

# Healthy Homes, Healthy Families

## FINAL IMPACT REPORT



*In-home case management is the cornerstone of HHHF's comprehensive health management program.  
(Courtesy of St. John's Well Child & Family Center)*

## Home-Related Health Issues Resolved

In Spring 2010, the California Community Foundation (CCF) launched a new partnership with CCF donors to address health issues spurred by substandard housing, expanding on excellent work spearheaded by St. John's Well Child and Family Center, a CCF health care grantee.

St. John's had seen many patients over the years with chronic infections, respiratory problems, skin disease and other ailments caused by poor housing conditions including vermin, mold, plumbing issues and poor ventilation. To address these problems at their root, St. John's developed the Healthy Homes, Healthy Kids collaborative with partner organizations that provided case management support, education about how to address these health issues, and even legal support to demand better housing from negligent landlords. There was just one problem: the program only served children and their immediate families. There wasn't funding to service adults as well.

With a total investment of \$228,000 from CCF (\$86,000 in donations from generous CCF donors), St. John's was able to expand the program to include adults. The new Healthy Homes, Healthy Families program has seen marked results. What's more, the support of CCF donors allowed the program to increase the program's efficiency through funding for evaluation and convening of partners to establish ongoing feedback loops.

## Treating Symptoms at their Root



*Health advocacy is encouraged. (Courtesy of SAJE)*

## Collaboration Beyond Clinic

Mrs. White, an elderly cancer survivor who recently lost her husband, had a chronic cough and a spider bite. It was clear, however, that her health conditions were the manifestation of substandard housing.

When a case manager in the Healthy Homes, Healthy Families (HHHF) program visited Mrs. White's home, she found insects, and no heat, water or electricity.

The HHHF advocacy arm acted. On behalf of the building's four tenants, Strategic Actions for a Just Community (SAJE), St. John's, Esperanza Community Housing and Neighborhood Legal Services contacted the government about building code breaches. After an extended legal battle, the collaborative helped the tenants secure several thousand dollars each in relocation assistance.

While cases like these are rare, they illustrate the power of the collaborative at work with Healthy Homes, Healthy Families.

## Success Story: The Martinez Family

The Martinez family was referred to HHHF because St. John's suspected that their converted garage home was affecting the family's health. The youngest of their two sons, Edgar (age 3), suffered from a persistent cough, respiratory problems and frequent ear infections. Mr. Martinez had chronic skin infections.

When their HHHF case manager, Maribel, visited their home, she found no windows, no screen door, and many cockroaches.

Maribel informed Mrs. Martinez of her rights as a tenant, and secured a letter from the children's provider at St. John's explaining how the children's health was impacted by their housing conditions and requesting repairs from the landlord. Maribel also provided the family with health education, including information about non-toxic cleaning materials and integrated pest management.

After receiving the letter, their landlord installed a window and screen door. Mrs. Martinez took Maribel's advice about cleaning, eliminating the cockroaches. Edgar and Mr. Martinez's health conditions cleared up. Now that her family is healthy, Mrs. Martinez is confident that she can help keep them that way.



Patients and case managers meet in their homes to assess and understand any home-related illness.  
(Courtesy of St. John's)

### Impact, cont.

Between January and December 2011, the program provided 1,700 referrals of individuals facing environmental health hazards from substandard housing. It also provided more than 8,000 patients with clinical care including assessment and education about housing-related health problems. Of the people who finished the program, there was a 100 percent reduction in adult patients with asthma attacks and skin rashes or irritations; a 145 percent decrease in daytime asthma symptoms in children and a 95 percent reduction in missed school due to asthma.

The program presented challenges and lessons learned as well. Primary among these is that pediatric patients were more likely to complete the case management program than adult patients. Adult patients tended to be more transitory, facing multiple challenges in addition to housing-related health conditions. For this reason, case managers refer patients to a wide variety of community resources such as food pantries and behavioral health care.

HHHF is an excellent model of a nonprofit collaborative providing effective, comprehensive support for low-income individuals and families. We are grateful to the donors who made this program possible.



***"We show families how to use non-toxic cleaning materials that are cheaper than regular cleaning supplies. This makes a big difference in their health and helps their budgets."*** – Maribel Larios, case manager



The California Community Foundation (CCF) is a public, charitable organization serving Los Angeles County since 1915, and playing several roles in the community today. It manages more than 1,600 funds created by individuals, families, companies and organizations, and serves as a steward of their funds and legacies. It makes grants to nonprofits working with low-income and underserved L.A. communities, and actively engages in community problem solving with business, civic, government and other organizations. For more information, visit [calfund.org](http://calfund.org).

California Community Foundation | 221 S. Figueroa St., Suite 400 | Los Angeles, CA 90012 | (213) 413-4130

[calfund.org](http://calfund.org)

