



ANNUAL REPORT

2020



A Letter from the Board President

This year was a challenging time for Family Promise of Essex County, but I am constantly reassured by our extraordinary commitment to responding to the urgent needs of Essex County's most vulnerable residents.


In the long shadow of the Covid-19 pandemic and its devastating economic toll, our services are in growing demand. In 2020, in addition to resuming our shelter program in hotels, with rigorous safety precautions to protect our dedicated staff, volunteers and families, we also have continued our prevention and stabilization programs that provide rental and security deposit assistance to people at risk for eviction.

People in our community--donors, volunteers, and concerned residents--have opened their hearts to help those affected during this difficult time. In 2020, Family Promise of Essex County helped over 250 people, more than 50% of whom are children. FPE provided over 2000 emergency shelter nights and supported over 100 people with rental assistance, so they can sustain permanent housing. FPE distributed over 5000 meals, thousands of Covid-19 safety masks, sanitizers, and other essential PPE and over 100 backpacks for virtual schooling.

A notable achievement of a different kind was our official name change. The Interfaith Hospitality Network for the Homeless of Essex County, Inc. officially became Family Promise of Essex County, Inc. (FPE) in July 2020. Despite the name change, our mission remains EXACTLY the same: to help families experiencing homelessness achieve self-sufficiency by providing shelter, housing assistance and an array of social services through a community-based approach. We made the decision to embrace the recognizable Family Promise name to be more in line with Family Promise National and our affiliates and to reflect our ever-broadening scope. The name refers to the promise, in the sense of commitment, which communities make to families in need. But it also refers to the promise, the potential, inherent in every family.

To our concerned community of volunteers, donors, and others who have shared so generously, and on behalf of our dedicated Board and staff, I offer my sincere gratitude. Thank you for helping us to continue to deliver these critical services to our Essex County families in need. Especially given our current public health crisis, your generosity is what allows us to do the work we do.

Warmly,



Chris Murphy
Board President



*Note that in July 2020, we changed our name from Interfaith Hospitality Network to Family Promise of Essex County, Inc.

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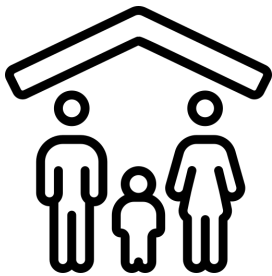
Covid-19 safety protocols were vigilantly followed at FPE for all staff and clients.

Pictured: Family Promise of Essex County staff and board members with Essex County Executive, Joseph N. DiVincenzo, Jr



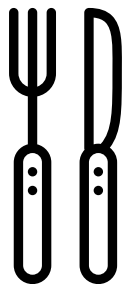
In 2020, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, FPE saw more than a 100% increase in the number of calls from people looking for homeless prevention support.

The Impact YOU Made



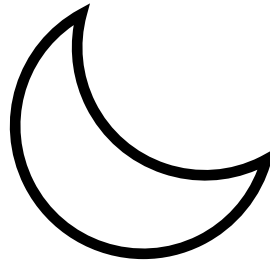
250+

People Served
(50% were children)



5,500+

Meals Provided



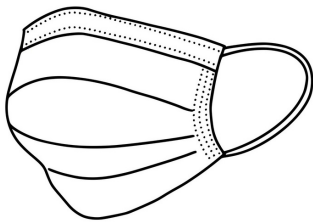
2,000+

Nights of Emergency
Shelter Provided



100+

People Supported with
Homeless Prevention
Rental Assistance



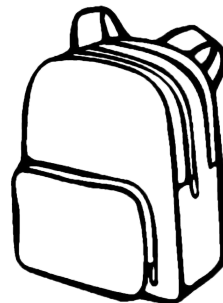
2000+

Covid-19 Safety Masks
Provided



140+

Hours of Virtual
Tutoring in
our After School
Program



110+

Backpacks
Distributed for
Virtual Schooling



450+

Holiday Food
Baskets
Distributed

Emergency Shelter Program



Family Promise of Essex County provides temporary emergency housing through a network of approximately 40 churches and synagogues in Essex County. Our shelter model includes a hospitality network of over 1000 volunteers a year, comprehensive guidance and referrals to find housing and jobs through case management by FPE case workers, and community engagement through congregational and other volunteers. Congregations host three or four families (up to 14 people) for a week at a time, providing sleeping and relaxation areas, with volunteers from the congregational membership providing meals, activities, and overnight supervision. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, FPE temporarily switched to a hotel shelter model and provided food gift cards for shelter clients. During the day, FPE's professional social services staff provide ongoing case management and programming at the FPE Family Resource Center in Montclair. The center is also available for access to phones, computers and shower facilities.



