

The logo for Family Promise of MidCoast Maine features a stylized yellow star with five points on the left. To the right of the star, the word "Family" is written in a blue sans-serif font, and "Promise" is written in a purple sans-serif font. Below "Family Promise", the words "of MidCoast Maine" are written in a smaller, dark blue sans-serif font.

Family Promise
of MidCoast Maine



**GET YOUR
CONGREGATION
INVOLVED!**

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Who is Family Promise?



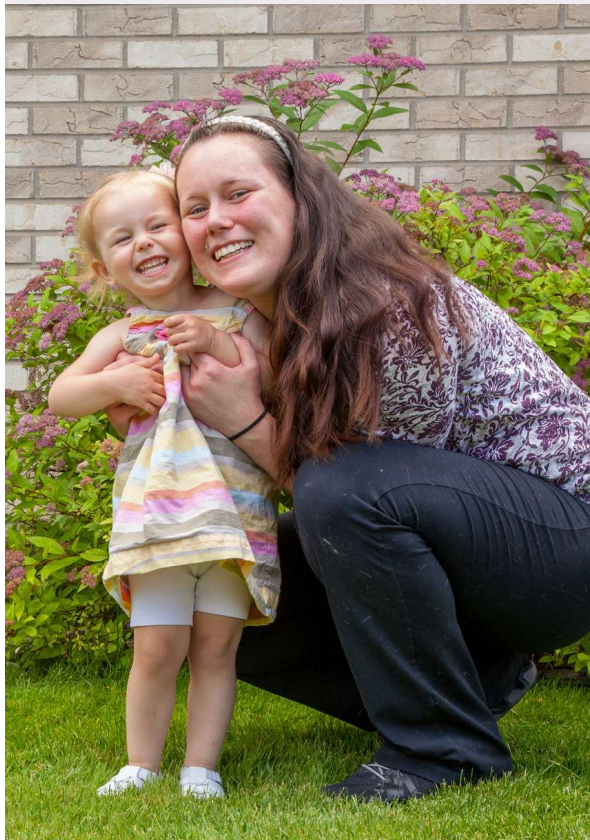
Family Promise is the leading national organization preventing and ending family homelessness. Our approach to this crisis involves prevention services before families become homeless, shelter to help families experiencing homelessness access housing, and stabilization programs once families have secured housing.

WHAT IS THE NEED IN MIDCOAST MAINE?

There are over 250 children ages 5 to 17 living in poverty. This translates to 1 in 5 youth living in poverty and 1 in 4 who are food insecure. Furthermore, there is an estimated 30-40 youth experiencing homelessness. Currently, there is no family shelter in Waldo County.



Congregational Involvement



HOW DO CONGREGATIONS GET INVOLVED?

- "Host" and provide shelter to families directly in houses of worship, for one week, 3-4 times a year
- "Partner" and support the hosting with volunteers, items, and donations
- Mentor families in Prevention and Stabilization programs
- Advocating on behalf of those experiencing homelessness

WHY SHOULD CONGREGATIONS PARTICIPATE?

- A local ministry opportunity
- Coordinated and efficient; easy to participate
- Success rate of Family Promise is unprecedented
- Engages folks of all ages in a variety of ways



Impact on the Faith Community

"I know that our hospitality has been meaningful to our guests, but I am no less certain that it has been a moving, inspiring, and motivating experience for our volunteers. It is tangible proof of the truth that one who gives receives back in at least equal measure.

-Rabbi, Temple Beth-El, Somerville, NJ



"Family Promise has allowed us to expand our reach. New people have volunteered and made us more united. Together, we witness Jesus' love.

-Father, St. Catherine's Newman Center, Salt Lake City, UT

"This has involved more people, more than any other program in our church. It has stirred some people who had not been active before, as well as drawn the participation of new members. We're a small church, but people feel, "here is something that I can do". It's concrete. This is something the Church ought to be doing."

