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HUD No. 10-171
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HUD PROVIDES RENTAL ASSISTANCE VOUCHERS TO HELP MORE THAN 2,500 FAMILIES STAY TOGETHER

\$20 million will keep children out of foster care, young adults from homelessness, and savings to the foster care system of more than \$142 million

WASHINGTON – Across the U.S., thousands of children live in foster care or are at risk of being placed with other families simply because their parents cannot afford a home. Today, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) announced \$20 million in funding to local housing authorities to help more than 2,500 families stay together. It's estimated that the rental vouchers awarded today will reunite nearly 5,000 children with their parents or prevent them from entering foster care in the first place. (See attached chart [here](#)).

"The foster care system is an important safety net for children when there's no alternative, but not having the means to obtain affordable housing is hardly a good reason for families to be divided," said U.S. Housing and Urban Development Secretary Shaun Donovan. "Thankfully these vouchers will keep thousands of families together under one roof."

HUD's Family Unification Program (FUP) will make 2,543 Housing Choice Vouchers available for families whose inadequate housing is the primary cause of their separation or near separation from their children. In addition, 20 percent of these vouchers will provide stable housing for approximately 750 young adults (ages 18–22) who are aging out of the foster care system, preventing them from becoming homelessness.

The funding is awarded to local public housing authorities that work closely with local child welfare agencies to identify families with children in foster care or who are at risk of being placed in foster care and youth at risk of homelessness. These vouchers, like regular Housing Choice Vouchers, allow families to rent housing from private landlords and generally pay 30 percent of the family's monthly adjusted gross income towards rent and utilities.

According to the National Center for Housing and Child Welfare, the average annual cost of providing foster care for one family's children is \$56,892. By contrast, it costs approximately \$13,193 a year to provide rental assistance and supportive services for that same family. Since FUP provides affordable housing to this targeted population, it's estimated that the total yearly savings to the foster care system is more than \$142 million. Cost savings are also considerable for young people aging out of foster care. The average annual FUP costs for young adults is \$5,600 – a tenth of the estimated costs associated with homelessness, incarceration, and residential treatment.

"The Family Unification Program exemplifies Secretary Donovan's commitment to interagency coordination and resource sharing," said Ruth White, Executive Director of NCHCW. "FUP will enable housing and social service providers to work together to apply resources where they are most needed to prevent and end homelessness for thousands of children and youth nationwide – and ultimately save money along the way."

The funds announced today include \$5.4 million HUD awarded earlier this year to housing authorities in California, Delaware, Florida, Massachusetts, Illinois and Washington. Those housing authorities submitted applications that were eligible for funding last year but did not receive funding because all available funds were exhausted. Those housing authorities are: Stanislaus (CA) Housing Authority; Santa Barbara (CA) Housing Authority; Alameda (CA) Housing Authority; Kern (CA) Housing Authority, Santa Clara County (CA) Housing Authority; Sonoma County (CA) Community Development Commission; Delaware State Housing Authority; Lee County (FL) Housing Authority; DuPage (IL) Housing Authority; Lynn (MA) Housing Authority and Neighborhood Development; and the Housing Authority of the City of Vancouver (WA).

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HUD's mission is to create strong, sustainable, inclusive communities and quality affordable homes for all. HUD is working to strengthen the housing market to bolster the economy and protect consumers; meet the need for quality affordable rental homes; utilize housing as a platform for improving quality of life; build inclusive and sustainable communities free from discrimination; and transform the way HUD does business. More information about HUD and its programs is available on the Internet at www.hud.gov and espanol.hud.gov.

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