

## RAPID HOUSING

### Keeping Families Safely Together and Helping Older Foster Youth

The Rapid Housing program, administered by the Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA), prevents homelessness and keeps families safely together by providing financial assistance to pay security deposits and the first several months rent.

The assistance is available to families when a child is at risk of coming into foster care or the barrier to reunification of child in foster care with his parent is due to inadequate housing. Rapid Housing also helps prevent youth aging out of foster care from becoming homeless by helping youth transition to their own housing. The program provides this help for a very small price – \$5,000 per family or \$4000 for youth.

- **Protects children and families.** Rapid Housing has helped hundreds of children reunify with their birth families quickly or stay out of foster care altogether. This program is vital when the number of children entering foster care due to inadequate housing has skyrocketed more than 50 percent in the last year.<sup>1</sup>
- **Need is great.** We project that Rapid Housing will help approximately 150 families in FY'10 and 110 emancipating youth in FY'10.
- **Essential for older foster youth.** Emancipating youth are at a high risk for homelessness, rapid housing helps youth make a successful transition to independence.
- **Pays for itself.** Every dollar spent saves the District more than four dollars<sup>2</sup> in foster care costs.

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<sup>1</sup> Government of the District of Columbia, Child and Family Services Agency, Implementing the Adoption and Safe Families Amendment Act of 2000 in the District of Columbia (2008 Annual Public Report), at 27, [http://cfsa.dc.gov/cfsa/frames.asp?doc=/cfsa/lib/cfsa/pdf/fy\\_2008\\_annual\\_public\\_report.pdf](http://cfsa.dc.gov/cfsa/frames.asp?doc=/cfsa/lib/cfsa/pdf/fy_2008_annual_public_report.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> The proposed budget for the 'Out of Home Care and Support' program includes \$104,317,000 in local funds. Proposed CFSA Budget, Schedule 30-PBB, E-16. With about 2300 children in foster care, this budget means that CFSA will spend an average of \$45,355 for each child in foster care. That estimate is conservative because we have not included many other costs associated with foster care both within CFSA's budget and other agencies' budgets. We assume based on historical trends that families receive 60% of the funds and youth 40%. We also assume foster care costs for six (6) months in our estimate.

