

Strengthening At Risk and Homeless Young Mothers and Children

The National Center on Family Homelessness

Partner Agencies:

Antelope Valley Partners for Health

Healthy Homes, a program of Antelope Valley Hospital

Mental Health America

Valley Oasis

United Way of Greater Los Angeles

REPORT ON COSTS

SYF: Strengthening Young Families, Antelope Valley, California

October 2011



STRENGTHENING
At Risk and Homeless
Young Mothers and Children

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Homeless and at-risk young families face profound challenges because their needs typically extend beyond just housing to include mental and physical health, child development, education, and employment.¹ Traditionally, systems addressing these needs have been fragmented, making it difficult for mothers to access a full range of resources for themselves and their children. The *Strengthening Young Families* (SYF) program, developed with funding from the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation, recognized that integrating services is key to improving the health and well-being of at-risk families. The program brought together diverse agencies to offer comprehensive wrap-around services at a reasonable cost. Over the four-year pilot period, SYF maximized Hilton's contribution by partnering with community agencies and leveraging resources to help 97 mothers and 157 children meet their goals and achieve greater stability.

Using a mobile, team-based approach, SYF specialists developed supportive relationships with young mothers while providing parenting education, child development, mental health and housing assistance. Children in SYF received regular developmental screenings from an early interventionist, who ensured they received help to address learning or physical delays. Pregnant young mothers received immediate access to prenatal care through Antelope Valley Hospital's Healthy Home program and all SYF mothers could get access to mental health services through Mental Health America. The program offered parenting and other groups, in accessible locations to help clients build peer support networks. Staff members also helped mothers maintain or regain custody of their children by guiding them through complicated paperwork, accompanying them to court, and serving as liaisons and advocates with child protection workers.

Over the four years, SYF accessed \$1.4 million in funds to develop its collaboration, and to provide direct services to homeless and at-risk families. Though a significant investment, it offsets considerable societal costs of family homelessness, including costs associated with health care, long-term shelter stays, and low levels of educational achievement for children. Sheltering families long-term, for example, can cost between \$22,000 and \$55,000 per family depending on the cost of housing in a specific geographic area.² By contrast, SYF spent an average of \$14,471.43 per family.³ The program not only helped clients find independent, permanent homes, but also provided them with an array of services to stabilize all areas of their lives.

1. An at risk family is one that has similar characteristics to other homeless families, is precariously housed, and is at risk of becoming homeless in the near future.

2. Culhane, Metraux, Park, Schretzman, and Valente (2007). "Testing a typology of family homelessness based on patterns of public shelter utilization in four US jurisdictions: implications for policy and program planning." *Housing Policy Debate* 18(1): 1-28. Numbers are for New York and Massachusetts; there is no reliable data on the cost of family shelter stays in Greater LA (Beyond Shelter (2010). "Housing First Program Annual Report").

3. The average annual cost per family multiplied by the average enrollment duration for a family.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The SYF program was creative and effective in generating funding. The Hilton Foundation provided a solid base for the program over the four years, contributing \$912,000 (44 percent of the total resources). However, a greater proportion of SYF's operating budget consisted of matching funds and leveraged resources. SYF raised \$922,000 in matching funds (44.5 percent), meeting the initiative's 1:1 matching fund requirements for all four years. The program also leveraged approximately \$238,184 (11.5 percent) in resources from the partner agencies in the collaboration. These leveraged contributions, which included additional programs and staff that benefitted SYF families but were not funded by the program, proved essential to the program's success and testify to these partner agencies' commitment to the well-being of families.

To ensure success of this innovative and ambitious project, SYF dedicated substantial resources to building a strong collaboration. The program spent 23 percent of its total funds during start-up, which we define as the first year of the program. Start-up funds were used to ensure that the collaboration was sufficiently prepared to serve clients and to respond quickly and flexibly to families' needs. They also allowed the program to hire, train, and cross-train a qualified program management, clinical, and service staff. Building the core program team was an ongoing process that ultimately accounted for 77 percent of the total costs. SYF enrolled families gradually during start-up, reaching 19 clients by the end of the first year.

SYF devoted the bulk of its resources to serving families during the steady state period (the three years following start-up), using 77 percent of total resources available. SYF's average annual cost per family suggests that the program grew more efficient and cost-effective over time. From the second to the third year, the average annual cost per family decreased from \$17,763 to \$14,080. The average annual cost per client decreased from \$7,208 to \$5,383. At the same time, program enrollment for families increased by 39 percent between the second and fourth years. SYF dedicated about 90 percent of the total available resources to direct services and 10 percent to program administration.

The SYF program had a measurable positive impact on the lives of homeless and at-risk families. Over half (about 55 percent) of the families enrolled during this pilot found permanent housing—a primary goal of the initiative.⁴ Mothers demonstrated improved mental health after one year, and many will continue to receive mental health services through other community sources due to referrals from program staff. Children benefitted as well; 83 percent of all eligible children (5 and under) received developmental screens and gained supports ranging from speech therapy to enrollment in Head Start. All of these children improved their development scores on later screenings. The program also achieved a lasting impact on the local community. Agencies in previously fragmented service systems have gained resources and expertise to improve the lives of families experiencing homelessness.

4. The lack of affordable permanent housing in the Greater LA Area limited the number of families that could be placed in housing. SYF staff has worked to resolve conflicts between clients and their families, and 20% are now living in safe and stable doubled-up situations.

P R E F A C E

The National Center on Family Homelessness (“the National Center”) is pleased to provide the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation with this cost evaluation of the Strengthening Young Families (SYF) pilot program. The National Center hired BD Group to assist in preparing this report. The National Center would like to thank the SYF team for their assistance with this cost evaluation.

All numbers in this report represent a high-level presentation of the costs of the pilot program. All numbers should be considered to be estimates of the cash and non-cash resources available to SYF. Unless otherwise noted, year refers to the period starting July 1 and ending June 30. Numbers presented in the tables and text may not add up to totals due to rounding.

All estimates contained in this cost evaluation, we relied heavily upon the following three sources of information: (1) quarterly narratives and financial reports submitted to the Coordinating Center; (2) information provided by the Coordinating Center; and, (3) the program’s responses to a survey questionnaire, which focused on the SYF’s use of matching funds, leveraged resources, achievements, and community impact.

Please note that all numbers presented in this report are based on the information available to the Coordinating Center as of August 1, 2011. The figures represent a high-level interpretation of the detailed quarterly reports provided by SYF. As such, all figures presented in this report should be viewed as estimates of the costs of operating and running SYF.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Sections

<i>Executive Summary</i>	i
<i>Preface</i>	iii
I. Purpose of the Report	1
II. The Strengthening Young Families Program	2
III. Social & Economic Conditions in Los Angeles & Antelope Valley	5
IV. Total Resources for the Initiative	7
V. Enrollment Trends	12
VI. Cost Trends	14
VII. Allocation of Resources	17
VIII. The Value of SYF	20

Appendices

A. Total Cash Resources for SYF	22
B. Lessons Learned Relative to Matching Contributions and Leveraged Resources for SYF	22
C. Calculation of the Average Enrollment for SYF Families	23
D. Housing Breakdown for SYF	24

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Tables

1.	Features of the SYF Program	3
2.	Total Cash and Non-Cash Resources for SYF	7
3.	Matching Contributions	9
4.	Leveraged Resources	11
5.	SYF Enrollment	13
6.	Resource allocation between start-up and steady state	14
7.	Steady state Cost Trends for SYF	15
8.	Costs for Staffing SYF	17
9.	Cost of direct services for SYF families	18
10.	SYF Program Highlights	19

