

Northwest University

Integrative Project

She Matters: A Holistic Approach to Ending Homelessness

Among Single Mothers in the United States

Susanna Hedenstrom

Integrative Project II, GLST 5973/5001

Dr. Forrest Inslee

24 April 2022

This thesis project submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Arts in International Community Development.

Some material included in this thesis was previously submitted for the following courses:

Research for Social Change

Table of Contents

I. Introduction	4
II. Research Findings: A Look into Mary’s Home	5
III. The Need for Holistic Support	9
A. Exiting Survival Mode	10
B. Depression, Trauma, and Identity	12
C. Building Social Support	15
D. Children and Homelessness: A Case for a Two-Generational Approach	17
IV. Homelessness and Single Motherhood: Creating a Culture of Love	19
A. History	20
B. Christian Influence and the Welfare State Today	23
C. An Alternative Vision	24
V. Bridging the Gap: Education Among the Non-Poor as a Tool for Change	27
A. Trauma Awareness	30
B. A Coaching Versus Teaching Mode	32
C. Motivational Interviewing	35
VI. Conclusion	37
Works Cited	39
Appendix	44
I. Introduction	45
II. The Mentorship Program	46
A. Coaching Model and Motivational Interviewing	48
B. Family Support	49
C. Mary’s Home Academy	50
D. The Projected Impact	51
III. Logistics	53
A. Expanding the Volunteer Team	53
1. Child Watch	53
2. Mary’s Home Academy Teachers	54
3. Family Support	54
IV. Budget and Timeline	55
V. Evaluation	55

VI. Conclusion	56
Comprehensive Works Cited	59

I. Introduction

Put yourself in her shoes. Imagine that you have two small children and nowhere to go. Imagine escaping an abusive relationship only to find yourself trapped in a cycle of poverty, unable to make ends meet. Imagine not even having the capacity to dream because you are simply trying to survive day-to-day. This is the reality of far too many single mothers in the United States. And as much as they may want to escape cycles of poverty, it often takes far more than obtaining employment or getting a degree. Generational poverty, homelessness, and single motherhood are complex and single-answer development programs are not enough to fully address these complexities.

The challenges that single mothers experiencing homelessness in the United States face are often exacerbated by the historical stigma surrounding single motherhood, a broken welfare system, and impossible expectations paired with inadequate systems of care. These mothers require holistic, contextualized care. However, this will likely not be possible until there is a broader understanding among the non-poor surrounding this issue.

Drawing on my research and data that I collected during my time at Mary's Home, I will explore the unique challenges that single mothers experiencing homelessness face in both the Colorado Springs area where I conducted my fieldwork, and, more broadly, the United States. While my fieldwork was completed in Colorado Springs and some of my data is specific to that area, much of my research and observations are applicable to the broader issue of single mothers experiencing homelessness in the United States. Strategies to help mitigate the unique struggles that these mothers face are suggestions based on research and data and are designed to be used as a template; however, each mother will have her own unique needs that need to be considered.

Following this thesis is a project proposal designed specifically for Mary's Home to help increase their reach in Colorado Springs (Appendix).

Single motherhood and homelessness are complex topics that require contextualization based not only on a geographical location, but on the mother herself. This paper will suggest a strategy of holistic, contextualized care to help these single mothers exit homelessness. A contextualized approach allows organizations, individuals, churches, etc. to address individual complexities such as trauma, abuse, racial disparities, and geographical location. In addition to exploring this approach to ending homelessness for single mothers, I will be looking at the idea of single motherhood through the lens of Christianity in order to help better understand the historical stigma surrounding poverty and single motherhood. While stigma is certainly not exclusive to faith groups, Christianity has been formative in the West's culture and cannot be separated from policies and attitudes that exist today.

Single mothers living in poverty and experiencing homelessness have faced decades of stigmatization in a society that has been conditioned to view them as 'less than'. However, in community development, "it is important to portray marginalized people as full human beings, showing the odds and prejudices they are up against" (Holmes 28). These mothers deserve to be heard, understood, and respected. The numerous obstacles that they face in simply surviving cannot be ignored and disregarded; rather, services need to exist that take into account the complexities of poverty, trauma, and motherhood.

II. Research Findings: A Look into Mary's Home

The first time I visited Mary's Home was in February of 2021. I had set up a meeting with the Program Director, Mary Hoggatt, to interview her about their programs and explore

whether Mary's Home could be a potential site for my fieldwork. I was intrigued by the idea of researching how homelessness affects single mothers, but had little idea how widespread and complex the issue is. After that first interview, I emailed Mary about setting up my fieldwork at Mary's Home and set a date in July to start. I spent 3-4 days a week at Mary's Home from July 2021-September 2021.

I began my fieldwork with one main research question: What are the needs of single mothers experiencing homelessness and what can the Christian community and the greater Colorado Springs community do to help meet these needs without stigma or judgement? From there, flowed a couple of sub-questions:

- How is Mary's Home destigmatizing single mothers and homelessness within the Christian community?
- Mary's Home has to turn down hundreds of applicants each year simply because they do not have the space and resources to meet the demand (Hoggat). Are there ways that the community of Colorado Springs can step up and fill the gaps that Mary's Home is unable to?

My questions were contextualized to Colorado Springs and Mary's Home but led to valuable insight about the broader issue of single mothers experiencing homelessness in the United States. My research at Mary's Home relied on qualitative methods with semi-structured interviews and observations providing the bulk of my data. For the interviews, I spoke directly with staff members and volunteers. Interviews took place in a quiet, non-distracting environment with at least a half hour (and often up to an hour) of time set aside to talk. Below are the interview questions I used to guide each conversation:

- What is your role at Mary's Home and what drew you to the position?
- If you are religious, how has your faith shaped your perspective of social justice? What does social justice mean to you as it relates to your faith? Has working at Mary's Home enhanced or changed this perspective?
- What would you say is the biggest challenge that the women at Mary's Home need to overcome?
- How do you think that the Christian community can better support women like the ones who come through Mary's Home?
- What is the best part about the job you do? Any challenges?
- How do you foresee that the holistic work that Mary's Home will impact the future (especially as it relates to the future of the children at Mary's Home)?

Because these were semi-structured interviews, there was room for different topics to be addressed depending on the interviewee's responses and the overall direction of the conversation. In total, I interviewed 11 different staff members and volunteers.

While each interviewee offered a unique perspective, there were several themes consistently addressed in nearly every interview. The people that I interviewed are all Christian and each expressed the importance of their faith in their decision to work with single mothers experiencing homelessness. Serving like Jesus and recognizing the worth and dignity of each person as a child of God was a motivating factor. Other themes are as follows:

- Healing takes time. Women coming out of homelessness have trauma that needs to be addressed before anything else.
- Teachability is key for staff, volunteers, and residents.

- Respect for the residents at Mary’s Home means recognizing that they are the experts of their own lives. It is not the role of staff or volunteers to decide for residents how they should be living their lives.

Each of these points will be addressed in further detail throughout this paper.

I did not have the opportunity to interview any of the women living at Mary’s Home due to concern from staff that interviews could be a triggering experience. This concern is reflected in *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation* where the authors note that “painful, debilitating memories may surface in an interview, even if the topic appears routine or benign” (Merriam 262). However, I did have the opportunity to interact with the residents of Mary’s Home and their children frequently. I participated in a couple of classes at Mary’s Home Academy, volunteered for Child Watch, sat at the front desk (meeting a lot of the residents as they came in to collect mail or meet with their Family Advocate), etc. These opportunities led to a number of informal conversations and observations.

Spending my summer at Mary’s Home was an invaluable experience. Qualitative research gave me the opportunity to focus on building authentic relationships and take a ‘human-centered’ approach. While of course data is important, “deep empathy for people makes our observations powerful sources of inspiration” (Bornstein 25). The data I collected and the patterns I observed are all crucial aspects of this thesis; however, my research was ultimately led by centering relationships and developing empathy. The best development work is done when people are valued beyond labels and assumptions. And throughout my own research, it was important for me to set these aside and truly listen to the stories I was hearing.

III. The Need for Holistic Support

A 'Housing First' approach is widely considered the “‘best practice’ intervention that can sustainably end homelessness for people with complex physical and mental health issues” (Milaney 2). As defined by the National Alliance to End Homelessness, “Housing First is a homeless assistance approach that prioritizes providing permanent housing to people experiencing homelessness, thus ending their homelessness and serving as a platform from which they can pursue personal goals and improve their quality of life.” However, studies of this approach lack data surrounding its effectiveness for single mothers and their children. Instead, studies primarily tend to focus on chronically homeless males (2). While housing is a certainly an important aspect to ending homelessness, a Housing First approach may not be adequate when it comes to single mothers experiencing homelessness. Other services must be present in conjunction with housing.

The Bassuk Center published a report in 2015 noting that “housing is essential to ending homelessness, but it is not sufficient. Families need basic supports beyond decent affordable housing to survive: food, education, employment, childcare, transportation, health and mental health care, trauma informed care and children’s services” (Bassuk 4). Because family homelessness tends to be a highly gendered issue, support with the purpose of ending family homelessness must take into account the unique obstacles that women face (7). For example, “intimate partner violence is a common path into homelessness for women” (Milaney 2). In fact, 92% of women experiencing homelessness have also experienced severe abuse (Frequently Asked Questions). A woman who has experienced domestic violence needs support to help her address the trauma of the abuse, housing that is secure (affordable, but also in a location where she feels safe), and support for her children.

Additionally, a lack of community, mental health issues, generational trauma and poverty will often keep her in ‘survival mode’—unable to think past surviving day to day. It is also critical that services for single mothers experiencing homelessness are designed to ensure that the mother has the necessary support to provide her children with the stability they need to thrive. A housing first approach certainly does not discount the need for more holistic services; rather, it views housing as the first step to exiting homelessness. However, with a primary focus on rapid rehousing, this method lacks the necessary support needed specifically for single mothers experiencing homelessness. For these women, homelessness will almost always go beyond the need for affordable housing, making holistic support crucial for helping them exit homelessness permanently.

A. Exiting Survival Mode

When a mother first becomes a resident of Mary’s Home, she spends the first six months of her time there taking classes, going to therapy, and meeting with her family advocate. Essentially, healing is the focus of the program before anything else. Staff at Mary’s Home understand that homelessness goes beyond the need to ‘just get a job’. The women who are experiencing homelessness have often also experienced childhood trauma, domestic abuse, and an overall lack of support to gain the right tools to be successful. According to *The National Center for Homeless Education*, “over 92% of homeless mothers have experienced severe physical and/or sexual abuse during their lifetime” (Frequently Asked Questions). This is severe trauma and if a mother has experienced this level of abuse, she is very likely operating in survival mode.

