



Neighborhood House: Providing Basic Needs to Saint Paul Families

*An Analysis of 2015 Family Center and
Food Shelf Data*

A P R I L 2 0 1 6

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Introduction

Neighborhood House provides free-of-charge wraparound services to help stabilize families by meeting their most basic needs. Services and referrals are provided largely through six Family Centers located throughout Saint Paul. The Family Centers are operated out of Bruce F. Vento Elementary, Dayton’s Bluff Achievement Plus Elementary, John A. Johnson Achievement Plus Elementary, Saint Paul Music Academy Achievement Plus Elementary, Sibley Manor Apartments in Highland Park, and the Wellstone Center.

Neighborhood House also supports two community food shelves – Wellstone Food Market at the Wellstone Center, and Francis Basket at Sibley Manor Apartments.

Overview of basic needs services

Crisis services

Crisis services are provided to those with children attending one of the Family Center schools, as well as to other families in the community. The goal is to assist families who are in crisis by meeting their basic needs.

Case management services

Family Centers also support clients through three different case management programs: the Housing Trust Fund program, Family Community Partnership, and Refugee Resettlement program. Case managers in these programs work with clients to identify their needs and goals in order to help develop a plan that will move the family toward stability.

- **Housing Trust Fund:** The housing program works with chronically homeless families, whose children attend Johnson or Dayton’s Bluff elementary schools, on the issues that led them to becoming homeless. Wilder Research conducts a separate evaluation of the Housing Trust Fund program.
- **Family Community Partnership:** The Family Community Partnership is a voluntary program, through Ramsey County Child Protection Services, that assists low income families with basic needs and provides information on community resources. Family Center staff work with families to address their needs, connect to community resources (including mental health supports), and offer general support and guidance to families.

- **Refugee Resettlement program:** The Refugee Resettlement program helps newly arrived refugees navigate their community by connecting them with larger systems, such as county, school, and medical systems. Participants are also connected to Neighborhood House programs.

Food shelf

In addition to the services described above, Neighborhood House operates two food shelves, Wellstone Food Market and Francis Basket, which not only provide food, but also connect participants to critical community resources that help them move “from survive to thrive.”

Evaluation methods

As part of its ongoing research and improvement efforts, Neighborhood House, since 2012, has contracted with Wilder Research to conduct an independent evaluation of its basic needs services. The following section gives a brief description of Wilder’s evaluation methods.

ClientTrack database and program records

Each year, Neighborhood House staff collect data on programs and services through the ClientTrack database, which houses descriptive information about the clients who received crisis or case management services, as well as food shelf support. Family Center staff pull the necessary data and send all files to Wilder for reporting; these files typically come in a PDF or Excel format. For the purposes of this report, data were pulled for calendar year 2015.

Client exit surveys

In addition to database records, Neighborhood House staff send Wilder data collected from client exit surveys. In January 2012, program staff began administering a brief survey to all clients exiting services each month. The survey is completed by individuals who exit service during these months, regardless of when they began receiving services from Neighborhood House. This exit survey measures participant satisfaction with program services, as well as their attainment of outcomes and changes in knowledge, behavior, and circumstances.

Clients served

In 2015, a total of 3,681 families¹ were enrolled in a Neighborhood House program, although this does not necessarily mean that they received a service during that year. Also, it should be noted that only “heads of household” were included in the enrollment numbers, so all data below reflect those individuals who are identified as the head of household. Families were largely enrolled in programs through the Wellstone Family Center, followed by Dayton’s Bluff Family Center (Figure 1).

Clients may have been enrolled in more than one program, but they are only counted in the program that they first entered. For example, if a client’s first introduction to Neighborhood House is through the Housing Trust Fund program, they are counted there, even though they may eventually enroll in other programs.

1. Families enrolled in 2015

Neighborhood House programs	Enrolled in 2015	Exited in 2015 (included with enrolled)
Wellstone Family Center	1,307	55
Dayton’s Bluff Family Center	938	26
John A. Johnson Family Center	494	48
Highland Family Center	401	36
Refugee Resettlement	218	0
Family Community Partnership	119	4
Saint Paul Music Academy	106	0
Bruce Vento Family Center	73	1
Housing Trust Fund	17	0
Family Assessment Response	8	0
Total	3,681	170

While over 3,000 families were technically enrolled in a Neighborhood House program in 2015, fewer had actually received a service and had available ClientTrack data. Readers should note that the number of total families served dropped from 3,807 in 2014 to 1,636 in 2015. The exact reason for this drop is unknown; however, one possible explanation is the discontinuation of culturally specific food boxes in 2015, which, in years past, accounted for a large proportion of those served.

¹ This number is not unduplicated and therefore may be an overestimate, as “heads of household” could have received multiple services from multiple programs.

In collaboration with Saint Paul Public Schools and Second Harvest, Neighborhood House has begun implementing a new program called “Food and You,” which provides families with food boxes through their children’s schools. The two schools that are served by this program are John A. Johnson Elementary School and Dayton’s Bluff Elementary School. Available data for this new program is reported in the “Food programs” section of the report.

Many of those who received services were initially identified through calls for crisis assistance. Neighborhood House staff received a total of 2,594 crisis calls in 2015 (Figure 2).