Figures

1.	Core Components of the SYF Program	4
2.	Total Resources for the SYF Program	8
3.	Ratio of Conrad N. Hilton Foundation Funding and Matching Contributions for SYF	10
4.	Leveraged Resources for SYF	11
5.	Total Clients Enrolled in SYF by Year and by Quarter	12
6.	The Average Annual Cost per Family and per Client	16
7.	Staffing Model for the SYF Core Team	17

Boxes

1.	<i>Strengthening At Risk and Homeless Young Mothers and Children</i>	1
2.	SYF's Program Description	2

Section I. Purpose of the Report

This cost study will provide an overview of the funds directed to the Strengthening Young Families (SYF) program through Strengthening At Risk and Homeless Young Mothers and Children, an initiative of the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation (Hilton Foundation). See Box 1 for a description of the Initiative. In this cost evaluation, we attempt to provide a complete account of all resources that supported the program. This approach provides the reader with a solid understanding of the resources required to replicate the comprehensive service packaged offered by the program and what it took to achieve the related outcomes for the families enrolled in the SYF program.

Total resources for the SYF program: In this report, we will provide a complete account of all resources that supported SYF, including: (1) the Hilton Foundation; (2) matching contributions; and (3) leveraged support for the pilot program from the community. This approach provides the reader with a solid understanding of the level of resources required to build and replicate the comprehensive service package offered by the program and the level of resources committed to achieve the outcomes for families enrolled in SYF.

Readers should note that this report does not include an analysis of the cost of SYF relative to other intervention models, which would be difficult to conduct because of the lack of comparable programs.

Box 1. Strengthening At Risk and Homeless Young Mothers and Children

Strengthening At Risk and Homeless Young Mothers and Children (the Initiative) seeks to improve the housing, health, and development of homeless and at-risk young families. The Initiative focuses on families headed by a mother ages 18-25 with at least one child age five or under. Services are provided through collaborations or partnerships of community agencies with expertise in housing, child development and family support services. SYF is one of four pilot programs funded through this Initiative.

Section II. The Strengthening Young Families Program

The SYF program is one of four pilot programs funded through Strengthening At Risk and Homeless Young Mothers and Children to improve the housing, health, and development of homeless and at-risk young families. See Box 2 for a description of the program, as articulated by SYF. SYF reflects the collaborative effort on the part of the following community agencies: Antelope Partners for Health; Healthy Homes, a program of Antelope Valley Hospital; Mental Health America; Valley Oasis; and, United Way of Greater Los Angeles.

Box 2. SYF's Program Description

“Strengthening Young Families is a way to identify homeless pregnant and parenting young mothers and serve them with a system of care that meets their unique needs at a key transition point in their life. The project helps mothers stabilize their finances and housing, improve their family’s medical and mental health, and optimize the growth and development of their children. The program successfully helps mothers have a healthy pregnancy and birth and reduce the community’s high infant mortality rate.”⁵

SYF provided services to homeless and at-risk young mothers and their children to help stabilize families. The SYF pilot program ran for four years: from July 2007 to June 2011. SYF began enrolling clients into the program in the third quarter of the first year.⁶ Over the course of the initiative, the program served 97 adults and 157 children for a total of 254 clients. On average, SYF families were enrolled in the program for about 1 year. Table 1 provides a description of the relative expertise of each of the partners and the program’s primary service components. SYF’s core service components are displayed in Figure 1.

5. SYF Final Report to the National Center on Family Homelessness, 2011.

6. SYF experienced an extended program planning phase.

Table 1. Features of the SYF Program

<i>Partners</i>	<i>Relative role and expertise</i>
Valley Oasis	Temporary Housing, Case management, Data files, Project management, Parenting Skills and Housing locator
Mental Health America	Mental health services, Permanent Housing,
Antelope Valley Hospital Healthy Homes Program	In-home visitation for positive pregnancy outcomes, child development screens and early intervention, pre-natal education
Antelope Valley Partners for Health	Child development activities, Parenting Skills and group therapy for services,
United Way of Greater Los Angeles	Co-funder and fiscal agent

Source: The National Center on Family Homelessness, based on information provided by SYF.

Figure 1. Core Components of the SYF Program



Section III: Social & Economic Conditions in Los Angeles & Antelope Valley

The economy of Los Angeles is large, with over five million workers in the labor force. However, the number of employed people in the Los Angeles area has fallen considerably from mid-2009 to mid-2010 and has never recovered. Employment stood at 5.35 million in July 2009, fell to about 5.13 million by May 2010 (a four-percent reduction), and remained at this lower level through May 2011. The unemployment rate, which stood at only 4.9 percent in 2000, rose to 11.6 percent in the 12-month period ending June 2010 and 11.8 percent in the 12-month period ending June 2011. These conditions are described in the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's "Market at a Glance" summary.⁷ The Greater Antelope Valley Economic Alliance reports that the unemployment rates for Antelope Valley are significantly higher than the rest of LA County. In August 2011 employment rates in the area were reported at 16.6%.⁸

- **Construction** – Building activity has fallen substantially in Los Angeles since the higher levels in 2004-2006, when production of multi-family units averaged about 18,000 units per year. In the period of 2009-2011, production of multi-family units fell to an annual average of only 5,000 units.
- **Rental Market** – The regional HUD report indicates that the rental market in Los Angeles has been tight, as in surrounding areas of southern California. From early 2010 to early 2011, apartment rental vacancy rates in Los Angeles fell from 5.5 to 4.5 percent.⁹
- **Homeless Population** – Meanwhile, the numbers of people experiencing homelessness in Los Angeles are substantial: over 23,500 in the City of Los Angeles in the 2011 count, and over 51,200 in the larger Los Angeles County. A 2007 policy brief on homelessness in LA County indicated that Los Angeles is known as the nation's capital for homelessness, with an unusually high proportion of homeless people who were not accommodated with emergency or transitional shelter. While downtown Los Angeles has had a significant share of people experiencing homelessness, persons without housing can be found in all eight of the county's service planning areas.

The policy brief explains the high level of homelessness in Los Angeles as a result of the high cost of housing and the large number of people living with low wages or unemployed. While Los Angeles is considered the most expensive rental market in California, 40 percent of LA County residents are either poor or near poor (at 200 percent of the Federal poverty level or lower).

7. PD&R and Economic & Market Analysis Division. (2011). *Market at a Glance: Los Angeles-Long Beach-Santa Ana, CA*. Retrieved from: <http://www.huduser.org/portal/MCCcharts/php/pdf/063110.pdf>

8. Email communication from the President of the Greater Antelope Valley Economic Alliance. October 12, 2011.

9. United States Department of Housing and Urban Development. (2011). *Regional Reports*. Retrieved from: http://www.huduser.org/portal/periodicals/ushmc/spring11/USHMC_1q11_regional.pdf

