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NC INTEGRATED CARE FOR KIDS

Integrated Care Round: Housing

January, 2023: 12:00-1:30 PM

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Welcome to NC InCK Integrated Care Rounds!

As we get started, do the following:

1

Think about the families with whom you work:

In your work with families, what impact have you seen housing instability have on other areas of a child and family's well-being? (physical health, education, behavioral health, etc.)

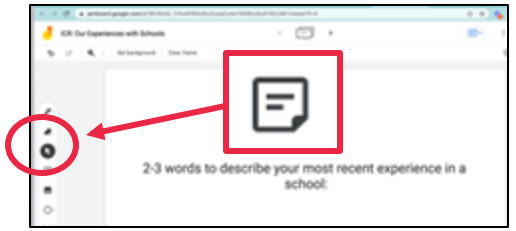
2

Open up the link:

https://jamboard.google.com/d/1yuXLZgjlRUx6IBD1UfvQSjho1VF3auHM4gbTiA8ng18/edit?usp=sharing

3

Click the "sticky note" button to make a new note.



Type the support you can provide as a Family Navigator and click "save."



Your sticky note will appear! Resize it/drag it where it can be seen on the slide.

Agenda

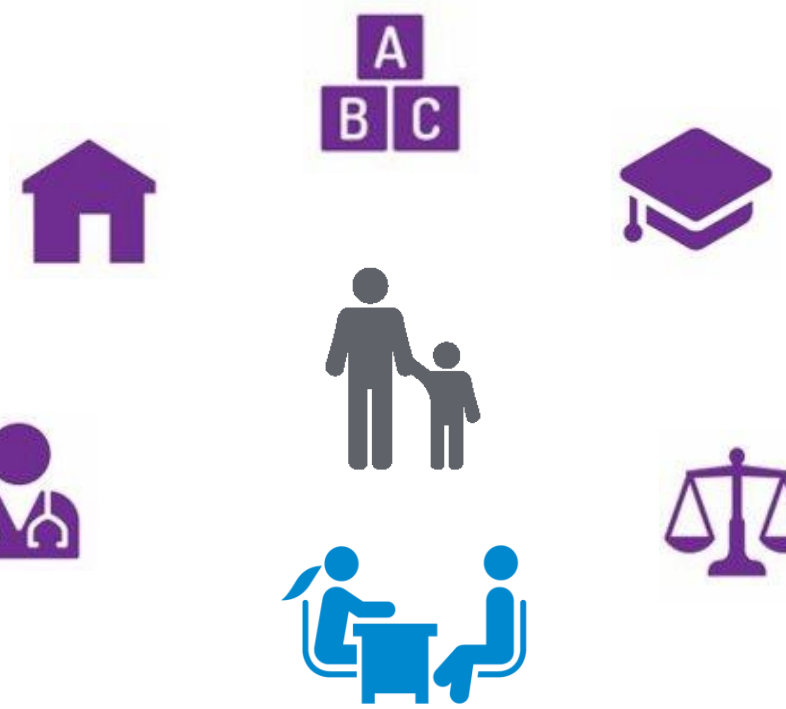
1. Why Housing
2. Context of Housing Instability
3. Supporting Cross Sector Needs
4. Connecting to Housing Specialists
5. Ways to Combat Housing Instability
6. A Look Ahead

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Why Integrated Care Rounds?

Why Housing?

Children ages 4-7 who experienced homelessness have higher rates of asthma, respiratory infections, severe allergies, and ear infections



Any move in childhood is associated with nearly a half-year loss in educational attainment

70% of children ages 9-11 who experience homelessness have at least one chronic health condition

People with housing instability are at significantly higher risk for food insecurity

Children experiencing homelessness require more inpatient mental health services than housed peers and have higher rates of depression

Key Points to Remember About Housing

There are a variety of local and statewide resources and programs for families facing housing instability. Family Navigators can help families target appropriate programs, complete applications, and communicate questions.

Navigating housing instability is challenging and takes a long time. Family Navigators can play an important and helpful role for families who are wading through the complex and arduous housing assistance system.

Housing instability often impacts many other areas of a child's life. Thorough assessment of all core child service areas is critical.

