Washington's

100 Day Challenge To End Family Homelessness

The Results And Their Applicability To Other System Improvement Efforts

Prepared by Aspire Consulting LLC

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About Aspire Consulting LLC

Aspire Consulting LLC provides project management, training, technical assistance, and community planning to reduce and end homelessness through performance improvement and system redesign. Aspire Consulting LLC designed, led, and implemented the 100 Day Challenge To End Family Homelessness in Washington. For questions about this project, contact Kathie Barkow, Principal, at kathiebarkow@earthlink.net or 510.967.5161.

Report Purpose and Use

This report was produced to fulfill two primary objectives:

i)   Summarize significant results, findings, and insights from the 100-day Challenge hosted in Washington;

ii) Share insights and lessons learned from the Challenge to offer specific approaches to system improvement that are implementable throughout the state and the country.

This report presumes an understanding of the 100 Day Challenge to End Family Homelessness (Challenge). Readers looking to better understand the origins or process of the Challenge are recommended to reference the report from the first Challenge, which can be found at http://www.commerce.wa.gov/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Commerce-100-Day-Challenge-Report.pdf

The appendix of this report includes additional narrative about the results in eastern Washington for Benton-Franklin, Walla Walla, and Yakima Counties.

Report Funders

Funding for this project was provided from the State Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) Economic Services Administration and the Department of Commerce. DSHS is the statewide Department that administers Temporary Aid to Needy Families, food benefits, and related aid. The Department of Commerce is the state's primary contractor for services and housing supports for people who are homeless.

Author Citations

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For More Information

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100 Day Challenge Background

Two 100 Day Challenges were convened in 2016, engaging six western and eastern Washington communities, to rapidly transform their family rehousing systems and make progress toward functionally eliminating family homelessness. Similar efforts helped Virginia and Connecticut reduce veteran homelessness. This 100 Day Challenge was meant to ensure that family homelessness is rare and brief. The Challenge provided expert technical assistance and change management support to these counties, a framework and assistance with goal-setting, and weekly accountability for and coaching about progress toward their goals.

The 100 Day Challenge to End Family Homelessness had two specific goals:

Challenge Goal #1: No unsheltered families; and

Challenge Goal #2: Lasting system change

Cowlitz, Mason, and Thurston counties participated in the first Challenge (February to June 2016, Cohort 1), and Benton & Franklin, Walla Walla, and Yakima counties participated in the second one (August to December 2016, Cohort 2). Additionally, a statewide team of staff also set goals and created system improvements in their respective work.

Counties selected a team of 8-10 implementers representing the key components of a system of care who were empowered to collaborate with the team and implement the team's work plan and strategies. The teams participated in a pre-kickoff webinar and planning retreat to learn about principles of an effective housing crisis resolution system, review their local performance data, create their community goals that achieved the Challenge goals, and tailor a work plan within a system framework that contributed to the two primary Challenge Goals. Following the kick off of the 100 days, each team met weekly for check-in, accountability, and technical assistance, and also once a month for exchange with their peers focused on technical assistance, encouragement, celebrating successes and learnings, and looking ahead to the expectations and challenges of the next month.

Unique from other technical assistance efforts, communities were encouraged to try new approaches that were reasonable to achieving the Challenge goals. This meant time was spent identifying possible new approaches, determining which team member(s) were responsible for implementing that approach, testing the approach for one or more weeks, dissecting the effectiveness of the new effort, replicating the facets the contributed to effectiveness, identifying and refining the facets that hindered new efforts, and adjusting accordingly.

The data, results, and lessons learned from both 100 Day Challenges are included in this report, with some family and system case studies from eastern Washington included in the appendix.

Results Reducing Unsheltered Families - The Data

The first step to rapidly rehousing unsheltered families is knowing how many there were, who they were, and secondarily, which agencies know them. All communities used the data sources and networks

available to them to create a list naming all the unsheltered families (a "By Name List" or "List"). All teams included the DSHS Community Services Offices (local TANF offices) who culled through its databases, contacted every family listed as unsheltered or the equivalent coding, ascertained an updated housing status, and added unsheltered families to the community's By Name List. Additionally, communities expanded their List through several other means such as its coordinated entry system, outreach teams, school district homeless liaisons, and case management teams. The data demonstrates the immediate benefit to 91 unsheltered families who were rehoused, as well as the impact of the unsheltered emphasis from the Challenge and the state's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) data.