- Reverend, Memorial Christian Church, Ann Arbor, MI



"The health of the congregation grows as people reach out in a hands-on way. People joined us because they've heard this is the place to come if you want to get involved. As a result, our numbers have increased."

- Reverend, Church of the Redeemer Episcopal Church, Morristown, NJ



"Our numerous volunteers continue to enjoy FP year after year. As much as we provide loving kindness to guests we host, we receive even more for ourselves in the sense of purpose, mission, and fulfillment. "

-Rabbi, Isaac Wise Temple, Cincinnati, OH



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"We support Family Promise because it provides us an opportunity to live out the Gospel. Providing a hand to those who are most in need and welcoming the stranger amongst us help us do our part to break the crushing cycle of poverty."

- Pastor at Christ the King Lutheran Church, Family Promise of Butler County, OH

"No human care ministry has so touched the hearts of the people I serve. Of all the outreach ministries, FP has been easiest to "sell" and the one that fills up soonest with volunteers. It is real love in action, broadening perspectives on poverty and homelessness.

- Reverend, Cross View Lutheran Church, Family Promise of Anoka County, MN



"I can't begin to put into words what FP has meant to us. It has generated a whole new spirit of generosity among our parishioners. It's given us new vision for what the Church is."

-Reverend, Shepherd of the Hills Presbyterian Church, Austin TX

"The choice to offer our building to FP was an easy. It feels holy, good, and right to open our doors and be a place of shelter and hospitality. We are grateful the space is no longer sitting empty while people need a place to call home."

-Rector, St. Catherine's Episcopal Church, FP of Cobb County, GA



Facts about Congregational Involvement:

- 67% of volunteers are from congregations
- 20+ denominations represented
- Approximately 15% of Affiliates' budget comes from congregations.



"I worked as a pastor and overnight host for Family Promise with a small congregation. FP was an ecumenical experience. It was such a blessing. We even had people from the neighborhood volunteer who had no church affiliation. We became "their church." This program is a true blessing not only for the people being served but for those of us with the privilege of serving!"

-Retired Pastor, FP of Scotland County, Laurinburg, NC

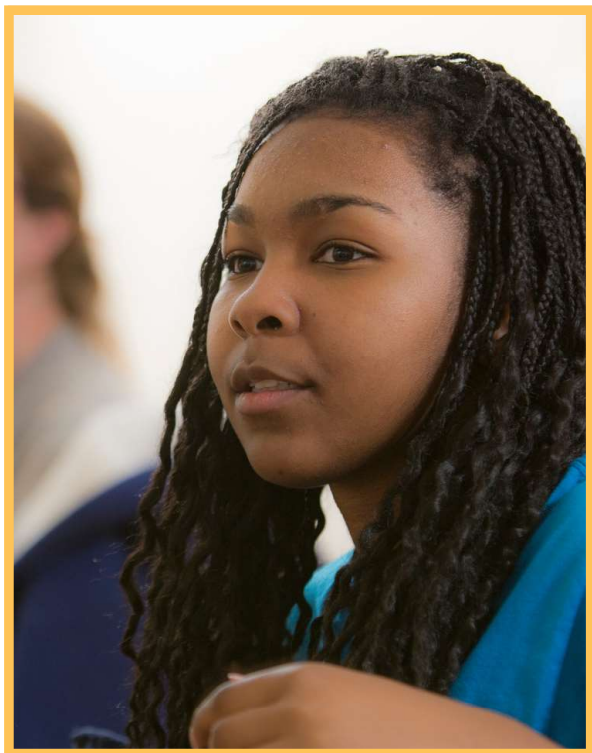
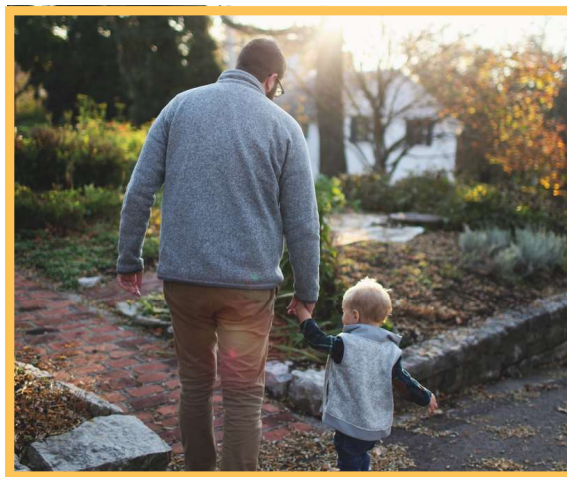
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A Typical Week in the Rotational Network

