



“Bringing Families Home. . .  
Keeping Families Housed”

e-Newsletter  
August 2021

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## Program at a Glance

**2021 YTD Statistics**

**12 Guest Families**

**8 Families**

**Transitional Housing**

**16 Families Forward**

**225 Services  
Housing Stabilization**

**13 HUMI/Diversion  
Families**



**Website: [shenandoahfamilypromise.org](http://shenandoahfamilypromise.org)**

**Email: [info@shenandoahfamilypromise.org](mailto:info@shenandoahfamilypromise.org)**

### A Child's Future Begins at Home

For every American who has been officially identified as homeless, there are many more existing in a perpetual state of limbo. The National Coalition for the Homeless estimates that people sheltering in others' homes are believed to be a majority of the homeless population in the United States, and that doubled-up families account for three-quarters of the more than 1 million homeless students in U.S. public schools.

Living in a rural area, many of us may ask where these families are. We generally don't see them wandering the streets of our county's small towns, or erecting tent cities in the local parks. To find a place to stay each night families must devise their own networks of support by calling on friends and family. In Shenandoah County, doubling up or couch surfing is a very common support system for the “invisible” homeless.

Couch surfing is the practice of moving from one friend or relative's house to another, sleeping in whatever spare space is available, floor or couch, and generally staying a few days before moving on to the next house. Compared to sleeping in the car, or literally being on the streets, moving in with family or friends would seem to be a more palatable solution. However, it comes with its own set of stressors. Claas Ehlers, CEO of Family Promise, “Doubling up is not qualitatively better than other homeless situations. It can be in some circumstances, and in others it can be worse.”

One of our guests spoke to this when she described the months she spent couch surfing while she was pregnant. “When you are sleeping in someone else's living room you can't go to bed until everyone else goes to their rooms. You have to get up really early so you aren't constantly in the way. I felt like I was sort of eavesdropping on their lives



## 2020 Statistics

13 Guest Families

5 Families  
Transitional  
Housing

11 Families  
Forward

181 Services  
Housing  
Stabilization

14 HUMI Families

145  
Children  
Served



and I just felt nervous all the time. You don't know when someone's going to tell you to leave. You worry about the landlord finding out and evicting everyone!"

As the moratorium on evictions is lifted, we must now wonder if couch surfing will remain an option. Will we have enough couches in Shenandoah County? Will the "invisible" homeless become glaringly visible? With your ongoing prayers and support, Family Promise of Shenandoah County will continue the mission of bringing families home and keeping them housed.





**2nd Annual Golf Tournament**

Friday, Sept. 17, 2021  
12 Noon - Shotgun Start  
4 Person Scramble



**\$100/golfer**  
**\$400/four-man team**

Included with entry: golf, carts, snacks, goodie bag, golf tees, player mulligan package, door prizes, awards dinner, entry into all contests



**Sponsorships Available**

All sponsors will receive recognition throughout the golf tournament and on day of tournament brochure.

540-459-4599  
[www.shenandoahfamilypromise.org](http://www.shenandoahfamilypromise.org)

[Click Here to Download Golf Tournament Brochure](#)



to everyone who supported **Night Without a Bed & the 2021 Online Auction**. All our fundraising events were pushed to the last half of the year due to the pandemic. Both events were a great success, and *we appreciate your loyalty & support!*

### People Incorporated



*Sam Barber*

People Inc. is the regional community action agency serving nine counties and two cities in the northern and central Virginia service areas (including Shenandoah, Warren and Frederick Counties). Samantha "Sam" Barber was named Director of Community Engagement at the beginning of June. Sam says, "Connecting with the community fuels my energy. I have a passion for service and look forward to knocking on doors and building relationships in my new role."

According to an agency press release, Barber is the founder and former CEO of Reaching Out Now, a nonprofit that serves under-resourced families in the Warren County public school system. Prior to joining the staff at People, Inc., she served on the agency's board of directors as part of the advocacy committee.

