

Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO)

OEO works in partnership with the private sector, community-based organizations, and others to increase the self-sufficiency of Vermonters, strengthen Vermont communities, and eliminate the causes and symptoms of poverty.

OEO administers federal and state funds that support the work of organizations that provide direct services to low-income Vermonters. These services include asset development, emergency food shelves, emergency homeless shelters, rapid re-housing, homelessness prevention, supportive housing, job readiness training, micro business development, weatherization assistance, and more.

Populations Served

Most OEO programs target Vermonters with incomes at or below 125% of the federal poverty guidelines, though some programs range up to 200% of poverty.

Outcome: Vermonters can meet their basic needs

Indicator: Family Supportive Housing (FSH)

FSH is a demonstration project, developed by the Agency of Human Services and Department for Children and Families, aimed at reducing the incidence and duration of child homelessness in Vermont. It helps families who are homeless to move into affordable housing and provides families with up to 24 months of case management and service coordination during their transition to permanent housing.

FSH was initially introduced in Brattleboro, Burlington, and Rutland districts. Hartford and St. Johnsbury districts were added in year two.

Here are some highlights:

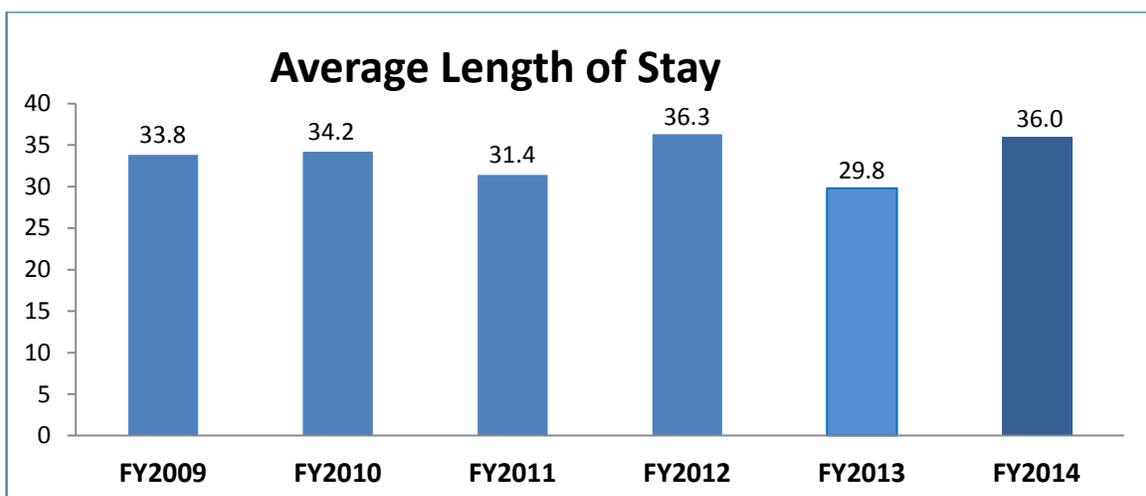
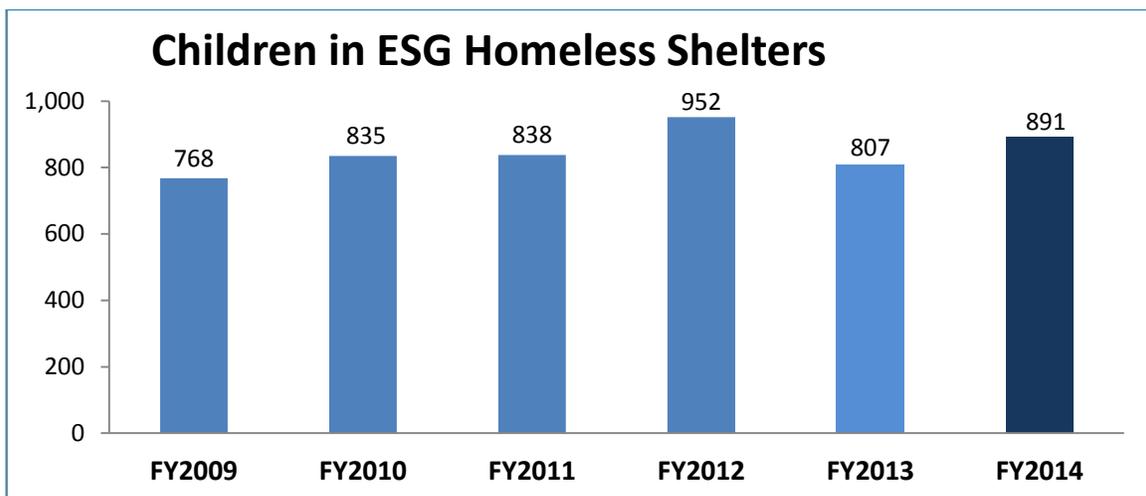
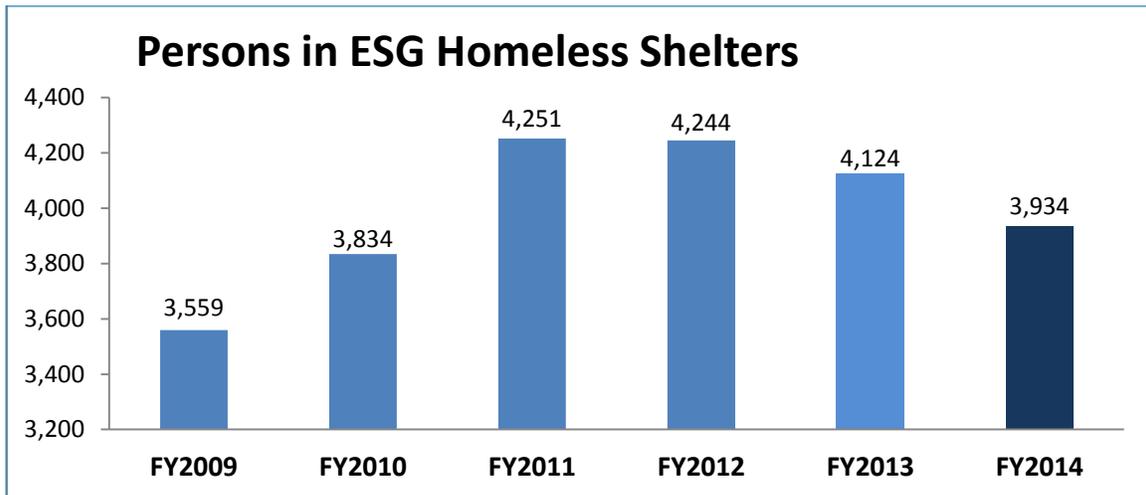
- ➔ 48 families (88 children and 60 adults) enrolled in year one and received a variety of services based on their needs.
 - 36 of the 48 families have been placed into permanent housing;
 - 12 of the 48 families have not yet moved into permanent housing but are receiving services.
- ➔ Families had been homeless for an average of 141 days prior to moving into permanent housing.
- ➔ 85% (41 out of 48) of families are participating in Reach Up.
- ➔ 35% (17/48) of families have an open case with the Family Services Division.