During the week there are approximately 50 slots for volunteers. Some host sites have a different member for each slot; others have volunteers take on multiple roles. There is a volunteer coordinator(s) who oversees the hosting and ensures all shifts are covered.

Sunday: Guest families arrive at the host site Sunday evening. The rooms for the families and the common area have been set up prior to the arrival.



Each night of hosting:

- Families settle in, relax and meet the coordinators and the evening volunteers. At 6:00 PM dinner is served family style. Guests and volunteers share the meal together.
- After dinner, volunteers hang with families. Hosts and their families play games, help with homework, watch videos, or just talk.
- Food for lunch is available in the kitchen area and parents make sack lunches for their families for the following day.
- Wake up is around 6:00 AM. 2 Volunteers typically spend the night at the host site.
- Breakfast is served around 6:30 AM during the week; typically cereal and other convenient foods. The van picks the families up at 7:00 AM.

A Typical Week in the Rotational Network



During the day:

- The Driver takes guests to the Center. From there, children will go to school and the parents tend to their business. In the afternoon the reverse is done.
- The Center has bathrooms with showers and other necessities to prepare for the day.
- Everyone returns to the Host Site again in the evening at the same time and the cycle repeats.

Saturday:

On Saturday the families can sleep in and enjoy a hot breakfast. Families go back to the Center and do what families typically do on weekends—see friends and relatives, take children to activities, etc. .

The next Sunday:

- On Sunday the families pack up and exit facilities. They are taken to the Center for the day until it is time to move on to the next host site.
- ...and the next host site begins its week on Sunday evening.

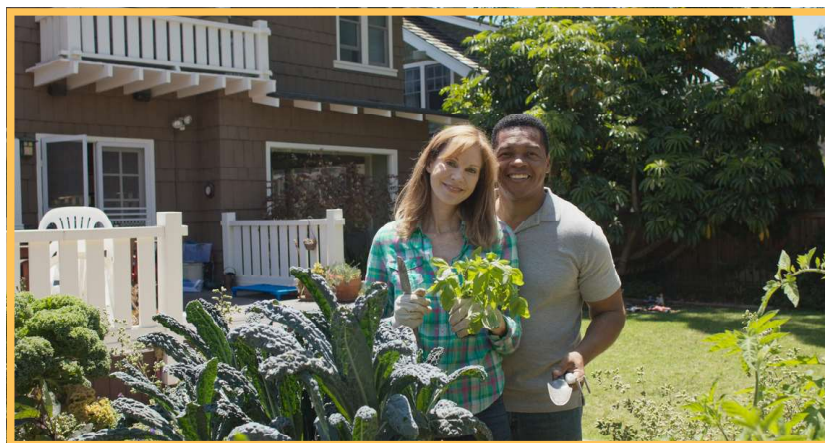




What is Needed for a Congregation to Host?

