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Researching Innovative Homelessness Prevention Programs

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Mission/Vision

Mission: Lead a coordinated community effort to end homelessness in Greater Cincinnati

Accomplishing this goal by:

1. **PREVENT**: prevent as many people from becoming homeless as possible

2. **ASSIST**: provide high-quality assistance to help people back into housing

3. **SOLVE**: offering solutions to homelessness through housing

STRATEGIES TO END HOMELESSNESS

Partner Agencies

Bethany House Services

Caracole, Inc.

Independence Alliance

Center for Respite Care

Cincinnati Metropolitan
   Housing Authority (CMHA)

3CDC GeneroCity513

City Gospel Mission

Emergency Shelter of NKY

Excel Development

Found House Interfaith Housing Network

Freestore Foodbank

Greater Cincinnati Behavioral
   Health Services

Hamilton County Job & Family Services

Hamilton County Mental Health & Recovery
   Services Board

HER Cincinnati

Joseph House

Lighthouse Youth & Family Services

Lydia's House

Neighbor Hub Health

Northern KY Health District

Ohio Valley Goodwill Industries

OTR Community Housing

Shelterhouse

St. Francis/St. Joseph Catholic Worker House

Society of St. Vincent de Paul

Talbert House

Tender Mercies

The Salvation Army

Veterans Administration

Volunteers of America

YWCA Greater Cincinnati

Across America, service providers are doing great work to take on poverty in all its complexity. But we still know too little about what's working and why.

Notre Dame's Lab for Economic Opportunities (LEO) helps service providers apply scientific evaluation methods to better understand and share effective poverty interventions.

leo

WE BELIEVE

Poverty can be outsmarted.

The social service community contains innovations
that show us how to end poverty.

Evidence (rather than hunches or assumptions) lights
the path to learning what works, with whom,
and at what frequency, sequence, and intensity.

Families in poverty deserve interventions that work.

leo

WHY WE EXIST

37 million people in poverty

$1 trillion spent annually fighting poverty

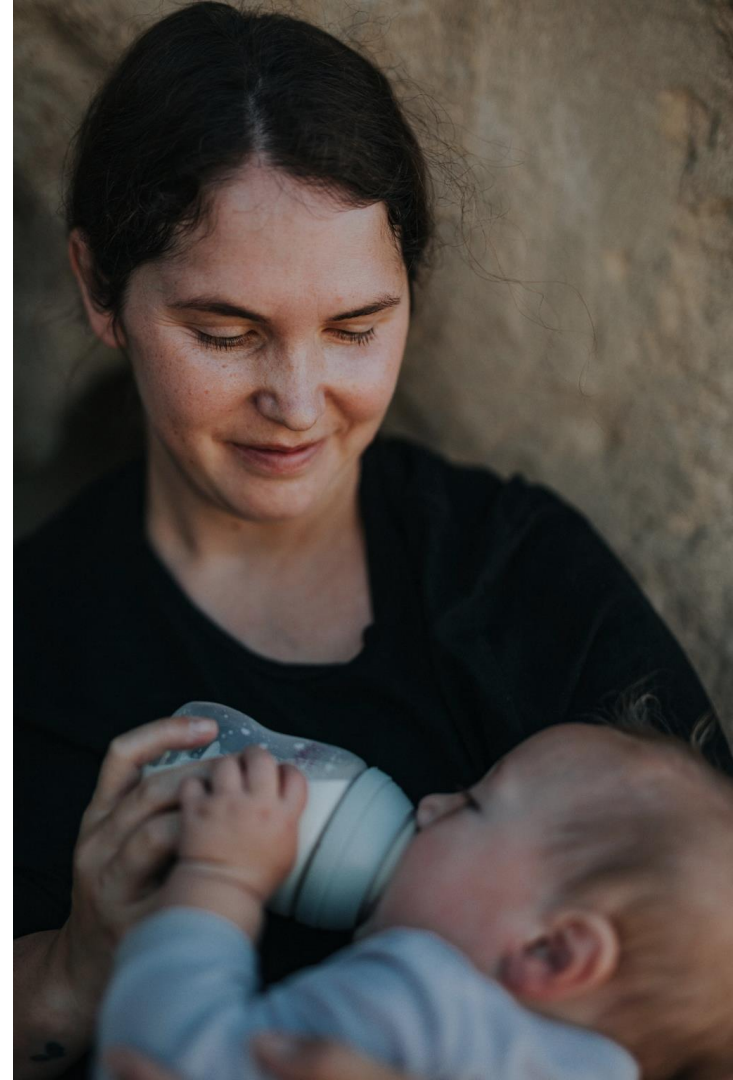As little as 1% goes to evidence-based programs

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WHAT WE DO

Find the innovators

Teach about impact evaluations

Overlay research design on anti-poverty programs

Learn & iterate

Share findings & scale

leo

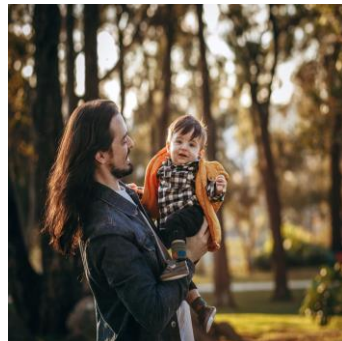# PARTNERS AND PROJECTS

105 projects **29** states

Employment

Housing & Homelessness

Education

Criminal Justice

Economic Mobility

Health

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WHY PARTNER WITH LEO

Impact starts with knowing. Evidence-based solutions provide better insight and actionable steps for fighting poverty. The more we know, the better our impact.