Housing Instability: What is it? How prevalent is it?

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Housing Instability Defined

There is not a consistent definition of "housing instability" and "housing insecurity" is a term used frequently to refer to the same thing. Both terms refer to a number of housing challenges, including:

- Trouble paying rent
- Moving frequently
- Overcrowding
- Spending the bulk of household income on housing
- Loss of housing
- Housing quality and safety concerns

Different programs have different definitions. The way a program defines housing instability or homelessness often dictates who is eligible for services or benefits.

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Housing Instability in North Carolina

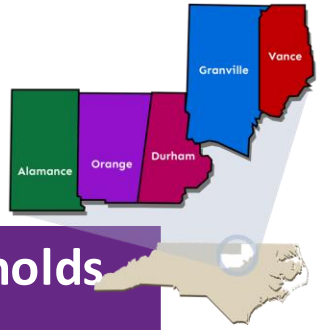
- Housing is considered unaffordable by the federal government if it costs more than 30% of the household's income
- Households are "severely cost burdened" if they pay over 50% of their income to housing

668,100 people live in households that are severely cost-burdened including 222,700 children

- An estimated 76% of people who qualify for housing assistance do not receive it because there are insufficient resources to meet housing needs

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Housing Instability in NC InCK Counties



2021	% of households that are cost-burdened	% of renters who have difficulty affording their homes	% of homeowners who have difficulty affording their homes	# of households
Alamance County	28%	46%	18%	17,825
Durham County	32%	46%	19%	39,754
Granville County	27%	44%	20%	5,722
Orange County	30%	48%	19%	15,817
Vance County	31%	41%	23%	5,165

Housing is affordable when it comprises no more than 30% of the family's budget. Families that spend more than this on housing are **cost-burdened**.

FN Steps to Support Housing Instability

Step 1: Identify and address cross sector needs

Step 2: Connect to Housing Specialist if possible

Step 3: Contact the Continuum of Care for the county in which the InCK member resides for guidance

- Many counties have a Coordinated Entry process to access emergency shelter and long-term housing options

Step 4: Contact the Housing Authority for the county in which the InCK member resides

Step 5: Identify affordable housing using NC Housing Search

Step 6: Refer to Legal Aid when appropriate

And remember:

- **Our NC InCK Housing Guide has lots of information on housing resources in each of the 5 InCK counties!**
- **Lean on your IC for support! They can reach out to our Housing Team for ideas and suggestions.**
- **Multiple steps can be taken at once and steps can be taken in a different order depending on situation.**

Step 1: Identify and Address Cross-Sector Needs Related to Housing Instability

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Physical Health

- How can a Family Navigator help address or prevent the negative health impacts that come from housing instability and homelessness?
  - Encourage well visits and preventive care whenever possible
  - Ensure transportation is not a barrier to health visits or services
  - Assist with any changes that need to be made for a pharmacy due to a move
  - **Keep track of when Medicaid recertification is due and make sure families submit forms so coverage of Medicaid (and InCK) does not lapse**



Education

- Make sure families who are homeless or facing housing instability are connected with the McKinney-Vento liaison in their school system.
- McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act guarantees:
  - Enrollment in school regardless of record status
  - Transportation to school
  - Access to the same education as non-homeless/housing instable students
  - Access to comparable services non-homeless/housing instable students are afforded

For information on McKinney-Vento liaisons for each InCK county, reference page 23 of the NC InCK Housing Guide.

Early Childhood

- Children experiencing homelessness (families in "doubled up" living situations are included) are prioritized for Head Start and Early Head Start



For more information on Head Start and Early Head Start programs in InCK counties, reference page 3 of the NC InCK Early Childhood Guide.

Food Insecurity

- Families with unstable living situations (with a friend, at a hotel, in a shelter) may not have access to a full kitchen or a way to prepare meals. Buying prepared food can be more expensive and stress a food-budget.
- Check on whether food resources will be helpful before giving them to families. A food bank providing raw ingredients that need to be cooked is not helpful if a family does not have a way to prepare meals.
- Enrollment in food and nutrition benefits is a critical source of support for families. Make sure the family is receiving benefits they may be eligible for, including:
  - SNAP benefits
  - WIC benefits
  - School lunch benefits

The NC InCK Food and Nutrition Support Guide provides more information on eligibility and enrollment for benefits.

