New Smyrna Beach Homelessness Workshop

June 23, 2020

Causes of Homelessness

- Unemployment/poverty

- Family separation – Divorce/family disputes

- Loss of loved ones – lack of social and family support

- Untreated mental illness

- Substance abuse

- Domestic violence

- PTSD

Common Service Needs for the Homeless

- Employment

- Housing/shelter

- Mental health services

- Substance abuse programs

- Case management

- Food

- Health care

Common Challenges for Providers

- Lack of affordable housing

- Lack of space in shelters – more homeless people than available beds

- Cuts in health, mental health, alcohol and drug treatment services

- Not enough case management

- Poor communication – traditional mail, voice mail, email

- Law enforcement becomes the default provider

Categories of Homelessness

- Episodic Homelessness
  - Persistent poverty is the decisive factor that turns unforeseen crises, or even minor setbacks, into bouts of homelessness
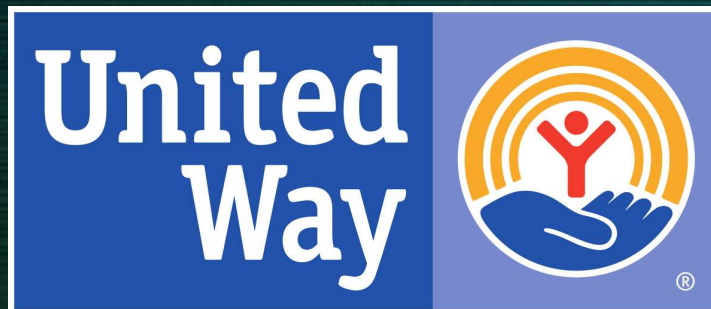 - Temporary
  - Unemployment or DV

- Chronically Homeless
  - Mental illness, drug and/or alcohol addiction
  - Lack of financial resources
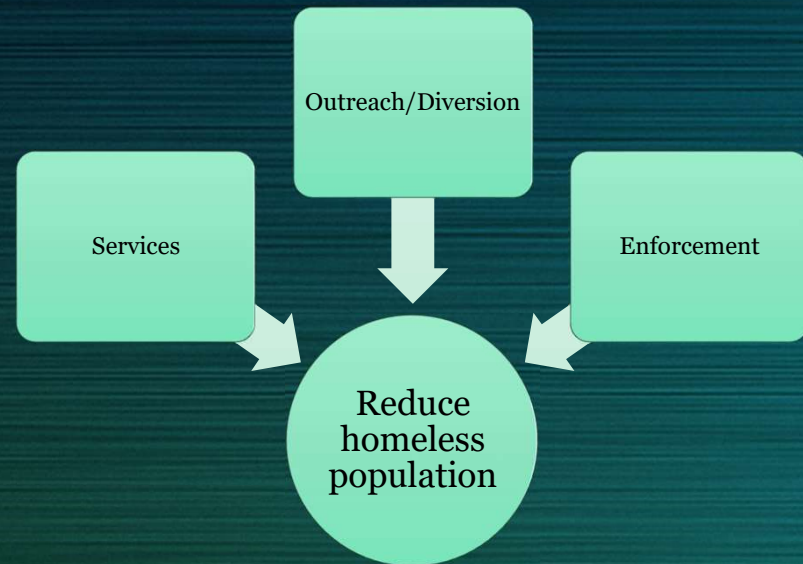 - Homelessness is a way of life

Health Care

- Cannot get to medical appointments
  - Health cards, prescriptions, integrated health services cannot be reached

- Heavy burden of illness
  - Little access to medicine
  - Only way someone can get meds is through the Hospital Emergency Room
    - Very expensive and ineffective

- Infectious diseases
  - TB, HIV/AIDS, Hep C and Hep A

Whose problem is it?

How we address the problem

- **Educate** - about social services
  - Local providers

- **Encourage** - referral to those services through outreach and diversion
  - Case management

- **Enforce** - law and ordinances
  - Ordinances

Services

Outreach/Diversion

Enforcement

Reduce homeless population

Homeless Outreach Teams

A homeless outreach specialist officer and a case manager, working with various social service organizations

- HOTs are a bridge to services and not a social service provider itself
- Education about the social services that are available
- Referrals of interested persons to social services
- Diversion - transportation to referrals, shelter
- Enforcement when all else fails
- Data collection