

# SUPPORTIVE HOUSING

EXPANDING AFFORDABLE HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALL NEW YORKERS



# WHAT IS SUPPORTIVE HOUSING?

- Supportive housing is permanent, affordable housing with on-site services
  - **Permanent:** Tenants sign leases and pay rent, typically for studio apartments
  - **Affordable:** Units are affordable to New Yorkers earning less than \$30,000 a year
  - **Supportive:** Serves the needs of the most vulnerable New Yorkers, including the homeless
  - **Proven model:** Research has shown that supportive housing is a cost-effective solution to high-cost crisis care
- New York City and New York State in the NY/NY III Agreement made a commitment to create 9,000 units of supportive housing over ten years



Debbie Williams,  
St. Nicholas House -  
Project Renewal,  
West Harlem,  
Manhattan

"Just being here gave me a foundation so I didn't have to struggle anymore and I could say, this is important to me: I've got my own place, I have my own key. When I come in, I feel *okay*. When I walk in the door I say, yes, that's my room; that's my apartment! I've been here for two years and it's just a feeling that you can't explain."

# WHO LIVES IN SUPPORTIVE HOUSING?

- New Yorkers in supportive housing are trying to overcome poverty and disability, and need a measure of support to put their lives back on track.
  - Low-income, at-risk and formerly homeless persons
  - People with chronic health conditions, such as a psychiatric disability, chemical dependency or HIV/AIDS



Gertha Reid, Georgia's Place – Community Counseling & Mediation, Crown Heights, Brooklyn

“There are a lot of things I like about this building. I take advantage of everything it has to offer. I feel safe here,” Gertha said. She is appreciative of all the amenities available to the residents, including the 24-hour laundry, on-site social services, mail boxes, movie nights, and events that bring residents together, including some communal meals and yoga classes. Surrounded by a safety net that makes dreams possible, Gertha is looking forward to achieving some of the personal goals she has set for herself, such as taking classes in reading, math and computer skills.

Source: Latour, Jane. May 2007. “Building Homes, Rebuilding Lives,” *Public Employee Press* 43(5): 12-13.

# WHAT DOES SUPPORTIVE HOUSING LOOK LIKE?



Abraham Plaza – VIP Community Services, Tremont-Crotona, Bronx



Buckingham House – Community Agency for Senior Citizens, Graniteville, Staten Island



Abraham II – Metropolitan Council on Jewish Poverty, Seagate, Brooklyn



Corner House – Goddard Riverside Community Center, West Harlem, Manhattan



Marcy-Hart – Services for the Underserved, Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn



St. Nicholas House – Project Renewal, West Harlem, Manhattan





**SUPPORTIVE HOUSING IS GOOD FOR TENANTS**

**SUPPORTIVE HOUSING IS GOOD FOR TAXPAYERS**

**SUPPORTIVE HOUSING IS GOOD FOR COMMUNITIES**

SUPPORTIVE HOUSING IS GOOD FOR

TENANTS

# SUPPORTIVE HOUSING IS GOOD FOR TENANTS



Gibb Mansion –  
Pratt Area Community Council,  
Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn



Abraham Plaza –  
VIP Community Services,  
Tremont-Crotona, Bronx



Dorothy Day Apartments –  
Broadway Housing  
Communities, West  
Harlem, Manhattan



Immaculata Hall –  
St. Vincent's Catholic  
Medical Center, Jamaica,  
Queens

"The day I was brought to see the apartment I cried so loud and so much because I could not believe it. When I put the key in the door I began to cry like crazy. Still today I cannot believe my good fortune.

This Christmas my daughters, aged 9 and 11, cooked up a storm. We spent Christmas Eve at home because we really wanted to wake up Christmas morning in our apartment. It had been so long since we spent time in an apartment that we could call ours that we were not going to miss this opportunity. It was a happy Christmas.

My future and that of my daughters is looking bright. I even got a job in the Dorothy Day Early Childhood Education Center. I'm happy and I owe it all to Broadway Housing."