- **Homelessness in AV** – Antelope Valley’s population grew 32 percent from 1990 to 2003. At the same time, homelessness grew a staggering 345 percent, from 1600 in 1992 to 7,123 in 2003. Despite this dramatic increase in homelessness, the majority of homeless services in L.A. County were located near “Skid Row,” which is south of the downtown business district and approximately 75 miles by freeway to Antelope Valley. The distance and transportation barriers significantly limited Antelope Valley residents’ access to these services. According to survey data made available by the Valley Oasis’s Homeless Solutions Access Center, one-third of the homeless population in Antelope Valley were young mothers and their children. Most of these young mothers did not have access to any transportation, further limiting their ability to access services in the city. With only two housing units available to serve homeless families in 2006, young families relied on vouchers to live in motels, or lived doubled-up with friends and relatives in less-than-ideal living conditions.¹⁰ In both scenarios, families had little or no access to the supportive services necessary to meet their needs. Homeless public service assistance recipients account for 34 percent of the poverty population in Antelope Valley, as compared to 23 percent in South LA and 9 percent in the rest of the county.¹¹ More detailed counts for local areas in 2009 were 2,400 for Antelope Valley (Service Planning Area 1).¹² The homeless count for AV has gone down dramatically (1,412) in 2011.¹³
- **Public benefits** – Public benefits in the area are insufficient to help people avoid homelessness. For example, in 2011 the county General Relief was paying only \$225 per month for adults with little or no income, which was too little for even the least expensive single-room occupancy hotels found in Skid Row.¹⁴ Pregnant women in their final trimester (after the pregnancy has been confirmed as viable), are eligible to enroll in CalWorks at \$584 a month, which continues roughly through their child’s first year. In addition, they can receive SNAP/food stamps (Dianne Grooms, SYF Project Director, personal communication, September 21, 2011). However, these measures are often insufficient to cover all the costs of raising young children, especially for young mothers with limited employment prospects.

10. Antelope Valley Homeless Coalition. (2007). Strengthening Youth Families project proposal.

11. Burns, Patrick; Flaming, Dan; Haydamack, Brent. (2003). Homeless in L.A.: A working paper for the 10-year plan to end homelessness in Los Angeles County. Retrieved from: <http://www.bringlahome.org/reports.htm>

12. Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority. (2011). Homelessness Data & Demographics: Select results from the 2009 to 2011 Greater Los Angeles homeless counts. Retrieved from: http://www.lahsa.org/homelessness_data/results.asp

13. Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority. (2011). Homelessness Data & Demographics: Select results from the 2009 to 2011 Greater Los Angeles homeless counts. Retrieved from: http://www.lahsa.org/homelessness_data/results.asp

14. Los Angeles County Department of Public Social Services. (2011). “Public social services resource guide.” Retrieved from: <http://www.ladpss.org/dpss/IGR/pdf/ResourceGuide.pdf>

Section IV. Total Resources for the Initiative

SYF was developed with initial funding from the Hilton Foundation in partnership with matching investments from local public and private funders. Participating programs received \$228,000 on an annual basis from the Hilton Foundation. This stable and steady stream of revenue was essential to the development of the program.

The purpose of this section is to: (1) to provide an overview of the total resources for the SYF program for the four years of the program from 2007-2011; (2) to report on the program's compliance with meeting the matching fund requirement under the *Strengthening At-Risk and Homeless Young Mothers and Children* grant agreement; and (3) to discuss the program's success in obtaining leveraged resources to expand the total resources available. Leveraged resources were secured by SYF to augment resources from the Hilton Foundation and matching contributions.

Total Resources

Over the course of the pilot period, SYF secured approximately \$2.1 million dollars to support the program's operations and to provide services to young families at risk of homelessness. SYF was developed with initial funding from the Hilton Foundation in partnership with matching investments from local public and private funders. SYF was also successful in securing leveraged resources from the community.

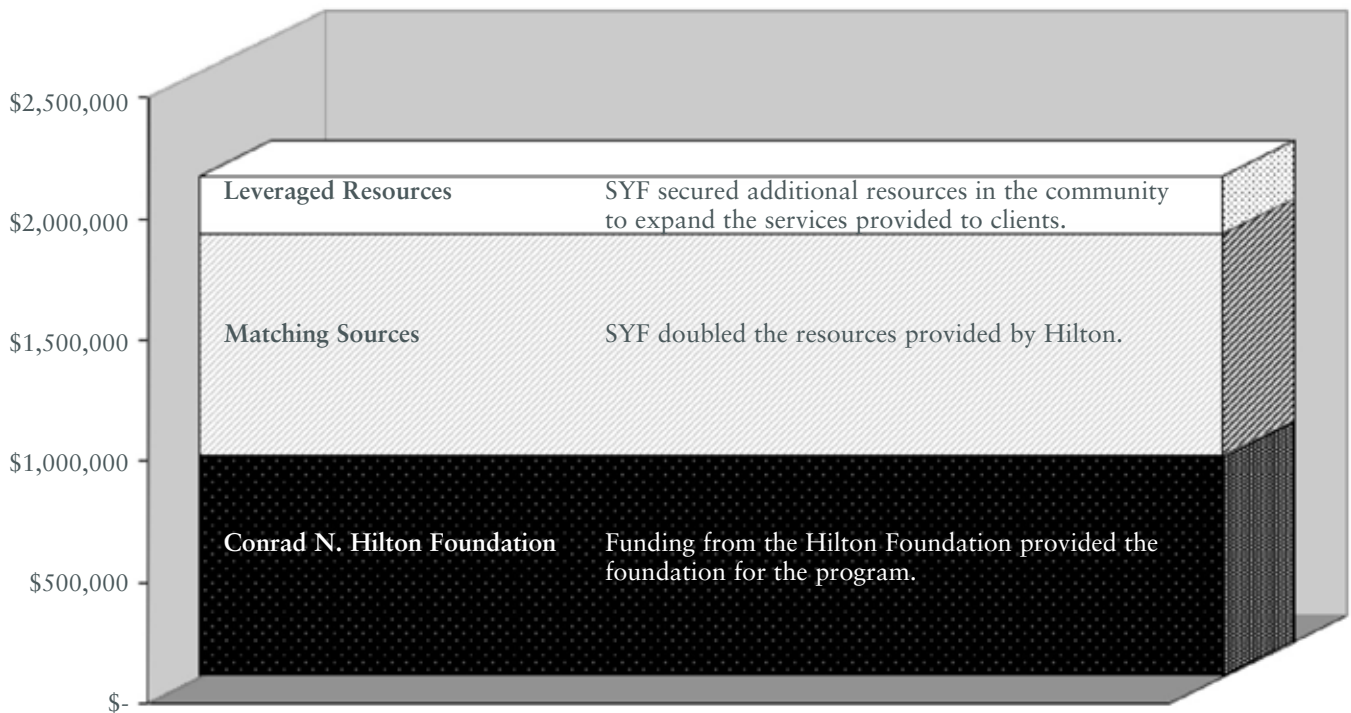
As the numbers in Table 2 show, the Hilton Foundation invested \$912,000 over the four years, representing 44 percent of the total SYF resources. Matching contributions and leveraged resources totaled approximately \$1.16 million, accounting for 56 percent of the total. See also Figure 2 for a visual depiction of the relative contribution of each source of resources.

Table 2: Total Cash and Non-Cash Resources for SYF

<i>Source</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Distribution</i>
Conrad N. Hilton Foundation	\$912,000	44%
Matching Contributions	\$922,000	44.5%
Leveraged Resources	\$238,184	11.5%
Subtotal Matching and Leveraged	\$1,160,184	56%
Total Resources	\$2,072,184	100%

Source: The National Center on Family Homelessness

Figure 2. Total Resources for the SYF Program, 2007-2011



Conrad N. Hilton Foundation

The Hilton Foundation provided a stable and steady stream of funding for SYF over the course of the pilot program. These funds were used to create and develop the SYF program. Participating programs received \$228,000 on an annual basis from the Hilton Foundation.