Housing and Stabilization Programs



Family Promise of Essex County works to place our shelter families into permanent housing as well as to prevent evictions and homelessness for other non-shelter family clients. Services for this program include assistance with back rent, first and last month's rent, and security deposits as well as case management services. During this time, families work with an FPE case manager to achieve their goals for stable housing, independence, and self-sufficiency. In addition to case management, FPE includes services such as job training, job search and interviewing skills; seminars on workplace protocol, budget management, landlord/tenant relationships, apartment maintenance, wellness and nutrition; and assistance with childcare and transportation options. In 2020, FPE supported over 100 people with rental assistance. Families in the Prevention and Stabilization Program join our short-term shelter families in becoming part of our FPE community. Many clients stay connected to FPE for years, attending our holiday parties and making use of additional services such as the disbursement of donated clothing, toiletry items, book, and toys.



Youth and Family Programs



As part of FPE Housing and Stabilization support services, FPE provides Youth and Family Programs for youth who are currently or have previously been in our emergency shelter or prevention and stabilization programs, as well as local youth from the community. One goal of this program is for youth experiencing or at-risk-of homelessness to have opportunities to feel part of their communities and participate in events with their peers, building self-esteem, self-confidence, and resiliency. In 2020, the after-school program was held virtually and children received homework help from virtual tutors. FPE provided school supplies and clothing, birthday and holiday parties, and even Halloween costumes. In 2020, FPE provided over 100 school back packs, along with laptop computers and other hardware for online schooling. In addition, our program includes summer camp opportunities and other educational and community-building field trips. In the past, trips have included visiting the Franklin Institute in Philadelphia, the Camden Aquarium, as well as a Beach Day at Point Pleasant Beach. FPE is also proud to host our own Girl Scout Troop made up almost entirely of girls in our emergency shelter and the prevention and stabilization programs.



A Family's Success: Shareen's Story

When Shareen came to Family Promise of Essex County this August, she and her children, Turrell and Virginia, were in need of stable housing that they could call home. **Like so many families, their lives were upended by the COVID-19 pandemic.** Shareen lost income and was evicted after her work hours were cut, and she couldn't afford housing or life necessities on her own.



“God was leading me to Family Promise. I don't know where me and my children would be without it.”

SHAREEN, FAMILY PROMISE OF ESSEX COUNTY (NJ) GRADUATE

In September, she and her children entered the FPE Shelter Program, through which they were housed in a hotel and given food gift cards, while the FPE staff provided counseling and support. **We are happy to say that Shareen received the support she needed and has moved into her own fully furnished apartment.** She finally had a place to call home just in time for the holidays! Shareen feels that “God was leading me to this organization. I don't know where me and my children would be without it.” Shareen expressed, “This is the best Christmas gift that I could give to my kids, is this home. I feel so blessed by this organization.”



“My team, at Allison Ziefert Real Estate Group has a long history of supporting local events and causes. About 3 years ago, we decided to focus our giving on one organization and we chose Family Promise of Essex County.” - Allison Ziefert, FPE Donor

Donor Highlight

"Why I Give"

After a decade in real estate I still love my job. I am blessed to have a career that combines several of my passions-- architecture and design, building community and helping people. I am a founding agent of Compass NJ where I lead a top-producing team. In 2020, we closed \$50 million in sales volume and helped 70 families buy, sell or rent homes. **This year, issues of equity and justice in the housing market and in the world are in the front of our minds like never before.** My team has a long history of supporting local events and causes. About 3 years ago, **we decided to focus our giving on one organization and we chose Family Promise of Essex County, Inc.,** a Montclair-based not for profit organization that provides food, shelter, and support services for homeless families in our area. To me, this seemed like an obvious choice given what we do. **We donate to Family Promise with each and every house closing.** There are so many families facing extra challenges for the 2020 holiday season, so we decided to support a family of five by covering the full cost of their holiday gift wish list including a kindle, digital camera, socks, slippers, dolls and bracelets! This family has three girls (ages 3, 6 and 12) and they moved to an apartment in Irvington, with the help of FPE, after being in a shelter last summer. We are local market experts who specialize in Maplewood/South Orange, West Orange, Millburn/Short Hills and Montclair, NJ, as well as the surrounding towns. It's always our goal to provide the highest level of boutique service coupled with candid advice so that our clients have the strategies and information to make the best real estate decisions. The Allison Ziefert Real Estate Group has platinum level sales volume, but our biggest reward is earning an excellent, heartfelt client testimonial or referral from a happy buyer or seller.



