

Transition Out of Homelessness
Woodring Community Action Grant Update
May, 2008

Program Committee Team:

Teresa Josephson, Exec. Dir.- Lydia Place	Jackie Baker-Sennett, WWU
Lydia Place Case Management Staff	WWU Human Services Students/Interns
Drew Betz, WSU Extension Faculty	Barbara Klein, NW Justice Project
Noriko Lau, Volunteer Coordinator	Christy Wales, ECONW- Family Services
Karen McKay, Public Health Nurse	Jeannie Havland, Bellingham High School



This community action project is conducted in collaboration with Lydia Place, a nonprofit organization that provides a six month residential program for homeless women and children. Our partnership establishes a real-world opportunity for WWU's Human Services students to learn about homeless transition services and to engage in applied research and evaluation practices. This collaboration also provides an opportunity for Lydia Place to refine existing programs and to further evaluate program effectiveness.

Activities to Date:

- a. WWU librarian (Stefanie Buck) designed a library resources webpage on homelessness research to support student work related to the project.
- b. The Gates Foundation lead evaluator for the Sound Families Initiative (Jami Bodonyi) met with students and Lydia Place staff at WWU to review homeless transition research and evaluation methods. Evaluation tools were provided to Lydia Place and WWU for their consideration.
- c. WCE/Human Services students met with Lydia Place Director and staff during class to learn about existing programs and prepare research proposals.
- d. WWU students analyzed 3 years of focus group data from Lydia Place graduates and wrote summary reports for the Program Committee
- e. Students reviewed existing literature in six areas of the Lydia Place Parent Program. Students provided recommendations for program planning and evaluation tools that might be considered for use by Lydia Place in the following areas:
 - parenting skills
 - financial literacy and housing
 - family communication
 - domestic violence and self care

- health/safety issues
- goal setting

Ongoing/Upcoming Activities

- a. Lydia Place staff, program committee members, and WWU/Lydia Plan Human Services student interns meet monthly to review and consider student generated materials and recommendations. Resulting from these discussions:
 - i. The Program Committee is considering major revisions to the Lydia Place parenting program. Lydia Place sponsored a nurturing parenting training in April that was open to Whatcom County agencies.
 - ii. A new program to help moms recognize housing safety dangers (based on materials from the Housing Authority) will be implemented.
 - iii. Discussions are taking place with other WWU programs regarding collaboration opportunities for graduate student interns.
- b. A focus group will take place in early summer 2008 to examine Lydia Place graduates' perspectives on the program (to be funded by the Community Outreach Grant).
- c. Once current program revisions are in place, a sustainable program evaluation plan will be developed with the goal of maintaining WWU student involvement over the long term.
- d. Phase II of the project will begin to examine the Lydia Place Children's Program.



Thank you Woodring College of Education Community Leadership Advisory Committee for supporting work to enhance student learning and promote partnerships between WWU and community-based agencies!

For additional information contact Dr. Jackie Baker-Sennett at bakersj@wwu.edu