- **An average 61.9% decrease of unsheltered families was achieved over the course of 100 days (range: 8.3% to 100%).** Central to these gains was utilizing and managing a By Name List and emphasizing rehousing unsheltered households either directly from their vehicles or outdoor accommodations or following a short stay in a shelter or motel.
- **The two cohorts showed a 31% and 28% increase respectively in the number of homeless families rehoused compared to a similar period in the prior year.** HMIS data was used to compare the rates of rehousing homeless families during the Challenge period and a similar period a year prior, showing a quarter to a third more households rehoused.[i]
- **Between 2015 and 2016, all six participating counties showed improvement on two key performance measures: rates of exit to permanent housing and the proportion of people served who were unsheltered in the previous two years.** Per the County Report Card Winter 2017 Edition and Year To Year System Performance Measures, the annual rates of exit to permanent housing in cohort counties increased by 13%, and the proportion of people served who were unsheltered in the previous two years increased by 40%. [ii]

Total and By County	Unsheltered Families Housed During Challenge	Unsheltered families at beginning of Challenge[iii]	Unsheltered families on Day 100	Change in # unsheltered families during Challenge
Totals For All Counties	**91**	**126**	**48**	**-61.9%**
In Cowlitz County	8	17	5	-70.6%
In Mason County	21	40	5	-87.5%
In Thurston County	31	24	22	-8.3%
In Benton & Franklin Counties	10	10	0	-100.0%
In Yakima County	14	26	12	-53.8%
In Walla Walla County	7	9	4	-55.6%

Not represented in the table above is the dynamic nature of how families fall both in and out of housing. In many instances, several communities found their count of unsheltered families higher than they estimated once they began to create an accurate, comprehensive, real time count in their By Name List. As rehousing efforts began, the information continually changed as some families had disconnected phones or were unable to be contacted, some families self-resolved and were no longer unsheltered, while different families came into homelessness.

> *"More families self-resolved than I expected. Rather than considering those we couldn't contact as a negative outcome, I learned to hold that as a neutral outcome and see if they show up again or not."*   —Team member

Results Achieving Lasting System Change

Counties identified and set goals to achieve one or more lasting system changes. All communities piloted prioritization by housing status, whether simply unsheltered or a more nuanced view of homelessness (sleeping in a car compared to sleeping outdoors compared to having a motel voucher for one night). This shifted communities' prioritization from being first-come, first-served or solely vulnerability-based to having a new factor that elevated unsheltered families and then targeted resources to these families. Other system changes ranged from enhanced outreach, landlord engagement, reducing barriers in system access and rapid rehousing programs, new data sharing agreements with DSHS and Coordinated Entry (CE), and community outreach and education to get families connected to CE. The highlights for key system changes include:

- **Prioritization produced more effective utilization of system resources.** All six counties prioritized by unsheltered status; four of the six counties used or created a prioritization tool that included vulnerabilities along with unsheltered status. In the other two communities, unsheltered status alone was used to prioritize.
- **Deeper and cross-system collaboration created more efficient systemwide operations.** All counties collaborated across systems, deeply among their team which built trust, and with the county's entire housing crisis resolution system to reduce barriers to accessing services, reduce barriers to permanent housing exits, and identify solutions for system and client level issues. Specifically, every team partnered with their local DSHS Community Services Office staff to create better coordination among the housing crisis resolution system and the mainstream benefits system for their mutual customers.
- **When communities were given a choice and a framework for improving their system, teams picked system change features that were meaningful and even difficult.** Teams really focused on key pieces that needed bolstering locally. System change efforts ranged from stripping down several documentation requirements for coordinated entry (e.g. identification and birth certificates) to another county launching a coordinated entry system in 88 days. Teams helped move communities into best practices and in some cases, address compliance findings.