Matching Requirements

The grant agreement requires the Initiative pilot programs to achieve a 1:1 matching ratio between the annual grant funds of \$228,000 provided by the Hilton Foundation and the matching contributions. Matching funds are defined in the agreement as: “direct contributions or a legally enforceable pledge; non-cash contributions must be new and must supplement, not supplant already-existing resources. The match may not be met by such in-kind contributions as space, equipment, supplies or computers, nor may it be met by shifting existing resources.”¹⁵

The SYF program met the 1:1 annual matching fund requirement of the grant agreement. SYF secured \$922,000 in total matching contributions through annual contributions of \$228,000 from United Way of Greater Los Angeles and a \$10,000 matching contribution from Kaiser Permanente in the second year of the program. That amount represents 44.5 percent of the total resources for the pilot. See Table 3 for a summary of the annual matching contributions received by SYF. This year-by-year analysis demonstrates that the program’s compliance with the grant agreement.

15. Agreement between the grantee(s) and the Coordinating Center.

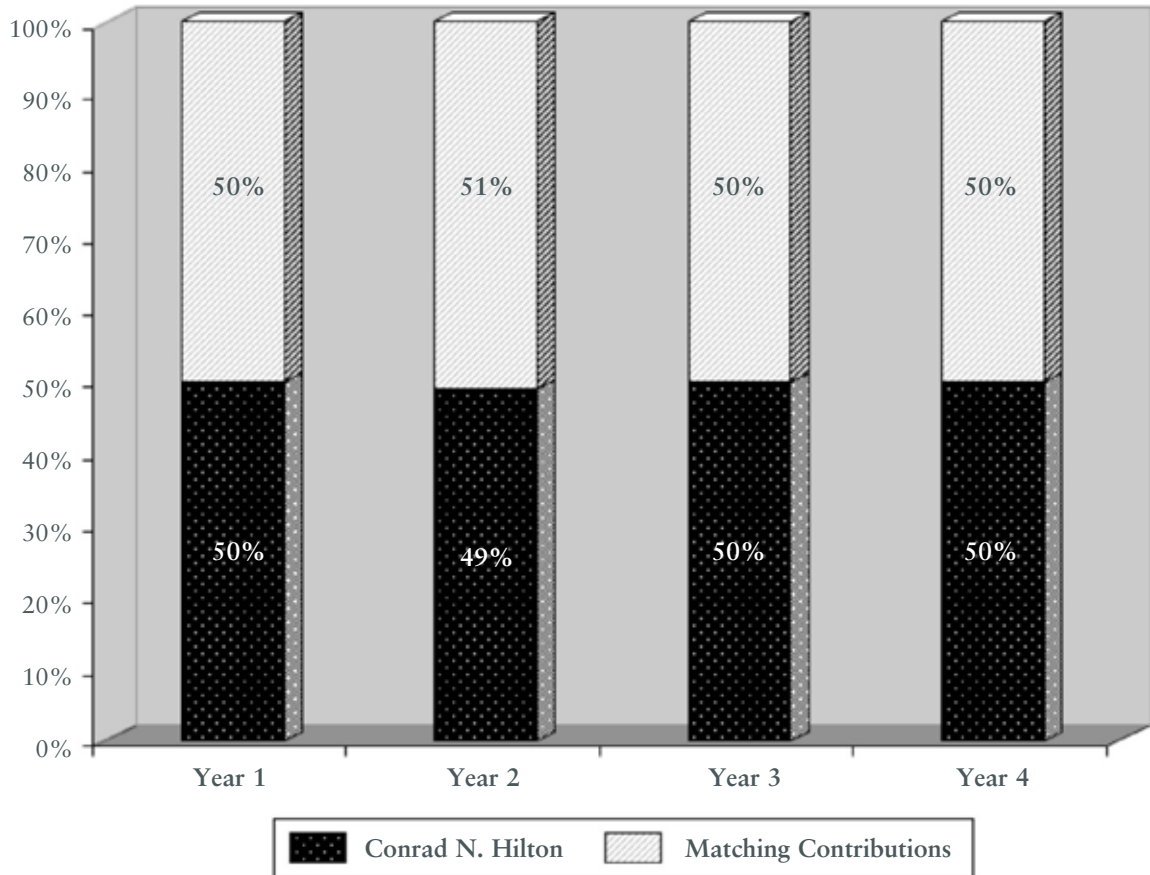
Table 3. Matching Contributions for the SYF Program

<i>Matching Contribution by cash and non-cash</i>	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	All Years
<i>Cash</i>					
Greater United Way of Los Angeles	\$228,000	\$228,000	\$228,000	\$228,000	\$ 912,000
Kaiser Permanente		\$10,000			\$10,000
Subtotal for Cash	\$228,000	\$238,000	\$228,000	\$228,000	\$ 922,000
<i>Non –cash</i>					
Zero non-cash sources	-	-	-	-	-
Subtotal for Non Cash	-	-	-	-	-
Total Matching Contributions	\$228,000	\$238,000	\$228,000	\$228,000	\$922,000
Conrad N. Hilton Foundation Matching Requirement	\$228,000	\$228,000	\$228,000	\$228,000	\$912,000
Amount Above/Below Requirement	-	\$10,000	-	-	\$10,000
Ratio of Matching Funds to Hilton Foundation Funds	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
<i>Matching Contributions by cash and non-cash</i>					
Cash contributions (share of total matching contributions)	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Non-cash	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

Source: The National Center on Family Homelessness.

Figure 3 depicts the relative relationship between the Hilton Foundation and matching funds, excluding leveraged resources. As the figure shows, matching contributions accounted for 50 percent of the total resources obtained by SYF in each year.

Figure 3. Ratio of Conrad N. Hilton Funding and Matching Contributions for SYF



Leveraged resources

SYF considered leveraged resources to be important to the program, because they provided another source of support for the program and enrolled clients. For the purposes of this evaluation, leveraged resources are defined as services and other resources that were required in order to provide wrap-around services to these young families, but that were not reported as matching contributions or revenue by the program.

For this analysis, we estimated the value of leveraged resources for SYF to be worth at least \$238,184.¹⁶ That amount represents 11.5 percent of the total resources for the pilot. See Table 4 for a summary of annual value of leveraged resources to SYF, which shows the steady support of the community despite the downturn in the economy.

¹⁶ The estimates of leveraged resources should be viewed as “ballpark” estimates. Many leveraged resources can only be quantified with difficulty; and other leveraged resources are not quantified at all.