Outcome: Vermonters can meet their basic needs

Indicator: ESG Emergency Homeless Shelters

Through its Emergency Solutions Grants (ESG), OEO supports operations at 28 non-profit emergency homeless shelters across the state. In FY2014, 3,934 persons were sheltered for a total of 141,778 shelter bednights. This included 3,034 adults and 891 children. The average length of stay was about 36 days.



Outcome: Vermonters can meet their basic needs

Indicator: ESG Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing

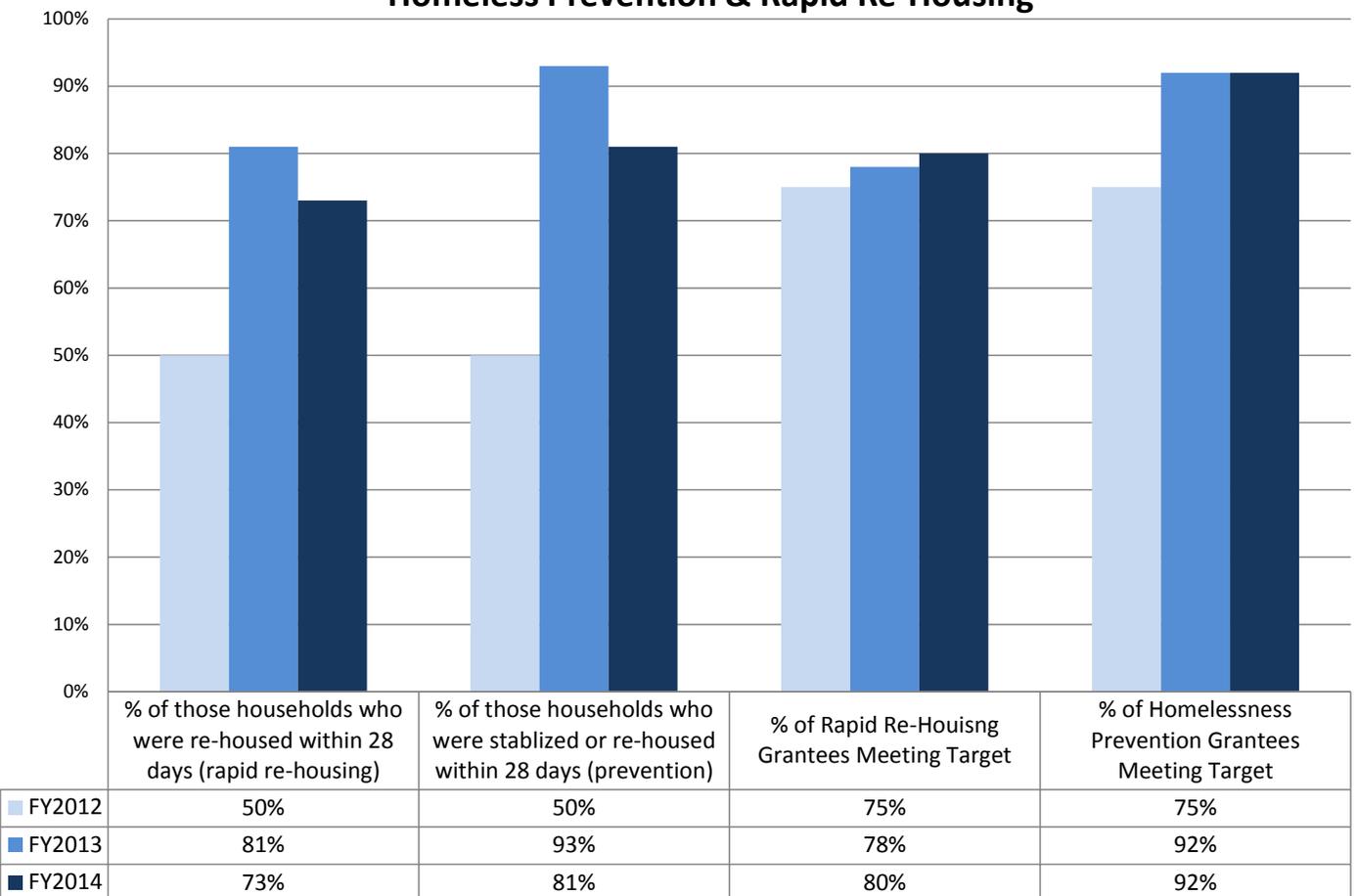
Other ESG-funded programs provide homelessness prevention and rapid re-housing assistance. Homelessness prevention targets helps to those at-risk of homelessness, while rapid re-housing serves those experiencing literal homelessness.

Services included:

- Housing search and placement;
- Housing case management;
- Landlord-tenant mediation; and
- Financial help to prevent eviction or help a family enter new housing (e.g., security deposits, utility payments, moving costs, and rental arrears).

In FY 2014, these activities provided housing stability for 1,703 persons in 771 households; 60% of these households were literally homeless.