When the brain has experienced a constant cycle of abuse, trauma, and uncertainty, it can alter how it operates day-to-day. Before my fieldwork at Mary’s Home, I had never heard the

term 'survival mode' in the context of homelessness. Wanting to explore this idea further, I sat down with one of the Family Advocates, Bethany Parker, to ask her about what it meant when staff talked about residents operating in survival mode. She gave me the following example:

I think about if I'm being chased down the street by someone trying to mug me, and [at the same time] someone's trying to talk with me about my 401k and how I really need to be putting more money in retirement. Like, I'm literally not in a place in my brain where I could engage in that conversation. And so, understanding someone operating in survival mode, it's not just like, 'Oh, I make better decisions than that person'. But it's like 'No, I've had the luxury of operating in my prefrontal cortex. And this person does not have that luxury'. She has been stuck in survival mode for decades, especially if she's coming from childhood trauma.

Parker's example puts the reality of living in survival mode into perspective. Asking a single mother operating in survival mode to think about her future, make plans for getting a job and/or education, and ultimately dream about different possibilities will not be a successful approach until she has had the opportunity to heal from trauma and exit survival mode. With her example, Parker also directly challenges that idea that single mothers experiencing homelessness are where they are simply as a result of 'bad choices'. The reality is much more complicated, which is why holistic support is necessary.

The Program Director at Mary's Home, Mary Hoggatt, echoes Parker's thoughts about survival mode and highlights the need for mindsets to completely shift before a mother experiencing homelessness can truly dream about tomorrow.

For mindset to truly change, it's not 'give them a bunch of resources and hope they're good'; for your mindset to change, you have to be able to step deep into their life, and deep into where they really are. See the places to heal, and then take those next steps to 'now I can dream about education, and dream about a career'. But first, you have to take care of those basic healing, stabilizing, things because every mom that comes to Mary's Home is in survival mode and she can't think past tomorrow.

If a mother has spent years, or even decades, in a place where her mind has had to focus on surviving in a world that does not seem to care for her, she will have a long road of healing before she can begin to see the world, and even her own life, in a different light. And unfortunately, there are too few programs that go beyond helping single mothers experiencing homelessness find a job and stable housing. These are crucial aspects, but long-term healing must also be considered for true sustainability.

B. Depression, Trauma, and Identity

For a single mother experiencing homelessness, the stress of her circumstances compounded with untreated trauma all too often leads to depression. According to Ellen Bassuk in *Depression in Homeless Mothers*, “12% of women from all socioeconomic groups are depressed”, and that number jumps to “40% to 60% for low-income mothers with young children and pregnant and parenting teens” (73). However, despite its prevalence amongst this population group, “depression among mothers experiencing homelessness remains largely unacknowledged, unrecognized, and untreated” (73). There is a lack of resources to help these women exit homelessness and treat mental illness. Additionally, even if those resources do exist, she may be hesitant to seek the help she needs out of a fear of further stigmatization. Among single mothers living in poverty, self-care is a concept that feels like a luxury, rather than a necessity. They are

facing pressure to provide and care for their children, so even if resources exist, taking time for themselves to get the help they need is often not possible due to a fear of stigmatization, and guilt (Long).

An even greater deterrent to these mothers seeking help is the fear that in the process of addressing her own needs, child-welfare could be involved, and she could lose her children (Bassuk 74). For many single mothers experiencing homelessness, there is a mental health crisis happening in conjunction with limited opportunities to obtain higher education, affordable housing, and a well-paying job. Furthermore, if trauma and mental illness are not properly treated, there is a risk that both could be passed down to the next generation (Linden 1071). Prioritizing single mothers experiencing homelessness means prioritizing future generations and breaking cycles of poverty and trauma. This means creating safe, effective environments in which they can receive critical services for both themselves and their children.

Lisa Bear, a volunteer at Mary's Home, runs the admissions interview process. She screens applicants for their eligibility to live at Mary's Home and then goes through the interview process with them, playing an essential role in deciding who would be the best fit for the program. Working directly with the applicants, she hears their stories and gets to know their struggles on a more intimate level than most other volunteers. During our interview, I asked her if she observed any common struggles among the mothers who apply for residency at Mary's Home. Expecting an answer related to struggling with poverty or abuse, her answer surprised me. She said, "it's not just the cycle of poverty. I think it's deeper than that. It's identity." Mental illness, trauma, and abuse can strip someone of their identity and feelings of self-worth. Lisa goes on to note that while there are programs that exist that address housing and food insecurity,

a holistic program that helps women overcome their trauma and find that core identity and self-worth are lacking.

When I asked her what stands out to her about Mary's Home, she stated: "it changes generations. If people come in here, and they do the due diligence and work the process and the program of Mary's Home, it sets their whole family on a trajectory for the rest of their lives". What Lisa is saying about identity and self-worth is supported by trauma expert Dr. van der Kolk. He argues that the experience of traumatic events inhibits imagination. Imagination is key to our ability to dream, hope, and set goals. Our imagination helps ground us in our identity and build our own self-worth. However, according to Dr. van der Kolk, "When people are compulsively and constantly pulled back into the past, to the last time they felt intense involvement and deep emotions, they suffer from a failure of imagination, a loss of the mental flexibility. Without imagination there is no hope, no chance to envision a better future, no place to go, no goal to reach" (17). Trauma affects how the brain operates and can leave the person experiencing it feeling hopeless and unable to dream about a better future. Overcoming trauma is crucial to changing the entire mindset—healing from trauma opens the door to rediscovering one's own identity, self-worth, and dreams for the future.

Single mothers experiencing homelessness are incredibly resilient. However, they are often attempting to overcome mental illness and trauma while working to provide for their children. In the process, they may lose their core identity and struggle with feelings of self-worth. Addressing homelessness among single mothers requires looking at the issue as more than just a physical circumstance. Mental health and wellness play a significant role in helping a mother permanently exit homelessness. Programs that desire to serve this population group need

to take this reality into consideration and prioritize environments where women have the time and space to heal.

C. Building Social Support

Single mothers experiencing homelessness tend to lack strong community ties. Without connections to the community, it is nearly impossible to develop a reliable social support system. A social support system can consist of a variety of individuals and is best defined “as a network in which the individual perceives love and care from others, such as family, relatives, and friends, and can receive guidance for help with daily tasks” (Schrag 316). While community and social support are crucial to the human experience, women especially use their social networks as social capital and rely heavily on these networks in times of crisis (Bassuk 13). However, for single mothers experiencing homelessness, it is difficult to develop that solid foundation of community. Without stable housing, there are no neighbors to rely on. Developing deep friendships and relationships can be challenging when operating in survival mode. Existing relationships may experience strain from abuse or unmet expectations. And on top of everything else, they live in a society that still stigmatizes poor, single mothers. Navigating the stigma associated with their situation may lead to a decreased sense of belonging and an increased feeling of isolation.

While experiencing homelessness does create barriers to building community, it does not make it impossible to do so. Charles H. Vogl, author of *The Art of Community: Seven Principles for Belonging* notes that creating community can start with simply “telling people who matter to you that they matter to you” (141). For single mothers experiencing homelessness, having people in their network who support them and remind them of their worth can create a sense of hope and empowerment. And while friends and family may be the most natural resources for this type of

support, support can be found within the broader community as well. For example, caseworkers and counselors are excellent resources for a mother who needs to expand her network. Not only can they help her find resources and suggest ways to get involved with the community, they are, themselves, a form of support. For professionals who are working with single mothers experiencing homelessness, building a bond of trust should be the first step. This bond allows the mother to feel safe in the relationship and her “self-worth and perceived level of support may rise” (Schrag 324). While professionals and clients must of course maintain boundaries, there is still room for a genuine, supportive relationship to develop.

Additionally, religious capital can be a powerful resource for helping families exit homelessness (Payne 97). Connecting with a religious organization, and especially a religious organization that understands the complexities of homelessness, is an effective way for a single mother in these circumstances to develop a robust social support system. However, all of these potential networks of support must be able to meet the mother where she is without judgement. This will help build bonds of trust and friendship that are crucial to successful community.

Ultimately, strong community is a vital step in the process of ending family homelessness. Bryant L. Myers succinctly summarizes the importance of community in *Walking with the Poor: Principles and Practices of Transformational Development*: “People need good neighbors much more than they need ... good development theory and practice” (218). This is not to say that good development theory and practice do not matter; they certainly do. However, development without the deep support of community will fall short. For a single mother experiencing homelessness, she needs resources that are contextualized to her circumstances; however, she also needs ‘good neighbors’, people she can trust and rely on. Social support networks provide the backbone to community development.

D. Children and Homelessness: A Case for a Two-Generational Approach

When discussing the issue of single mothers experiencing homelessness, it is impossible to separate their plight from that of their children's. A child who experiences homelessness faces unique challenges that could potentially affect their adult lives if not properly addressed. The number of children experiencing homelessness in the Colorado Springs area alone is staggering. According to the Colorado Department of Education, "In El Paso County, Colorado, 2,142 children were identified as experiencing homelessness in the school year of 2017-2018" (Frequently Asked Questions). In the United States as a whole, that number climbs to 2.5 million children. To put it in perspective, that is one out of every thirty children (Bassuk). These are sobering statistics that demonstrate a desperate need for greater understanding and action to be taken regarding family homelessness.

Dr. Ruby K. Payne notes that "poverty around the world tends to be feminized, with more women in poverty than men because the burden of raising children usually falls on women. The highest percentage of children in poverty come from female-headed, single-parent households. Poverty and gender often go hand in hand" (154). While not every family experiencing homelessness is headed by a single mother, this is the most common situation. For added clarification, when referring to children experiencing homelessness, I am referring to children who live with an adult parent or guardian (i.e. not homeless/runaway/unsheltered youth—this is another complex issue that is not within the scope of this paper to address). Just as single mothers experiencing homelessness face unique challenges that require holistic, contextualized care, the same is true for their children.