A sample of the system change efforts include:

Benton-Franklin	Decreased unnecessary documentation requirements for coordinated entry	Created and implemented prioritization tool; created and distributed flyer about coordinated entry	Recruited new landlords and made contact for presentation to landlords
Cowlitz	Reallocated funding to create and deploy light-touch rapid rehousing strategy	Collaborated with faith community to fund immediate family needs, including motel	Added new voucher preference for homelessness with the Housing Authority
Mason	Launched and staffed a Coordinated Entry System and a By Name List from scratch	Replaced first-come shelter waitlists with prioritized families from By Name List	Teamed cases efficiently across multiple agencies to garner needed resources for families
Thurston	Led a county collaboration to create a landlord liaison committee	Partnered with Housing Authority to receive vouchers for homeless families	Enhanced, regular communication and shared resources (e.g., security deposit funds)
Walla Walla	Refined tracking system to have an accurate count of homeless families	Implemented triaging as a focus point of Coordinated Entry	Enhanced data sharing agreements to include DSHS and Work Source
Yakima	Prioritized unsheltered families identified by multiple DSHS offices and homeless providers	Implemented a single countywide list for serving unsheltered families tracked in HMIS	Made key CE design decisions (i.e., planning team, prioritization); set February launch date)

Lasting System Change Beyond The 100 Days

To evaluate the sustained impact beyond the Challenge, a follow-up survey was done five months after the conclusion of the first 100 Day Challenge. A sample of some system changes still in use locally are:

- 50% of respondents continue to meet weekly
- 67% added new partners, and
- 67% continue to maintain a by name list.

> *"The system change we focused on has been maintained and built upon very well. We have focused on this aspect and kept tabs on the effects it has had on our number of unsheltered homeless."* –Team member

Lessons Learned

The 100 Day Challenge offers a new strategy and fresh approach to both technical assistance and community self-improvement efforts. The observations and insights from the Challenge are compiled below to encourage communities to consider and utilize some of these approaches locally. The 100 Day Challenge has shown that these approaches effectively produce system change. Most of the approaches are low- to no-cost and could be used in tandem with existing efforts or to launch new efforts. It is

critical to have a system that rehouses more people who are homeless and does so faster. To accomplish that, these approaches may be synergistic in your community goal setting and system improvement efforts.

1. Try a 100 Day Challenge!

The urgency and focus of a 100 Day Challenge coupled with people's drive to succeed produce innovation and significant collaboration toward system change when appropriate goals and framework are used. A Challenge also can work for various population types, including with the higher number of unsheltered households without minor children (single individuals, couples, and multiple adult households) or with young adult households.

This short-term, specific, rapid improvement model is perfectly poised to help launch a new initiative, boost a flat or stagnated effort, drive a performance improvement effort, or pilot a new model. Some ideas for which a Challenge and the advice through the lessons learned could be useful include:

A New Initiative	Performance Improvement Efforts	Pilot New Model Or Intervention
Launch a Coordinated Entry System (CE)	Reduce lengths of stay in shelters	Launch/convert to a "zero barrier" shelter
Launch/relaunch a revamped or multiple-population CE	Increase rate of exit from shelter to permanent housing	Pilot a "Streets to Home" rapid rehousing program
Test a new prioritization tool or process	Reduce exits to unsheltered or sheltered homelessness	Start a by name prioritization registry list for PSH
Collaborate/integrate with school districts, social and health services, & employment projects	Reduce time from first contact to permanent housing	Expand and/or formalize shared permanent housing options

These intensive efforts of a Challenge are generally unsustainable for longer than 90-100 days due to workload, fast pace, and scheduling constraints. However, a Challenge certainly is another tool or model that funders and community leaders could consider. Sometimes, the fastest and best way to get to the goals is by "doing", learning, and refining the "doing".

2. Lead a community change effort with a small team representative of key stakeholders that operates with the authority and encouragement of the Continuum of Care and clear goals.

Rather than a large stakeholder group, try a small and empowered group that brings the context and on-the-ground expertise. This is different than an open or large stakeholder committee in a governance structure that may bog down progress.

> *94% of team members from the first Challenge ranked* ***team composition*** *as a 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale as "essential to navigating and tackling change".*

For optimal results, teams should be:

- Small (8-10 people)
- Nimble (manager level or key line staff who have authority to try new strategies, evaluate their successes, and adjust as needed)
- Representative of the key stakeholders (not just in the homeless system but with mainstream partners too)
- Empowered by the Continuum of Care and their organization
- Focused on the desired future state

This is also an opportunity to cultivate new leaders from among knowledgeable and competent staff and expand capacity beyond executive directors and other community leaders who are involved in many meetings and initiatives.