Ms. A,  
Dorothy Day Apartments –  
Broadway Housing Communities,  
West Harlem, Manhattan

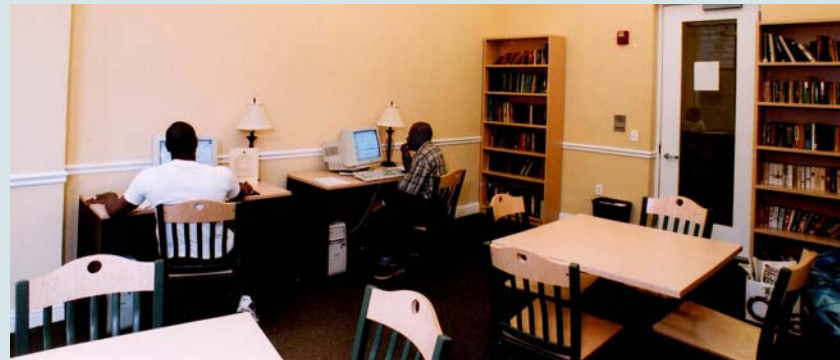
# WHAT SERVICES ARE PROVIDED?

- The services provided in supportive housing enable tenants to achieve goals
  - Seek and obtain employment
  - Receive education and vocational training
  - Access health care and counseling, including 12-step programs
  - Participate in health, wellness, and nutrition classes
  - Receive support from their peers
  - Receive money management and life skills assistance



James Bookhart,  
Narragansett House –  
Housing and Services, Inc.,  
Upper West Side,  
Manhattan

After years of knowing only how to sign his name, James told his case manager that he did not know how to read. With the help of the Narragansett staff, James was connected to adult literacy courses and today can not only read and write but is working toward his G.E.D.





# HOW ARE TENANTS SELECTED?

- In the homeless shelter system, individuals are assessed by professional staff
- Applicants with special needs who can live on their own are prepared for supportive housing
- They are selected by landlords who carefully screen and choose individuals who will be good tenants and good neighbors



Teresa Thompson,  
Warren Street Residence  
– Fifth Avenue  
Committee/Community  
Access, Boerum Hill,  
Brooklyn

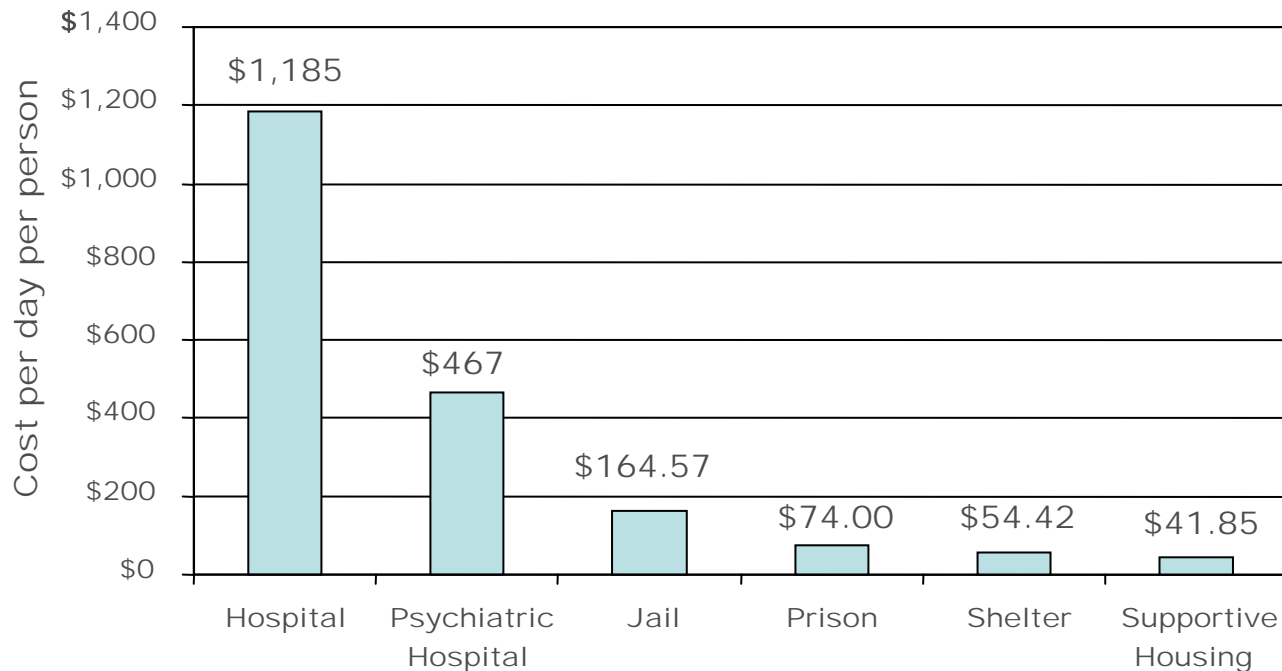
One night, without warning, Teresa's partner locked her out of the house and kept all her belongings, leaving her with nothing but the clothes on her back. After bunking with friends for a while, Teresa entered the shelter system. Now, placed in permanent housing, Teresa occupies her time with her true love, sewing. She made the valance in the building's lobby and the curtains in her apartment, and has started designing and sewing a doll collection called Embroider Face.