Working directly with the children at Mary's Home, I observed how this stable, safe environment allowed them to thrive. These children came from difficult and often traumatizing

backgrounds, and while behavioral issues were not necessarily uncommon, the children were in a safe environment where they could process their emotions. Having this type of safety and stability gives children the opportunity to grow into healthy, productive adults. I remember talking to one of the little boys at Mary's Home and telling him that he and I both live in Colorado. He promptly corrected me exclaiming, "I don't live in Colorado! I live in Mary's Home!". This was a small moment but spoke volumes to how impactful it is for children to have this stability. Mary's Home is their space and their home. They are comfortable and stable. In stark contrast to this, when I sat in on admissions interviews for potential residents, I heard stories of children living in cars, with relatives across the country, or in a household with their mother's abusive partner. One mother spoke of her two sons who had experienced instability, abuse, and chaos their whole lives and were beginning to act out. And this mother is certainly not alone. These mothers are doing the best they can within their circumstances; however, stability and consistency are vital to a child's development (de Thierry). Ending homelessness among single mothers requires that they have access to services and support for both themselves and their children.

In addition to added trauma from not having stability, children who experience homelessness are at a higher risk than their housed peers for both mental and physical health problems (Gultekin 11). Additionally, "early exposure to homelessness is associated with arrested grade progression and increased risk of social isolation and bullying" (13). With the stressors that children experiencing homelessness face, acting out may simply be a result of the instability, isolation, and uncertainty that they experience day-to-day. *America's Youngest Outcasts: A Report Card on Child Homelessness* states that "without a bed to call their own, they [children experiencing homelessness] have lost safety, privacy, and the comforts of home, as

well as friends, pets, possessions, reassuring routines, and community. These losses combine to create a life-altering experience that inflicts profound and lasting scars” (Bassuk 8). However, the Report Card goes on to note that it is possible for children to recover from these adverse experiences and the earlier that homelessness is addressed, the better.

Because female headed households represent the bulk of family homelessness (Bassuk 7), ending family homelessness will require more services targeted specifically towards single mothers and their children. Helping these single mothers by providing the necessary holistic care can impact generations. In fact, the “poverty trap can be broken by one generation getting to grow up healthy” (Banerjee 43). If caught early enough, the children of single mothers experiencing homelessness could experience a life free of poverty for both themselves and the generations to come.

IV. Homelessness and Single Motherhood: Creating a Culture of Love

In Colorado Springs, there are over 400 churches (Colorado Springs Churches and Cathedrals) and 511 Christian nonprofit organizations (Colorado Springs Religious Organizations). While these churches and organizations are doing important work to serve the Colorado Springs community and beyond, there seems to be a lack of support for the unique needs of single mothers experiencing homelessness and/or poverty. Additionally, Christian churches have historically been involved in the de-valuing and stigmatization of poor, single mothers. This history has contributed to the misunderstanding of these mothers not only within the church but also within the broader culture of the United States—a culture that has been heavily influenced by Christianity. Unfortunately, the Christian church often “legitimizes unequal structures” (Clifford 7) through varying interpretations of Biblical texts. Because of this, Christians have a unique responsibility to look within their own communities and call out the

ways that theology is being manipulated and used to legitimize the exclusion and de-valuation of vulnerable populations. I would like to note that my critique is not necessarily directed towards individual Christians. There is diversity of opinion among individual Christians that is not within the scope of this thesis to explore. Additionally, my fieldwork at Mary's Home was just one of many examples of how individual Christians are seeking justice for marginalized populations and standing against unequal structures. That said, I will offer a critique of broader cultural issues and systems that have been created and/or withheld partially by Western Christian culture and theology.

As for the broader culture in the United States, self-sufficiency and hard work are highly valued. However, while hard work and self-sufficiency are not inherently negative values, they are not always compatible with the complexities surrounding poverty. Bryant Myers cautions development practitioners to “avoid simplistic diagnoses and their corresponding single-answer development programs” (40). In the case of poverty in the United States as it pertains to single mothers, the solutions offered are often too simplistic and stem from stigma surrounding single-motherhood and poverty.

A. History

The value of a two-parent, male-headed household has “deep roots in American, and specifically Christian American, history” (Maddalena 150) and has shaped policies and attitudes towards single mothers living in poverty. In Christian tradition, women have historically been devalued. Exploring this issue is not a statement of my own religious beliefs or interpretations of Biblical texts or even a commentary on how modern-day Christians think. Rather, I am simply exploring where, in the context of Christian theology, the historical stigma of poor, single women stems from and how this stigma manifests itself today.

The view that women are 'less than' has been justified within the church beginning with the story of the fall of humans in Genesis. In Genesis 3:16, God lays out the punishment for women for eating the forbidden fruit and directly disobeying God's commands:

To the woman he said,

I will make your pains in childbearing very severe;
with painful labor you will give birth to children.
Your desire will be for your husband,
and he will rule over you (New International Version).

With this verse, God lays out the hierarchy of man and woman, placing the woman under the man. Rosemary Reuther's *Sexism and Misogyny in the Christian Tradition: Liberating Alternatives* explores how this idea has been interpreted by the church throughout history. She writes,

In this theory of woman's punishment for primacy in sin as added subjugation, redeeming grace does not overcome subordination, but rather reinforces it. The good Christian woman demonstrates her converted mind and heart by interiorizing her secondary place in creation and her deserved punishment for Eve's sin. She quietly and submissively accepts her husband's rule over her, as well as that of other males in authority, even their harsh words and blows. By redoubling her submission, she shows herself worthy of redemption and presumably wins her husband's care and affection. (87)

Additionally, Reuther highlights this theory to demonstrate how masculinity has often been viewed as superior within Christian tradition. There are two important aspects of this history to note here. The first is that when femininity is viewed as something inferior, it will naturally be

treated with suspicion and in some cases, disgust. The second is the value placed on masculinity and the belief that men are essentially closer to God. However, “the oppressive patterns in Christianity toward women and other subjugated people do not come from specific doctrines, but from a patriarchal and hierarchical reading of the system of Christian symbols as a whole” (83). That is to say, the inferiority of women in the Christian faith is more a result of *how* the Bible has been read and interpreted throughout history rather than absolute Biblical truths.

Hayley Feuerbacher takes an in depth look at the history surrounding Christianity and single motherhood in her dissertation, *The Unmarried (M)Other: A Study of Christianity, Capitalism, and Counternarratives Concerning Motherhood and Marriage in the United States and South Africa*. She argues that stigma towards single mothers is reinforced through the idea of ‘family values’, a term many churches and religious organizations in the United States have adopted. Family values “are often tied to the nuclear family structure. In many predominant conceptions of “family values” in the United States – both at large and in evangelical Christian circles, moral excellence is equated with the heteronormative two-parent household” (40). For example, a large non-profit in Colorado Springs, Focus on the Family, has six core values, several of which are related to the importance of traditional family structures. Under their vision, they write, “we believe God has ordained the social institutions of family, church, and government for the benefit of mankind and as a reflection of His divine nature” (Our Vision). Single motherhood does not, according to this idea of family values, reflect God’s divine nature.

In the 1980s, a movement called New Familism emerged that reinforced the importance of family values. This movement has roots in the Christian idea that God’s design for society is two-parent households, headed by a male. It went as far as implying that a number of social ills such as AIDS, drug use, increased criminal activity, etc. were a result of the increased number of

female-headed households (Feuerbacher 41). Ultimately, throughout history, single motherhood in Western Christian tradition has been somewhat of the antithesis to the divinely ordained two-parent household. While the concept of family values is not inherently bad, it has unfortunately been used to denigrate alternative family structures.

B. Christian Influence and the Welfare State Today

The United States today is heavily steeped in Christian culture and tradition. While society is far more egalitarian today than it was in the early days of the church, stigma towards single mothers still exists. In fact, in his article *Welfare, Politics, and Folklore: Overcoming the Narrative Bias Against Public Assistance in the U.S.*, Tom Mould contends that “stories about welfare cheats had been in the mass media since at least the 1940s and have continued to be published, while the oral tradition of welfare fraud stories remains alive and well today” (2). Additionally, studies show that the ‘welfare cheats’ in these stories are primarily assumed to be single women of color (2). Single motherhood is often perceived negatively in the United States regardless of religion. However, Christian tradition has the added bias that God’s design for children is a two-parent, male-headed household. Thus, single women with children are may automatically be perceived in a negative light.

Despite this stigma, single mothers living in poverty are not ‘welfare cheats.’ In fact, by 2000, “mothers with young children had experienced some of the steepest increases in employment over the past few decades” (5). However, the current welfare state is broken and single mothers often have limited opportunities and are forced into work with low wages where social insurance is limited. Catherine Albiston uses the term ‘social insurance’ in her article *Precairous Work and Precairous Welfare: How the Pandemic Reveals Fundamental Flaws of the U.S. Social Safety Net*, to refer to benefits often associated with white collar jobs such as

health insurance, paid time off, educational benefits, childcare, etc. In essence, “what we have sentenced poor women to is a low-wage workforce utterly unwilling to allow a single mother enough control and flexibility in the workplace to accommodate her dual responsibilities for family work and paid work” (Maddalena 165). The problem is not that impoverished single mothers cannot achieve self-sufficiency. They certainly can with the right tools and opportunities. The problem is that the welfare system in the United States is not designed to help these women actually exit poverty.

Thus, the problem here is two-fold: there is the historical devaluing of women and especially single-mothers, as well as the modern-day stigma that exists surrounding welfare and single motherhood. Modern day attitudes towards poor mothers continue to be shaped by these influences. Unfortunately, these attitudes towards single mothers do not exist in a vacuum and they have consequences beyond poorly designed social programs. John Lederach, author of *Reconcile: Conflict Transformation for the Ordinary Christian* argues that “humiliation—the lived experience of disrespect and exclusion without some form of authentic acknowledgment of the harm or hurt received—leaves deep personal and social scars” (35). Healing the scars left by hundreds of years of stigma and hurt that poor, single mothers have faced will take time. This then leads to the question, how can the Christian community in the United States contribute to the de-stigmatization of poor mothers? Is the historical devaluing of women biblical? Jesus calls on Christians to both love their neighbor (Mark 12:30-31) and care for the vulnerable among them (Matthew 25:40). What can be done to live out this calling?

C. An Alternative Vision

While there is complicity for the systemic mistreatment of single mothers experiencing homelessness and/or poverty in the Christian culture, there is also the opportunity for restoration;

there is the opportunity to fight against injustice and create a culture of love. *In Reconciling All Things: A Christian Vision for Justice, Peace and Healing*, Emmanuel Katongole states that “within the biblical story, the Christian discovers a constant call for justice on behalf of the weak and forgotten” (72). The idea of restoration is grounded in God’s Word. However, restoration is not simply learning to ‘get along’ with others or the decision to not pass judgement. There is necessary, active work that must be done. For example, “restoration requires a recovery of real, overlooked stories in history. It means learning to listen to people who embody a unique journey and set of practices in a broken and divided world” (Katongole 45). I witnessed what restoration can look like throughout my time at Mary’s Home. The mothers living there receive care that is contextualized to their needs while also being treated with dignity. They are valued as equal children of God. The way that Mary’s Home looks at poor, single mothers is counter to the stigma that these mothers face from so many people in the United States. At Mary’s Home, love and restoration are cornerstones of their mission.