3. **Focus on system level principles and goals; they are pivotal to aligning interests bigger than the participating organizations'.**

Consistently planning and thinking on a system level comes with practice, a learning curve, and possibly a need for some technical assistance. However it is critical in order to move dialogue away from focusing overwhelmingly on what is the impact to "my agency" and "my clients". Focusing on the system level (such as reducing unsheltered families) supports the communities' efforts to be data-centered and regularly examine data and the effectiveness of the system. Working across systems is beneficial to both systems and their mutual clients. Examples of system principles are:

- Thinking and planning should be at a system level first, secondarily acknowledging impact to agency.

- The system's goal is to end homelessness among all sheltered and unsheltered families with a reasonable expectation they will not become homeless again. All resources, interventions, and definitions of success are aligned to this goal, or are not a part of *this* system.

- Achieving functional zero at the system level means being laser focused at the program and family level on rehousing *each* family as quickly as possible, with the lightest and shortest duration of services needed to accomplish that.

4. **Invest in achieving results through weekly/frequent accountability, examination of progress and challenges, and helping every team member reconnect to the team and its work.**

When being intentional about a meeting's structure, facilitation, and support, consider how you create a safe space and the expectation for discussions about accountability (what got accomplished, what didn't), factors that led to progress or lack thereof, and keeping the team engaged in the work especially when it's not exciting. Some examples from the Challenge include:

- Start every meeting with a quick report about how many households were housed since the last meeting and how many are currently unsheltered.
- Use a tool like a heat map that lists the tasks anticipated to occur between meetings and rank each task as a green/yellow/red to signify moving ahead well (green), stalled or moving slowly (yellow), or at a halt/didn't happen (red). Update the tool weekly with the color-coding and new tasks, troubleshooting every task that is yellow or red and acknowledging the success of the tasks that are green.
- Use humor, awards, praise, and celebrations of success. Remind people of how the successes tie into the system goals.
- Apply the strengths-based framework used with program participants to the development and growth of the housing crisis resolution system. Create a culture that tries new approaches, pushes system efficiency, explores risk, praises the attempts at something new, articulates the strengths of the system, and learns from what didn't go as well as anticipated.

5. **Be aware of and prepared for fewer results where communities have new leadership or a political or emergent crisis to address.**

The 100 Day Challenge model showed slower or fewer results where communities had new CoC leadership or a new political or emergent crisis to address. For example, Yakima County was in the midst of a transition of leadership. Walla Walla County experienced a prominent encampment emerge during the Challenge. Both Counties still demonstrated considerable and important benefits from the Challenge. These potentially competing demands for immediate attention were a reminder to tailor approaches to the context of the community, work to bring people along to a common goal in times of unusual change, and proactively address any lack of alignment among the team more regularly and directly.

6. **Align all efforts to reduce homelessness, ultimately to functional zero.**

It is critical that community and team/committee goals are especially attentive to unsheltered households as an essential element of a system approach to reduce and functionally end homelessness. Rather than addressing peripheral or less impactful efforts, cut to the bottom line of what reduces homelessness the fastest: rehousing those that are unsheltered.

Utilize prioritized By Name Lists to give direction to rehousing efforts and a framework for utilizing housing and service resources. Focus on ensuring high barrier households are moving to permanent housing with adequate supports in a timely manner from both the streets and from shelters.

Functional zero is the goal and requires work with other systems[iv] (i.e. school liaisons and TANF agencies for families; other systems for other populations).