2. Enrollment, crisis calls, and those served in 2015

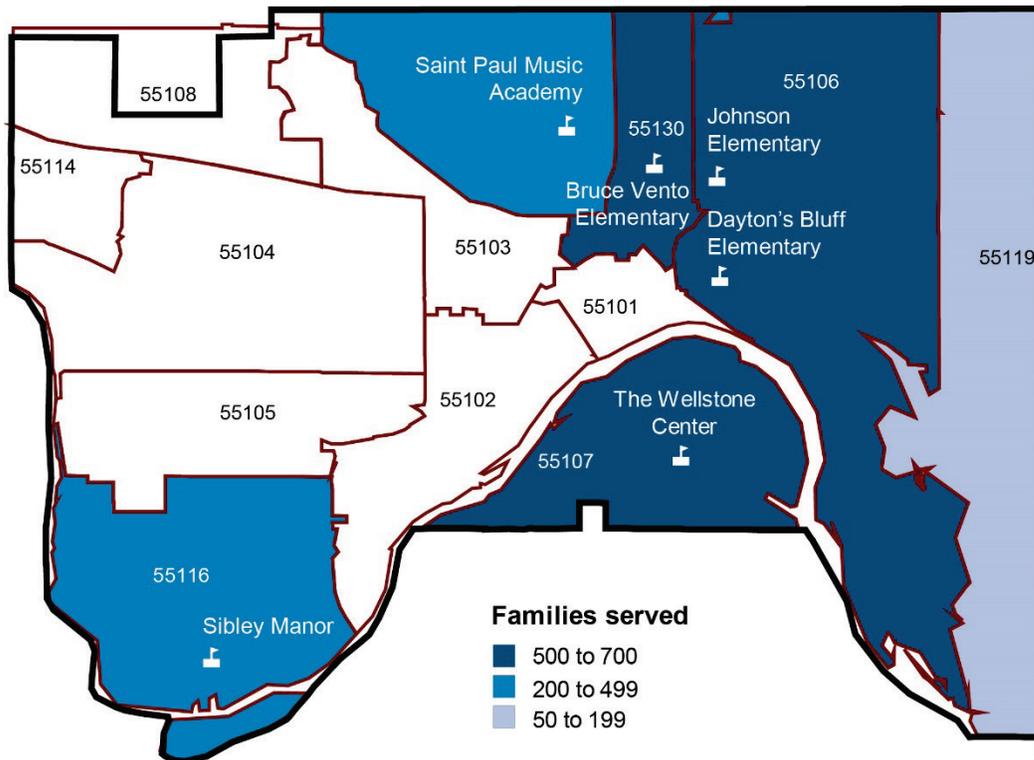
	N
# enrolled in a Neighborhood House program	3,681
# of calls for crisis assistance	2,594
# of clients who received at least 1 service (per ClientTrack)	1,636

The sections that follow provide a detailed picture of those served, as well as the services they received.

Location of clients

The Family Centers provide support to clients living in the East and West Sides of Saint Paul, particularly in the following zip codes: 55130, 55106, 55107, 55116, 55117, and 55119. In addition, participants can be referred from other Neighborhood House programs. Most of the families enrolled in 2015 lived on the East Side. Figure 3 illustrates the zip codes in which clients lived during their program enrollment. There was available zip code data for 2,712 individuals, sent to Wilder by Family Center staff. Readers should note that 136 clients were excluded from the map, because they were living in a zip code that served fewer than 40 clients.

3. Families receiving any type of service, by zip code (N=2,712)



Note: This map only depicts data from the zip codes most served by Neighborhood House programs: 55130, 55106, 55107, 55116, 55117, and 55119. There are 136 clients living in other zip codes around the Metro area (not included in this map), most likely because they had moved at some point during their enrollment. These zip codes served fewer than 40 clients each.

Client characteristics

Neighborhood House staff collect demographic data on all clients who receive services from one of their programs. These data are then entered into the ClientTrack database.

In 2015, 1,636 clients received at least one crisis or case management service from a Neighborhood House program. Clients ranged in age; however, half were between 23 and 54 years old. The majority identified as African American or Black (55%), and 61 percent were below the federal poverty line (Figure 4).

Again, it is important to note that the total number of clients served dropped from 3,807 in 2014 to 1,636 in 2015. A potential explanation for this drop is the discontinuation of culturally specific food boxes in 2015. Culturally specific food boxes were among the most commonly received service in 2014. In addition, these food boxes were tailored to Asian and Hispanic families, therefore, it is not surprising that the racial make-up of those served also changed.

In 2014, the largest group served identified as Asian (39%), followed by Hispanic (24%) and African American (21%), whereas in 2015, African Americans accounted for more than half of those receiving services, and Asian and Hispanic clients made up 10 percent or fewer of the total population of clients served.