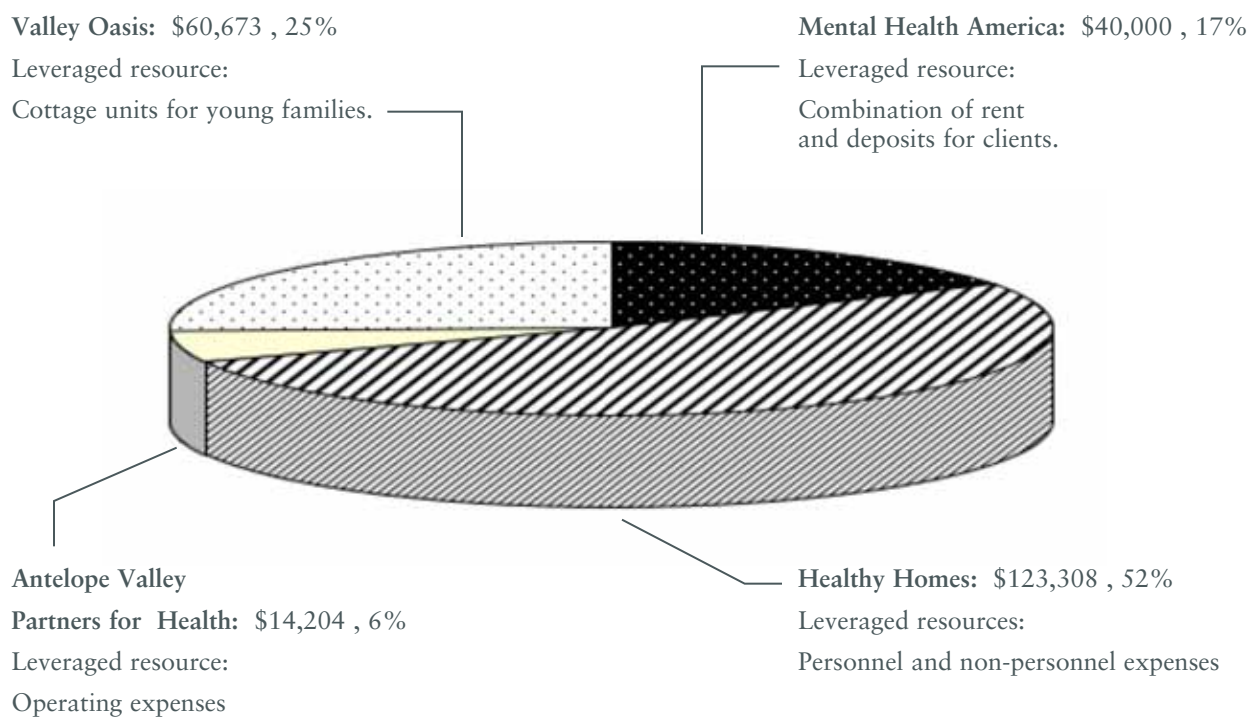
Table 4: Leveraged Resources

Leveraged Resources	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	All Years
Mental Health America	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$40,000
Healthy Homes	-		\$60,864	\$62,443	\$123,308
Antelope Valley Partners for Health	-	\$4,040	\$6,821	\$3,343	\$14,204
Valley Oasis	\$8,668	\$17,335	\$17,335	\$17,335	\$60,673
Total Leveraged Resources	\$18668	\$31,375	\$95020	\$93,121	\$238,184
Total Resources for SYF	\$474,668	\$497,375	\$551020	\$549,121	\$2,072,184
Leveraged as % of Total Resources	4%	6%	17%	17%	11.5%

Sources of leverage

Figure 4 provides a visual depiction of the sources of leverage for SYF.

**Figure 4. Leveraged Resources for SYF
Composition of Resources by Partner Agency**



Section V. Enrollment Trends

The purpose of this section is to provide: (1) the total number of families served by SYF and the average duration of enrollment; (2) trends in quarterly enrollment for all four years; and (3) an analysis of enrollment in SYF, including the levels achieved during start-up, in steady state, and at peak enrollment. The start-up period is defined for this evaluation as the first year of the program. The steady state period is defined as the second year and beyond. Peak enrollment varies by pilot program. This approach is consistent with the framework used to analyze the costs for start-up separately from those for steady state in Section VII.

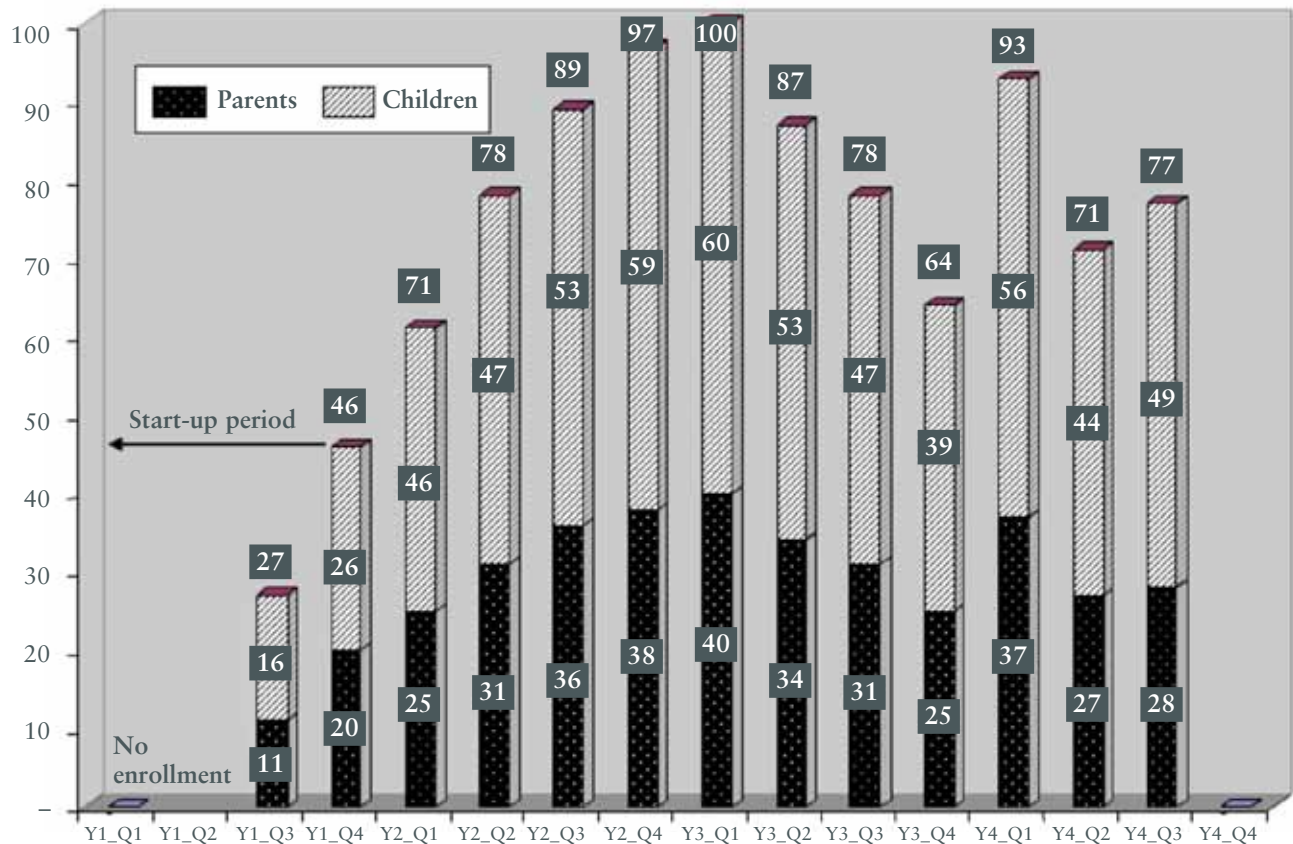
Families served

SYF served a total of 97 families over the course of the four years. On average, each family was enrolled for about 1 year.

Enrollment trends for SYF

SYF did not begin enrolling clients until the third quarter of the first year (January 2008). See Figure 5 for a visual that depicts the climb in enrollment from the third quarter in Year 1 through the start of Year 3. Enrollment in SYF fell throughout the program’s third year, dropping to 64 clients by the fourth quarter of the third year. According to SYF, several factors drove this dip in enrollment, including: (1) the graduation of an initial cohort of clients; (2) a staff vacancy; and, (3) the program’s intention to reduce caseloads to preserve the quality of the care.