7. **System improvement is ideally supported by a multi-faceted approach including: targeted funder mandates, proactive and remedial technical assistance, multiple and consistent technical assistance efforts, and a role for locally designed improvement efforts.**

After examining the 100 Day Challenge and analyzing what appeared to drive change, some generalizations and insights emerged that are noted below. It is also true that there is a bit of unpredictability about which counties may exceed expectations. When thinking about a multi-faceted approach to system improvement, consider the following:

- Contractual mandates, technical assistance, and repeated improvement efforts were necessary backdrop. Multiple TA efforts had been tried over time in some instances.
- The Challenge had some unpredictable elements of who it clicked for.
- The 100 Day Challenge did not emphasize "you have to", but regularly included dialogue about why system reorientation was needed from a data perspective and a client experience.
- The framework of the 100 Day Challenge allowed communities to set and test their own strategies to get to two specific system goals, which appears to be two substantive feature of the Challenge that lends to its effectiveness: having only two goals, and setting their own strategies to those goals.
- Time-limited technical assistance and a safe learning environment to try and practice new system improvement efforts are helpful characteristics of future technical assistance efforts.

> *"I was really amazed at how we were able to actually make system change happen."*
> –Team member

> *"The Challenge literally 'rocked our world' and we are still trying to recover. ;) It's amazing the things that it has began and the conversations that have changed since the beginning of the Challenge – within agencies and among agencies and systems."*
> –Team member

> *"I thought it was valuable to push our team to think outside the box and gain perspective. It was also a valuable team building opportunity that made us stronger and unified."* –Team member

> *"The Challenge helped our local coalition continue talking about systems work. I think one of the most important elements of the Challenge was showing the system that changes could be made relatively fast that have a substantial impact. Not all of the changes we make worked but it was valuable to see that making changes didn't create as big of a problem as people believed."*
> –Team member

Appendix

The three participating counties from the second cohort were asked to prepare a family case study and a system case study that exemplify the changes in their community. The appendix sections A through F summarize their responses by county in their own words.

The counties also identified three areas where they planned to focus after the conclusion of the Challenge to continue the momentum in their community. Their self-selected priorities for continued efforts are noted in appendix G.

A. Benton-Franklin County Family Change

 After the sudden passing of her husband last year, a grieving single mother of 7 children found herself trying to hold her family together, keep working, and deal with the severe mental health issues of one her sons. After eight months, the family was evicted due to the mother's loss of time at work while seeking the needed treatment for her son's mental health issues. With no family or friends to take them in, they found themselves relegated to their car, not eligible for a shelter due to having a teen-aged son. After many attempts to find help through St. Vincent DePaul, the Salvation Army, and Coordinated Entry, she was on the verge of giving up custody of her children. The providers began a more intensive care plan with the family and specifically for her son. She received a motel voucher and began looking for housing. She located a low-income apartment on her own and was supported with security and utility deposits and a stay in the hotel until the unit was available. With affordable housing and more intensive care for her son, the family is equipped to heal and move forward to rebuild their lives.

Prior to the Challenge, this family would likely have given up and had her children taken from her. The family would have alternated between a few days in the hotel and the car. The family would have to be separated to stay in a shelter if they were able to find a place for the son to stay.

Because of this Challenge, the value in partnering with various agencies helped this family. The family was able to stay intact. The emphasis on unsheltered families and those with the highest barriers lifted this family as a priority for assistance.

This family's experience is indicative of the system change because this family had many agencies helping them in their own ways – with the common goal of getting this family housed, and with the health of her mentally ill teenage child in mind, there was a common ground for all agencies to come together to help this woman and her family in a time of severe crisis.

B. Benton-Franklin County System Change

System feature being profiled: **The improvement of the Coordinated Entry System**

Prior to the Challenge, what did that system feature look like? How did it operate?
Prior to the challenge, our CE system was difficult for both customers and providers to navigate. Our community has minimal emergency shelter beds and our CE, which is centralized, is the only access point for families to access rapid re-housing services or emergency sheltering through motel vouchers.

Customers were overwhelmed by the process and strict documentation requirements to apply for assistance and providers were frustrated by the obstacles homeless community members seemed to face to obtain housing or emergency shelter. The list of documentation required to be screened was long and if all the documents were not there, customers were turned away.

Because of the Challenge, how has this system feature evolved? What benefits have been realized due to these changes?
Because of the Challenge, providers were able to come together to identify weaknesses in the system, develop a common goal, and collaborate on ways to strengthen our system to better meet the needs of the families we serve. Families are more easily able to access needed services and are not turned away for lack of documentation. Our CE screens for basic eligibility, provides emergency shelter vouchers (if available), and refers the families to the appropriate provider for rapid placement into permanent housing.

