

FAMILIES FORWARD

DIGNITY • EMPOWERMENT • HOPE

FAMILIES FORWARD exists to help families in need achieve and maintain self-sufficiency through housing, food, counseling, education and other support services.

“QUICK FACTS”

Orange County’s Harsh Realities

Housing

- **32,510 Orange County school-aged children are homeless or unstably housed.***
- An hourly wage of \$24.67 is necessary to afford a one-bedroom apartment.**
- A minimum wage worker must work 110 hours a week to rent a one-bedroom apartment.**

Hunger

- **1 in 5 children living in Orange County are “food insecure” and are often hungry.**
- 49% of Orange County’s students, 243,432 children, qualify for free and reduced-price lunch.*

Families Forward’s 2015 Impact

Thanks to support from the community, nearly 8,000 children and adults in crisis received services that enabled them to avoid or overcome homelessness and provide stability for their children.

Housing Program

- **126 Homeless Families** (412 children and their parents) achieved safety and stability through their participation in the Families Forward Housing Program.
- **96%** of the families successfully maintained their own housing one year after graduating from the Families Forward Housing Program.

Homeless Prevention Programs

- **Food Pantry Program:** served more than 6,257 children and adults.
- **Community Cares Program:** 74 volunteer healthcare professionals provided 105 medical services.
- **Career Coaching:** 196 individuals received career coaching services.
- **Community Counseling:** 287 individuals from 181 families received counseling services.
- **Community Resource Fair:** 717 children and adults received health and other services provided by 57 local community service organizations.
- **Back to School:** 1,317 children received clothing and backpacks.
- **Thanksgiving:** 784 families received holiday meal baskets.
- **Adopt A Family:** 1,916 children (734 families) received holiday gifts.

The Community Makes a Difference for Families in Crisis

- More than 2,250 dedicated community volunteers provided over 21,000 hours of service.
- Nearly 2,500 generous charitable gifts and grants were received, funding vital services for local families.
- More than 200 food drives were hosted by groups and individuals, and over 300,000 food items were donated to our food pantry.
- Partnerships with dozens of local agencies provided coordinated and efficient use of community resources to help families in need.

From a storage unit to lasting stability: A single mother overcomes homelessness

Barbara, a single mother with two teenage daughters, had a stable job working as a court clerk and was able to maintain a simple lifestyle for her small family. However, four years ago she was diagnosed with Polycystic Kidney Disease. Barbara moved with her girls to Orange County to be with the only family she thought would support her during this challenging time. Shortly after arriving, it became apparent that the support she needed didn't exist. Barbara's cousin suddenly moved out and left her responsible to pay the full rent that she could not afford alone, which eventually resulted in an eviction. Barbara and her daughters found themselves unexpectedly homeless with nowhere to go. With an eviction on her record and no employment, Barbara was unable to secure an apartment lease on her own. Their lack of housing options, insufficient income and no car resulted in the family sleeping in a storage unit to survive.

When they finally came to Families Forward, Barbara and her daughters were placed in an apartment through one of our partnerships with an apartment community in Tustin. The constant fear they faced by possibly being caught at the storage facility was now gone. The family received 3 months of financial assistance until they were able to stabilize and increase their income to pay rent on their own.

A year has passed since this family graduated from Families Forward's Housing Program and Barbara shared the amazing news that she has renewed her lease at the same apartment community for another year! Barbara explained that it has not been easy at times, but with the budgeting and problem solving skills she learned from Families Forward, she was able to focus on ways to maintain her housing and provide a stable home for her daughters.



For the 6th consecutive year, Families Forward has earned Charity Navigator's top 4 Star rating, placing our agency among the **top 3% of rated charities nationwide**. Through Families Forward's careful management of resources, an extensive volunteer corps, and thousands of food and product donations, **89% of all financial contributions directly fund programs and services to client families**.

Families Forward's Values Guide all of our Efforts: Dignity, Empowerment, Accountability, Community Spirit and Hope

*Orange County Children's Partnership. The 21st Annual Report on the Conditions of Children in Orange County. 2015.

** The Orange County Community Indicators Project. Orange County Community Indicators 2015.