The Investing in Families Pilot Project Evaluation Plan Framework

(July 2011 to June 30, 2013)
## Assumptions Driving the Investing in Families Pilot Project Evaluation

- The evaluation will document the extent to which Snohomish County, Workforce Development Council Snohomish County, The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, Building Changes, and other community resources are leveraged to plan and implement a high-performing system for helping families experiencing and at risk of homelessness achieve optimal self-sufficiency.

- The Investing in Families Pilot Project Evaluation Plan is a tool used to build awareness and consensus among partners about the main questions that need to be answered during the Pilot Program phase of the work, occurring July 2011 to June 30, 2013.

- The Evaluation Plan is intended to be revised over time to reflect changes in the environment and the work of key partners, grantees and committees.

- The Strategic Advisory Coordinating Committee will advise the coordination of Investing in Families Pilot Project strategies and evaluation.

- A comprehensive data trail will be put in place to track the progress of families experiencing and at risk of homelessness and effectiveness of the policies, practices, and systems to support their success.

- Coordination with other efforts (planning, program, policy, funding) influencing services to individuals and families experiencing and at risk of homelessness will be incorporated into the evaluation.

- Experiences of families, providers and stakeholders engaged in different strategies will be incorporated into the evaluation and guide continuous improvement of the system.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current State</th>
<th>Pilot Project Action</th>
<th>Family Outcomes</th>
<th>System Outcomes [8]</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. SYSTEM INTEGRATION</td>
<td>The current service system and related funding streams which support families experiencing and at risk of homelessness are not well-integrated.</td>
<td>- Design and implement a continuum of housing assistance and support services, including integration with economic opportunity resources, to assist families experiencing and at risk of homelessness.</td>
<td>- Improve family stability as indicated by their progress on Snohomish Self-Sufficiency Matrix life domains, such as housing, income, health, employment, etc. [4]</td>
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<td>2. SYSTEM INFRASTRUCTURE – HOUSING SUPPLY</td>
<td>There is an insufficient supply of affordable housing accessible to homeless families.</td>
<td>- Implement a program to engage and incentivize current continuum of care and private sector landlords in the provision of housing to assist families.</td>
<td>- Increase access of homeless families to housing opportunities. [5]</td>
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<td>3. ACCESS TO SERVICES</td>
<td>Prevention: Many families are not getting the timely help they need to avoid becoming homeless.</td>
<td>- Design and implement coordinated entry services that are responsive to the obstacles and needs of families at risk of homelessness.</td>
<td>- Increase the timely access of families at risk of homelessness to needed resources to reduce the time spent in homelessness, prevent first time, and prevent recurring homelessness. [1.2.3]</td>
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The numbers in the Family Outcomes column refer to the changes to be tracked on the following page.
The Investing in Families Vision and Mission

The Investing in Families vision is that every Snohomish County family has ready access to the housing, economic opportunities, and support to lead lives of dignity and fulfillment. The mission of Investing in Families is to develop a high-performing system to transform services and programs to prevent and end homelessness among families in Snohomish County.

Investing in Families Pilot Project Partners

The Investing in Families Pilot Project Partnership includes government; homelessness prevention, housing, social service and economic opportunity providers; homeless policy staff; and homeless families. The Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation and Building Changes are key funders and advisors to this work.

Investing in Families Pilot Project Funders and Management Entities

Snohomish County is the lead entity for the Investing in Families Initiative and the Investing in Families Pilot Project is responsible, ultimately, for transforming mainstream service delivery programs into a high performing system that meets the needs of families experiencing and at risk of homelessness.

The Snohomish County Human Services Department (SCHSD) will select an entity to hire a Coordinated Entry Specialist and a Housing Resource Specialist who will provide services to at least 75 pilot project families. The families will be designated as Tier I, II, or III based on need and referred to appropriate services.

SCHSD has repurposed county recording fee funds to reassign staff in order to fill the Investing in Families Navigator position.

SCHSD will procure a provider or providers to provide family mental health/counseling services and family and civic law services to the pilot project families as well as other families experiencing and at risk of homelessness.

Workforce Development Council Snohomish County (WDCSC) is responsible for the Investing in Families planning work and the Investing in Families Pilot Project.

WDCSC has identified one entity to connect pilot project families to Workforce Investment Act Title I-B and other economic opportunity services.

WDCSC is working with multiple agencies that receive sustaining federal, state, and local government funds to match with Washington Families Fund (WFF) dollars being made available by Building Changes with 50 percent of the WFF dollars supporting the specific activity and 50 percent of the WFF dollars supporting the flexible fund.

WDCSC will manage the flexible fund that the Housing Resource Specialist and Navigator will use to meet the needs of pilot families.

Changes to Be Tracked for Families Served:

1) Access to Permanent Housing
2) Needs and Prevalence
3) Recurring Homelessness
4) Movement toward Self-Sufficiency in Different Life Domains
5) Access to Private Housing
6) Changes in income
7) Changes in access to earned income
8) Challenges and Successes
How Can We Use Pilot Project Data to Think about Implementing Investing in Families Countywide?
We can use pilot project data to document and reflect on the work underway and to:

- Promote an environment which supports learning and creativity
- Identify the characteristics, needs, and experiences of Tier I, Tier II, and Tier III families
- Identify the challenges and effective practices in coordinated entry and utilization of a navigator to provide case management follow-up services
- Assess the effectiveness of provider referral tracking and feedback loops, Housing Resource Specialist, and Landlord Rental Program
- Understand the effectiveness of redirecting government and other mainstream system funds to support homeless families and families at risk of homelessness
We can use pilot program data to drive improvements and scale up recommendations and to:

- Identify the systems needed to make necessary improvements, communicate and support next step scale up efforts
- Identify where improvements are needed in staffing practices and partnerships
- Estimate the staffing time and resources needed to effectively support and serve families
- Communicate lessons learned, effective practices, challenges, and scale up projections
We can use pilot project data to develop sustainability strategies and to:

- Identify and promote the cost saving strategies that could better serve homeless families, and increase the understanding of the economic and social benefits of different strategies.

- Develop a deeper understanding of where system expansion efforts are most needed.

- Increase the efficiency and way systems work together to support the self-sufficiency of homeless families and families who are at risk of experiencing homelessness.

- Inform the base of funders, champions, and advocates who understand and invest in effective practices and policies and are working to increase the growth and sustainability of the Investing in Families infrastructure and service.