In 2020, FPE Virtual Events brought in a combined total of over \$150,000!

Virtual Event Highlights

Thank you to everyone who participated in the November 14th, 2020 Family Promise of Essex County Film Screening Event! We were honored to share the film, "Inocente", an Academy Award winning documentary about one teen's struggle to become an artist while experiencing homelessness. Along with a Zoom panel discussion, which included Inocente herself, the event provided a wonderful opportunity to engage with our community even in this time of distancing. Although the event was free of charge, we raised over \$23,000 thanks to the wonderful coordinators, volunteers and friends of FPE. **This money will go towards serving FPE families on their road to stability.** Our core values at FPE include engaging the whole community in combating family homelessness. We truly can't do this essential work without your volunteer efforts and donations.



Celebrity

Tracey

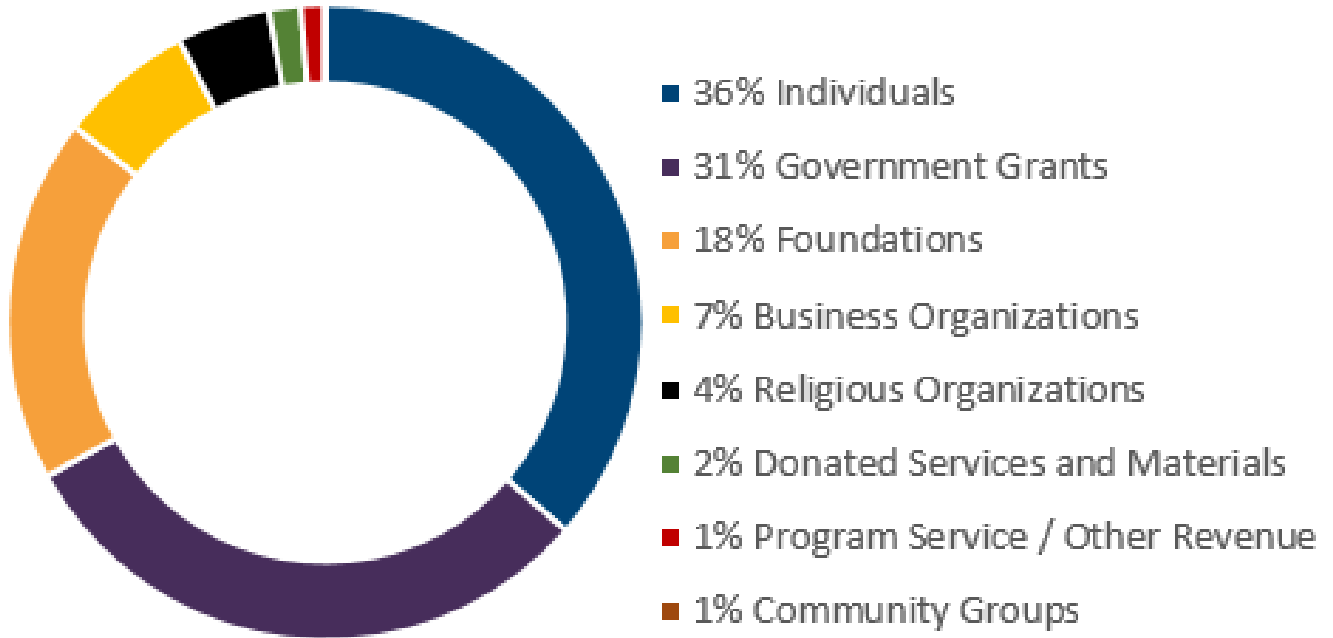
Serenity

Tracey and his family speaking about their success in FPE Programs at the Film Screening Event

