

Mother Uses HPRP Support to Rise Above the Odds

Positive Stories / Lessons Learned from HPRP: *Individual Success Story*

HPRP Grantee:	City of Hialeah, FL
CoC Name and Number:	FL-600 – Miami/Dade County CoC

Latest CoC Point-in-Time Count:

Total persons in ES:	1,344	Total persons in TH:	1,668
Total persons in Safe Haven:	16	Total unsheltered persons:	789
Total persons, sheltered and unsheltered:	3,817		

Madeira's* case manager describes her story as a lesson that even the worst situations can be opportunities to grow. Madeira grew up in an environment that encouraged her to be a homemaker and depend on her husband for her livelihood, and since her marriage at age sixteen, those spheres of influence were not challenged. When she suddenly found herself the sole supporter of her family of three, HPRP helped her maintain housing while she gained the skills she needed to sustain herself and her family.

Her husband lost his job in 2008. But when he was briefly incarcerated two years later, Madeira realized that - for the first time in her life - she was financially responsible for her family. She had zero income. The twenty-four hour eviction notice that came soon after his return from prison was not unexpected, and, when the family woke up one morning to no utilities or electricity, they entered an emergency shelter.

This was the first of many instances, her case manager reported, in which Madeira could have succumbed to the odds: she was 37 years old, spoke only Spanish, and had no work history. Women with fewer obstacles than she have been paralyzed by the stresses of housing instability. Instead, she

used the four weeks she spent in shelter to meet with a Spanish-speaking HPRP case manager, sign up herself and her husband for employment assistance programs, job search, and look for a new apartment. She had a seasonal job within two weeks, found an apartment the next week, and moved out of the shelter with a security deposit and first month's rent from HPRP.

In less than a month, her job increased her hours to full-time and hired her as a regular employee, and she proudly displayed her first "employee of the month" certificate to her case manager. Her case manager contributed her success at her job to her friendliness, relentless pursuit of English, and refusal to let personal trials sabotage her life. Indeed, Madeira was coping with ever-increasing amounts of responsibility and checked in with her case manager frequently, reporting her husband's spells of depression, his evasion of court appointments, and eventually, his flight to avoid another arrest.

Madeira became effectively a single parent five months after entering HPRP. But, by that time, she had a reliable job, her own bank account, and self-confidence. After twelve months of rental assistance from HPRP, Madeira exited HPRP with proof that she could control her own life, provide for her family, and succeed.

**Names have been changed for confidentiality.*

For more information, contact Frederick H. Marinelli, Department of Grants and Human Services at 305-883-5839 or Fmarinelli@hialeahfl.gov.