4. Characteristics of clients served in 2015 (N=1,636)

	N	%
Gender		
Female	1,049	64%
Male	585	36%
Other or don't know	2	<1%
Age		
0-4 years	144	9%
5-9 years	181	11%
10-14 years	158	10%
15-17 years	96	6%
18-22 years	107	7%
23-54 years	825	50%
55 years and older	125	8%
Race/ethnicity		
African American/Black	906	55%
Caucasian/White	189	12%
Asian	165	10%
Multiracial	123	8%
Hispanic/Chicano/Latino	118	7%
African	82	5%
American Indian/Alaska Native	36	2%
Other	3	<1%
Missing data	14	1%
Poverty level*		
Below 100% of poverty line	1,001	61%
Between 100%-200% of poverty line	221	14%
Above 200% of poverty line	15	1%
Missing data	513	31%
County of residence		
Ramsey County	1,241	76%
Dakota County	11	1%
Hennepin County	6	<1%
Washington County	3	<1%
Missing data	375	23%

Note: Percentages may not equal 100%, due to rounding.

* Poverty Level percentages total more than 100%, because clients may be counted in multiple categories.

Services provided

Neighborhood House programs provide a variety of crisis and case management services to help stabilize families in crisis. In 2015, the most common service provided was related to assistance with housing, which is not surprising as much of the organization’s work focuses on helping families find and sustain safe, affordable housing. This assistance was provided 2,061 times to 666 families (41% of those served; Figure 5).

Other common services provided included initial intake and assessment, assistance with utilities, and Bridge to Benefits screening. (Bridge to Benefits links families to public programs and tax credits.) It is important to note that not all clients received an initial intake. This may be due to walk-in clients who stop by the Family Centers to receive a one-time service. It is also possible that program staff are not completing intake forms with clients when they should be.

5. Services received

	Total # of services provided	Clients receiving service (N=1,636)	
		N	%
Assistance with housing resources	2,061	666	41%
Initial intake and assessment	961	948	58%
Assistance with utilities	640	242	15%
Bridge to Benefits screening	341	338	21%
Advocacy	136	27	2%
Assistance with navigating resources	122	54	3%
MNSure	89	58	4%
Assistance with applications	77	64	4%
Transportation resources	73	71	4%
Assistance with appointments	65	57	3%
Assistance with parenting	64	27	2%
Baby bags/Baby needs	50	46	3%
Furniture	44	32	2%
Housing resources	43	27	2%
Medical/Dental	40	27	2%
Food shelf	31	30	2%
Translation services	25	18	1%
Assistance with intervention services	15	13	1%

5. Services received (continued)

	Total # of services provided	Clients receiving service (N=1,636)	
		N	%
Health care application assistance	13	8	<1%
Clothing voucher	12	11	1%
Life Skills	10	10	1%
Assistance with finances	9	6	<1%
Assistance with taxes	8	8	<1%
County combined application	8	7	<1%
K-12 education	8	5	<1%
Social Security - SSI application assistance	7	5	<1%
Assistance with child health resources	6	6	<1%
Energy assistance	6	5	<1%
Employment	5	5	<1%
Household report form	5	5	<1%

Note: The "Total number of services provided," is greater than the number of clients, as services can be provided multiple times. Services with fewer than 5 clients were excluded from this table. Percentages add to more than 100%, as clients could receive more than one type of service.

As housing assistance represents such a large proportion of the services provided to clients, researchers looked specifically at the demographics of those receiving housing assistance. In this subset of clients, there were notably more women (83%, compared to 64% overall), and more clients between 23 and 54 years old (82%, compared to 50% overall; Figure 6).

6. Characteristics of clients served: Housing and utilities services (N=659)

	N	%
Gender		
Female	550	83%
Male	109	17%
Age		
0-4 years	0	0%
5-9 years	5	1%
10-14 years	2	<1%
15-17 years	2	<1%
18-22 years	24	4%
23-54 years	543	82%
55 years and older	83	13%

**6. Characteristics of clients served: Housing and utilities services (N=659)
continued**

	N	%
Race/ethnicity		
African American/Black	390	59%
Caucasian/White	114	17%
Multiracial	49	7%
Hispanic/Chicano/Latino	37	6%
African	26	4%
Asian	18	3%
American Indian/Alaska Native	16	2%
Missing data	7	1%
Other	2	<1%
Poverty level*		
Below 100% of poverty line	393	60%
Between 100%-200% of poverty line	105	16%
Above 200% of poverty line	11	2%
Missing data	225	34%
County of residence		
Ramsey County	647	98%
Dakota County	4	1%
Hennepin County	3	<1%
Washington County	2	<1%
Missing data	3	<1%

Note: Percentages may not equal 100%, due to rounding.

** Poverty Level percentages total more than 100%, because clients may be counted in multiple categories.*

Crisis assistance

The majority of the services that Neighborhood House provides are crisis-related. Individuals are able to call Neighborhood House staff and request crisis assistance, whether or not these calls result in provided services. In 2015, the Family Centers received 2,594 calls for crisis assistance. Again, the majority of those calls were related to housing and utilities, with the most common request being for rental assistance (45%; Figure 7).