**Emergency Solutions Grant Performance:
Homeless Prevention & Rapid Re-Housing**



Outcome: Vermonters can meet their basic needs

Indicator: Low-Income Homes Weatherized

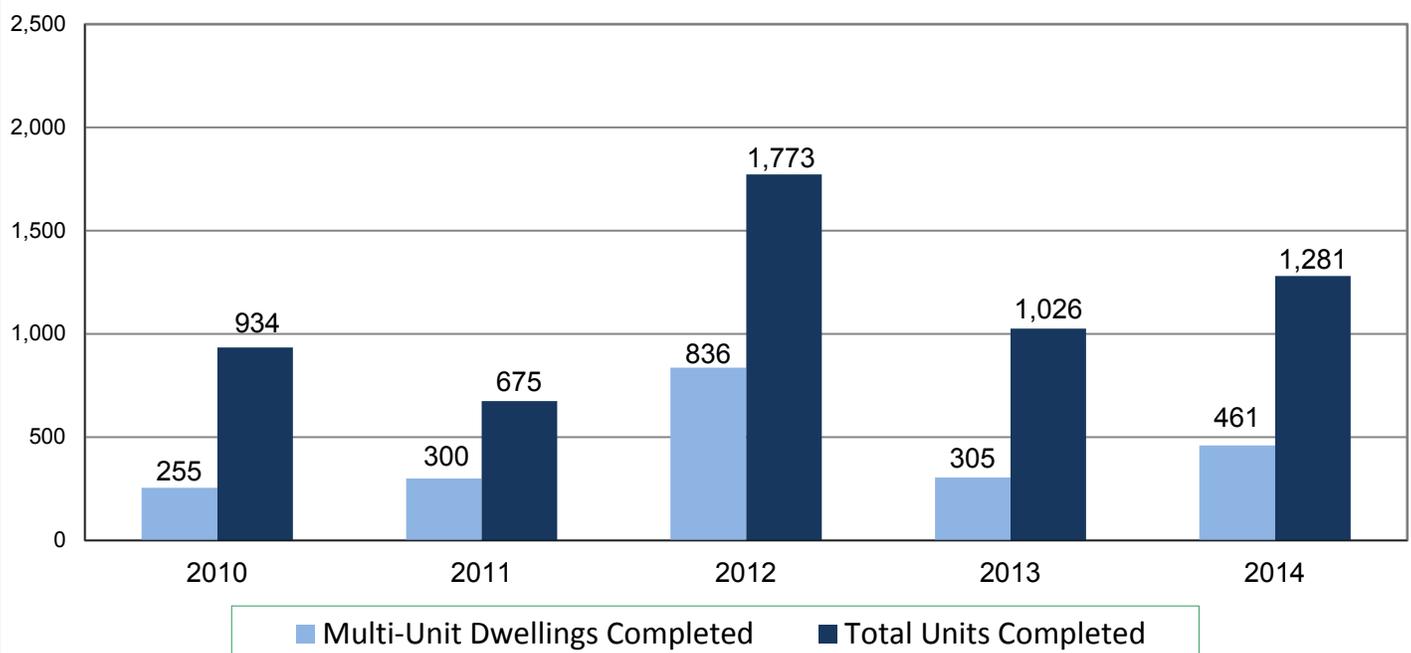
The Weatherization Assistance Program helps lower-income residents (particularly older Vermonters, people with disabilities, and families with children) to improve the energy efficiency of their homes. This saves them both fuel and electricity and leaves them with more money to spend on other necessities such as food and health care. A weatherized home saves a family, on average, about \$1,000 a year.

In FY 2014:

- ➔ 1,281 homes were weatherized;
- ➔ The average investment per home was \$8,500; and
- ➔ Priority was given to providing weatherization services to households getting fuel assistance and those with the highest fuel usage per square foot of living space.

Vermiculite insulation, a known asbestos-containing material, is found in 10% of our clients' homes. Until FY 2014, the presence of vermiculite meant an automatic deferral of services for needy clients. With the help of one-time funding, 15 homes containing vermiculite were weatherized, which resulted in average savings of \$1,500 per year for clients who struggle to heat their homes in the winter.

Low-Income Weatherization Program



Program Year: Beginning in 2013, the Weatherization Program Year runs from July 1 to June 30. For years prior, the program year was April 1 to March 31.

Outcome: Vermonters can meet their basic needs

Indicator: Micro Business Development Program (MBDP)

The Micro Business Development Program (MBDP) is operated by each of Vermont's Community Action Agencies. It provides training and assistance to help low-income Vermonters to start and grow businesses. Business ownership is a proven pathway out of poverty, helping to increase income, create wealth, and move people off public assistance. Assistance includes one-to-one business counseling, business training, networking opportunities, business plan development, and financial management training.

