



Our Services Are Expanding Into Tacoma

Thanks to you, even more families have access to housing services.

On June 1st, Wellspring's housing department opened its doors in Tacoma. This expansion is an important step towards supporting more families in our community. "There's a trend of families we serve moving south of Seattle," explains Wellspring's Senior Director of Housing Services, Walter Washington. "We find families where the need is at, so it made natural sense to follow them."

Meeting families where they're at is central to Wellspring's Pierce County expansion. Our new partnership with Tacoma Public Schools will connect us with an additional 200 homeless youth and their families.

Wellspring is grateful for the warm welcome we've received. "Pierce County has welcomed us with open arms and Tacoma Housing Authority has been nothing but fantastic," says Walter.

Special thanks also goes to the Tacoma Urban League, who hosts Wellspring's new Tacoma team in their building. "Without Tacoma Urban League, their space and support, none of this could happen."

Especially in this challenging moment, Wellspring is proud to be widening its reach.



Walter Washington with members of Wellspring's new Tacoma office: Kara Cooper, Tara Simone Gamble & Marquay Seamster

The longer a family goes without being holistically served, the harder it is to help them. This makes intervention now all the more important.

As Walter will tell you, this is only the beginning. **"We want to build the same diversity of programs in Pierce as King. There are 11 programs in King. These two in Pierce are just a start."**

Newsletter written by our summer interns
Morgan De Lancy (pg 1,2,3)
Talia Morris (pg 4)

Together, We Are Helping Families Stay in Their Homes

Your support keeps families stable during the pandemic and beyond

COVID-19 has left more families at risk of homelessness than ever. “It’s a scary feeling coming home wondering whether the locks have been changed” explains Nawiishtunmi Nightgun, Wellspring’s new Deputy Director of Housing.

She’s seen the struggles families face firsthand and has helped countless families achieve stability. She says with COVID-19, things have only gotten harder. We’re working to fix that. “Wellspring is expanding at a time it’s needed the most,” says Nawiishtunmi.

Currently, Washington state has put a moratorium on evictions. But we know there’s still plenty of work to do. That’s why we’ve pivoted our eviction team to manage COVID-19 relief funds.

This money helps families to pay their rent so they can stay stable when the moratorium ends. **So far, we’ve helped to keep over 3,317 children and parents in their homes during COVID-19.** And we’ll keep working, to support families in the challenging months to come.

Once a family has experienced homelessness, their barriers to stability increase. Displacement is traumatic. Getting to work and school becomes more difficult.



Nawiishtunmi Nightgun is Wellspring’s new Deputy Director of Housing. She is an expert on helping families overcome obstacles to housing security. Nawiishtunmi comes to Wellspring from Chief Seattle Club where she achieved a recidivism rate of 0%, meaning all families stayed housed long term. She is a fierce advocate for equity and justice and works to improve housing support systems in our region.

It’s harder to stay healthy. And with a previous eviction, it’s much harder to find somewhere new to move.

“Evictions on records impact families for years. When we can prevent them... That’s life changing,” says Nawiishtunmi.

That’s why Wellspring is dedicated to preventing homelessness. Together, we support families still in their homes, so they never have to lose them.

Thank you to Wellspring’s 2020 Lasting Change Campaign’s Premier Level Sponsors



1,518

families have been supported with housing assistance through our COVID relief programs

You Make Healing Possible For Children

You help provide Trauma Informed Care for children in Wellspring's Early Learning Center

Jordan's* experiences with trauma used to cause frequent emotional outbursts. At age two, he already struggled with disruptive behavior.

This all changed during his time in Wellspring's Early Learning Center. For the first time, he had support from specialists in early childhood mental health, like Meeghan Bergmann.

When Jordan got frustrated, Meeghan said to him, "it looks like you're really upset right now, like you're angry and sad. Can I help you hold some of your feelings?"

Finally, Jordan had permission to relieve the burden on his tiny shoulders. He scooped up the troublesome feelings, plopping them into Meeghan's outstretched hands. The two sat side by side until he felt better.

Meeghan explains, "Young children are developing a sense of self in that moment. It's about holding these feelings with them—saying



you are a smart and kind kid. There are things that you're working on; we all are."

Today Jordan is happy and confident. His early experience in the Early Learning Center is now a beloved tradition. "Can you help me hold my feelings?" He'll ask.

When Jordan goes off to kindergarten this fall, the love and care he received in the Early Learning Center will go with him.

"What we affirm in him will become his inner voice," says Meeghan. Thanks to the Early Learning Center, Jordan is ready not only for kindergarten, but wherever life takes him.

*Name has been changed for anonymity.

Creating Change

- Setup a **recurring** gift. A small gift each month can create big change throughout the year for families facing homelessness.
- Host a **Facebook** fundraiser, inspire your friends to help you create lasting change.
- Add Wellspring to your will. Ensure the **legacy** you leave behind is one of change and impact.

*real*networks.

Thank you RealNetworks! Your generous support of Wellspring's Early Learning Center is changing young lives.

Volunteers Are The Heartbeat of Wellspring

Learn more about volunteer opportunities, call Thom Murray at 206-902-4259 or visit wellspringfs.org/volunteer



Keeping The Baby Boutique Open During Lockdown

Wellspring's free store is continuing to serve families in a safe way because of the generosity of our community.

Families facing homelessness are in a state of instability now more than ever. Before COVID, children and families were able to shop at our Baby Boutique for essential items in person.

With your support, we have been able to start our Personal Shopper Program, which allows families to get the items they need while maintaining a safe distance. Now, instead of coming into the store, families request items they need and schedule a time to pick them up.

We want to make sure that we are staying safe and that everyone's health is protected.

The Baby Boutique stopped allowing in-person visits mid-March and was quick to adapt.

**Between March 16
and July 27**

418

families received items through our Baby Boutique

10,039

diapers were distributed to families

\$113,772

in clothing, hygiene supplies, and essential items were distributed



Through the new Personal Shopper Program we have been able to reach more families than before COVID.

So far more than 400 families have received shopping bags filled with clothing and essentials through our Personal Shopper Program.

As families continue to struggle with the effects of COVID, Wellspring has been able to meet their basic needs. Because of you, children and families can still receive clothes, hygiene supplies, diapers, and other essential items.

During a time of uncertainty, you have given families continued stability. Thank you!

Your Support is Needed Now More Than Ever!

In this ever-changing world, it may seem nothing is certain. But one thing we're sure of is that life for families facing homelessness is going to get harder.

Please give whatever you can today to ensure families facing homelessness continue to get the support they need - through our COVID relief programs, our free clothing store, and our housing services.

wellspringfs.org/donate