Energy and Water Assistance

- Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIEAP)
- Crisis Intervention Program (CIP)
- Emergency Assistance (Short-Term Financial Assistance for Families in Crisis)
- Low Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP)
- County-specific programs
- Local agencies and faith-based programs

For more information on assistance programs available in InCK counties, reference page 24 of the NC InCK Housing Guide.

Mental and Behavioral Health

- Housing instability and homelessness can be stressful and traumatic for children and families
- Touch base with families about how their housing situation is impacting their mental health and connect them to services if needed

The NC InCK Behavioral Health Guide provides resources on behavioral and mental health supports.

Step 2: Connect to and Collaborate with Housing Specialists (when possible)

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Housing Specialists

- As part of Medicaid Transformation, each prepaid health plan (AmeriHealth Caritas, Carolina Complete Health, Healthy Blue, United Healthcare, WellCare) was **required to develop a Housing Specialist role** to help members facing housing instability

- Housing Specialists **receive referrals** from care managers or other providers to **assist individuals and families facing housing instability** with everything from emergency shelter needs to pest control issues to searching for long-term affordable housing options

- NC InCK has spent time over the past year getting to know the Housing Specialists and learn about their role and how InCK can support their critical work

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Housing Specialist Panel Questions

- Introduce yourself – name, entity you are from, any relevant background
- Can you tell me about a success story when you've been able to help someone with their housing need?
- What stands out from what has been shared so far – by Ryan and I – that resonates with you given your experience?
- What does a busy day look like for you?
- What is your favorite/the best housing resource from your perspective?
- What is the biggest barrier you encounter in supporting families around housing instability?
- What information is helpful for a Family Navigator (care manager) to obtain before making a referral to you?
- From your perspective, what are some effective strategies for collaboration with care managers to support families?

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Connecting Families to Housing Specialists

- Children in Standard Plans facing housing instability can be connected to Housing Specialists
- InCK is working with PHPs to develop pathways for FNs outside of each plan to make referrals to Housing Specialists
- Our hope is collaboration between FNs and Housing Specialists will maximize capacity of both roles
  - Housing Specialist: resource expert
  - Family Navigator: family connector to resources identified by Housing Specialist

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Housing Specialist and Family Navigator Collaboration

Housing Specialist	Family Navigator
• Provide information on local Coordinated Entry Process to Family Navigator.	• Assist families in completing Coordinated Entry Process.
• Provide information on organizations that can supply emergency assistance (housing, rent, utilities) and confirm they are taking referrals.	• Make emergency housing assistance referrals identified by Housing Specialist for the family.
• Identify income-based housing resources, including potential sites to use Housing Choice Vouchers, and determine if they have availability. Provide information to Family Navigator to make referral.	• Assist families in completing applications for income-based housing or Housing Choice Vouchers by helping families gather required documents and information to complete the applications.
• Recommend referral to Legal Aid for eviction prevention or issues with housing conditions.	• When recommended by Housing Specialist, assist family in connecting with Legal Aid for eviction prevention or issues with housing conditions.

Steps 3-6: Key Components of Housing Support

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FN Steps to Support Housing Instability

Step 1: Identify and address cross sector needs

Step 2: Connect to Housing Specialist if possible

Step 3: **Contact the Continuum of Care for the county in which the InCK member resides for guidance**

- Many counties have a Coordinated Entry process to access emergency shelter and long-term housing options

Step 4: **Contact the Housing Authority for the county in which the InCK member resides**

Step 5: **Identify affordable housing using NC Housing Search**

And remember:

- **Our NC InCK Housing Guide has lots of information on housing resources in each of the 5 InCK counties!**
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- **Multiple steps can be taken at once and steps can be taken in a different order depending on situation.**

Step 3: Contact Continuum of Care (CoC)

- A CoC is a community plan to organize and deliver housing services to meet the specific needs of people who are homeless and prevent a return to homelessness. CoCs work to connect people to:
  - Permanent Supportive Housing
  - Transitional Housing
  - Supportive Services