This idea was expressed throughout my interviews with staff and volunteers. However, Kadyn, a Resident Assistant at Mary’s Home, explained the mission beautifully. Kadyn is in her early twenties and is spending the year living and working directly with residents. She knows the mothers and their children intimately and sees both their value and potential. When I asked her about her faith and passion for seeking justice for marginalized communities she replied,

Who did Jesus spend his time with? The outcasts. The people on the margins. Those are the people that Jesus walked with. Those are the people that Jesus touched. And so in my faith, you see things that people don't want to see and you spend your time with people that are left out, or that are misunderstood. And once you enter into someone's context and situation, you realize there's so much more than their circumstances. There's a

person; there's a soul. And there's also suffering, and Jesus enters into suffering. And brings about restoration. (Gianis)

She paints a picture of who Jesus was during his time on Earth and highlights how entering into someone's context can lead to a deeper understanding of person. For single mothers living in poverty, they are "so much more than their circumstances." Richard Beck, author of *Unclean: Meditations on Purity, Hospitality, and Mortality*, argues for a form of Christianity that is grounded in the works that Jesus did while on Earth. He makes a case that those who have been historically marginalized deserve a place at the table; they deserve space to be heard and understood and that "the 'will to embrace' must precede any judgments of the other" (146). Christianity is less about who is most holy or closer to God; rather it is about love and hospitality—without judgement or bias that may stem from the result of perceived sin. Love and hospitality are not circumstantial or conditional.

Unfortunately, Christianity in the United States has become a place where, regardless of good intentions, people often feel judged and excluded. As previously discussed, there is a history of bias within the faith especially towards single, poor women with children. However, the Christian faith is also in a unique place to lead the way in changing the narrative about these women by providing a place where they are fully embraced, regardless of circumstances. With that, Christians should strive "to know the mechanisms that generate poverty, [and] to struggle for a more just world" (Campbell-Johnson 4). Mary Hoggatt, Program Director at Mary's Home, expressed hope for the church saying that "the church has a long way to go ... but what I actually love about our current time right now, is we are able to be educated and willing to be educated". Despite Christianity's contribution to current injustices that single mothers experiencing homelessness face, there is immense opportunity for restoration. Christians have a calling to seek

justice and can lead the way in creating a “space where the dignity of every human person is vouchsafed, embraced, and protected” (Beck 140). However, in order for this to happen, the non-poor must be willing to embrace their own need for education and use that education to create change.

V. Bridging the Gap: Education Among the Non-Poor as a Tool for Change

There is no denying that a single mother experiencing homelessness faces numerous obstacles. And practical tools for change are often complex and multifaceted. However, one area that is not often discussed is education among the non-poor as a tool for change. The poor in the United States experience stigmatization and face harmful assumptions about their work ethic, choices, and circumstances. Single mothers experiencing homelessness are particularly scrutinized and judged because of their situation. However, it is clear that poverty is complex and widely misunderstood. Widespread education among the non-poor can shift the dangerous assumption that “the poor somehow did this to themselves— that they are all bums and deserve to be poor because they’re lazy, have bad habits, or possess a horrible work ethic” (Bryant 14). And while of course these assumptions are not held by everyone, there is a certain level of stigma ingrained in the culture of the United States that can make compassion conditional.

Sue Hammond, an expert in qualitative research, notes how the words we use have emotional meanings (14). Single mothers experiencing homelessness are often described using what is referred to as “the language of deficit” (14). These are words with negative connotations. For example, a single mother experiencing homelessness may be described as ‘lazy’ or ‘entitled’. She may be criticized for her ‘poor decisions’ and the word ‘broken’ may be used to describe her family. As Hammond argues, words have the power and can shape reality. Using a language of deficit to describe single mothers experiencing homelessness overlooks the complexity of their

situation. Additionally, it devalues their stories and their resiliency. This is where education plays a crucial role. Changing how the single mothers experiencing homelessness are perceived has the potential to change how poverty is addressed in the United States and the types of support specifically available to these mothers. Essentially, a socially just future depends on both outer action and inner development (Kunkel 60).

I was inspired during my Fieldwork at Mary's Home by their commitment to involving volunteers because of their desire to help shift assumptions about single mothers experiencing homelessness. During an interview with Program Director Mary Hoggatt, she stated:

If we had all the resources in the world, if we could hire all the people we wanted, we would still have volunteers. Because it invites people into the 'face-to-face' and invites people into the process. It invites the church into the opportunity to be transformed by serving those that the church was meant to serve. I mean, even I love that Mary's Home is down here in the southeast. I love that it's not up north where most of our volunteers come from. Because they actually have to enter into the world. They have to exit their bubble.

Volunteers are invited to serve and gain a new understanding of single mothers experiencing homelessness. However, education is also a crucial part of the volunteer program at Mary's Home. Volunteers attend trainings and receive a list of recommended readings. Being a volunteer at Mary's Home means taking a posture of learning.

The deep involvement of volunteers in the work of Mary's Home led me to wonder what the world could look like if the non-poor were involved in opportunities like this. It would certainly broaden their worldview. And a greater understanding of poverty has the potential to

lead to more compassionate policies and programs, as well as more compassionate people in general. This idea is supported by Contact Theory “which suggests that relationships between conflicting groups will improve if they have meaningful contact with one another over an extended period of time” (Salter McNeil 37). With time, contact with a differing group of people can lead to reduced prejudice (Everett). Hoggatt mentioned that she is glad that Mary’s Home exists in an area of town that most volunteers would otherwise not visit. Removing people from their ‘bubble’ and encouraging them to embrace those whose lives differ from their own has immense potential for positive change.

Contact, however, is only one piece of what needs to be done to reduce prejudice and help marginalized groups. A desire to do good is not enough. Bryant L. Myers highlights this in his book *Walking with the Poor*, writing that “doing good work means being skillful and continually refining one’s skills. The poor need more from us than broken hearts; they need professional skills and knowledge, too” (224). While Contact Theory presents an opportunity to reduce prejudice it must be paired with education that can lead to action. This is especially pertinent in the context of single mothers experiencing homelessness. These mothers are not confined to organizations like Mary’s Home. They are in churches, they are active in community groups, they are friends, family, etc. Bringing education that can lead to action into the mainstream will help communities better understand and empower the single mothers experiencing homelessness that they encounter in the day-to-day.

In 2021, the conversation surrounding single mothers experiencing homelessness was brought to the mainstream through the popular Netflix show, *Maid*. The 10-episode series chronicles the journey of a young woman as she navigates leaving an abusive relationship and finding resources for herself and her daughter. The show does an excellent job of portraying the

complexities of the welfare system, the legal system, relationships, trauma, and generational poverty and abuse. This show is a huge step forward bringing this issue to light, destigmatizing who these mothers are, and sparking productive conversation. However, what society still lacks is widespread knowledge on practical tools that can be used by everyday people to help the single mothers in their lives in a way that is both productive and empowering.

The following sections will cover three practical tools that can be used in both professional and personal environments: Trauma Awareness, a Coaching Model, and Motivational Interviewing. These tools are not exhaustive by any means but provide an excellent start for improved communication and understanding when it comes to single mothers experiencing homelessness. They have immense potential to result in positive change and can be used within churches, schools, family relationships, friendships, etc. These tools are also interconnected and overlap in several areas so learning about one will provide a strong basis to learning the others.

A. Trauma Awareness

Trauma Awareness is a useful tool that can be adapted from Trauma Informed Care (TIC). Trauma Informed Care is “a strengths-based service delivery approach that is grounded in an understanding of and responsiveness to the impact of trauma, that emphasizes physical, psychological, and emotional safety for both providers and survivors, and that creates opportunities for survivors to rebuild a sense of control and empowerment” (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration xix). TIC is often used in professional settings; for example, Mary’s Home is a trauma-informed organization. How they design their services and interact with the residents is done with the impacts of trauma in mind.

However, TIC requires training and a dedication to ongoing learning. For most communities, becoming trauma-informed on a widespread level may be difficult. That is where trauma awareness can fill the gaps. While someone experiencing trauma symptoms should always be encouraged to seek professional help, there is still a need for communities to better understand what a trauma reaction may look like. Trauma awareness will lead to an increased level of empathy, allowing people to view difficult situations in a new light and help those in their community who may be struggling with trauma symptoms. Again, the purpose of this section is not to encourage ordinary people to replace trauma-informed professionals; rather, the purpose is to highlight how trauma awareness can be applied at a community level and lead to an understanding of trauma reactions. Understanding trauma and the various ways it presents will allow greater empathy in difficult situations.

Women experiencing homelessness in the United States report high levels of trauma both from events prior to and during homelessness. They “are more likely to have histories of childhood physical and sexual abuse and to have experienced sexual assault as adults” (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration 57). For single mothers, they are often dealing with their traumatic pasts while doing their best to navigate a traumatic present, all while caring for their children.

An interaction with someone who is operating from a place of trauma may not look rational and can be easily misunderstood. Trauma expert Dr. van der Kolk gives the following example:

When something reminds traumatized people of the past, their right brain reacts as if the traumatic event were happening in the present. But because their left brain is not working very well, they may not be aware that they are reexperiencing and reenacting the past—

they are just furious, terrified, enraged, ashamed, or frozen. After the emotional storm passes, they may look for something or somebody to blame for it. They behaved the way they did because you were ten minutes late, or because you burned the potatoes, or because you “never listen to me.” Of course, most of us have done this from time to time, but when we cool down, we hopefully can admit our mistake. Trauma interferes with this kind of awareness (45).

Trauma-awareness can help situations like these make more sense. It can help us turn our own hurt, anger, and confusion stemming from the interaction into empathy. For single mothers experiencing homelessness, it is necessary to view interactions through a trauma-informed lens and see “trauma-related symptoms and behaviors as an individual’s best and most resilient attempt to manage, cope with, and rise above his or her experience of trauma” (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration 13). Additionally, if an interaction is identified as a trauma response, the following two tools in this section can help recover the interaction and create something positive from it. Trauma-awareness is not just helpful to professionals in specific fields; it is a useful tool for communities and people in their everyday lives. Being trauma-aware encourages communities to lead with empathy rather than judgement or disdain.

