

Letter from the Executive Director



Dear Reader,

For the last 12 years, ICPH's *Beyond Housing* conference has sparked conversations and convened the community of policymakers, service providers, and others dedicated to supporting the needs of families experiencing homelessness.

When the COVID-19 crisis struck the country in March 2020, that community stepped up in a big way. For many, the pandemic's toll over the past two years has only strengthened their commitment to finding new and long-lasting solutions for the changing needs of families and communities. At ICPH and our affiliate Homes for the Homeless (HFH), the pandemic has taught us to reimagine the ways we foster community. Due to the nature of the COVID-19 pandemic, we made the difficult decision to forego our regular *Beyond Housing* conference, which normally draws hundreds of attendees at a major hotel and conference center in New York City.

Instead, this year, we're bringing you together in a different way—through the launch of our new *Beyond Housing* magazine, a collection of ideas and solutions around family homelessness. Our team at ICPH is smaller than it used to be, and we've tailored our research to more directly address the needs of local families in New York City. Yet, we know that when it comes to family homelessness, local issues are also national issues. Many of the lessons we've learned and the solutions we've found in NYC can easily be applied to other localities, and vice versa.

In this inaugural issue, you'll find a Q&A with homeless education liaisons in Los Angeles County and an analysis of the New York City Department of Education's coordination with shelter-based student services during the COVID-19 pandemic. You'll read about a partnership in Philadelphia that's working to foster quality early childcare for children experiencing homelessness and its influence on statewide policy, as well as a NYC shelter-based afterschool Youth Council offering peer leadership opportunities to children and teens.

The Urban Resource Institute, which served as a site visit during the 2020 *Beyond Housing* conference, will share the latest research on their innovative pet-friendly domestic violence shelter model. You'll learn how pre-existing housing conditions, like overcrowding and low affordable housing stock, exacerbated the COVID-19 and looming eviction crises in NYC's immigrant communities, as well as strategies for ensuring that documentation requirements don't impede a family's search for housing stability. And Family Promise offers us a glimpse into the work that two of their affiliates are doing to ensure that documentation and identification issues do not keep a family from achieving housing stability, especially for those who are asylum seekers. We'll also feature some enlightening infographics highlighting data from our research and policy unit's "Snapshots" on employment, disability benefits, and "new parents" in Homes for the Homeless' four family shelters in NYC.

Through it all, we've seen what community and care can do for families, even—or especially—under the most challenging circumstances. Our communities have consistently stepped up in the face of disaster—including hurricanes, the September 11 attacks, and now, a global pandemic—and each time they've emerged with new tools, ideas, and resolve.

I'm deeply proud of this community and the ways in which we've supported each other and families experiencing homelessness.

We look forward to hearing your thoughts, comments, and stories, and encourage you to connect with us on Facebook, Twitter, or by email at INFO@ICPHusa.org. You can also visit our website at ICPHusa.org for additional content and more opportunities for collaboration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Greenwood". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

John Greenwood

Executive Director

Homes for the Homeless and the Institute for Children, Poverty & Homelessness