7. Calls for crisis assistance (N=2,594)

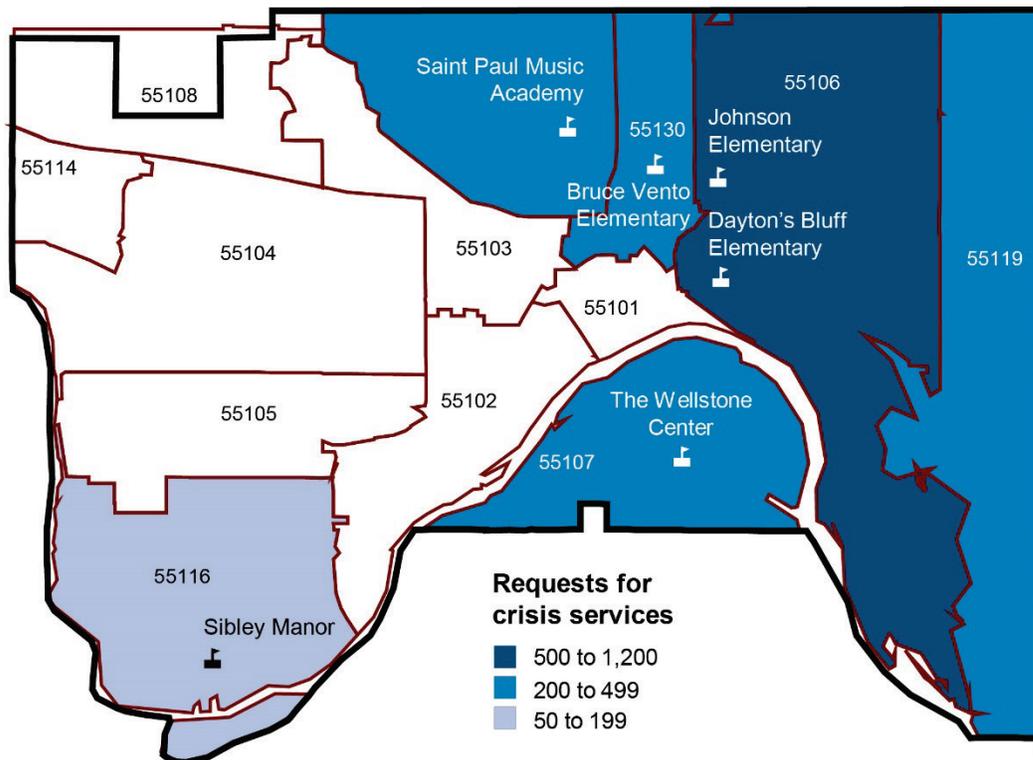
Reason for call	N	%
Rental assistance	1,159	45%
Utilities (power, water bill, phone bill)	639	25%
Damage deposit	403	16%
Housing/shelter	193	7%
Furniture (Bridging)	89	3%
Car seats	28	1%
Medical insurance	28	1%
Baby items	16	1%
Car repair	12	<1%
Family support	12	<1%
Food support	9	<1%
Clothing	8	<1%
Transportation/bus/gas cards	8	<1%
Summer programming	6	<1%
Moving expenses	5	<1%
Storage fees	5	<1%
Other*	38	1%

Note: Percentages total more than 100%, as there may have been multiple requests in a single call.

**Categories with fewer than 5 calls were coded as "other." Other identified needs included assistance with: birth certificate, car payment, child care, child support or custody, computer class, domestic, ELL class, financial literacy or credit repair, household repair, impound fees, school supplies, SSI application assistance, state ID/license/passport, and taxes.*

Figure 8 illustrates the zip codes in which families were living at the time of their crisis request. Zip code data were unknown for 218 callers, and 25 crisis calls were received from other Metro area zip codes.

8. Requests for crisis services, by zip code (N=2,288)



Note: This map only depicts data from the zip codes most served by Neighborhood House programs: 55130, 55106, 55107, 55116, 55117, and 55119. The zip code for 281 callers was unknown, and 25 crisis calls were received from other Metro area zip codes (not included in this map).

Client experiences with crisis services

Clients receiving crisis services are asked to complete an exit survey addressing their satisfaction with the program and changes in their knowledge, behavior, and circumstances. In total, 28 clients completed exit surveys during 2015, from four of the six Family Center sites. No clients from Bruce Vento Elementary or Saint Paul Music Academy completed surveys. This does not mean, however, that those sites did not serve any clients. In some cases, clients may receive services at one Family Center, but conduct their exit assessment at a different Family Center.

The number of completed surveys is substantially lower than the total number of clients who exited in 2015 (N=170); there two likely explanations for this – program staff are forgetting to complete exit surveys with clients, or clients disappear before program staff have the opportunity to complete an exit survey with them. Because of the low response rate, caution should be used in interpreting these results, as they may not be representative of all client experiences. A copy of the exit survey is appended to this report.

Types of services provided

Participants most frequently indicated rental assistance as an area of need, followed by food and assistance with utilities. The services that participants received did not always match the services they needed. Some respondents who did not indicate a particular area of need received services in that area, and vice versa. Figure 9 illustrates the total number of clients who needed help from the Family Center, those who received assistance (of those who said they needed it), and the total number of clients who received services or referrals, regardless of whether they indicated a need.

9. Types of services needed and received (N=28)

Areas of service	Clients who indicated a need for help	Clients who received services or referrals, of those needing help	Clients who received services or referrals, regardless of need
Rental assistance	13	6	8
Food	4	0	8
Utilities assistance	4	3	9
Clothing	2	1	1
Landlord/tenant problems	2	0	2
Medical needs	2	1	7
Employment	0	--	3
Conflict with neighbors	0	--	1
Chemical dependency	0	0	0
Domestic abuse	0	0	0
Mental health needs	0	0	0
Mortgage foreclosure	0	0	0
Other (not specified)	1	1	2

Satisfaction with services

Overall, survey participants were satisfied with the Family Center program. Most were “highly satisfied” with the services they received (86%), as well as the Family Center’s ability to help them with their needs when they first came into the program (89%; Figure 10).