B. A Coaching Versus Teaching Mode

While at Mary’s Home, staff would often talk about what it means to coach versus teach someone. Using a Coaching Model is a core aspect of their programs. Family Advocate, Bethany Parker uses a Coaching Model in her interactions with the residents that she works with. She states, “I want to help them identify their goals, and then support them towards that, as opposed to dictating their goals to them.” This approach is echoed by the Director of Volunteers, Sue Harrelson. During our interview she stated, “it would be easy for me to sit with somebody and all

of a sudden start giving advice. That would be so wrong. I am not the expert on their life” (Harrelson). Essentially, a Coaching Model means taking a posture of learning and listening rather than dictating.

This idea is not unique to Mary’s Home and is often used in the field of Community Development to provide programs that are contextualized to local populations. A Coaching Model ensures that the recipients of a program are viewed as the experts, while those creating the program are there to learn and design effective solutions based on local knowledge. William Easterly, an American economist, writes about a Planner vs a Searcher in community development, which is another way to frame the Coaching vs Teaching Model. He writes,

A Planner thinks he already knows the answers; he thinks of poverty as a technical engineering problem that his answers will solve. A Searcher admits he doesn't know the answers in advance; he believes that poverty is a complicated tangle of political, social, historical, institutional, and technological factors. A Searcher hopes to find answers to individual problems only by trial and error experimentation. A Planner believes outsiders know enough to impose solutions. A Searcher believes only insiders have enough knowledge to find solutions, and that most solutions must be home grown (6).

For communities who want to create more effective solutions for single mothers experiencing homelessness, outsiders must not be the ones to impose solutions. By outsiders, I mean those who have not directly experienced single motherhood and homelessness. There are experts with the education and training to provide services to these women, but ultimately, solutions should be a collaborative process with these single mothers involved in every stage of the process.

For example, at Mary's Home, residents' goals differ from one another as the program is not designed to be a 'one-size-fits-all'. And while there are certain aspects to the program that are mandatory (like attending therapy and classes), residents are actively involved in creating their own goals. Additionally, staff are always open to feedback and learning from their own mistakes. They do not see themselves as a final authority; in fact, as discussed earlier, the women at Mary's Home are honored as the experts in their own lives. In other words, solutions need to be contextualized to each individual and/or community. In this process, an individual or community's lived experiences are honored and taken into account.

A Coaching Model requires empathy which "means challenging your preconceived ideas and setting aside your sense of what you think is true in order to learn what actually is true" (Kelly 90). In the context of a single mother experiencing homelessness, a person can guide and provide recommendations and support but ultimately the mother is given the authority and respect as the expert of her own life. Bethany Parker highlights the difference that this kind of model can make for these mothers. She says, "At Mary's Home the women are honored, respected; they're empowered. This is a really nourishing place. It's not a judgmental place. And so I do think that women feel a difference when they're invited into this place... It's a program, but it's a program operating out of the context of relationship and respect, and community and authentic love." Learning about a Coaching Model challenges the non-poor to listen rather than impose. This is key to creating healthy communities.

This section is a broad overview of the Coaching Model. The following section will examine Motivational Interviewing. Motivational interviewing is a practical tool within the Coaching Model that can be learned and used by communities to improve interactions with single mothers experiencing homelessness.

C. Motivational Interviewing

Motivational Interviewing (M.I.) is a useful communication tool within the Coaching Model that is useful when interacting with a single mother experiencing homelessness. For example, single mother in this situation may have felt disempowered, judged, and vulnerable at multiple times throughout her life. On top of that, she may be working through trauma associated with both her past and present circumstances. M.I. is a tool that empowers and encourages throughout an interaction using a set of core skills. These core skills are:

- Open questions to elicit and explore the person's experiences, perspectives, and ideas.
- Affirmations of successes and strengths to foster the person's confidence in their ability to change.
- Reflections based on attentive listening and understanding what the person is expressing, by repeating, rephrasing, or connecting with a deeper level of meaning the person is expressing.
- Summarizing to ensure a shared understanding and reinforce a person's key points.

Using open questions, affirmations, reflections, and summarizing (Rollins 6).

Together, these skills are referred to as OARS. A person using OARS can help someone process their thoughts and feelings, and ultimately guide them in making their own decisions based on what they need.

At Mary's Home, I had the opportunity to see how Motivational Interviewing plays out in everyday communication through interactions with staff and residents. Stephanie DeMeritt, the Associate Program Director at Mary's Home brought up the concept of an M.I. spirit in all interactions "which means egalitarianism, partnership, unconditional positive regard. You're

emphasizing autonomy.” During an afternoon of shadowing Stephanie, she had a scheduled meeting with a resident to talk through a problem. With the resident’s permission, I sat in on the meeting and observed the interaction. For clarity, I will refer to the resident as Amber (her name has been changed to protect her privacy).

While at Mary’s Home, residents spend the first six months taking classes through Mary’s Home and do not work jobs or attend any other school. The purpose of these policies are to prioritize healing. However, there was a miscommunication and Amber had understood that she could go to school during those first six months. Stephanie used Motivational Interviewing in her conversation with Amber, allowing her to express her frustrations and validating those frustrations. She allowed Amber to lead the conversation, asking questions along the way to help Amber gauge what she felt like she could handle schedule-wise. Ultimately, instead of simply telling Amber that she thought additional school on top of classes at Mary’s Home would be a bad idea, she allowed Amber to come to her own conclusion and make the final decision. Stephanie did not use her position of authority as a staff member at Mary’s Home to make a decision for Amber; instead, she gave Amber the autonomy to make her own decision for her life while appropriately encouraging and providing feedback throughout the conversation. To summarize,

Within the M.I. philosophy, it’s not that the coach is going to fix the client’s problems and bring them the wisdom they need in life. Instead, your relationship is collaborative between two experts - both the coach (expert in subject area) and the client (expert on themselves, what they’ve already tried, what might work for them, etc.). This specific tool provides a way for the coach to bring expertise to the table, while inviting the client

to 1). give permission for the coach to do so and 2). have the last word (Motivational Interviewing Gems for Coaching 5).

While Motivational interviewing is often used in a setting where there is a client/coach relationship, this style of communication can be used across all relationships. The purpose of M.I. is that it acts as an equalizer—one person does not have more authority than the other. M.I. overlaps with some of the most important standards within the community development field. Good community development requires listening to and learning from one another. M.I. requires this kind of active listening and challenges us to set aside our preconceived notions about a person or situation and allow them to tell their story. Russell Haitch argues that listening is a crucial part of the community development process because “listening well means indwelling the space the story circumscribes. By indwelling we may come to understand the inner logic, which often is not linear” (Haitch 396). This style of communication, especially when interacting with someone who has past trauma and complicated circumstances, creates an environment that is empowering and safe. Each person is the expert of their own lives and M.I. demands that this notion is respected. For a single mother experiencing homelessness, having people around her who respect her capabilities, thoughts, and experiences is an empowering experience especially within our current culture that often relegates these women to the margins of society.

VI. Conclusion

This thesis discussed a number of interrelated topics regarding single mothers experiencing homelessness in the United States. It is a nuanced, multi-layered subject that requires a holistic approach. These women face pressure to overcome their circumstances—to get jobs, spend enough time with their children, live in safe communities, etc. However, the

welfare system in the United States is flawed and ultimately not designed to help poor, single mothers succeed. Additionally, single mothers experiencing homelessness have been historically devalued in Western culture and tradition. Much of this stigma has roots in Christian theology that has informed much of society today. However, Christians in the US also have great potential to reverse this stigma and create a culture of love where single mothers can thrive. Ultimately, single mothers experiencing homelessness in the United States need professional, holistic services for both themselves and their children. In addition, they need support from the community in which they live. This means increasing service availability while also increasing education among the non-poor. This will look different depending on the individual community.

Mary's Home in Colorado Springs is an excellent example of how a community can embrace both holistic services and education among the non-poor. The appendix of this thesis is a program proposal for Mary's Home to expand their current reach. While this program is contextualized to Mary's Home, it is an idea that can be applied to communities across the United States as long as relevant adjustments are made depending on the needs of the women in that community. Single mothers experiencing homelessness should not be defined by their circumstances. Rather, they should be valued for their inherent worth, resiliency, and capabilities.

Works Cited

- *Banerjee, Abhijit V., and Esther Duflo. "Low Hanging Fruit for Better (Global) Health?" *Poor Economics: A Radical Rethinking of the Way to Fight Global Poverty*. New York: PublicAffairs, 2011.
- Bassuk, Ellen L., et al. "America's Youngest Outcasts: A Report Card on Child Homelessness." *American Institutes for Research*, Nov. 2014.
- Bassuk, Ellen L., and William R. Beardslee. "Depression in Homeless Mothers: Addressing an Unrecognized Public Health Issue." *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, vol. 84, no. 1, 2014, pp. 73–81. EBSCOhost, <https://doi.org/10.1037/h0098949>.
- Bassuk, Ellen L., et al. "Services Matter: How Housing and Services Can End Family Homelessness." *The Bassuk Center*, 2015.
- Bear, Lisa. *Personal Interview*. 9 August 2021.
- *Beck, Richard. *Unclean: Meditations on Purity, Hospitality, and Mortality*. Cascade Books, 2011.
- *Bornstein, David, and Susan Davis. *Social Entrepreneurship: What Everyone Needs to Know*. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2010.
- *Bryant, John Hope. *How the Poor Can Save Capitalism: Rebuilding the Path to the Middle Class*. Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc., 2015.
- *Campbell-Johnson, Michael. "Romero's Legacy." 30th Anniversary of Romero's Death, 24 March 2010.
- Christopher, Karen. "A 'Pauperization of Motherhood'? Single Motherhood and Women's Poverty over Time." *Journal of Poverty*, vol. 9, no. 3, Sept. 2005, pp. 1–23.

EBSCOhost, doi:10.1300/J134v09n03_01.

*Clifford, Paula. *Theology from the Global South: Perspectives on Christian Aid's Work*. Christian Aid, 2010.

“Colorado Springs Churches and Cathedrals.” *World Guides*, www.world-guides.com/north-america/usa/colorado/colorado-springs/colorado_springs_churches.

DeMeritt, Stephanie. *Personal Interview*. 15 July 2021.

de Thierry, Betsy. *The Simple Guide to Child Trauma: What It Is and How to Help*. Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2016.

*Easterly, William. “Planners vs. Searchers.” *The White Man's Burden: Why the West's efforts to aid the rest have done so much ill and so little good*, New York: Penguin, 2006.

*Everett, Jim A.C. “Intergroup Contact Theory: Past, Present, and Future.” *The Inquisitive Mind*, 2013, www.in-mind.org/article/intergroup-contact-theory-past-present-and-future.