In SFY 2014:

- ➔ 780 low-income Vermonters participated in MBDP;
- ➔ 61 participants who were unemployed found a job;
- ➔ 58 participants who were employed increased their income;
- ➔ 57 participants started new businesses;
- ➔ 103 participants expanded their businesses;
- ➔ 80.7 (FTE) jobs were created — for the participants and others; and
- ➔ \$1.4 million in capital was accessed.

An evaluation conducted by UVM in 2008 found that more than 90% of businesses helped by MBDP are still in business after 3 years – a survival rate significantly higher than the Small Business Administration's national average.

Indicator: Individual Development Account (IDA) Program

OEO provides funds to the five Community Action Agencies in Vermont for the Vermont Individual Development Account Program. IDA is a matched savings and financial education program for low-income Vermonters. Participants can save up to \$1,000 of earned income, which is matched by federal and state funds, to help them invest in their first home, a business, or a post-secondary education.

In SFY 2014:

- ➔ 123 people increased their savings; and
- ➔ 36 Vermonters invested \$81,537 in their first home, post-secondary education, or a small business.

2014 STATE CSBG FACTSHEETS

From the VT FFY 2013 Community Services Block Grant Information System Survey

Vermont

CSBG NETWORK PARTICIPANTS

Vermont administers CSBG to
5 agencies in
100% of VT counties

61% of VT families served were in poverty, below 100% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines

33% of VT families served were in severe poverty, below 50% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines

The CSBG Network provided services to
59,496 low-income individuals in
29,994 families in Vermont.

Vulnerable populations served included:



Nationally, 1,040 agencies receiving CSBG funding provided services to 15.7 million low-income individuals in 6.7 million families.

Of the 6.7 million families nationwide, 70% of those families were living in poverty, below 100% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines.

CSBG NETWORK RESOURCES

For every \$1 of CSBG, the VT Network leveraged
\$9.34 from state, local, and private sources,
including the value of volunteer hours*

\$4.65 State
\$0.20 Local
\$4.36 Private
\$0.13 Value of Volunteer Hours

\$9.34

\$3,122,492 CSBG funds were allocated in support of the VT CSBG Network

The VT Network's non-CSBG funding totaled \$54,763,536

Including all federal sources and volunteer hours, the VT CSBG Network leveraged
17.65 per \$1 of CSBG

*Value of Volunteer Hours calculated using federal minimum wage, except in those states with a higher minimum wage.

2014 STATE CSBG FACTSHEETS



From the VT FFY 2013 Community Services Block Grant Information System Survey

CSBG PERFORMANCE OUTCOMES FOR VERMONT

Below is a subset of the VT Network's 103,752 outcomes, including indicators of movement toward self-sufficiency and community revitalization.

Outcomes Include:

3,056 **Employment or Work Supports**

Low-income participants in CSBG Network employment initiatives obtained supports which reduced or eliminated barriers to initial or continuous employment, acquired a job, obtained an increase in employment income, or achieved "living wage" employment and benefits.

3,778 **Economic Asset Enhancement and Utilization**

Low-income households achieved an increase in financial assets or financial skills as a result of CSBG Network assistance.

3,944 **Child and Family Development**

Infants, children, youth, parents, and other adults participated in developmental or enrichment programs facilitated by the CSBG Network and achieved program goals.

9,460 **Independent Living for Low-Income Vulnerable Populations**

Low-income vulnerable individuals received services from the CSBG Network and secured or maintained an independent living situation as a result.

5,442 **Family Stability**

Low-income participants obtained supports which reduced or eliminated barriers to family stability through assistance from the CSBG Network.

75,988 **Emergency Assistance**

Low-income individuals and families received emergency assistance from the CSBG Network.

1,113 **Community Opportunities and Resources**

Community opportunities or resources were improved or expanded for low-income people as a result of CSBG Network projects or initiatives, or advocacy with other public and private agencies.

971 **Community Empowerment**

Community members and low-income people mobilized to engage in activities that support and promote their own well-being and that of their community as a direct result of CSBG Network initiatives through maximum feasible participation.