What logic and/or reasons motivated and persuaded your team or community stakeholders to implement the change?
After committing to a common goal it was much easier to see that our system at that time was a hindrance to us accomplishing the goal we had set. In order for us to be effective as a community in ending family homelessness, we needed a system that was utilizing best practices and was responsive to the needs of families experiencing homelessness and provided them the best opportunity for success.

C. Walla Walla County Family Change

Maya, 32, is mom to a 12 year old, an 8 year old, and was expecting a baby any day. Maya had experienced homelessness as a child and several times as an adult. She had lived in public housing but had left her unit after 5 years to move to Louisiana where her partner had family. In Louisiana, they found full time work and were able to support themselves since 2007, but flooding in the summer of 2015 affected her employment and housing. The stress affected her relationship with her partner. Maya and the kids came home to Walla Walla in September to stay with a friend temporarily. Maya got a job right away, but her friend's landlord said she could only stay two weeks. A second friend was willing to let the Maya's children stay with her, but worried about the friend's landlord, Maya slept in her truck. Through coordinated entry she was referred to a local shelter and a rapid rehousing program.

Prior to the Challenge, it is likely Maya would have experienced a long wait in shelter to move to the top of the rapid rehousing list. She would have given birth to her son in shelter, living in one room with all her children.

Because of the challenge, Maya was prioritized for rapid rehousing as she had been unsheltered. She was housed on November 9, 2016, one month before her due date. She also received all the baby stuff

from a friend's last child. She is focused on returning to work as soon as possible with the company she worked for in Louisiana who is here in Washington as well.

This family's experience is indicative of the system change in our county because the emphasis on unsheltered homeless families resulted in Maya getting housing quicker. While she has experienced homelessness before, this time the quick turnaround created the least amount of disruption and she is focused on stability.

D. Walla Walla County System Change

System feature being profiled: **Prioritizing by vulnerability.** Walla Walla County elected to focus on our triage system based upon need and not waitlist status. Previously waitlist status was the main access to services regardless of a family's need or shelter/unsheltered status.

Prior to the Challenge, what did that system feature look like? How did it operate?
Prior to the challenge, clients were served upon a first come first serve basis. If a family was also willing to enter our shelters, it was perceived that they "really wanted help" and therefore would be rewarded with continued support to find permanent housing. Families or individuals who did not want to enter into shelters were perceived as not wanting help and may have not been given the full level of support that they needed.

Because of the Challenge, how has this system feature evolved? What benefits have been realized due to these changes?
Now clients are continuously ranked on a certified needs level and clients that are the most vulnerable, even when declining shelter, are prioritized and given the full level of case management they may need to obtain permanent housing.

What logic and/or reasons motivated and persuaded your team or community stakeholders to implement the change?
Looking at our homeless response system as a hospital triage system where the "gunshot victims" go first and then you titrate down to the less complex cases. We only have so much funding to go around and as a team we realized that we were spending an inordinate amount of time and funding on clients who didn't need that level of engagement. And when we finally could serve our highest needs clients we often didn't have the funding or time to serve them. We were doing our community a disservice by not prioritizing our families. While this has been a difficult idea to embrace, we are seeing improvements in our vulnerable family's homeless statuses. We plan to continue to refine this process as we go along and hope to continue to see improvement in our homeless response system.

E. Yakima County Family Change
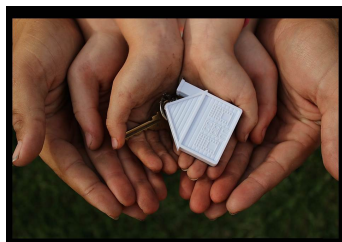
One family of five experienced their fair share of tribulations over the last few years. Despite being a hard worker who could easily land a job, this father of three teenagers suffered more than one job loss, resulting in income instability and four evictions. Because of this, staff searched for housing with landlords they already had relationships with. They were

turned down several times before a landlord gave them a chance. The landlord we found initially said no after running their application. During the search process, the parents and oldest child slept in their car, while the two younger siblings slept on the floor of a family member's house during certain hours. This was a very difficult situation, and the family often called crying or angry. After a lot of frustration, tears, venting, and struggle, the lease agreement is finally getting finalized! Staff are working on a strong housing stability plan with the family that includes increasing and diversifying their income by encouraging the other two adults in the home to seek employment.