Feuerbacher, Haley. "The Unmarried (M)Other: A Study of Christianity, Capitalism, and Counternarratives Concerning Motherhood and Marriage in the United States and South Africa." *Religious Studies Theses and Dissertations*, 12 Dec. 2019.

“Frequently Asked Questions.” *Dream Centers*, www.dreamcenters.com/faq/.

Gianis, Kadyn. *Personal Interview*. 22 July 2021.

Gultekin, Laura E., et al. “Health Risks and Outcomes of Homelessness in School-Age Children and Youth: A Scoping Review of the Literature.” *Journal of School Nursing*, vol. 36, no. 1, Feb. 2020, pp. 10–18. EBSCOhost.

*Haitch, Russell, and Donald Miller. “Storytelling As a Means of Peacemaking: A Case Study of Christian Education in Africa.” *Religious Education*, vol. 101, no. 3, 2006.

- *Hammond, Sue. *The Thin Book of Appreciative Inquiry*. 3rd ed. Bend, OR: Thin Book Publishing, 2013.
- Harrleson, Sue. *Personal Interview*. 13 August 2021.
- Hoggat, Mary. *Personal Interview*. 11 February 2021.
- Hoggat, Mary. *Personal Interview*. 22 July 2021.
- *Holmes, Seth M. *Fresh Fruit, Broken Bodies: Migrant Farmworkers in the United States*. Univ. of California Press, 2014.
- *Katongole, Emmanuel and Rice, Chris, *Reconciling All Things: A Christian Vision for Justice. Peace and Healing*, InterVarsity Press, 2008.
- *Kelley, Tom, and David Kelley. *Creative Confidence: Unleashing the Creative Potential Within Us All*. Crown Publishing Group, 2013.
- *Kunkel, Petra. *The Art of Leading Collectively: Co-Creating a Sustainable, Socially Just Future*. Chelsea Green Publishing, 2016.
- *Lederach, John Paul *Reconcile: Conflict Transformation for Ordinary Christians*. Herald Press, 2014.
- Linden, Isabelle A., et al. "Addiction in Maternity: Prevalence of Mental Illness, Substance Use, and Trauma." *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment & Trauma*, vol. 22, no. 10, Nov. 2013, pp. 1070–84. EBSCOhost, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10926771.2013.845279>.
- Maddalena, Julie A. Mavity. "Floodwaters and the Ticking Clock: The Systematic Oppression and Stigmatization of Poor, Single Mothers in America and Christian Theological Responses." *Cross Currents*, vol. 63, no. 2, June 2013, pp. 148–173. EBSCOhost.
- Maid*. Directed by John Wells, 2021. *Netflix*.
- *Merriam, Sharan B., and Elizabeth J. Tisdell. *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and*

Implementation. Jossey-Bass, 2016.

Milaney, Katrina, et al. "Recognizing and Responding to Women Experiencing Homelessness with Gendered and Trauma-Informed Care." *BMC Public Health*, vol. 20, no. 1, Mar. 2020, pp. 1–6. EBSCOhost, doi:10.1186/s12889-020-8353-1.

"Motivational Interviewing Gems for Coaching". *Dream Centers Mary's Home*. September 2020.

Mould Tom. "Welfare, Politics, and Folklore: Overcoming the Narrative Bias Against Public Assistance in the U.S." *Journal of Folklore Research*, vol. 57, no. 2, May 2020, pp. 1–39. EBSCOhost, doi:10.2979/jfolkrese.57.2.01.

*Myers, Bryant L. *Walking with the Poor: Principles and Practices of Transformational Development*. Orbis Books, 2011.

New International Version. Biblica, 1983, www.biblestudytools.com/niv/.

"Our Vision." *Focus on the Family*, www.focusonthefamily.com/about/foundational-values/.

Parker, Bethany. *Personal Interview*. 27 July 2021.

Payne, Ruby K. *A Framework for Understanding Poverty: A Cognitive Approach for Educators, Policymakers, Employers, and Service Providers*. Aha! Process, Inc., 2019.

Rollins, Katie, et al. *Motivational Interviewing: A Guide to Family First Implementation*. Chapin Hall and Public Consulting Group, 2022.

Ruether, Rosemary Radford. "Sexism and Misogyny in the Christian Tradition: Liberating Alternatives." *Buddhist-Christian Studies*, vol. 34, University of Hawai'i Press, 2014, pp. 83–94, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24801355>.

*Salter McNeil, Brenda. *Roadmap to Reconciliation 2.0: Moving Communities into Unity*,

Wholeness and Justice. Revised and expanded, InterVarsity Press, 16 June 2020.

Schrag, Allison, and Ada Schmidt-Tieszen. "Social Support Networks of Single Young Mothers." *Child & Adolescent Social Work Journal*, vol. 31, no. 4, Aug. 2014, pp. 315–27. EBSCOhost, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10560-013-0324-2>.

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. *Trauma-Informed Care in Behavioral Health Services*. Treatment Improvement Protocol (TIP) Series 57. HHS Publication No. (SMA) 13-4801. 2014.

Van der Kolk, Bessel. *The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma*. Penguin Books, 2015.

*Vogl, Charles. *The Art of Community: Seven Principles for Belonging*. Barrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc, 2016.

Appendix

Program Proposal

for

The Mary's Home Mentorship Program

Prepared for Mary's Home by Susanna Hedenstrom

10 December 2021

*Use is intended for Mary's Home to be submitted to donors and grant agencies for program funding.

I. Introduction

There is a widespread need in Colorado Springs for holistic services designed for single mothers experiencing homelessness. Programs exist to help mothers with their everyday needs like temporary housing and food assistance; however, these programs alone may not be enough (Bassuk, Services Matter: How Housing and Services Can End Family Homelessness). Mary's Home is a long-term, educationally focused community in Colorado Springs designed to help meet the needs of single mothers experiencing homelessness. Because of their holistic focus, Mary's Home is an excellent example of the type of support that so many single mothers living in poverty need. While at Mary's Home, mothers receive housing, counseling, classes on life skills, and guidance on making a plan for the future. Unfortunately, due to a high demand and limited space, Mary's Home has to turn away dozens of applicants each year.

Additionally, Mary's Home relies heavily on volunteers for an important reason which also has a positive effect on the greater community. In Colorado Springs, there is often a gap in understanding regarding the complexities of poverty among the non-poor which unfortunately can lead to the stigmatization of single mothers experiencing homelessness. However, involving volunteers directly with the issue of single mothers experiencing homelessness increases community understanding and awareness of a complex issue.

Below is a program proposal to reinstitute the Family Support Volunteer Team and expand Mary's Home Academy to applicants who have not been accepted to live at Mary's Home but could still benefit from this type of support. The Family Support Team will provide coaching on career or education goals to both current residents and moms who have applied and interviewed, but have not been accepted into residency. Mary's Home Academy offers current residents classes on life skills ranging from parenting to car maintenance to classes focused on healing

from trauma. The expansion of this program would also include single mothers who have gone through the applicant process but were not accepted into residency. Extending the Mary's Home Family Support team and Mary's Home Academy to non-residents, under the volunteer Mentorship Program, are impactful ways to provide much-needed services to single mothers in the Colorado Springs community while also providing volunteers with an understanding of the complex issue of single mothers experiencing homelessness. Through this program, more women will receive the important care they need to exit poverty, while volunteers will be reached with training and education.

II. The Mentorship Program

The reality of Mary's Home is that they cannot accept everyone who applies for the residency program. Applicants who interview and are determined by staff to be overall good candidates but are ultimately turned down, would become eligible for the Mentorship Program. This program will include both one-on-one support from a volunteer and classes from Mary's Home Academy taken alongside residents. Candidates for the mentorship program must meet several of the same requirements as candidates for residency as stated on the Mary's Home website:

- Must be homeless, imminently homeless, and/or leaving domestic violence with their children.
- Must live in El Paso County and be eligible for TANF, CCAP, and SNAP for a minimum of eighteen months.
- Must be motivated to gain holistic health, basic life skills, and financial independence.

- Cannot have a recent history of severe behavioral issues, criminal activity, or substance abuse (Who Qualifies for Mary's Home?).

Regarding volunteers, the most crucial trait that Mary's Home is looking for is teachability. Sue Harrelson, Director of Volunteers at Mary's Home highlights this saying:

A lot of people [who apply for volunteer positions] have no exposure to poverty or trauma. They just identify with the mission... if somebody comes in teachable, and their heart is to serve no matter what, they are very likely to gain a lot of satisfaction and successful service. If somebody comes in and feels like they have knowledge to give that will help save somebody, then that's a bumpy ride, because you kind of have to separate them from that idea.

Volunteers need to be willing to learn and occasionally challenge pre-conceived notions about single mothers living in poverty. In addition to training, volunteers for the Mentorship Program will receive a list of suggested readings. The recommended books are provided at the end of the volunteer handbook (Dram Centers Volunteer Handbook 24) and most will be available for volunteers to check-out through Mary's Home. The readings will not necessarily be a requirement as volunteers will not always have enough extra time, but it will be encouraged. If a volunteer does not come into this position with a posture of teachability, they may be asked to serve in a position that does not require direct interaction with the women Mary's Home serves.

Because mothers in the Mentorship Program will not be residents, volunteers will be asked to gain a basic familiarity with alternative resources available to these mothers such as government assistance, food banks, housing resources, etc. The goal of the mentorship program is to provide supplemental support that reinforces overall holistic healing.

A. Coaching Model and Motivational Interviewing

For both the Family Support Team and the Mary's Home Academy Teachers, emphasis will be placed on coaching vs teaching and Motivational Interviewing (MI). Coaching essentially involves coming from a place of humility. Mary Hoggatt, the Program Director at Mary's Home explains it by saying:

Instead of 'I am the expert and the teacher and I'm going to tell you how to live your life and all the things that you need to do' we said, 'be strength based'. Say 'I'm not the expert in your life at all. You are. So, what is it that you're wanting? What are the goals that you have? What are your values?' Now granted, that's going to shift and change through healing because as we heal our perspective of things changes, our mindset shifts, but we're constantly drawing it out. She is the expert in her life. She is the expert in her kid's life. So, what are tools that we can give you, that help strengthen your already amazing strengths? But also, we'll pull up the broken places. And then not that 'I have your answer for your broken place', but 'I can help you hold that broken place' (Hoggatt).