## Board Members

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Diane Wittreich,  
Case Manager  
Elizabeth Shoemaker,  
Service Access Coordinator  
Diane Pence,  
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FPSC staff members met with Sam at the end of June to learn how we might best partner with People, Inc. Our first endeavor together is distributing 200 food boxes provided by the Blue Ridge Area Food Bank to families in need as part of the food bank's "Summer Kids Pack" program. The boxes were delivered to our front door on pallets, and the staff formed a "box brigade" to unload them. Each of the



"kid packs" includes family-friendly foods. *If you know of families in need, please have them contact FPSC at 540-459-4599. If they do not have transportation, we can arrange to deliver the boxes.*

People, Inc. offers a wide variety of services that include education, family & children's services, housing services, and community development. The agency owns and manages two apartment complexes in Shenandoah County: Valley Vista and Toms Brook Apartments. FPSC has worked with a number families at Valley Vista.

Sam loves serving and she is excited about her new role with People, Inc. and getting to know the community. Her home base is the Woodstock office located at 135 South Main St. She can be reached by email at [engagement@peopleinc.net](mailto:engagement@peopleinc.net) or by phone at 540-459-8732. Check out their website: <https://www.peopleinc.net/>. We look forward to seeing how FPSC and People Inc. can work together on additional projects.

## FPSC Partners with United Way & Faithworks

Family Promise was tapped by Faithworks to assist Shenandoah County residents through Phase 38 of the National Emergency Food and Shelter Program. The Emergency Food and Shelter Program is a federally funded program administrated by FEMA. The program was created in 1983 to supplement the work of local social services organizations. United Way of NSV is managing the program, and Faithworks is administering the funding. A total of \$50,277 was available beginning in June to assist with rent, mortgage and motel stays for families. Elizabeth Shoemaker, Service Access Coordinator for FPSC, has been fielding calls and assisting families with applications. We have worked with 58 families since May.

## Host Churches & Organizations

All Souls Anglican Church/  
Community Mission  
Church of the Brethren

Antioch Church of the  
Brethren

Buttonwood Lodge/  
Camp Caroline Furnace

Lebanon Lutheran Church

Mt. Hermon United  
Methodist Church

New Market Seventh-Day  
Adventist Church

St. John Bosco Catholic  
Church

St. John's United  
Methodist Church

Shenandoah Valley Teen  
Challenge

Shrine Mont

Strasburg Assembly of God

Strasburg Christian  
Church

Valley Pike Church of the  
Brethren

Wakemans Grove Church  
of the Brethren



## NIGHT WITHOUT A BED

### Report from Team Barb

Our team camped at Shenandoah National Park. It was very cold that night, so we discussed dealing with extreme weather. We talked about dealing with cold water to wash with and the inconvenience of no running water or electricity at the camp. We ate minimally keeping in mind the inability to refrigerate. It was humbling to imagine being homeless.



### The Virginia Family Nutrition Program A Healthy Family Starts with You!

**Location:** Family Promise, 781 Spring  
Parkway, Woodstock

**Dates:** Aug. 6, 13, 20, 27 – 9am to Noon

- Share delicious, low-cost recipes
- Tips on meal planning & food shopping to save time & money
- Money management lessons included!

**Contact:** Kim Costa, 540-722-8316

### Job-Readiness Workshop

Aug. 24, 2021

Shenandoah County  
Department of Social Services

494 N. Main St., Suite 200  
Woodstock, VA

**Workshop:** 10-11

**Resume Assistance:** 11-12

**Presenter:**

Kerri Lane Mariano,  
Chick-Fil-A Talent Director

### Training Includes:

- Enhancing Your Job Search Journey
- Resume Building
- Mock Interviews
- Sharpening Soft Skills
- Tips on Re-Entering the Workforce

**ALL ARE WELCOME AT  
THIS EVENT!**

**For more information call  
540-459-6930**

### Corporate Sponsors