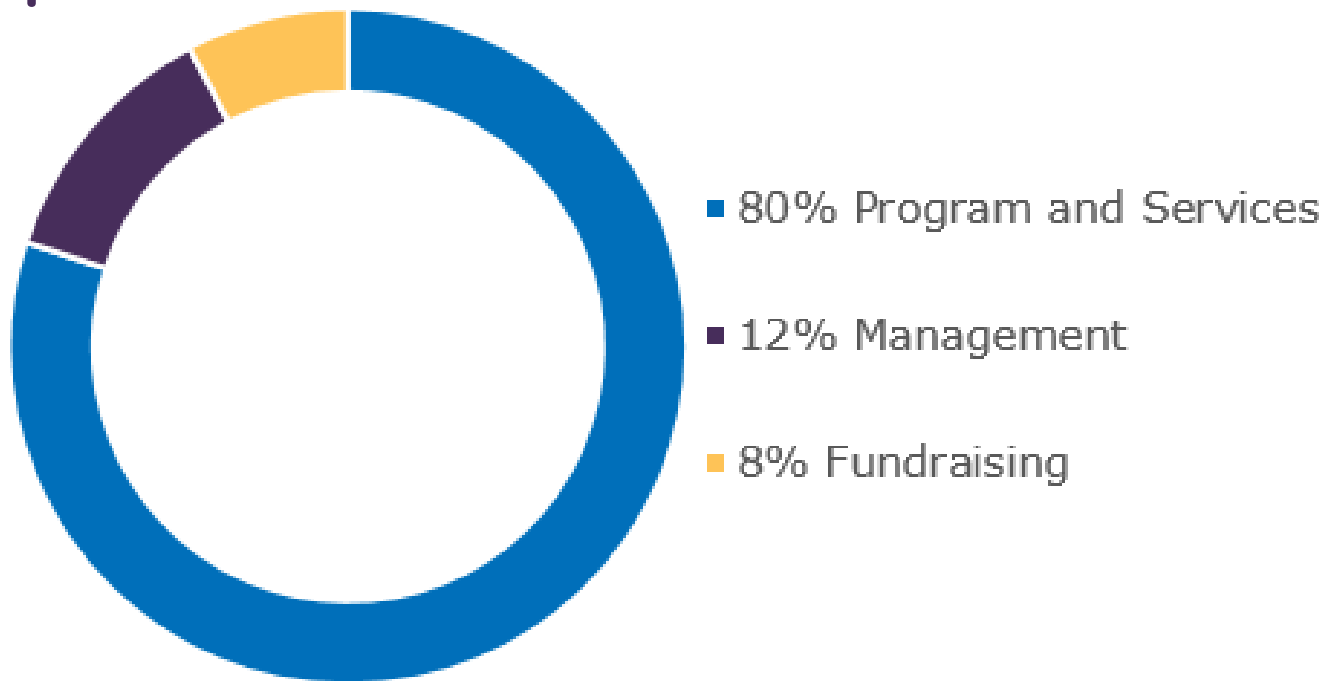
You can find this video and more at the FPE website and YouTube Channel

2020 Financial Overview

Income



Expenses



See a more detailed financial report in our 2020 Audited Financial Statement at
Family Promise of Essex County website
<https://www.fpessexnj.org/financials-annual-reports/>



Thank You to Our Donors!

The FPE Dream Team is a group of individuals who make a multi-year pledge of to provide FPE with sustainable non-restricted funding. Being able to count on this pledged income allows FPE to plan for the future of the organization.

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\$10,000+

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Saint Mark's AME Church
Saint Paul Baptist Church
Saint Rose of Lima Church
Saint Thomas The Apostle Bloomfield
South Orange-Vailsburg United Methodist
Temple Sholom of West Essex
Winston Preparatory School



In 2020, Covid-10 protocols made it impossible to continue our hospitality network of rotational congregational shelter but we are grateful to our congregations for their continued support!

Host Congregations

Vincent United Methodist Church
Grace Episcopal Church Nutley
St. George Episcopal Church
Wyoming Presbyterian Church
Park United Methodist Bloomfield
Union Congregational Church
Prospect Presbyterian
Our Lady of Sorrows South Orange
B'nai Jeshurun
Notre Dame Catholic Church
Temple Sholom of West Essex
St. Philomena's Catholic Church
Agudath Israel
Congregation Shomrei Emunah
St. Mark's AME Church
Grace Presbyterian Church
St. Paul Baptist Church
Temple B'nai Abraham
Temple Ner Tamid
Central Presbyterian Church

Congregation Beth El
Morrow Memorial Church
Glen Ridge Congregational
Redeemer Church of Montclair
Trinity Temple SDA Church
St. Luke Episcopal Church
St. Marks United Methodist Church of Montclair
St. Stephen's Episcopal Church
Calvary Baptist Church

Support Congregations

First Congregational Church of Montclair
South Orange Vailsburg Methodist
St. Mary's Church Nutley
Caldwell United Methodist Church
Unitarian Universal Church of Montclair
Christ Church Montclair
First Lutheran Church of Montclair



Get Involved

Support Family Promise of Essex County with a gift and help provide families with emergency shelter and housing services in our community. Established in 1988, FPE has been keeping homeless families together and guiding them towards home and self-sufficiency. Visit us at our website to see how you can join our community!



Get Social



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Follow us on Twitter @EssexPromise



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