**SUPPORTIVE HOUSING IS GOOD FOR**

**TAXPAYERS**

# SUPPORTIVE HOUSING SAVES MONEY

Supportive housing is less expensive than high-cost crisis care and emergency housing systems



“Cost benefit analysis continues to demonstrate that housing and supportive services solutions for chronic homelessness may be less expensive than this population randomly ricocheting through the homeless system and expensive mainstream health and law enforcement systems.”

– Phillip F. Mangano,  
Executive Director,  
Interagency Council  
On Homelessness

Source: Culhane, Dennis, P., Stephen Metraux, and Trevor Hadley, 2002. Public Service Reductions Associated with Placement of Homeless Persons with Severe Mental Illness in Supportive Housing. *Housing Policy Debate* 13(1): 107-163

# WHAT TAXPAYERS ARE SAYING ABOUT HOMELESSNESS AND SUPPORTIVE HOUSING...

- 81% of New Yorkers think homelessness is a “big problem” for New York
- 72% believe that, as long as homelessness exists, the United States has “failed to live up to its ideals”
- 85% approve of having their tax dollars pay for housing for the homeless
- 88% favor placing homeless people who need additional assistance in supportive housing



Frances Mastrota,  
Neighbor, Odyssey  
House, East Harlem,  
Manhattan

In 2002, Frances volunteered to supervise the distribution of water to runners in the New York City marathon as they passed through East Harlem. She reached out to the Odyssey House residents with the hope of recruiting them as volunteers. Several residents volunteered and have continued to do so over the years. Now Frances considers the residents “the wind beneath my wings.”

Source: Arumi, Maria and Andrew L. Yarrow. 2007. Compassion, Concern, and Conflicted Feelings: New Yorkers on Homelessness and Housing. *Public Agenda Report*.

SUPPORTIVE HOUSING IS GOOD FOR

COMMUNITIES



# SUPPORTIVE HOUSING IS GOOD FOR COMMUNITIES

Supportive housing is often built on long-empty lots. . .

*Before*



*After*



St. Nicholas House –  
Project Renewal,  
West Harlem, Manhattan

“St. Nicholas House is another shining example of what can be accomplished when a diverse cross section of the community comes together to implement initiatives that will combat the critical housing shortage in New York.”

– Congressman  
Charles B. Rangel

# SUPPORTIVE HOUSING IS GOOD FOR COMMUNITIES

*Before*



Bergen Residence –  
Lutheran Social Services,  
Boerum Hill, Brooklyn



# SUPPORTIVE HOUSING IS GOOD FOR COMMUNITIES

*After*



Bergen Residence –  
Lutheran Social Services,  
Boerum Hill, Brooklyn

# SUPPORTIVE HOUSING IS GOOD FOR COMMUNITIES

*Before*



Jericho Residence I -  
Jericho Project,  
Tremont, Bronx

# SUPPORTIVE HOUSING IS GOOD FOR COMMUNITIES

*After*



Jericho Residence I -  
Jericho Project,  
Tremont, Bronx



# SUPPORTIVE HOUSING IS GOOD FOR COMMUNITIES

Buildings are attractive, well maintained, and designed to match neighborhood density, scale, and appearance



Franklin Avenue Apartments – Dunn Development/Community Access, Inc., Morrisania, Bronx



Glass Factory – Bowery Residents' Committee, Bowery, Manhattan



Capitol Hall Residence – Goddard Riverside Community Center, Upper West Side, Manhattan



DeKalb Avenue Apartments – Dunn Development/Community Access, Inc., Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn

# SUPPORTIVE HOUSING BRINGS AFFORDABLE HOUSING TO NEIGHBORHOODS

- In addition to the supportive housing units, 40% of units in supportive housing buildings are set aside for low-income residents of the neighborhood
- Income limits are about \$29,000
  - These units are available to young adults, the elderly, or any other low-income person
  - Individuals earning this income may have careers such as nursing aide, home health aide, bank teller, school bus driver, and a retail sales person
- Tenants pay 30% of their income in rent