Motivational Interviewing goes along with the Coaching Model because it provides insight on how to communicate and coach. While volunteers will not be expected to be experts in MI, they will be required to utilize the model as much as possible when interacting with participants in the Mentorship Program. MI involves "unconditional positive regard. Saying the most challenging thing in the most supportive way. Listening more than telling, . . . honoring the person's autonomy, resourcefulness, and ability to choose" (Motivational Interviewing and Coaching Tips). Staff at Mary's Home is trained in MI and resources have already been developed for volunteers to learn these important basics. Volunteers will be required to watch training videos and/or attend in-person training on this subject in order to volunteer on the Family Support Team

or as a Mary's Home Academy Teacher. Using the Coaching Model and Motivational Interviewing will help build trust between the volunteers and the women they are working with. Building this trust is a vital step to building a successful program.

B. Family Support

The Family Support team has been temporarily disbanded in order to rework the logistics of the program. When the program relaunches in 2022, the focus will be on coaching—primarily financial and college/career readiness. The Family Support team will offer one-on-one mentorship to current residents as well as non-residents who have been accepted into the Mentorship Program. Non-residents can choose to meet with their mentor weekly, or bi-weekly depending on their schedules. Residents will meet with their mentor weekly.

Mentors will partner with program participants and help them set realistic goals for their futures. This may include working through the logistics of a budget, filling out applications for tech schools or colleges, researching available benefits and government programs, etc. The form that these meetings will take ultimately depends on the program participant's goals. A mentor will need to be especially careful that they do not come in believing that they have all of the answers. Megan Boucher puts it well when she writes, "In light of the great potential for harm, people who want to help the poor must develop the humility to realize that they do not have all the answers. They must first view the poor as capable and intelligent or their efforts will never cause any lasting change" (170). Additionally, mentors need to set boundaries as well. Their role will happen at Mary's Home in the context of providing guidance on goal-setting and budgeting. If meetings become overwhelming or if inappropriate topics come up, they will need to notify a staff member.

Because non-residents will not be receiving the same holistic care as residents, they may need added assistance getting connected to resources. Family Support volunteers can help them get connected with mental and physical health services starting with Dream Centers Women's Clinic (Mary's Home's sister program). A list of other resources will also be provided and volunteers may help the mother determine which would be most helpful and help her contact the appropriate places during their meeting.

C. Mary's Home Academy

Mary's Home Academy (MHA) is a unique aspect of Mary's Home. Residents take classes full-time throughout the week for the first few months after moving in. The focus is on healing and learning new skills to help residents navigate the world. Becky Fulcher, the volunteer coordinator for the academy, affirms this noting that "if you're missing some things in your experience of life, which a lot of times people coming out of poverty are, then this is kind of a fills in the gaps". Mary's Home Academy has immense value because it encourages both learning and community. The Bassuk Center argues in *Services Matter* that "few people can live alone, isolated from support, compassion, and instrumental assistance" (13). For this reason, as part of the Mentorship Program, non-residents accepted into the program will be invited to join both evening and weekend classes at Mary's Home Academy. This will help encourage community with people who have gone through similar life-circumstances and struggles while also providing the opportunity to learn important real-world skills. Confining the Mentorship Program to evening and weekend classes will allow for accommodation of work schedules or other obligations during the day. Childcare will be provided during these classes in order to make them more accessible to the women. Below is a list of classes that were provided on the evening

and weekends during the Fall semester of 2021. While the schedule changes from semester to semester, these will provide an idea of what can be expected:

- Car Maintenance
- Legal Basics
- Children and Trauma
- Self-Defense
- Healthy Parent-Child Bonding

For non-residents, the Mary's Home Academy program would require a commitment of attending 1-2 classes each month. Each student will be required to sign the Code of Conduct that Mary's Home has already prepared for current students and attendance will be mandatory. That being said, it is understood that some women may not have access to a car. If this is the case, Family Support volunteers can help them get connected to rides. This could be car-pooling with another program participant, connecting with someone from their church (if they attend one), or rideshare (e.g., Uber or Lyft) gift cards through Mary's Home if needed.

D. The Projected Impact

The research presented in *How Housing & Services Can End Family Homelessness* argues that “housing is essential to ending homelessness, but it is not sufficient. Families need basic supports beyond decent affordable housing to thrive: food, education, employment, child care, transportation, health and mental health care, trauma-informed care, and children’s services” (Bassuk 4). While the Mentorship Program alone is not designed to end poverty for a single mother, it is designed to help her exit survival mode and gain the tools and connections she needs to heal from trauma and create a better future for herself and her child(ren). Volunteers

are not always professionals in the field of social work or community development; however, their role is crucial because they can help provide the mothers that they serve with tools and connections to achieve holistic healing.

Non-residents in the Mentorship Program will benefit from having people on their team who want to see them succeed. These are people who will see success as something beyond getting a job or finding stable housing. And while these are of course important aspects of transitioning out of poverty, helping mothers shift their mindset will lead to a more long-term impact. Mindset shift involves addressing those places where they have been hurt (for example, Mary's Home Academy classes will often focus on these broken, traumatic places). John Bryant, author of *How the Poor Can Save Capitalism: Rebuilding the Path to the Middle Class* writes, "a poverty of hope cannot be solved with a nice apartment, a new car, or even a new school building in a neighborhood. This problem has to be attacked from all sides to prevent a self-perpetuating cycle in which the very poverty of the poor seems to justify the poverty itself, in which we come to think of the poor as noncontributing members of society who somehow did it to themselves" (16). The purpose of the mentorship is not only to provide mothers in poverty with tangible skills, but also help address this 'poverty of hope' through trauma-informed mentorship.

For non-residents, the goal of this program would be to see the mothers in stable employment or enrolled in an educational program, living in some type of transitional, temporary, or best-case scenario, stable housing, and connected with other necessary resources such as medical providers and childcare providers. However, it is also understood that exiting poverty and healing from trauma can be an extended process. Therefore, grace and patience on behalf of volunteers are key.

III. Logistics

A. Expanding the Volunteer Team

Volunteers are crucial to the success of both the Family Support Team and Mary's Home Academy. And while there is an existing pool of dedicated volunteers, growing this network will be an important step in implementing an expanded version of both the Family Support Team and Mary's Home Academy. Simone Joyaux, author of *Strategic Fund Development* offers important insight on how to grow a strong team of volunteers. Perhaps most importantly, "volunteers require good enabling to effectively do their work. So staff must be good enablers" (Chapter 2). One of Mary's Home's greatest strengths is their ability to enable volunteers to do their job. Volunteers are an active part of the mission and valued members of the Mary's Home Team. Additionally, Mary's Home has connections to 20-25 different churches in the city through their volunteers (Hoggat). Tapping into this network and advertising volunteer openings directly to churches would be an effective way to attract new volunteers. Volunteer applicants will then go through a screening process in order to determine whether or not they would be a good fit. Because the work that Mary's Home does involves working with vulnerable people, this process is essential. The roles of Volunteer Mentor and Mary's Home Academy Teacher come with a higher commitment than many traditional volunteer positions; however, this helps attract only the people who can dedicate the necessary time and energy to the women at Mary's Home.

Additionally, Mary's Home will hire a paid intern to help build this program and network with potential volunteers. This intern would be asked to commit to 4-6 months at Mary's Home. Having an intern to help start the program will help alleviate some of the responsibility from already busy staff.

1. Child Watch

The Child Watch team provides childcare for mothers while they take evening and weekend classes at Mary's Home Academy. Two volunteers are required per child which means that as more mothers join Mary's Home Academy, it will be a priority to grow the Child Watch team. This team is trained in understanding children who have past trauma—children coming out of poverty often have unique needs and Child Watch sessions are designed to be a space where kids not only have fun, but also receive additional love and support from volunteers. Volunteers for this team will have a passion for working with children and the ability to learn about how trauma presents in children.

2. Mary's Home Academy Teachers

The Mary's Home Academy teachers provide various classes depending on their expertise. The current volunteer team has unique strengths that help provide a rich curriculum. Volunteers for this position must be able to commit to teaching for an entire semester. They must be comfortable in group settings and working with adults who have experienced trauma. Teachers are required to go through the initial application process and then a minimum of one morning of training. They will have access the Volunteer Coordinator for any questions that come up during their time.

3. Family Support

The Family Support Team will specifically be looking for volunteers who are comfortable working with residents in a one-on-one setting. They will need to commit to at least 6 months. Additionally, volunteers will need to be comfortable with building budgets, walking through application processes (could include reviewing resumes, cover letters, statements of purpose, writing reference letters, etc.). They will need to be comfortable and confident when it comes to setting boundaries and be willing to continually give and receive feedback.

IV. Budget and Timeline

Getting this program off the ground would require a fair amount of effort from a staff member. Because of this, the budget will include funds to take on a paid intern for 4-6 months. Pay for this position will be \$17/hour and 15-20 hours a week. The upper end of the total pay is \$8,160. However, after the program is up and running (4-6 months), it can be mostly sustained through volunteers on a fairly minimal budget. In the future, more paid staff may need to be considered as the programs continue to expand. However, for the time being, this program will be self-sustaining with a small budget.

Another \$5,000 will be set aside annually for miscellaneous expenses. For example, a portion of this money may go towards training materials for volunteers such as books or courses related to trauma-informed care. Another portion can be put towards materials for Mary's Home Academy and the Family Support Team. What this money is used for will ultimately be left up to the discretion of each volunteer team leader as well as the Assistant Program Director. Materials may include books, notebooks, art supplies, etc. Finally, a portion will go towards purchasing rideshare gift cards for non-residents if they are unable to find transportation to their Mary's Home Academy classes and Family Support meetings. The program will be implemented in 2022.

V. Evaluation

According to Mark Melvin, author of *Evaluation: An Integrated Framework for Understanding, Guiding, and Improving Policies and Programs*, the purpose of an evaluation is to "improve social conditions" (50). With that said, evaluations of the Mentorship Program will prioritize feedback from program participants and volunteers with the aim of tracking improved livelihoods. It is imperative that the women who are participating in the program are able to give

honest feedback regularly. Feedback can be given either directly to volunteers and staff or it can be communicated anonymously through a feedback box in the front office. Additionally, every six months, non-residents in the mentorship program will be asked to answer the following survey questions:

1. Are you currently employed? If yes, what is your income?
2. Are you pursuing any educational goals? If so, what are they?
3. Please describe your current housing situation. Do you feel stable?
4. Are you regularly seeing medical providers for both physical and mental health services?
5. Do you have consistent childcare in place for your children? What does this look like?
6. What does your current support system look like?
7. What are your future goals?
8. How can the Mentorship Program be improved? What did you find most and least helpful?

A consistent cycle of feedback is the core of the evaluation process for the Mentorship Program. The goal is to constantly improve and adjust based on the needs of the program participants and volunteers.