10. Satisfaction with Family Center services

How satisfied were you with...	Highly satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Highly dissatisfied
Family Center's ability to help you with the needs you had when you initially came to the program (N=27)	89%	11%	0%	0%
Services received from the Family Center (N=28)	86%	14%	0%	0%

Participants were also satisfied with Family Center staff. A majority “strongly agreed” that staff were available to clients when needed (81%), as well as knowledgeable and skilled (78%; Figure 11).

11. Satisfaction with Family Center staff

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	N/A
Family Center staff were available to me when I needed them. (N=26)	81%	19%	0%	0%	0%
Family Center staff were knowledgeable and skilled. (N=27)	78%	19%	0%	0%	4%

Changes in situation

The majority of participants (81%) reported that their situation had changed since receiving services from the Family Center, usually because they had assistance finding or keeping housing (Figure 12).

12. Ways in which participants' situations have changed

Has your situation changed since you began receiving services from the Family Center? (N=27)	N	%
Yes	22	81%
No	5	19%
How has your situation changed? (open-ended) (N=14)		
Gained or kept housing	11	86%
Had help paying utilities	2	14%
Searching for employment	1	7%
Child can continue school	1	7%
Have food to eat	1	7%

Note: Responses have been coded into the categories above. Percentages total more than 100%, as responses could have been coded into multiple categories.

When asked specifically if their situation had changed for the better, all participants agreed that it had improved since seeking services from the program (Figure 13), and 68 percent “strongly agreed.” In a separate question about the helpfulness of services, all survey participants indicated that the services they had received from the Family Center were at least “somewhat helpful” in improving their situation, with nearly all (93%) reporting that they were “very helpful” (Figure 14).

13. Improvements in situation

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	N/A
My situation has improved since receiving services from the Family Center. (N=25)	68%	32%	0%	0%	0%

14. Helpfulness of Family Center services in improving situation

N=27	N	%
Very helpful	25	93%
Somewhat helpful	2	7%
Not at all helpful	0	0%

Basic needs

As shown in Figure 15, two-thirds of respondents “strongly agreed” that Family Center services helped them meet their family’s basic needs.

15. Basic needs

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	N/A
Services I received from the Family Center helped me meet my family’s basic needs. (N=27)	67%	33%	0%	0%	0%

Connections with community resources

Nearly all respondents (92%) felt that Family Center staff helped connect them with other organizations and agencies, although fewer (57%) indicated that they had actually received services from outside organizations (Figure 16). Four in ten participants reported that they had sought referrals on their own, and an additional 19 percent reported that they would feel comfortable doing so (Figure 17). However, another four in ten participants said that

they were not comfortable contacting other agencies on their own, which is an increase from last year's report (2014: 15%, 2015: 41%).

16. Connections with community resources

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	N/A
Family Center staff helped connect me with other community organizations, agencies, or classes that could help me with my situation. (N=25)	64%	28%	0%	0%	8%
I have received help for my situation from other community organizations, agencies, or classes since I first came to the Family Center (whether or not Family Center staff helped connect you with the resource). (N=26)	38%	19%	23%	8%	12%

17. Contacting community agencies without Family Center assistance

N=27	N	%
Yes, I have contacted other community agencies on my own for help with my situation.	11	41%
No, but I would feel comfortable contacting other community agencies on my own.	5	19%
No, and I do not feel comfortable contacting other community agencies on my own.	11	41%

Informal sources of support

The majority of participants agreed that they had learned new strategies or obtained new resources that would help them if they faced a similar crisis situation in the future; 46 percent agreed strongly. While 85 percent said that Family Center staff had helped them build closer relationships with informal supports, fewer felt that they had friends, family, or neighbors to provide support during times of need (65%; Figure 18).

18. Informal sources of support

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	N/A
Family Center staff helped me build a closer relationship with friends, family, and/or neighbors. (N=26)	54%	31%	15%	0%	0%
I learned new strategies or obtained new resources since I first visited the Family Center that will help me if I face similar problems in the future. (N=26)	46%	54%	0%	0%	0%
Friends, family, and/or neighbors provide support to me during times of need. (N=28)	29%	36%	21%	7%	7%

Improvements to Family Center program

When asked how the Family Center could improve its services, most respondents said that they would not change anything. A few respondents said that they liked the Family Center program, but can see a need for more funding and staff to help clients more quickly (Figure 19).

19. Ways Family Center services could be improved

(N=17)	N	%
No changes/Everything is good	10	59%
More funding for the program	2	12%
More staff available to help clients	2	12%
Faster call back time from staff	2	12%
Being able to call long distance	1	6%
More non-English language speakers among staff	1	6%

Note: Responses have been coded into the categories above. Percentages total more than 100%, as responses could have been coded into multiple categories.

Case management services

In 2015, 90 clients received a variety of case management services through the Housing Trust Fund (N=11), Family Community Partnership (N=19), and Refugee Resettlement program (N=60).² Clients' demographics varied between programs.

