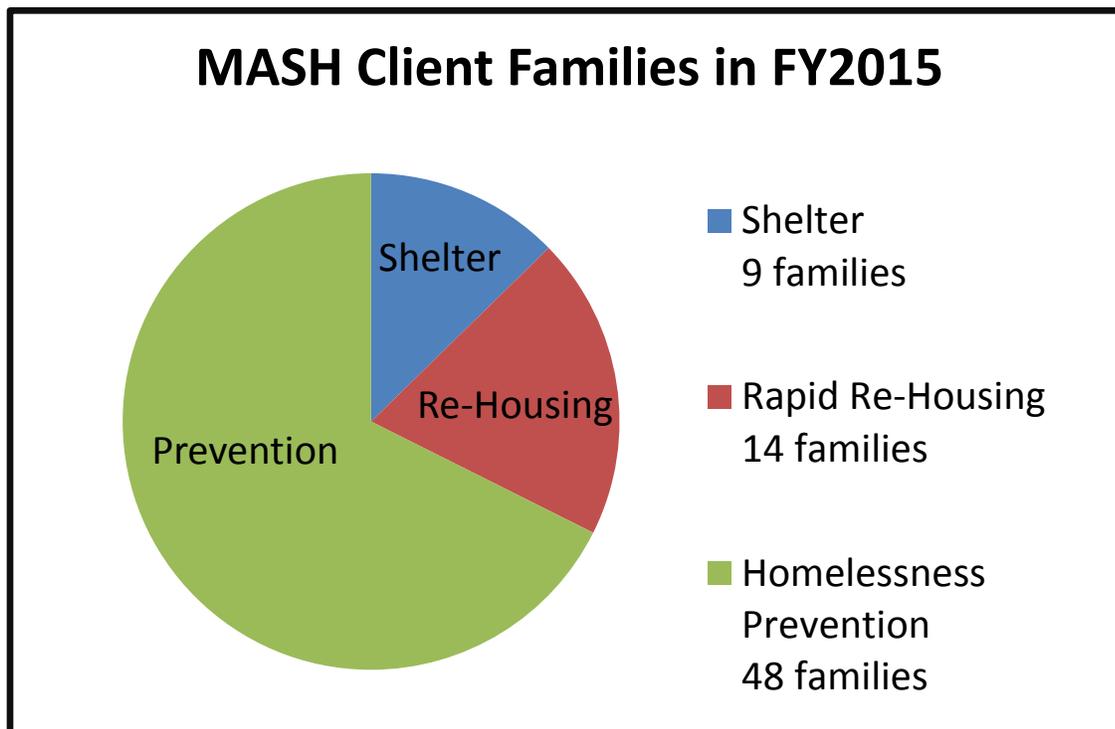


## MASH Year in Review 2015

July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015

MASH was formed in 1998 with the mission of “ending family homelessness, one family at a time”. MASH provides emergency shelter, rapid rehousing, and shelter diversion services to homeless and imminently homeless families with children. Our goal is to address the housing needs of at-risk and homeless families while imparting hope and respecting the dignity of the families that we serve. Our services focus on empowering our clients to achieve permanent stable housing. We use a data driven approach so that we can effectively and efficiently serve as many families in need as possible. Since 2011, MASH has been working with all of the family shelters in Southeastern Connecticut through a cooperative network. We are the first group of providers in Connecticut to take this innovative step (a nationally recommended best practice). This network, the first of its kind in Connecticut, has since been used as a model for regions throughout the entire State.

**In FY 2015, MASH provided shelter and support services across three programs to 71 local families, including 227 children and parents.**



## **Program details**

- MASH provided Shelter Diversion (or prevention) services with financial assistance to 48 families (149 children and parents).
- MASH Rapidly Re-Housed 14 homeless families (47 children and parents) from shelter.
- MASH provided Emergency Shelter for 9 families (31 children and parents).
- MASH families spent an average of 32 days homeless in our shelter, well below the regional average. Less time homeless means reduced stress on children and parents and allows MASH to make better use of our resources.

MASH is making great progress, in preventing homelessness by finding immediate housing alternatives for families seeking shelter. 68% of the families served by MASH in FY 2015 were served through our shelter diversion program. In other words, 48 of the families served were spared the stress and trauma of entering the emergency shelter system. Diverting (or finding alternatives for families) who would otherwise need emergency shelter is of critical importance due to the negative impact of the experience on a child's physical and psychological health. Further, there is a high cost to both the individual and society as homeless children are far more likely than their housed peers to become homeless as adults. The success of this program in our region resulted in an invitation to MASH to speak at the annual conference of the National Alliance to End Homelessness in Washington D.C.

Transportation is one of the biggest obstacles our clients face in securing and maintaining the employment necessary to sustain a home. In FY 2015, MASH budgeted \$5,000 to help families with "Wheels to Work". In FY 2015, MASH helped 9 families through this fund as follows: Bus tickets/cab to work/interview: (2); Financial assistance for car registration, insurance, license: (2); Donated car and financial assistance for registration/insurance: (3); Car released from pawn broker: (1); Financial assistance towards car purchase: (1)

## **Generous local support and increased success in fundraising finances our work**

- MASH enjoyed continued, strong support in 2015 from over 20 generous local foundations.
- Donations from nearly 500 individuals, small businesses, local churches and corporate matching programs contributed almost \$300,000 to support our work.
- MASH worked closely with other providers to help address additional family needs. Our partners include State and town providers, healthcare providers, mental health counselors, employment service providers, childcare providers and faith communities. Our goal is to enhance cooperation throughout the community to better serve local families facing homelessness.