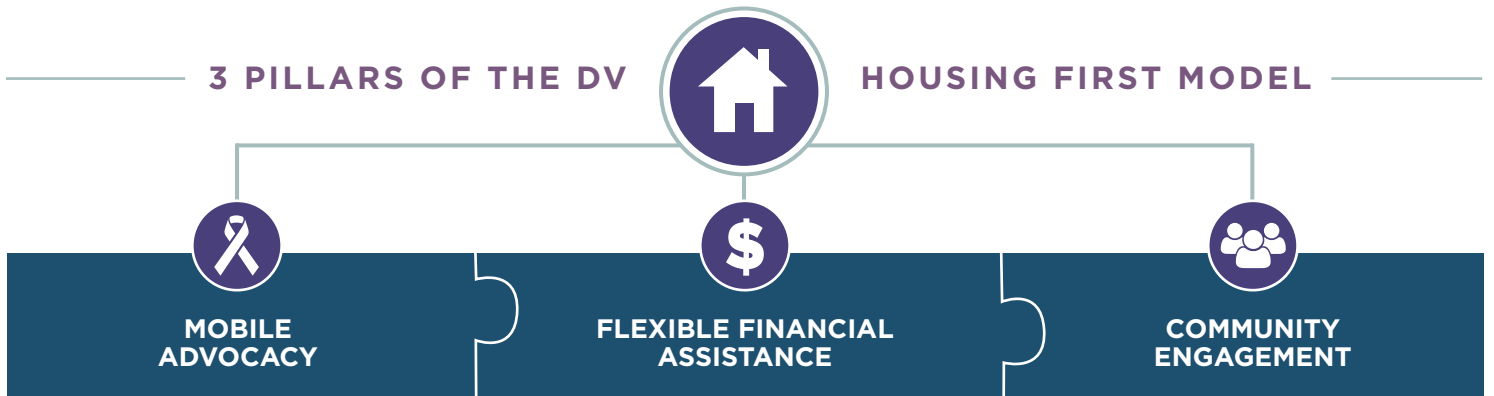


DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOUSING FIRST DEMONSTRATION EVALUATION




Project Overview | April 2020

Domestic violence is a leading cause of homelessness. However, little evidence exists about effective strategies to reduce homelessness among domestic violence survivors. This evaluation will contribute to our understanding of best practices by studying the implementation and effectiveness of the Domestic Violence Housing First (DVHF) Demonstration Project operating in Washington State.¹



THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOUSING FIRST (DVHF) MODEL

The DVHF model is designed to promote long-term safety and housing stability through:

- 1 MOBILE ADVOCACY**
 Advocates work with survivors where it is safe and convenient for them, in the community, and advocacy continues as long as survivors need support.
- 2 FLEXIBLE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**
 Funds are targeted to support survivors' individual needs, such as housing assistance, transportation, childcare, employment-related costs, and education.
- 3 COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**
 Key to the model is that advocates proactively engage those people in the community who can help support the safety, stability, and well-being of survivors.

¹The Domestic Violence Housing First (DVHF) Demonstration Evaluation is being conducted through a contract with the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation (ASPE) in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, with funding from the Office for Victims of Crimes in the U.S. Department of Justice. The contractor is the Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence and its subcontractor Michigan State University. The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation has provided additional funding for the DVHF services and evaluation activities.

DVHF DEMONSTRATION EVALUATION

This quasi-experimental study is examining the impact of DVHF on safety, housing stability, and well-being for domestic violence survivors and their children over time. By inviting all eligible survivors to join the study – regardless of the level of resources the DV program has at the time – we can study the effects of different levels and types of services in a real-world context, since lacking sufficient resources is a problem many DV programs frequently face. Homeless or unstably housed survivors enter the study shortly after seeking services from one of five DV agencies in Washington state. Two sites are in urban King County and three are in rural areas.

DATA SOURCES

We are interviewing **406** survivors every **6** months over **24** months. Service providers are submitting information about the services participants received and services available through the agency. Advocates complete brief online surveys 6 months after survivors initially seek services about their work with specific survivors.

HYPOTHESES

- 1 Survivors receiving greater levels of mobile advocacy and flexible financial assistance will show greater improvement in the following areas compared to survivors receiving “standard services” that either do not include mobile advocacy or flexible funding, or include minimal levels:
 - Increased housing stability
 - Increased economic stability
 - Increased safety
 - Increased quality of life
 - Decreased mental health symptomatology and substance abuse
- 2 As parents’ housing stability and well-being increase, so too will children’s outcomes. Specifically, children will demonstrate:
 - Increased school attendance and achievement
 - Decreased behavioral problems
 - Increased social-emotional skills

EXPLORATORY RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- Can advocates accurately predict which survivors will be stably and safely housed over time?
- Does this type of intervention work better for some survivors than for others?
- Are particular agency characteristics related to better outcomes (e.g., procedures for determining services, number of advocates available, providing services that are more trauma-informed and/or culturally responsive)?

DVHF DEMONSTRATION EVALUATION TIMELINE

The evaluation began in summer 2017 and continues through September 2022. Updates and findings can be found at [WSCADV DVHF Project](#).