Hosting families speaks to the scripture of all faiths, tenants of corporate responsibility and beliefs of civic responsibility. It provides families who have lost their homes with safe, secure lodging and a sense of community. Hosting also gives volunteers the opportunity to provide hands-on outreach, with their own families, friends, or colleagues. The following are the basic elements needed for a site to be a host for Family Promise:

- Space for 4-5 families, 14 individuals, to stay for a week at a time, once every 2 or 3 months. The space used can be classrooms, offices, or a large hall with dividers.
- A common area for meals, homework, and relaxation.
- Bathrooms for families. They do not necessarily need showers as the Family Promise center provides showers.
- Space for volunteers to sleepover (any available space at the congregation can be used, e.g. offices, hallway, etc.).
- A kitchen for meal preparation (dinners may be cooked on site or brought in), a refrigerator, food staples and necessary clean-up items.
- The host is responsible for all meals (nutritiously cooked dinners, simple breakfasts and supplies for sack lunches), utilities (heat/cooling, water and electricity), linens, and various basic items such as toys, soap, etc. The Affiliate supplies the beds.
- A site should have at least 2 volunteers present and generally not more than 4 at a time. All volunteers undergo orientation before they begin.



Frequently Asked Questions About Hosting



1 How many hosts are needed for a Family Promise Affiliate to be successful?

You will recruit at least 13 hosts with volunteers. Fewer than that could overtax some groups. Having more than 17 can dilute the experience for groups/congregations, resulting in a loss of continuity and focus. Hosting weekly, 3-4 times a year is the perfect amount.

Who will we be hosting?

Family Promise serves any composition of families. Families stay in the program between 30-90 days on average. Families may have experienced homelessness before or this might be their first time. Anyone over 18 has a background check completed. Families review expectations of participating in the program.

3 How do kids attend school?

The Family Promise Center is the address of the Affiliate. Children go to the school they have been attending or to the school nearest the Center. In 1987, Congress passed the McKinney Act that requires all states and school districts to provide for the education of homeless youth, including transportation.

What about insurance?

Each local Affiliate must carry general liability insurance. Congregations/hosts are usually covered by their own policies because Family Promise is an outreach ministry, a regular activity of the congregation like a youth sleepover or Friday night supper. Most congregations/sites find they do not need extra insurance to be hosts.

5 Do Congregations need to provide financial support?

It is not expected that congregations provide financial support to Family Promise beyond covering the costs of the hosting weeks. Hosting typically costs \$250-\$300 between utility usage, food, and other essentials. Many congregations do provide financial support and consider Family Promise one of its select nonprofits to support because it is cost-effective and effective at ending family homelessness. The starting budget for an Affiliate is approximately \$200,000.

Is Family Promise hard for clergy?

Short answer, no. Clergy need to support Family Promise and can encourage participation in their position. Family Promise is led by volunteers and a coordinator.

Host Site Agreement Example



This agreement is entered into this ____ day of _____ 20XX between Family Promise of XXX (FPXX), a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit corporation, located in CITY, STATE, and _____ (“Host Site”). This agreement continues until it is revoked in writing. The purpose of FPXX is to provide shelter and opportunities to children and families experiencing homelessness. FPXX has acquired insurance to cover liability while the families are at the Day Center and being transported by FPXX. The Host Site is responsible for any liability while families are housed at the Host Site. We may invite our guests to attend activities, but we agree not to proselytize; instead, we will demonstrate our faith by our actions. We will work with other faith traditions within the Family Promise network with love and cooperation. To meet these goals, Family Promise of XXX and the Host Site agree to the following:

Host Site agrees:

- To provide overnight accommodations for up to 4 families (14 individuals maximum) in its facility for a period of 7 evenings, a maximum of five times per year.
- To provide the families with evening and morning meals and items for sack lunches.
- To provide bedding and linens for the families.
- To provide a safe place for sleeping.
- To provide a sufficient number of volunteers who have completed the FPXX volunteer training to host the families. Volunteers will be available from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 a.m. Sunday through Friday, and on Saturdays. Volunteers may occasionally be needed during the day on Sundays. If so, the guests and volunteers may use the Family Day Center, if available.
- To provide a volunteer coordinator to serve as a liaison with Family Promise staff and attend quarterly coordinator meetings.