Prior to the Challenge, the family would have had a long wait to get into shelter and would not have been able to stay together. The wait to find a landlord would have been incredibly long with their rental history, and resulted in an extensive episode of homelessness and family disruption.

Because of the Challenge, the family epitomizes how prioritization is likely to work: helping those who are unsheltered and with significant obstacles, reminding staff to be persistent in efforts to rehouse families and strategically engage landlords.

This family's experience is indicative of the system change in our county because the emphasis on unsheltered homeless families resulted in this family getting housing quicker. The quick turnaround created the least amount of disruption and allows focus on stability in their new home.

F. Yakima County System Change
System feature being profiled: **Coordinated Entry**

Prior to the Challenge, what did that system feature look like? How did it operate?
Coordinated Entry had been in design phase for over three years prior to the Challenge and was no closer to being implemented than it was three years ago. The system was not operational and Yakima County was out of compliance for the Coordinated Entry Funding Requirement.

Because of the Challenge, how has this system feature evolved? What benefits have been realized due to these changes?
As a result of the challenge, we piloted a coordinated list/pool for the "Unsheltered Families" subpopulation. We learned what worked well and what needed to be improved. We also put together a subcommittee to finalize the prioritization, assessment tool, and matching and referral system. We are working with our technical adviser, Emily Mirra from Building Changes, and plan to have a complete pilot up and running by March 27th (delayed from February 1) with mandatory use by all providers receiving funding by May 1st. This will put us in compliance prior to the July 2017 deadline.

What logic and/or reasons motivated and persuaded your team or community stakeholders to implement the change?
The main motivation was Yakima County not being in compliance with program requirements.

G. Continuing the Momentum
Each county has recognized the importance of maintaining a sense of energy and focus in order to maintain momentum and ensure that their systems continue to evolve. It must be acknowledged,

however, that this can be a difficult ambition: as counties become further removed from the 100-day 'blitz', they must extend even greater efforts to avoid backsliding or downgrading from their new system improvements. Generally, a decline in sense of urgency over time is a result of the lacks of system focus, outcome measurement, and discussion of the current outcomes with some urgency to improve outcomes. To avoid this situation, Challenge counties must make a conscientious shift to a systematic – rather than rapid cycle – approach towards change. Toward the end of the Challenge, each of the communities identified the top three steps for continuing momentum in their communities as summarized below.

County Priorities for Continuing Challenge Momentum

Priority	Benton & Franklin Counties	Yakima County	Walla Walla County
1	Refine prioritization tool in January & regularly	Launch Coordinated Entry pilot on February 1	Continue to use triage for entering families into services and housing
2	Increase pool of interested landlords; present in spring at the local landlord association	Finalize CE policies and procedures for CE to ensure Housing First, prioritizing the highest need, and low barrier services	Keep list of families who are homeless updated each week
3	Maintain landlord and community outreach and continue to meet as a team	Continue collaboration with all stakeholders and across the entire county	Increase outreach to people who are difficult to reach or need extensive engagement

For more information about the 100 Day Challenge or system improvement work in these communities or in Washington, please contact any of the three collaborators for the Challenge:

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[i] Western Washington (cohort #1) achieved a 31% increase; eastern Washington (Cohort 2) achieved a 28% increase. HMIS data run 02/06/17 for time periods: Sept-Nov 2015 and Sept-Nov 2016.
[ii] Report Card can be found at https://public.tableau.com/profile/mary3342#!/vizhome/CountyReportCardWinter2017/2017ReportCard The year to year comparison of system performance measures can be found at https://public.tableau.com/profile/mary3342#!/vizhome/2017SystemPerformanceAnalysis/YeartoYearComparisonsofSystemPerformanceMeasures
[iii] After completing steps to create an updated baseline By Name List.
[iv] HUD released criteria and benchmarks for achieving the goal of ending family homelessness which include a coordinated community response. https://www.usich.gov/resources/uploads/asset_library/Family_Criteria_Benchmarks_FINAL.pdf