



1825 Riverside Drive ~ PO Box 1593 ~ Green Bay, WI 54305-1593  
PH: (920) 432-3393 ~ FX: (920) 432-7144  
[www.browncountyunitedway.org](http://www.browncountyunitedway.org)

---

**Date: July 19, 2004**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

## **FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN NEED EMERGENCY SHELTERS**

### Advocates propose community-based initiative to help

**WI, Brown County** – A local council, through research, has found that there aren't enough safe, stable and supportive emergency shelters for homeless families with children in Brown County.

Research known as Point-In-Time, conducted by the Brown County Homeless and Housing Coalition shows, 197 individuals were found in or seeking emergency shelter; 130 or 66% were families with children.

Gary LaFave, President of Freedom House, "We have 26 families on the waiting list to get into our program which would help them redirect their lives and get back on their feet. These families have temporary shelters but in inadequate conditions. They are staying in their cars or are doubling up, staying with relatives."

Brown County United Way's Basic Needs and Self-Sufficiency Impact Council, in a presentation to the Brown County Homeless and Housing Coalition, outlined a plan to help solve the problem through a new community-based effort. It will have two goals:

- 1) Generate the needed funds and resources necessary for sufficient numbers of safe, stable, supportive emergency shelters for families with children.
- 2) Educate the community and government on housing needs and issues.

"To make an impact, this community initiative is not going to be a quick fix. It has to be institutionalized and sustained in the long term," said Gene Vandevoorde, chairman of the Impact Council.

Representatives from the Affordable Housing Institute, Brown County Homeless and Housing Coalition, and JOSHUA (Justice Organization Sharing Hope and United for Action), along with State Sen. Dave Hansen and Marlene Mielke of the office of U.S. Sen. Herb Kohl, offered advice on and support for this initiative. "This is a good starting point in forming a critical partnership to address this pressing community issue," Mielke said.

"This community initiative will engage multiple stakeholders and will foster collaboration," said Toni Loch, president/CEO of Brown County United Way. "Strategies will include whatever sectors, systems, networks, groups, or environments that can play a role in improving lives in Brown County."

For more information, please contact:  
Gene Vandevoorde, at (920) 766-8493 or [gene.vandevoorde@ipaper.com](mailto:gene.vandevoorde@ipaper.com)  
Jen Fietz at (920) 432-3393, ext. 8625 or [jen@uwbc4u.org](mailto:jen@uwbc4u.org)