All, or nearly all, of those served by the Family Community Partnership and Housing Trust Fund programs were female and between the ages of 23 and 54 years old. Clients in these programs represented diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds; although, it is important to note the number of clients in these programs is quite small (Figure 20).

Clients in the Refugee Resettlement program were split almost equally between men and women and represent a broader range of ages. Nearly all of those served by the Refugee Resettlement program identify as Asian.

² Again, this may be an overestimate as clients are not unduplicated and could have received services from more than one program.

20. Characteristics of clients served, by case management program

	Family Community Partnership (N=19)	Housing Trust Fund (N=11)	Refugee Resettlement Program (N=60)
Gender			
Female	95%	91%	47%
Male	5%	9%	53%
Age			
18-22 years	0%	0%	18%
23-54 years	95%	100%	67%
55 years and older	5%	0%	15%
Race/ethnicity			
Asian	37%	18%	98%
African American/Black	26%	27%	0%
Caucasian/White	16%	18%	0%
Hispanic/Chicano/Latino	11%	18%	0%
Multiracial	11%	18%	0%
African	0%	0%	2%
Poverty level*			
Below 100% of poverty line	53%	45%	23%
Between 100%-200% of poverty line	5%	0%	23%
Above 200% of poverty line	0%	0%	0%
Missing data	47%	55%	53%
County of residence			
Ramsey County	95%	100%	95%
Missing data	5%	0%	5%

Note: Percentages may not equal 100%, due to rounding.

* Poverty Level percentages may total more than 100%, because clients may be counted in multiple categories.

The types of services received varied depending on the program in which clients were enrolled. For example, advocacy was the most common service reported among the Housing Trust Fund clients enrolled in 2015, followed by assistance with housing resources. Whereas, those enrolled in the Refugee Resettlement program were most likely to receive transportation services, and those in the Family Community Partnership program received assistance with navigating resources and housing resources (Figure 21).

21. Services received: Case management clients

	Services	Clients	Families
Housing Trust Fund			
Advocacy	112	10	10
Assistance with housing resources	103	10	10
Assistance with parenting	28	4	4
Assistance with intervention services	5	5	5
Life skills	5	5	5
Refugee Resettlement			
Transportation resources	59	59	36
Family Community Partnership			
Assistance with navigating resources	36	8	8
Assistance with housing resources	26	11	11
Assistance with parenting	14	9	9
Assistance with utilities	6	1	1
Assistance with appointment	5	4	4

Note: Categories with fewer than 5 services reported were excluded from this table. Additionally, the number of services is greater than the number of clients or families, since services can be received multiple times over the course of a client's involvement in the program.

Food programs

As mentioned above, Neighborhood House is now offering food boxes to clients through a program called Food and You. This program serves families who have students at John A. Johnson or Dayton's Bluff Elementary Schools. As the program is fairly new, there are only four months of data available for clients served by the program in 2015. Between September and December, Dayton's Bluff distributed a total of 331 food boxes and Johnson distributed a total of 236 food boxes to families.

Figure 22 illustrates the number of students served by the Food and You program in proportion with the number of students at each school. When the program began in September, just over one-quarter of students at each school received food boxes. This percentage reached its highest point in November, presumably because of the Thanksgiving holiday – 59 percent of students at Dayton's Bluff and 39 percent of students at Johnson received food boxes during the month of November. The percentage of students receiving food boxes at each school dropped in December. Wilder and Neighborhood House staff will continue to look at these numbers in the future.

22. Proportion of students being served by food boxes, by month

	Dayton's Bluff Elementary			John A. Johnson Elementary		
	# of students enrolled at school	# of students who received food box	% of students who received food box	# of students enrolled at school	# of students who received food box	% of students who received food box
September 2015	399	115	29%	409	108	26%
October 2015	409	168	41%	414	38	9%
November 2015	407	241	59%	408	159	39%
December 2015	410	113	28%	411	44	11%

Neighborhood House also supports two community food shelves: Wellstone Food Market at the Wellstone Center and Francis Basket at Sibley Manor Apartments. In 2015, the food shelves served a total of 12,367 clients. A smaller proportion of those served had available demographic data in ClientTrack. The characteristics of those with available data are reported below.

Clients served represented diverse racial and ethnic groups, with the largest proportion being Asian or Pacific Islander (48%). The majority of clients receiving food shelf support were from Ramsey County (85%) and were living below the federal poverty line (81%); however, there were a fair amount of missing data for both of these data points (Figure 23).

