



How can my church be part of the safety net?

What is Family Promise of Berks County? It is a unique and simple way for neighbors to help neighbors who have lost their housing due to an unforeseen crisis or job loss. Homeless families are housed and fed by a network of local congregations, with the families staying a week at each congregation. Family Promise provides transportation and intense counseling. It's cost effective, and proven successful by our outcomes.

MYTH: Hosting Family Promise at your congregation is a lot of work for volunteers. **BUSTED:** A minimum of 2 volunteers must be present while the families are at the building, from about 5 pm to 7 am. The most important qualification for volunteers is compassion. Family Promise provides volunteer training.

MYTH: Having homeless families in our congregational building is a big security risk. **BUSTED:** These families are usually homeless for the first time. Families go through an intense application process before being admitted to the program, which includes a face-to-face interview, criminal history background checks, child abuse clearance, and are subject to random drug tests. Guests with medical conditions that require monitoring at a level more than can be provided by the program or that would be made worse by traveling from congregation to congregation or by living in a communal situation will not be admitted. Family Promise staff is always on call to help if difficult situations arise.

MYTH: Our church building doesn't have showers. **BUSTED:** Families take their showers at the Family Promise Day Center. All that is needed are three spaces where the three families can have some privacy (usually Sunday School classrooms) and a communal space for eating dinner and evening fellowship. Family Promise provides rollaway beds.

MYTH: "We can't give much; our small contribution won't make a difference". **BUSTED:** Family Promise of Berks can do A LOT with A LITTLE! Every dollar raised is equivalent to \$4.00 of services due to the in kind donations of our congregations. It just makes good "cents".

Family Promise of Berks County needs you to get involved! Together we WILL make a difference!

For more information check our website www.FamilyPromiseofBerks.org, call our Executive Director, Elise Chesson, at (610) 373-3323 ext 24 or email her at ELChesson@FamilyPromiseofBerks.org .