Tony Ortelano, Warren Street Residence - Fifth Avenue Committee/Community Access, Boerum Hill, Brooklyn

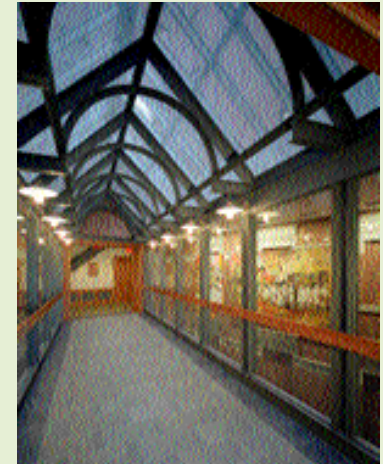
Tony served as a Brooklyn longshoreman on Pier 3 for 15 years. Later he worked for a private sanitation company, and spent his last working years laying sewage pipes for the City.

When Tony's wife passed away, he was given the option to live with his family, but he wanted to stay in his neighborhood, so he was thrilled to find out he was selected to live in the Warren Street Residence as a community resident. Now his grandchildren fight over who gets to stay with him on the weekends.

"I love it here. If I get tired of living by myself, I'll go live with my family, but for now I want to stay right here."

# SUPPORTIVE HOUSING ENHANCES NEIGHBORHOODS

- Supportive housing is a community resource. Non-profit providers who run supportive housing have opened up their community rooms for use by community boards, block associations, and other groups
- Groups have provided other community benefits:
  - Annual block parties and barbeques
  - Neighborhood clean-ups
  - Use of computer labs and other resources
  - Community participation in programs such as Head Start
  - Voter registration drives



Dorothy Day Apartments – Broadway Housing Communities, West Harlem, Manhattan

“As a Washington Heights resident, it is a great pleasure to tell you how wonderful it is to have an organization like Broadway Housing to promote the arts in the community they serve. After Broadway Housing opened their Galleries I and II at Dorothy Day Apartments, the community expression of arts became an explosion. I don't know how many exhibitions they already have in their portfolio, but I can tell you that this is a place everyone in the community loves.”

– Mary Gratereaux, Neighbor

# SUPPORTIVE HOUSING KEEPS COMMUNITIES SAFE

- Buildings have 24-hour security desks and additional lighting and cameras at the perimeter
- This benefits tenants, neighbors, and provides “extra eyes” on the street
- Research indicates that supportive housing does not lower property values in the neighborhood



The Times Square – Common Ground Community, Midtown, Manhattan

“Common Ground’s Times Square residence has been an important neighbor and has certainly helped improve the quality of life in the community. The renovation of the Times Square Hotel has also proven significant in helping to reduce the crime rate in the adjacent area and in attracting respected retail tenants to the neighborhood.

The economic vitality and safety of the area has only improved since the restoration of the Times Square Hotel. We are very happy that this building is a part of our neighboring community.”

– William H. Daly, Director of Public Services, Fashion BID

Source: Galster, George, Peter Tatian, and Kathryn Pettit. 2004. Supportive Housing and Neighborhood Property Value Externalities. *Land Economics* 80(1): 35-54.



# SUPPORTIVE HOUSING SPURS ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- The development of supportive housing brings Federal, State, and City dollars to the neighborhood, creating permanent and temporary employment opportunities for neighborhood residents
- A 100-unit supportive housing building brings about eight social worker jobs, eight property management jobs, and 133 construction jobs
- Residents buy local goods and services, supporting neighborhood merchants



Archie's Place - GEEL Community Services, Melrose, Bronx



The Prince George - Common Ground Community, Gramercy, Manhattan



# SUPPORTIVE HOUSING WORKS

*Before*



Gouverneur Court –  
Community Access, Lower East Side,  
Manhattan

# SUPPORTIVE HOUSING WORKS

*After*



Gouverneur Court –  
Community Access, Lower East Side,  
Manhattan

# SUPPORTIVE HOUSING WORKS

*Before*



The Castle –  
The Fortune Society, West  
Harlem, Manhattan

# SUPPORTIVE HOUSING WORKS

*After*



The Castle –  
The Fortune Society, West  
Harlem, Manhattan