Figure 5. Total Clients Enrolled in SYF by Year and by Quarter



Enrollment across periods

Three perspectives on enrollment are offered: (1) the average enrollment achieved during Start-up; (2) the average enrollment achieved during steady state; and, (3) peak enrollment level. See Table 5 for a summary of these three perspectives, which we describe as follows:

- **Start-up enrollment:** During Start-up, the average annual enrollment level was 19 clients, including 11 children and 8 adults.
- **Steady state enrollment:** During steady state, the average annual enrollment level was 82 clients, including 50 children and 32 parents. These numbers reflect the average of enrollment across the steady state period of enrollment for SYF.
- **Peak enrollment:** At peak enrollment, the program had 100 clients, including 60 children and 40 adults. SYF attained peak enrollment in the first quarter of the third year.

Table 5. SYF Enrollment

	<i>Start-up a/</i>	<i>Steady state b/</i>	<i>Peak c/</i>	<i>Growth Index d/</i>
Children	11	50	60	5
Parents	8	32	40	4
Total Clients	19	82	100	4

Source: The National Center on Family Homelessness.

Notes:

a/ Average enrollment during the start-up period, which we define as year 1.

b/ Average enrollment during steady state, which we define as year 2 and beyond.

c/ Peak enrollment for the pilot program.

d/ Growth measured between start-up and steady state.

Section VI. Cost Trends

The purpose of this section is to present the cost trends for SYF. We present costs for start-up separately from those for steady state.

Two separate calculations were made for the pilot for each year of the program's steady state: (1) the average annual cost per family; and (2) the average annual cost per client. Please take note that we did not calculate the average annual cost per family (and per client) for the start-up period of the program, because program enrollment during start-up was about less than half the enrollment level attained during steady state. Calculating the average annual cost per family and per client for the start-up year would create a misleading picture of costs for those interested in building a similar model.

Resource allocation across start-up v. steady state periods

See Table 6 for an overview of how SYF distributed resources between start-up and steady state. Note that 23 percent of the resources were allocated to Start-up.

Table 6. Resource allocation between start-up and steady state

	<i>Average Enrollment</i>		<i>Total Resources</i>
	<i>Families</i>	<i>All Clients</i>	
A. Start-up period	8	19	\$ 474,668
B. Steady state period	32	82	\$1,597,516
C. Total a/	26	42	\$2,072,184
D. Start-up as a % of Total	25%	45%	23%

Source: The National Center on Family Homelessness

Notes:

a/ Total families and all clients is based on the weighted average of the numbers for the start-up period and the steady-state period.

Start-up costs for SYF

Start-up costs represented 23 percent of total resources available to the SYF program from all sources. These resources were used in the first year to support the development of the program and to serve clients. Startup expenses related to development included the hiring and training of staff, the in-take process, and general operating expenses related to the program.

Steady state cost trends for SYF

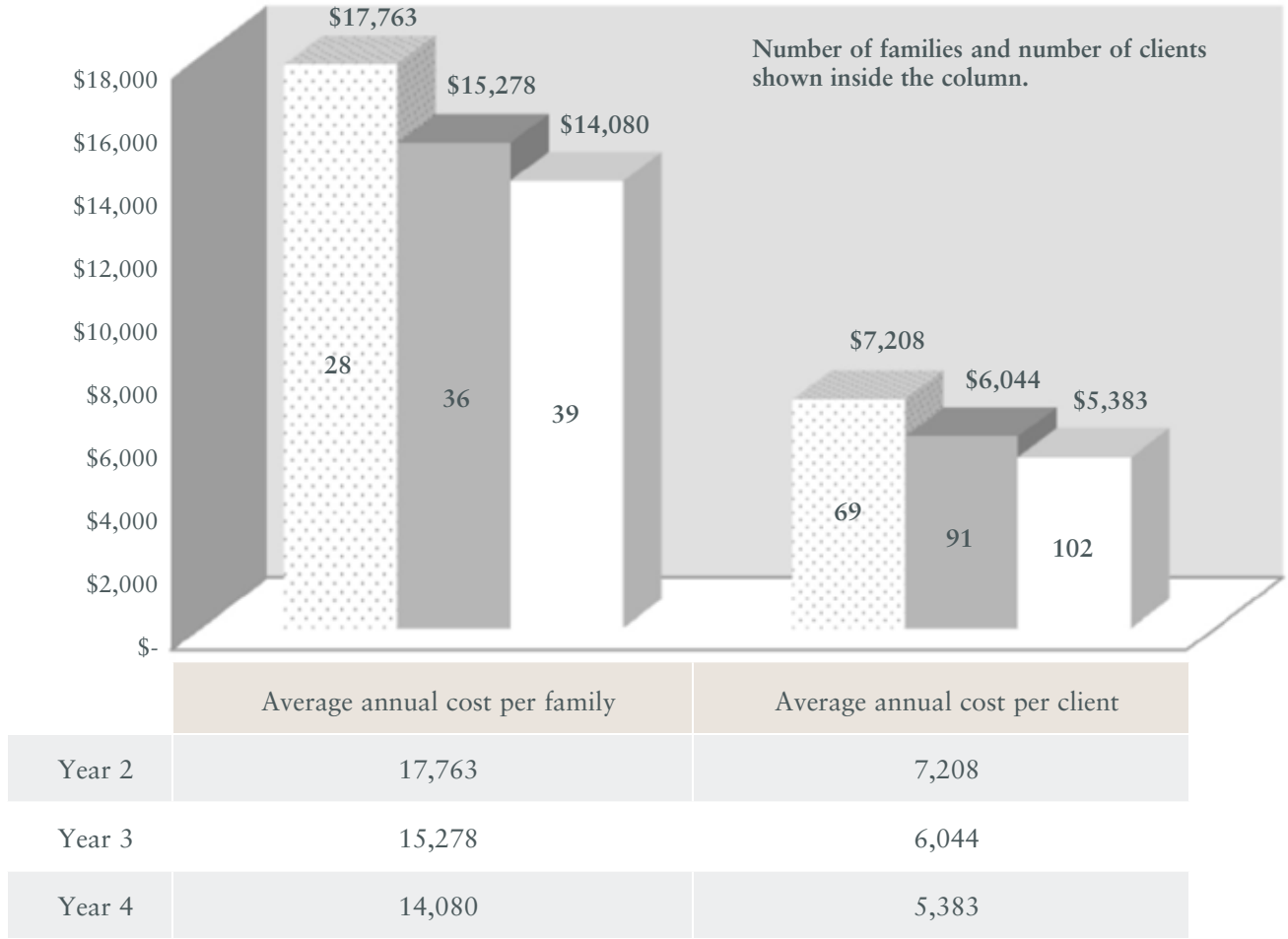
Over the steady state period, the SYF program demonstrated an increasing financial commitment to serving at-risk families. Despite tough economic times, the program raised its total funds by 10 percent between year two and year four, primarily due to the partners leveraging more resources for the project. These funds allowed the program to serve more families each year. At the same time, the program became more cost-efficient in serving families. Average annual costs declined significantly between the second year and the fourth year of the SYF program. Table 7 shows the average annual cost per family and per client for steady state by year. The average annual cost per family declined by 21 percent and the average annual cost per client declined by 25 percent, while enrollment increased by 39 and 48 percent, respectively. Figure 6 shows a comparison of the annual trends during steady state.