23. Characteristics of clients served: Food shelves (N=12,367)

	N	%
Gender		
Female	6,360	51%
Male	5,985	48%
Missing/Other/Don't know	22	<1%
Age		
0-4 years	994	8%
5-9 years	1,540	12%
10-14 years	1,512	12%
15-17 years	888	7%
18-22 years	1,255	10%
23-54 years	4,854	39%
55 years and older	1,324	11%

23. Characteristics of clients served: Food shelves (N=12,367) continued

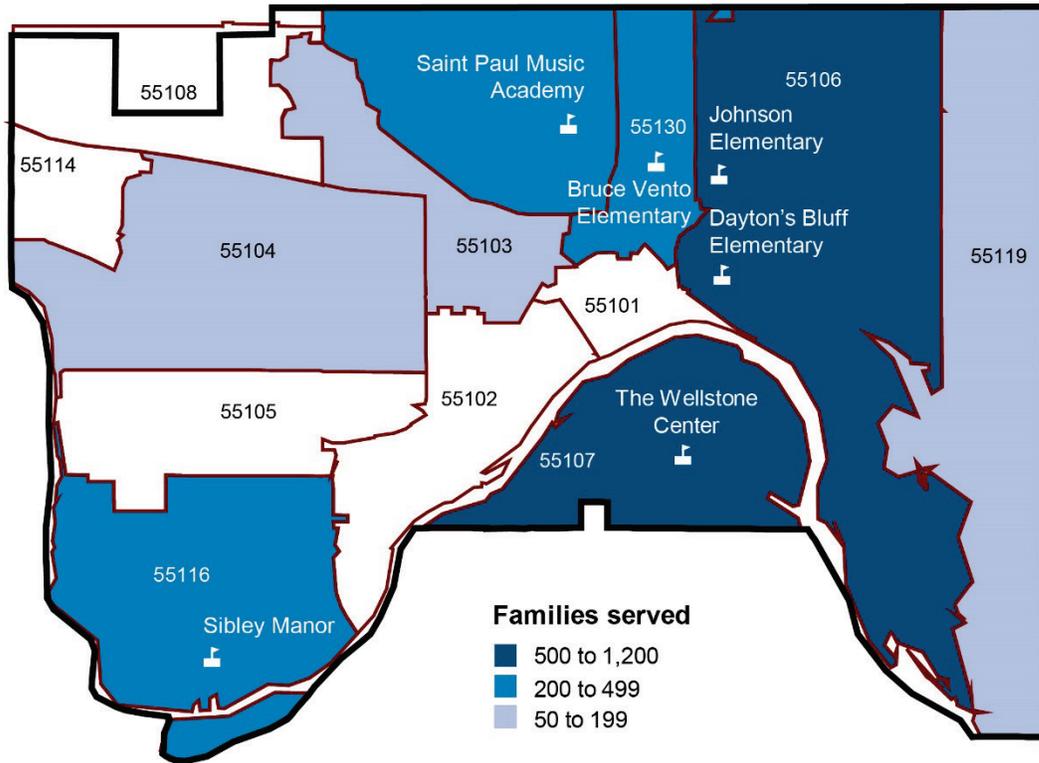
	N	%
Race/ethnicity		
Asian/Pacific Islander	5,887	48%
Hispanic/Chicano/Latino	2,482	20%
African American/Black	1,391	11%
Caucasian/White	1,159	9%
African	696	6%
Multiracial	436	4%
Native American/American Indian	152	1%
Other/Unknown	164	1%
Poverty level*		
Below 100% of poverty line	9,979	81%
Between 100%-200% of poverty line	1,016	8%
Above 200% of poverty line	177	1%
Missing data	1,809	15%
County of residence		
Ramsey County	10,512	85%
Dakota County	465	4%
Hennepin County	60	<1%
Washington County	58	<1%
Other	17	<1%
Missing data	1,255	10%

Note: Percentages may not equal 100%, due to rounding.

**Poverty Level percentages total more than 100%, because clients may be counted in multiple categories.*

Figure 24 illustrates where clients were living in Saint Paul when they received food shelf support. Readers should note that 240 clients were excluded from the map, because they were living in a zip code that served fewer than 40 clients.

24. Clients who received food shelf support, by zip code (N=3,025)



Note: This map only depicts data from the zip codes most served by Neighborhood House programs: 55130, 55106, 55107, 55116, 55117, and 55119, as well as 55103, 55104, and 55118. Zip codes were excluded from the above map if they had fewer than 40 clients living in that area. In total, 240 clients (from 59 counties) were excluded.

Conclusions

The Family Center serves a large number of families who are experiencing economic distress, eviction and homelessness, poor mental health, and other serious issues. Overall, clients tend to be women of color, between the ages of 23 and 54 years, and living below the federal poverty line; however, clients also vary by program type. For example, men and women are served in near equal numbers through the Refugee Resettlement program.

In 2015, a total of 3,681 clients were enrolled in a Neighborhood House program. Program staff received over 2,000 phone calls regarding crisis assistance – mostly for rent, utilities, damage deposits, and other issues related to housing – and a total of 1,636 clients received at least one service, again mostly related to housing assistance. The number of crisis calls and clients served dropped fairly significantly between reporting years, but the exact reason for these drops is unknown. One potential explanation for the drop in clients served is the discontinuation of culturally specific food boxes to Asian and Hispanic families.

Through its services, the majority of which are crisis-related, Neighborhood House staff work to connect families to community supports and provide them with a sense of stability and empowerment. Those clients who completed an exit survey³ were generally very satisfied with the services they have received from Neighborhood House, as well as the staff with whom they have worked. All survey respondents said that their situations had changed for the better since seeking services from Neighborhood House, and all respondents felt that the services they had received were at least somewhat helpful.

