

How Family Promise Works

Families who join our program are hosted weekly by a local congregation. The family eats dinner and breakfast and sleeps at the congregation's facilities in a space converted into a bedroom for one week at a time. On Sunday, the beds and the family's belongings are moved to the next host congregation.

During the day, the Day Center is hosted by staff and volunteers. Staff work on case management and other activities to assist the family in moving forward in their journey to getting into their own residence again.

The process is rigorous and adult family members are required to make progress on the goals set during their assessment. Progress is assessed every 30 days. It is very important that the family be willing and able to take the necessary steps to become independent again. Most families thrive in our program and graduate into their own residence within a couple of months.



Let us Introduce Ourselves!

Family Promise is the leading national nonprofit organization addressing family homelessness in the U.S.A.

Our mission is to help families with minor/school-aged children who are experiencing homelessness achieve sustainable independence in their own residences.

Contact us at
360-703-3131

or on the web at

www.FamilyPromiseOfCowlitzCounty.org

215 Academy Street
P.O. Box 1152
Kelso, WA 98626



Family Promise of Cowlitz County

Helping families get back home

"We were treated like actual people; not like a case study or statistic. Family Promise showed us compassion, sympathy, and even friendship."

Family Promise Graduate



Guest eligibility

Family Promise screens guests carefully to safeguard our volunteers, staff, and other guests. To be accepted into our program, guests must

- have children under 18 (or still in high school)
- pass a background check
- pass a drug screen (conducted on site)
- be free of active addiction and untreated mental health disorders that could cause violent disruptive behavior

Our program is “clean and sober;” no alcohol, THC, or illegal drug use is allowed. Those who do not fit these requirements will be referred to other agencies for appropriate assistance. Those accepted into the program must also demonstrate the ability to become sustainably independent.

A community-based solution to family homelessness

Background

Family Promise changes the lives of children without homes by assisting their families to achieve sustainably independent lives in their own residences again. We do this through a holistic, community-based approach that includes thorough assessment, customized action plans, intensive case management, and by helping the family connect to agencies and to individuals in the community through genuine relationships.

In 1988, Family Promise was founded as the Interfaith Hospitality Network. Since then, the organization has grown in both scope and numbers, spreading across the U.S. because its approach is effective in stabilizing the lives of families with children experiencing homelessness.

There are now 206 Affiliates across the U.S. with well over 200,000 volunteers who have served nearly one million guests in 43 states.

How We Serve

Family Promise hosts up to 14 people (about 4 families) at a time in our interfaith hospitality network. Our partner congregations in Cowlitz County host our guest families for a week at a time several times a year. The guests go to the Host facilities at 5 p.m. and return to the Day Center at 7 a.m. to prepare for school, work, and case management activities.

We refer our guests to social, medical, dental, and mental health services. We connect families to life-skills classes like parenting, finance and budgeting, resumé development, and good tenancy. Guests may take GED or college courses to improve their job prospects and long-term stability. When they're ready, we help them search for housing.

Nationally, 88% of Family Promise guests graduate to stable residences within 9 weeks.



How to refer a family to us

A family experiencing homelessness is welcome to call us. We explain the program and determine basic eligibility. If we are at capacity, we ask that the family call us each week to keep us up to date on their situation and to confirm continued interest. If we have space available, we will bring the family in for intake, drug screening, and background check before bringing them into the program.

What happens between 5 p.m. and 7 a.m.? — The Community of Faith Coming Together in Service

Family Promise was founded as a faith response to the crisis of family homelessness. The first Interfaith Hospitality Network set the model in 1988, when a congregation hosted the first Family Promise guests to help them get back on their feet. That became the model of congregational hospitality that still operates today.

Between 5 p.m. and 7 a.m., the guests stay at a congregation's facility. The hosts provide dinner, eat with the guests, make sack-lunch options available, and hang out with the guests until bedtime. Each family sleeps in a room or space in the building that has been converted into a bedroom for the week. In the morning, hosts provide breakfast before seeing their guests off for the day. Each host is assisted by at least one support congregation, so people of different traditions come together to live out their faith in service. Volunteers report enjoying getting to know one another in this way, and many new friendships form.