Table 7. Steady state Cost Trends for SYF

	<i>Average Enrollment</i>		Total Resources	<i>Average Annual Cost</i>	
	Families	All Clients		Per Family	Per Client
<i>Steady state period</i>					
Year 2	28	69	\$497,375	\$17,763	\$7,208
Year 3	36	91	\$550,020	\$15,278	\$6,044
Year 4	39	102	\$549,121	\$14,080	\$5,383
Steady state:	103	262	\$1,536,652	\$14,919	\$5,865
Change between Years 2 and 4	39%	48%	10%	-21%	- 25%

Source: The National Center on Family Homelessness

Figure 6. The Average Annual Cost Per Family and Per Client for SYF during Steady State



Section VII. Allocation of Resources

The purpose of this section is to summarize how SYF allocated its resources to support the program outcomes for SYF families. SYF’s pattern of allocation reflects its underlying availability of cash resources. Over the four-year period, 87 percent of SYF’s total resources were in cash form.

Staffing costs for SYF

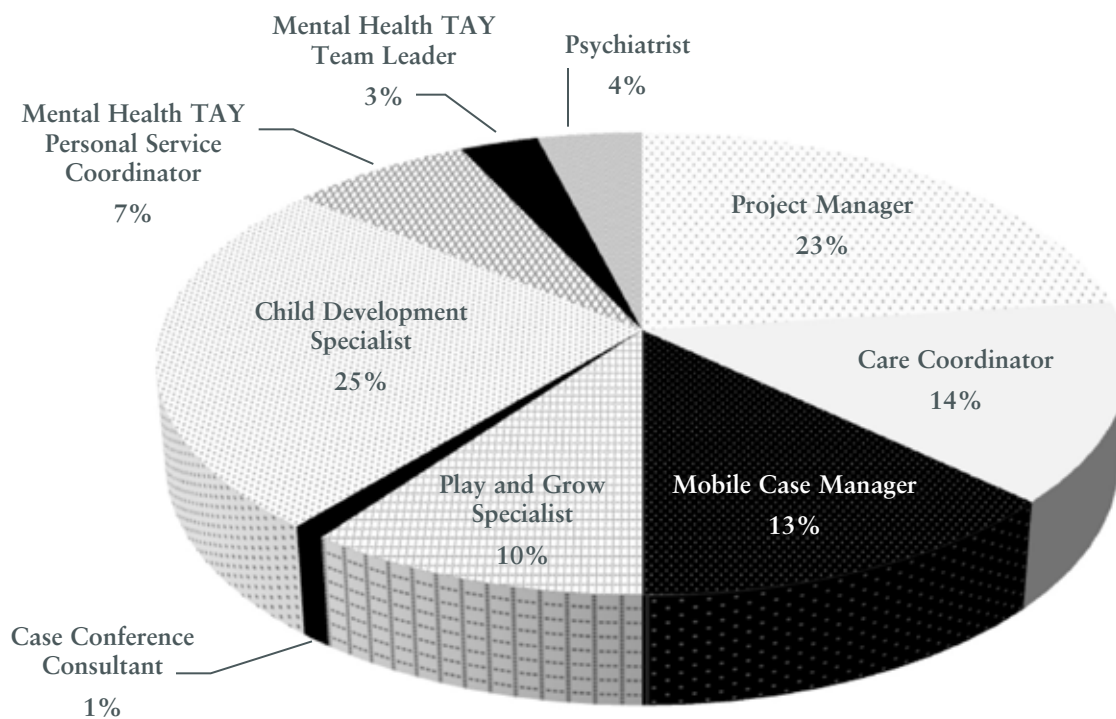
SYF built a core team of employees with responsibility for both for program management and service provision. SYF spent \$1.6 million in cash on building its core team over the four years of the pilot. These staffing costs accounted for 87 percent of all cash expenditures and 77 percent of its total resource pie. See Table 8 for a summary of the cost of building SYF’s core team. Figure 7 provides an overview of the relative cost of each position included in the core team.

Table 8. Costs for Staffing SYF

	<i>Percent of cash resources</i>	<i>Percent of all resources</i>
Staffing costs	\$1,595,279	\$1,595,279
Total	\$1,834,000	\$2,072,184
Percent of total	87%	77%

Source: The National Center on Family Homelessness.

Figure 7. Staffing Model for the SYF Core Team
 Percent = Share of Total Staffing Costs for that Position



Costs of direct services for SYF families

Table 9 provides a summary of the allocation of SYF costs between direct services and administration. The vast majority of SYF’s resources supported the provision of direct services to enrolled families, including services offered by the core team. SYF allocated 10 percent of its resources to support the administrative functions of the program. Such administrative functions were closely aligned with program needs. Spending on administrative needs included staff training, program supplies, and program evaluation.

Table 9: Cost of direct services for SYF families

	<i>Direct Services</i>	<i>Administrative</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Direct Services</i>	<i>Administrative</i>
Conrad N. Hilton Foundation	\$812,845	\$99,155	\$912,000	89%	11%
Matching Contributions	\$821,757	\$100,243	\$922,000	89%	11%
Subtotal	\$1,634,602	\$199,398	\$1,834,000	89%	11%
Leveraged Resources	\$238,184	-	\$238,184	100%	0%
Total Resources	\$1,872,786	\$199,398	\$2,072,184	90%	10%

Highlights of program outcomes

SYF provided services to 254 persons over the course of four years. The average family size was 2.6 including 1 adult. The average duration of enrollment was 1 year.

SYF families received a range of services, including housing support, advocacy for benefits, mental health services, court advocacy, and child development. Table 10 provides an overview of the supports provided to families through SYF.

Table 10. SYF Program Highlights*Unduplicated Clients*

Adults	97
Children	157
Total	254
Average Family Size (includes 1 adult)	2.6
Average length of enrollment in years	0.97

Housing

Number of families permanently housed	53
Number of families served in program	97
Percent of families benefiting	55%
Maintained stable housing for 1 or more years ¹⁷	57
Number of families “stably housed”	73
Percent of families benefiting	58%

Family

Family reunifications	12
Family separations	21

Child developmental screens

Total number of ASQ screens conducted	179
Children receiving ASQ screens	100
Children in program eligible	121
Percent of eligible children receiving screens	83%

17. The lack of affordable permanent housing in the greater LA area and the age of the mothers limited the number of families that could be placed permanent housing. SYF staff has worked to resolve familial conflicts between the mothers and their parents and/guardians and 20 moved into safe and stable doubled-up situations. Please see Appendix D to get a better understanding of where the families were housed upon graduation.

Section VIII: The Value of SYF

We estimate that the average cost per family enrolled in SYF was about \$14,919. That calculation reflects the cost of providing support to a typical family on an annual basis, adjusted to reflect the average duration of family enrollment. That calculation reflects the cost of providing support to a typical family on an annual basis, adjusted to reflect the average duration of family enrollment. Understanding the costs and budgeting decisions required to operate SYF is valuable information for future programs that aim to offer a similar service model. Inherent in this understanding is an acknowledgment of the immeasurable value that SYF offered to both the families involved and the community at-large.

Value to Families

The SYF program provided essential services to promote better outcomes for families and individuals. The program provided an array of services, including child development services, case management and therapy services, to sustain the family as a whole. In the previous section, we reviewed a list of the program's achievements. More families are in permanent housing as a result of SYF. The majority of children received developmental screenings and improved their developmental scores on follow-up tests. Furthermore, preliminary outcome results demonstrate improved mental health, increases in monthly income, and other positive results among mothers in the initiative as a whole. We may conclude that SYF families benefited from the program's comprehensive and holistic service package that included case management and counseling for the entire family.

I think the best thing they do is what their name is: they strengthen young families. They make us stronger parents and people who we never thought we would be. They give us hope, and they're just—they're always there for us, no matter what. The program opened a lot of doors for me... I think it will help me be where I always wanted to be in life. I don't feel like I'm upset just because I have two kids—I feel like I can still meet my goals.