The majority of participants agreed that they had learned new strategies or obtained new resources that would help them if they faced a similar crisis situation in the future. However, in a separate question, four in ten respondents said that they were still not comfortable contacting other agencies on their own, which indicates that Neighborhood House staff should continue to work with clients on building their confidence and resiliency beyond the program. Neighborhood House staff should also keep in mind that food boxes are an important service for clients, and many families received culturally specific food boxes before their discontinuation in 2015. Neighborhood House should continue providing a variety of healthy, culturally specific foods to families if possible.

In terms of the evaluation, Wilder recommends the following next steps:

- **Continue to look at the data for the Food and You Program:** In future evaluations, Wilder and Neighborhood House staff should continue pulling data on

³ The number of clients who participated in the exit survey is much smaller than those actually served; therefore, responses should not be considered representative of the whole population of clients.

the Food and You program, as well as dig deeper into the numbers served and characteristics of clients. As food is an essential basic need, it will be helpful to gauge if there are any improvements or enhancements that Neighborhood House could make in providing food to families.

- **Re-examine the Wilder exit survey:** The number of clients who complete an exit survey is quite low compared to the number of clients who exit Neighborhood House programs within one year. Wilder and Neighborhood House staff should evaluate both the usefulness of the questions asked on that survey, as well as the methodology used in implementing it in order to increase the response rate. One possibility is conducting the exit interviews over the phone; program staff could conduct a phone interview as they are following up with clients to close out their paperwork.

- **Discuss the ClientTrack database and look at ways to continually improve the collection of client data:** Wilder and Neighborhood House staff may also consider having more conversations around the ClientTrack database. The current group of researchers on this project has never looked at the full ClientTrack database, and it may be worthwhile to explore all of the fields or elements available to determine if we are using the data to its fullest potential. Wilder would be interested in discussing how to better use the database, keeping in mind that we want it to be a quick and easy process for Neighborhood House to pull the data. One of the ongoing issues with data collection is that program staff at the various Family Center sites may forget to enter client data, or not enter it in a timely fashion; finding ways to improve data collection is key to understanding the needs of and services provided to clients.

Appendix

Client exit survey

Staff use only: Membership No. _____ Initial intake date: _____ Case closure date: _____

Family Center site: _____ Date survey completed: _____

NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSE FAMILY CENTERS ***Client Survey***

Please answer these questions. Your responses are confidential and will help the Neighborhood House Family Center strive to provide the best possible services.

For the following issues, please check the first box if you needed help in that area when you initially came to the Neighborhood House Family Center. If you needed help in an area, please check the second box if the Family Center provided services or referrals to you in that area.

	a. Needed help from the Family Center	b. Received services or referrals from the Family Center
Q-1. Rental assistance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q-2. Mortgage foreclosure	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q-3. Utilities assistance (e.g., Xcel, water)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q-4. Employment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q-5. Food	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q-6. Clothing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q-7. Landlord/tenant problems	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q-8. Conflict with neighbors	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q-9. Medical needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q-10. Mental health needs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q-11. Chemical dependency	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q-12. Domestic abuse	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Q-13. Other (please specify): _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Q-14. Has your situation changed since you began receiving services from the Family Center? ¹ Yes ² No

14a. If yes, in what ways has it changed? _____

Q-15. We are interested in your experience with the Family Center. Please circle the number in the category that best describes your opinion (circle one number for each item):

	Highly satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Highly dissatisfied
a). How satisfied are you with the services that you received from the Family Center?	4	3	2	1
b). How satisfied are you with the Family Center's ability to help you with the needs you had when you initially came to the program?	4	3	2	1

Q-16. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements (circle one number for each item):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Not applicable
a). My family's basic needs are being met.	4	3	2	1	9
b). Friends, family, and/or neighbors provide support to me during times of need.	4	3	2	1	9
c). Family Center staff were knowledgeable and skilled.	4	3	2	1	9
d). Family Center staff were available to me when I needed them.	4	3	2	1	9
e). Family Center staff helped connect me with other community organizations, agencies, or classes that could help me with my situation.	4	3	2	1	9
f). I have received help for my situation from other community organizations, agencies, or classes since I first came to the Family Center (whether or not Family Center staff helped connect you with the resource).	4	3	2	1	9
g). Family Center staff helped me build a closer relationship with friends, family, and/or neighbors.	4	3	2	1	9
h). My situation has improved since I began receiving services from the Family Center.	4	3	2	1	9
i). Services I received from the Family Center helped me meet my family's basic needs.	4	3	2	1	9
j). I learned new strategies or obtained new resources since I first visited the Family Center that will help me if I face similar problems in the future.	4	3	2	1	9

Q-17. Since you started receiving services from the Family Center, have you contacted any other community agencies for help on your own, without the assistance of Family Center staff? This could include agencies Family Center staff referred you to, but that you contacted on your own. (check the one that most applies)

- ¹ Yes, I have contacted other community agencies on my own for help with my situation.
- ² No, but I would feel comfortable contacting other community agencies on my own.
- ³ No, and I do not feel comfortable contacting other community agencies on my own.

Please continue questionnaire on following page. ➔

Q-18. Overall, how helpful would you say services from the Family Center have been in improving your situation?
(check one)

- ¹ Very helpful
- ² Somewhat helpful
- ³ Not at all helpful

Q-19. How could services provided by the Family Center be improved?

Q-20. Additional comments: _____

Thank you!