FPXX agrees:

- To provide free training to all potential volunteers.
- To screen the families in accordance with its guidelines. Guests will be screened for violent criminal history, untreated mental illness or untreated chemical dependency problems. A criminal records check will be done on guest adults.
- To provide transportation for the families from and to the Host Site each morning and evening, Sunday through Saturday, if needed.
- To deliver to Host Site beds, pillows and mattress pads as needed for the families.
- To work with the families during the day at the Family Day Center to help them obtain permanent housing and other services, with a goal of self-sufficiency within 90 days.
- To have trained staff or volunteers available 24 hours per day by cell phone to handle emergency situations.



Partner Congregation Agreement Example

This agreement is entered into this ____ day of _____ 20XX between Family Promise of XXX (FPXX), a 501 (c)(3) nonprofit corporation, located in CITY, STATE, and _____ (“Partner Site”). This agreement continues until it is revoked in writing. The purpose of FPXX is to provide shelter and opportunities to children and families experiencing homelessness. FPXX has acquired insurance to cover liability while the families are at the Day Center and being transported by FPXX. To meet these goals, Family Promise of XXX and the Partner Group agree to the following:

The Partner Group/Congregation will assist its assigned Host Site in providing the following services:

- Overnight housing for up to 4 families (14 individuals maximum) in its facility for a period of 7 evenings, a maximum of five times per year.
- Evening and morning meals and lunches.
- A sufficient number of volunteers who have completed the FPXX volunteer training program to host the families. Volunteers will be available from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 a.m. Sunday through Friday, and until 9:30 a.m. on Saturdays. Volunteers may occasionally be needed during the day on Saturdays. If so, the guests and volunteers may use the Family Center, if desired.
- A volunteer coordinator will serve as a liaison with Family Promise staff and will attend quarterly coordinator meetings.

FPXX agrees:

- To provide free training to all potential volunteers.
- To screen the families in accordance with its guidelines. Guests will be screened for violent criminal history, untreated mental illness or untreated chemical dependency problems. A criminal records check will be done on each new guest. Only guests deemed appropriate for services will be admitted.
- To provide transportation for the families from and to the Host Site each morning and evening, Sunday through Saturday, if needed.
- To deliver to Host Site beds, pillows and mattress pads as needed for the families.
- To work with the families during the day at the Family Day Center to help them obtain permanent housing and other services, with a goal of self-sufficiency within 90 days.
- To have trained staff or volunteers available 24 hours per day by cell phone to handle emergency situations.

Recruiting Volunteers



Coordinators are encouraged to combine and adapt all the following suggestions to meet their needs:

- Hold a sign-up day the day of your services. The congregation holds Sign-up one month before hosting. Here is the [Volunteer Hosting Week Document sample](#)
- The clergyperson encourages participation by announcing the upcoming host week, drawing attention to the notices in the bulletin and the newsletter, and pointing out the sign-up board.
- Telephone the Volunteers. Coordinators call those who have expressed interest in Family Promise or who have volunteered in the past.
- Contact Special Groups. Encourage groups in the congregation, such as women's circles, men's clubs, youth groups, to consider participating in meal preparation or in setup, takedown, or final cleanup.
- Create and Use a Database. You can collate responses on a master schedule, phoning to adjust for choices that overlap. Then post the master schedule at services so that other volunteers can fill in time slots that are still open. Alternatively, you can email a blank schedule to previous volunteers who can then call the coordinator with their time preferences.
- Share Awareness, Family Promise Success Stories and testimonies. Throughout the year, the program's momentum can be sustained by announcements and upbeat stories about the Family Promise program. The Affiliates will benefit if the clergyperson and the congregational bulletin or newsletter continue to publicize the program during non-hosting times as well. This kind of sharing has a contagious, positive effect.

Resources

01 CONGREGATIONAL TESTIMONY VIDEO

02 INTERVIEW WITH A VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR

03 FAMILY PROMISE INTRODUCTION VIDEO

04 VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR ROLE

05 SAMPLE HOSTING WEEK SCHEDULER

06 HOST SITE AGREEMENT

07 PARTNER GROUP AGREEMENT

08 HOSPITALITY CODE