CoCs often manage **Coordinated Entry/Assessment:** Standardized process for anyone looking for housing

- Family Navigators can provide families with information about Coordinated Entry and even walk them through the process by participating in the initial phone call.
- Information on Coordinated Entry for all counties can be found here:

https://www.ncceh.org/lookingforhelp/coordinatedassessment/

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Step 4: Contact the County Housing Authority

- A Housing Authority is a local administrative agency for housing assistance programs funded by the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
- Housing Authorities provide housing or rental assistance to people who are eligible
- Contacting a local Housing Authority will provide you with information about what housing programs are available and accepting applications
- Housing Authorities:
  - Maintain public housing units
  - Issue Housing Choice Vouchers (Section 8)
  - Often help coordinate the CoC
- Section 3 of NC InCK's Housing Guide provides contact information for the Housing Authorities in the 5 InCK counties

For more information on eligibility criteria for Housing Choice Vouchers, please see the Appendix.

Step 5: Identify Affordable Housing Options

- NC Housing Search is a web-based listing of affordable rentals in North Carolina. You can search for:
  - Affordable rentals
  - Income-based rental units
  - Rental units that accept Housing Choice Vouchers
- The website also has a list of resources that provide housing assistance such as the NC Homeowner Assistance Fund

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Step 6: Refer to Legal Aid

- Legal Aid can help with the following housing-related needs
  - Eviction
  - Landlord refusing rental assistance
  - Repairs and Maintenance
  - Mobile home evictions
  - Public and subsidized housing lease terminations
  - Housing Vouchers

For more information on Legal Aid, reference the InCK Legal Aid Guide.

According to Prosperity Now, the availability of legal representation is one of the most effective protections against eviction and foreclosure. **If a family is facing a potential eviction or foreclosure, contact Legal Aid's Housing Hotline at 877-201-6426.**

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Take a Moment…

Think about one current family with whom you are working who may be facing housing instability. What is something you will do to support that family as a result of this session?

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A Look Ahead

Every Other Thursday; 10-11am:

NC InCK Office Hours

Always Optional: Invites Sent by Brie Hardy

Thursday, February 9, 2023; 12-1:30pm:

Value Added Services from PHPs and Offering Proactive Support with Families

Tuesday, February 21, and Thursday, February 23; 9am-1:00pm:

Next Full Family Navigator Trainings

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Appendix

Housing Instability Defined – Health Screening Measure

A child's health plan or health provider will screen families for housing instability. The majority of the entities will use the following set of three questions. If the family answers "yes" to any of the questions, they are considered to be facing housing instability.

- Within the past 12 months, have you ever stayed: outside, in a car, in a tent, in an overnight shelter, or temporarily in someone else's home (e.g. couch-surfing)?
- Are you worried about losing your housing?
- During the last 12 months, have you been unable to get utilities (e.g. heat electricity) when it was really needed?

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Eligibility for Housing Choice Vouchers (HCVs)

- Applicants must be US citizens or have legal documentation to reside in the country
- Eviction from public housing in the past due to drug-related activity means someone is disqualified for the program for up to 3 years
- Income limits vary:
  - 75% of HCVs are given to families with income below 30% of median income level
  - 25% are given to families with income below 50% of the median income level
- A family with a HCV does pay rent, but it is not more than 40% of their adjusted income

*Note: There are 70 Housing Authorities in NC. Some have closed waiting lists meaning applications cannot be submitted.

One of the main reasons people on waiting lists for HCVs do not receive them is because their contact information is not up-to-date. Family Navigators can support families in updating their contact information and checking on their status on the waiting list.

At A Glance...

County	Median Income	30%	50%	Income Needed for 2 –bedroom Apartment
Alamance	$68,100	$20,430	$34,050	$35,400
Durham	$86,400	$25,920	$43,200	$45,360
Granville	$68,600	$20,580	$34,300	$33,200
Orange	$86,400	$25,920	$43,200	$45,360
Vance	$50,400	$15,120	$25,200	$27,720

2-3% of people (between 115,000 and 138,000 households) in NC receive some type of HUD assistance, including HCVs and Section 8 Project Housing.

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