—A SYF client, June 2011

Value to the Community

We might reasonably conclude from the program scope and the supporting data that SYF also provided value to the community. In effect, communities benefit in numerous ways when fewer of their resident families are homeless. In keeping with this report's focus on funding, we limit our review to the implications of homelessness that are economic or financial in nature. We share three such economic implications of homelessness below.

- **High health care costs** – Persons who are homeless experience higher than average levels of emergency room utilization and mental-health inpatient hospitalizations than those who are not homeless. In another study about the average cost of a hospital stay for patients who were homeless, the authors found that persons who were homeless cost, on average, about \$2,500 more than patients who had permanent housing.¹⁸ This is the result of many factors, including the difficulty in conducting discharge planning for the person who is homeless.
- **Lower levels of achievement among children** – Children who are homeless experience lower levels of achievement than children who are not homeless.¹⁹ The literature indicates that these gaps seem to be related to the higher need for special educational services among homeless children relative to their grade peers who are not homeless. As mentioned, the SYF program provided children with intense developmental support through programs and therapeutic interventions; all children with delays on developmental screenings improved their developmental scores on later tests.
- **High costs for a family with long-term shelter stay** – Finally, the high costs for a family with a long-term shelter stay could range from a low of \$22,000 to a high of \$55,000.²⁰ In contrast, the SYF program spent an average of \$14,919 per family each year, helping them stabilize their housing situation while at the same time providing young mothers with educational, employment, mental health, and other assistance.²¹

Value to Future Program Design

Overall, we conclude that SYF offered significant value to the broader community of policy and program managers, especially those who are interested in creating a positive impact on the lives of young families. SYF was able to provide services to enrolled families in a holistic manner as a direct result of the integrated design of the program. We credit the incentives facing partnering agencies under the matching grant agreement for contributing to this integrated program design. We hope that the lessons learned from SYF can help influence future programs and initiatives, with the goal of improving the well-being of homeless and at-risk young families.

18. Shepherd, Leslie. "Study: Homeless patients cost \$2,500 more than the average patient for each hospital stay." St. Michael's Hospital. Retrieved from: http://www.stmichaelshospital.com/media/detail.php?source=hospital_news/2011/20110308_hn

19. United States Interagency Council on Homelessness. (2011). "Education for homeless children and youth program: data collection summary." Retrieved from: http://center.serve.org/nche/downloads/data_comp_0708-0910.pdf

20. Culhane, Parker, Poppe, Gross, Sykes (2007). "Accountability, cost-effectiveness, and program performance: Progress since 1998." Prepared for the National Symposium on Homelessness Research, March 1-2, 2007. Retrieved from: <http://aspe.hhs.gov/hsp/homelessness/symposium07/culhane/>

21. The average annual cost per family multiplied by the average enrollment duration for a family.

Appendix A

Appendix. Total Cash Resources for SYF

	<i>Cash</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Cash as a % of Total</i>
Conrad N. Hilton Foundation	\$912,000	\$912,000	100%
Matching Contributions	\$922,000	\$922,000	100%
Leveraged Resources	-	\$238,184	0%
Total Resources for SYF	\$1,834,000	\$2,072,184	89%

Appendix B

Appendix. Lessons Learned from SYF Relative to Securing Resources

<i>Question</i>	<i>Summarized Responses</i>
<p>Matching Contributions – What are the three to four key lessons relative to identifying, securing and keeping matching funds?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify the funder at the outset of the project, and involve funder in the application process. 2. Maintain communication with the funder throughout the project. 3. Involve the funder in successes as well as failures. Their experience is valuable and helpful.
<p>Leveraged Resources – What are the three to four lessons learned relative to securing leverage?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The lead agency (serving as the fiscal agent) of the project is in a better position to request leveraged fund than partnering agencies within the collaborative. 2. A solid program can secure leveraged funds. The opportunity to build the program remains positive. SYF has proven itself as a way of preventing children from entering the foster care system, of taking homeless families off the streets, and of securing more stable financing for very young families.

Source: The National Center on Family Homelessness, based on the program's responses to a set of survey questions prepared by the National Center's consultant.

Appendix C

Appendix. Proxy Calculation of the Average Enrollment for SYF Families

	<i>Adults</i>	<i>Children</i>	<i>Total Clients</i>
Unduplicated clients <i>a/</i>	97	197	254
Program duration <i>b/</i>	13	13	13
Full enrollment <i>c/</i>	1,248	1,989	3,237
Sum of quarterly enrollments <i>d/</i>	383	585	968
Full enrollment <i>c/</i>	1,248	1,989	3,237
Average length of enrollment <i>e/</i>	31%	29%	30%
Program duration <i>b/</i>	13	13	13
Duration of enrollment <i>f/</i>	4.0	3.8	3.9
Average number of months of enrollment <i>g/</i>	12.0	11.5	11.7
Average number of years of enrollment <i>h/</i>	1.0	1.0	1.0

Notes:

a/ Unduplicated count of adults and children served over the course of the initiative.

b/ Program duration = the number of quarters the program was enrolling clients.

The program actually ran for 16 quarters (or 4 years), but did not enroll clients until the third quarter of the first year.

c/ Sum of unduplicated clients over 13 months of the program's enrollment, based on the assumption that all unique clients were enrolled in the program for all 13 months of the program's period of enrollment. 13 was used to reflect the Start-up of enrollment and the fact that data for the last quarter has not been reported yet.

d/ Enrollment in each quarter summed across quarters, based on data submitted on a quarterly basis by the program.

e/ Average length of enrollment measured in percent terms. This is the percent of time that a family is enrolled in the SYF program across the 13 quarters or entire enrollment period in the program.

f/ The duration of enrollment represents the number of quarters during which the average family is enrolled in the SYF program. This was calculated by multiplying line 6 by line 7.

g/ The average number of months of enrollment represents the average length of enrollment for a SYF family, based on multiplying line 7 by line 8.

h/ The average number of years of enrollment represents the average length of enrollment for a family, based on dividing line 9 by 12.

Appendix D

Housing Breakdown for SYF

<i>Housing Type</i>	<i>Number (total N=97)</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Own Apartment	44	45%
Renting a Room	04	4%
Permanent Supportive Housing	05	5%
Doubled up – living with client or boyfriend’s parents	20	21%

Strengthening At Risk and Homeless Young Mothers and Children is generating knowledge on improving the housing, health and development of young homeless and at-risk young mothers and their children.

This *Report on Costs for Strengthening Young Families* (SYF) was written by The National Center on Family Homelessness. The primary author was Ellen Davidson, President, BD Consulting, with support from Sonia Suri, Senior Research Associate, Annabel Lane, Research Associate, and Ellen Bassuk, President, The National Center on Family Homelessness. The *Report on Costs for Strengthening Young Families* (SYF) is a product of The National Center on Family Homelessness on behalf of the *Strengthening At Risk and Homeless Young Mothers and Children* Coordinating Center, which is a partnership of The National Center on Family Homelessness, National Alliance to End Family Homelessness and ZERO TO THREE. The Coordinating Center provides technical assistance to program sites, conducts cross-site process and outcome evaluations and develops a range of application products from the study sites.

Strengthening At Risk and Homeless Young Mothers and Children is an *Initiative* of the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation.



For more information on this *Initiative*, please contact The National Center on Family Homelessness, 200 Reservoir Street, Suite 200, Needham Heights, Ma; (617) 964-3834 or at www.familyhomelessness.org



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