



Do you know where you will sleep tonight? Where your children's next meal will come from? If you do, you are more fortunate than nearly 2,000 families who are homeless in Minnesota tonight.

Fortunately, 30 mothers, fathers and children have a place to go today – Families Moving Forward. Due to your support, we have weathered the financial storms of 2009 and now find ourselves on a path towards sustainability. We thank you for not giving up on us or the nearly 200 homeless family members we served last year, as we faced the most difficult time in our 19 year history.

Now, there is much more to be done.

The most recent statistics released March 2010 from the Wilder Foundation show a dramatic spike in homelessness. We must do something NOW, to help homeless families. Tonight more than 3,500 children, whose average age is just six and a half years old, are without a home. This is not acceptable. But, there is hope.

At Families Moving Forward, **just \$36.00 a day will provide a Mom, Dad or child with:**

Services at our North Minneapolis Day Center:

- Family Advocates who guide and assist families to find and keep stable, affordable housing.
- Basic needs including showers, laundry, computers, telephones, and children's playroom.
- Trained volunteers who provide loving, fun and educational experiences for children, while parents concentrate on housing, employment, and educational goals.

Support at our 40+ Hosting Congregations:

- Daily breakfast and dinner served family style at the congregations, as well as to-go bagged lunches.
- Comfortable, private bedrooms for each family.
- Evening activities to engage and mentor children and parents.
- Congregation volunteers who serve as role models, offering social support and friendship to families.

How many days will you choose to give this life-changing opportunity to a homeless family?

Linnea and her 18 month old son Jason arrived to the Families Moving Forward shelter in July 2009 (when we could have closed our doors if it wasn't for the overwhelming support from our community of donors!) The two black garbage bags Linnea carried contained everything they owned, except for the blanket that Jason clung to ever so tightly. This is their story...

“We were hungry and exhausted” – physically and emotionally.

“The months before we came to Families Moving Forward we’d been sleeping in our car at sketchy rest stops or on the floor at a friend-of-a-friend’s home. I was exhausted from just trying to survive.”



After three months Linnea and Jason moved into an apartment. “I don’t know what we would have done without you. Thank you to all of you – the staff and hosting congregations - you took a huge burden off of me. We didn’t have to fight to survive anymore. You gave us a place to sleep, fed us, encouraged us, counseled us, gave us time to rest, and never judged us. You loved us just as we were and helped us get back on the path to being who we wanted to be. You are truly life savers!”

Unfortunately, there are 300 families a month that call Families Moving Forward for shelter who do not get a chance at such a happy ending.

*Our mission is to do more. We want to reach more families and impact more lives.
With your help, we can do it!*

We have set a goal to raise \$100,000 by July 1st. By doing so, we will:

- Ensure sustainability to continue to positively impact homeless families.
- Initiate two new programs to support the success of Families Moving Forward participants:
 - Financial Literacy and Money Management Classes
 - Parenting and Life Skills Classes
- Hire two part-time staff dedicated to providing educational and social support programming for children and youth.
- Lay the ground work for expanding our program to meet the escalating demand for our services.

The 300 families that we are turning away each month include more than 1,000 people – 600 of them children. Children who deserve to have their own bed to sleep in each night. Parents who need someone to believe in them and give them a chance for a brighter future.

We want to be that hope in their lives – will you please help us? **We invite you to donate now to Families Moving Forward.** Your gift will provide a stable and more promising future for a homeless family, today.

- ❖ \$36 provides one day of food, shelter and education for a child.
- ❖ \$250 provides a parent with food, shelter and services for a week.
- ❖ \$1,000 provides a family of three with services for two weeks.

Together we can do it. Together we will change this community – one family at a time.

Sincerely,

Juli Baecker
Board Chair

P.S. – Follow our progress towards our \$100,000 goal and put your donation to work faster by giving online at www.familiesmovingforward.org