Our research is free. We don't charge our partners a fee for our work.

More evidence = more money. Today's philanthropists care about impact on people's lives. Being able to prove this impact with evidence helps our partners raise more money to support their poverty-fighting missions.

Our research is third-party validation of impact. Evidence speaks for itself. Many social service leaders, staff, and supporters welcome independent confirmation of the impact of the agency's work. Third-party validation is critical to creating continuous improvement and attracting future investment.

Why we are working together:

- Document effectiveness, make improvements.
- Many people who need assistance and are not receiving it.

- Shrinking resources = need to focus on outcomes-based, cost-effective solutions.

- Policy change: the largest funder of homeless services is the federal government, which does not currently permit its largest funding stream (Continuum of Care for the Homeless funds) to support homelessness prevention activities.

Intervention Types

Decreasing numbers

1st night literally homeless

Literally Homeless Tonight

01 Pre-Eviction Filing Prevention
No eviction notice filed but tenant anticipates not being able to make rent, or is behind on rent

02 Post-Eviction Filing Prevention
Has received eviction notice, has a court date scheduled in the next 30 days.

03 Homelessness Prevention
Lost housing and doubled up, at risk of homelessness within 15-30 days

04 Shelter Diversion
Doubled up, will run out of places to sleep within 14 days or less

05 Emergency Response/ Rapid Resolution
Literally homeless

Study #1: Shelter Diversion

- Program began in 2012 as ARRA funds expired; effort to preserve services for people most likely to become literally homeless (street/shelter/DV)
- Primarily households that are doubled-up and running out of options, coming to shelter in the next 14 days
- Helps them back into their own permanent housing instead of bringing them into shelter, sleeping on the streets
  - Housing placement & case management for up to 6 months (Bethany House & FreeStore Foodbank)
- 95% successful in preventing future homelessness
  - Compared to 65-78% success rate for people assisted after homeless
- Significantly reduced cost to system
  - $1650 per person compared to $4700+ to assist after literally homeless
- Reduced Trauma: mainly families = children not experiencing homelessness.
- Current capacity: serving 1/3 of households that met criteria (161/483)
- LEO study began in November 2024

STRATEGIES TO END HOMELESSNESS

WILSON SHEEHAN
leo LAB FOR ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

Study #1: Shelter Diversion

- Research questions:

  (1) Does the Shelter Diversion Program reduce the likelihood of individuals and families using emergency shelters or street outreach (signaling on-the-street homelessness) in both the short and long term?

  (2) How does participation in the Shelter Diversion Program impact broader outcomes such as housing stability, employment, and criminal justice involvement?

- Study Outcomes

  Primary: Emergency Shelter Stays, Days in Shelter. Street Outreach Engagement, Additional CAP Helpline Calls

  Secondary: Involvement in Other Homelessness Services and Programs, Criminal Justice Involvement, Evictions, Educational Outcomes, Economic Outcomes, Credit Outcomes, Neighborhood Quality, Access to Social Support Programs

- Sample Size: 1760 Individuals total (over 2 years)

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Study #2: Housing Stability Collaborative

Using **predictive data analytics** to identify households

in the very early stages of a housing crisis

– *even before they realize their situation could lead to housing loss* –

*a*nd **proactively offer assistance** to resolve the situation

- Supported by the City of Cincinnati as first Impact Award in 2023
- Pursuing 25+ data sets that are predictive of housing instability
- Predictive Data Model, which is being updated with new data sets quarterly
- Outreach being conducted to highest risk families identified
- System navigation services provided by:

- Other key partners:

Study #2: Housing Stability Collaborative

Launching fall 2025

What We Are Hoping to Accomplish:

- Document the effectiveness of these homelessness prevention program through research.

- Utilize research results to secure additional and new resources for outcomes-based, cost-effective solutions.

- Convince the federal government to permit communities to use current funding streams to support homelessness prevention activities.

- Add capacity to homelessness prevention activities to:
  - Serve more households
  - Serve additional populations (e.g. single individuals)
  - Expanded geography (e.g. all of Hamilton County, then Greater Cincinnati, etc.)

- Replicate these homelessness prevention services in other communities

- Reduce and end homelessness in Cincinnati