VI. Conclusion

The Mentorship Program is designed to be integrated with other resources available in Colorado Springs in order to promote holistic healing. Mary's Home cannot take on each woman who interviews as a resident; however, Mary's Home Academy and the Family Support Team

are both unique aspects of Mary's Home that could be extended to qualifying non-residents as well, under the Mentorship Program. This will help fill a gap in Colorado Springs for single mothers seeking support in their journey to exit poverty permanently. Additionally, because these programs are primarily volunteer-led, expanding the volunteer team will lead to increased education among the non-poor about the complexities of poverty, especially when it comes to single mothers. Overall, the Mentorship Program would be a valuable resource to the community by helping address the issue of poverty while also bridging the gap in understanding among the non-poor when it comes to the reality and complexity of the lives of these single mothers.

Works Cited

- Bassuk, Ellen L., et al. "Services Matter: How Housing and Services Can End Family Homelessness." *The Bassuk Center*, 2015.
- Boucher, Megan C. "Ten Talents: The Role of Church-Based Programs in the Microfinance Industry." *Missiology*, 40.2, 2102, pp. 167-179. mis.sagepub.com/content/40/2/167.
- Bryant, John Hope. *How the Poor Can Save Capitalism: Rebuilding the Path to the Middle Class*. Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc., 2015.
- "Dream Centers Volunteer Handbook." *Dream Centers*. June 2019.
- Fulcher, Becky. *Personal Interview*. 27 July 2021.
- Harrleson, Sue. *Personal Interview*. 13 August 2021.
- Hoggat, Mary. *Personal Interview*. 22 July 2021.
- Joyaux, Simone P. *Strategic Fund Development: Building Profitable Relationships That Last*. Hoboken, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2011. Kindle Edition.
- Mark, Melvin M., Gary T. Henry, and George Julnes. "Defining Evaluation Purposes." *Evaluation: An Integrated Framework for Understanding, Guiding, and Improving Motivational Interviewing and Coaching Tips*. Mary's Home Academy Teacher Handout. 2021.
- "Who Qualifies for Mary's Home?" *Dream Centers*.
<https://www.dreamcenters.com/marys-home/>.

Comprehensive Works Cited

- *Banerjee, Abhijit V., and Esther Duflo. "Low Hanging Fruit for Better (Global) Health?" *Poor Economics: A Radical Rethinking of the Way to Fight Global Poverty*. New York: PublicAffairs, 2011.
- Bassuk, Ellen L., et al. "America's Youngest Outcasts: A Report Card on Child Homelessness." *American Institutes for Research*, Nov. 2014.
- Bassuk, Ellen L., and William R. Beardslee. "Depression in Homeless Mothers: Addressing an Unrecognized Public Health Issue." *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, vol. 84, no. 1, 2014, pp. 73–81. EBSCOhost, <https://doi.org/10.1037/h0098949>.
- Bassuk, Ellen L., et al. "Services Matter: How Housing and Services Can End Family Homelessness." *The Bassuk Center*, 2015.
- Bear, Lisa. *Personal Interview*. 9 August 2021.
- *Beck, Richard. *Unclean: Meditations on Purity, Hospitality, and Mortality*. Cascade Books, 2011.
- *Bornstein, David, and Susan Davis. *Social Entrepreneurship: What Everyone Needs to Know*. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2010.
- *Boucher, Megan C. "Ten Talents: The Role of Church-Based Programs in the Microfinance Industry." *Missiology*, 40.2, 2102, pp. 167-179. mis.sagepub.com/content/40/2/167.
- *Bryant, John Hope. *How the Poor Can Save Capitalism: Rebuilding the Path to the Middle Class*. Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc., 2015.
- *Campbell-Johnson, Michael. "Romero's Legacy." 30th Anniversary of Romero's Death, 24 March 2010.

Christopher, Karen. "A 'Pauperization of Motherhood'? Single Motherhood and Women's Poverty over Time." *Journal of Poverty*, vol. 9, no. 3, Sept. 2005, pp. 1–23.

EBSCOhost, doi:10.1300/J134v09n03_01.

*Clifford, Paula. *Theology from the Global South: Perspectives on Christian Aid's Work*. Christian Aid, 2010.

"Colorado Springs Churches and Cathedrals." *World Guides*, www.world-guides.com/north-america/usa/colorado/colorado-springs/colorado_springs_churches.

DeMeritt, Stephanie. *Personal Interview*. 15 July 2021.

de Thierry, Betsy. *The Simple Guide to Child Trauma: What It Is and How to Help*. Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2016.

"Dream Centers Volunteer Handbook." *Dream Centers*. June 2019.

*Easterly, William. "Planners vs. Searchers." *The White Man's Burden: Why the West's efforts to aid the rest have done so much ill and so little good*, New York: Penguin, 2006.

*Everett, Jim A.C. "Intergroup Contact Theory: Past, Present, and Future." *The Inquisitive Mind*, 2013, www.in-mind.org/article/intergroup-contact-theory-past-present-and-future.

"Frequently Asked Questions." *Dream Centers*, www.dreamcenters.com/faq/.

Feuerbacher, Haley. "The Unmarried (M)Other: A Study of Christianity, Capitalism, and Counternarratives Concerning Motherhood and Marriage in the United States and South Africa." *Religious Studies Theses and Dissertations*, 12 Dec. 2019.

Fulcher, Becky. *Personal Interview*. 27 July 2021.

Gianis, Kadyn. *Personal Interview*. 22 July 2021.

Gultekin, Laura E., et al. "Health Risks and Outcomes of Homelessness in School-Age Children and Youth: A Scoping Review of the Literature." *Journal of School Nursing*, vol. 36, no. 1, Feb. 2020, pp. 10–18. EBSCOhost.

*Haitch, Russell, and Donald Miller. "Storytelling As a Means of Peacemaking: A Case Study of Christian Education in Africa." *Religious Education*, vol. 101, no. 3, 2006.

*Hammond, Sue. *The Thin Book of Appreciative Inquiry*. 3rd ed. Bend, OR: Thin Book Publishing, 2013.

Harrleson, Sue. *Personal Interview*. 13 August 2021.

Hoggat, Mary. *Personal Interview*. 11 February 2021.

Hoggat, Mary. *Personal Interview*. 22 July 2021.

*Holmes, Seth M. *Fresh Fruit, Broken Bodies: Migrant Farmworkers in the United States*. Univ. of California Press, 2014.

*Joyaux, Simone P. *Strategic Fund Development: Building Profitable Relationships That Last*. Hoboken, John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2011. Kindle Edition.

*Katongole, Emmanuel and Rice, Chris, *Reconciling All Things: A Christian Vision for Justice, Peace and Healing*, InterVarsity Press, 2008.

*Kelley, Tom, and David Kelley. *Creative Confidence: Unleashing the Creative Potential Within Us All*. Crown Publishing Group, 2013.

*Kunkel, Petra. *The Art of Leading Collectively: Co-Creating a Sustainable, Socially Just Future*. Chelsea Green Publishing, 2016.

*Lederach, John Paul *Reconcile: Conflict Transformation for Ordinary Christians*. Herald Press, 2014.

Linden, Isabelle A., et al. "Addiction in Maternity: Prevalence of Mental Illness, Substance Use,

and Trauma.” *Journal of Aggression, Maltreatment & Trauma*, vol. 22, no. 10, Nov. 2013, pp. 1070–84. EBSCOhost, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10926771.2013.845279>.

Maddalena, Julie A. Mavity. “Floodwaters and the Ticking Clock: The Systematic Oppression and Stigmatization of Poor, Single Mothers in America and Christian Theological Responses.” *Cross Currents*, vol. 63, no. 2, June 2013, pp. 148–173. EBSCOhost.

Maid. Directed by John Wells, 2021. *Netflix*.

Mark, Melvin M., Gary T. Henry, and George Julnes. "Defining Evaluation Purposes." *Evaluation: An Integrated Framework for Understanding, Guiding, and Improving*

*Merriam, Sharan B., and Elizabeth J. Tisdell. *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation*. Jossey-Bass, 2016.

Milaney, Katrina, et al. “Recognizing and Responding to Women Experiencing Homelessness with Gendered and Trauma-Informed Care.” *BMC Public Health*, vol. 20, no. 1, Mar. 2020, pp. 1–6. EBSCOhost, doi:10.1186/s12889-020-8353-1.

“Motivational Interviewing Gems for Coaching”. *Dream Centers Mary’s Home*. September 2020.

Motivational Interviewing and Coaching Tips. Mary’s Home Academy Teacher Handout. 2021.

Mould Tom. “Welfare, Politics, and Folklore: Overcoming the Narrative Bias Against Public Assistance in the U.S.” *Journal of Folklore Research*, vol. 57, no. 2, May 2020, pp. 1–39. EBSCOhost, doi:10.2979/jfolkrese.57.2.01.

*Myers, Bryant L. *Walking with the Poor: Principles and Practices of Transformational Development*. Orbis Books, 2011.

New International Version. Biblica, 1983, www.biblestudytools.com/niv/.

"Our Vision." *Focus on the Family*, www.focusonthefamily.com/about/foundational-values/.

Parker, Bethany. *Personal Interview*. 27 July 2021.

Payne, Ruby K. *A Framework for Understanding Poverty: A Cognitive Approach for Educators, Policymakers, Employers, and Service Providers*. Aha! Process, Inc., 2019.

Ruether, Rosemary Radford. "Sexism and Misogyny in the Christian Tradition: Liberating Alternatives." *Buddhist-Christian Studies*, vol. 34, University of Hawai'i Press, 2014, pp. 83–94, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24801355>.

*Salter McNeil, Brenda. *Roadmap to Reconciliation 2.0: Moving Communities into Unity, Wholeness and Justice*. Revised and expanded, InterVarsity Press, 16 June 2020.

Schrag, Allison, and Ada Schmidt-Tieszen. "Social Support Networks of Single Young Mothers." *Child & Adolescent Social Work Journal*, vol. 31, no. 4, Aug. 2014, pp. 315–27. EBSCOhost, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10560-013-0324-2>.

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. *Trauma-Informed Care in Behavioral Health Services*. Treatment Improvement Protocol (TIP) Series 57. HHS Publication No. (SMA) 13-4801. 2014.

Van der Kolk, Bessel. *The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma*. Penguin Books, 2015.

"Who Qualifies for Mary's Home?" *Dream Centers*.

<https://www.dreamcenters.com/marys-home/>.

*Vogl, Charles. *The Art of Community: Seven Principles for Belonging*. Barrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc, 2016.