

HPRP Housing Assistance Provides Safe and Healthy Home

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

HPRP Grantee:	Macomb County, Michigan
CoC Name and Number:	MI-503 – St. Clair Shores/Warren/Macomb County CoC

Latest CoC Point-in-Time Count:

Total persons in ES:	249	Total persons in TH:	101
Total persons in Safe Haven:	0	Total unsheltered persons:	306
Total persons, sheltered and unsheltered:	656		

Keisha* dreaded coming home. It wasn't so much the outlets that refused to work or the screen-less windows that wouldn't shut completely – she had lived in dilapidated apartments before – it was the gauntlet she had to run to get past her landlord and his father. Since her last complaint about sewage back-up, the two had begun harassing her when she entered the building, and she started sleeping in her car to avoid them.

Her car was only a solution for the nights her son stayed over in the hospital, however. He was two years old and severely disabled, and Keisha spent most of her days shuttling him to and from the hospital for treatment. Much of the reason why she tolerated the increasing deterioration of her apartment was to protect his already unpredictable schedule from the disruption of moving. She had recently lost custody of her two older children after being overwhelmed by clinical depression, so a stable home life for her youngest son was one factor she was determined to control.

The breaking point came when she suspected that the mold creeping up the walls of her bathroom and kitchen exacerbated her son's respiratory problems. She contacted Macomb County's HPRP provider, the Community Housing Network, for help and a case manager's HQS inspection deemed her apartment uninhabitable. With very little income and no one else to stay with, Keisha and her son enrolled in HPRP.

Keisha took advantage of housing search assistance and found several possible apartments immediately; the required habitability and lead-based paint inspections ensured that the apartment she chose was safe and sanitary. HPRP provided her with the needed security and utility deposits, first month's rent, and subsequent rental assistance until she entered a permanent supportive housing program one year later.

Keisha's largest concern in entering HPRP was that receiving rental assistance and relocating would reflect poorly on her parenting. Yet, HPRP ultimately helped her maintain the housing stability she needed to continue taking care of her son and herself. Her two other children moved back in with her when she entered permanent supportive housing, and the environment of their home is finally conducive to the health and happiness that Keisha has desired to provide for so long.

**Names have been changed for confidentiality.*

For more information, contact the Community Housing Network at 248-928-0111 or mmartinez@chninc.net.