Dear Margot,

I sincerely wanted to thank you for allowing me to work with you over the past two semesters. I have gained considerably more insight into the connections between racial disparity and homelessness. I hope that my report may be of use to you and Homeward in your pursuit to seek options to mitigate racial disparity among the future homeless population in Richmond City, Virginia.

A few comments:

When available, I utilized primary sources, i.e. Bureau of Labor, Department of Education, Virginia Department of Corrections (VDOC), Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS), Richmond Department of Social Services, etc. When primary sources were unavailable, I utilized peer-reviewed journal articles and publications. Given the complexities of the topic and the limited amount of city-wide data, there were multiple instances when I contacted specific statewide and citywide agencies and requested relevant information; I spoke with influential employees from agencies varying from: ChildSavers, VDOC-Office of Work Release, VDOC – Office of Statistical Analysis and Forecast Unit, VDSS Child Care Division (subsidy licensing, wait list management, etc.).

I dedicated roughly 15-25 hours/week, for 14 weeks, researching, calculating, and writing about this topic. I approached the topic, "Mitigating Racial Disparity Among the Homeless Population in Richmond City, Virginia" by analyzing present trends and questioning why an individual becomes homeless. When analyzing present trends, I utilized the January 2014-December 2018 Quarterly Reports and the Prioritization spreadsheet, that you pulled for me from HCIS, as well as the Point-in-Time (PIT) Count from 2008-2018, located on Homeward's website. As we discussed, the PIT data is not representative of the entire homeless population in Richmond. However, since the PIT count is the only mechanism used to collect information about a homeless individual's education and incarceration history, I did utilize it to make certain assumptions.

Given the limitations of available data, I had to make various assumptions throughout the report. The majority of the assumptions can be found in the "Main Assumptions" worksheet within the attached Benefit-Cost Analysis (BCA) spreadsheet. However, specific assumptions are also mentioned throughout the report. I attempted to be as clear and concise as possible. Given the extensive amount of research available on this topic and the limited time window, I made a judgement call on what costs and benefits to focus on. Please be aware: there are considerably more benefits associated with the suggested alternatives, than are listed in the analysis. Unfortunately, not all primary and secondary benefits were able to be included. If time allows, it is recommended that Homeward dedicate time to creating a full-scale BCA on the suggested alternatives.

I only considered options that would be administratively feasible and cost effective for Homeward. Therefore, while increased section 8 housing would be beneficial for the target population, it was not considered due to the constraints. The recommended alternatives suggest that Homeward engage in collaboration with existing community program and sectors, outside of the traditional housing services. I anticipated that the maximum cost to Homeward would be the hiring of one Community & Social Service Specialist. This individual's role is discussed in the implementation section of the report.

Throughout my research, I found that early childhood care and education has fundamental implications on an individual's success in life, as defined by society (academic achievement, economic stability, criminal justice system involvement, mental and physical health, etc.). As I am sure you are aware, there are also

significant connections between race, incarceration, and homelessness. Therefore, my short-term recommendation focuses on prevention of homelessness as it relates to incarceration. My long-term recommendation focuses on early child care intervention strategies by increasing access to subsidized early child care for at-risk minority children. Both approaches suggest that Homeward expand its scope beyond housing services and collaborate across sectors in the community to target areas that strongly influence whether an individual becomes homeless.

Please note that this report is a detailed snapshot of the current situation and potential remedies. Given the extensive scope of the issue, the information provided is not completely exhaustive. I hope that this report may deliver useful information to you, Homeward, and the Richmond community.

Thank you,

Monika Merk

Expanding Richmond's Community Collaborations

Holistic Path Towards Mitigating Racial Disparity Among the Future Homeless Population in Richmond, Virginia

Prepared for: Dr. Margot Ackermann, PhD

Research and Evaluation Director

Homeward

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The ability to dedicate such extensive time on this important topic has been a goal of mine for over three years. I am thankful that Homeward - and specifically, Dr. Margot Ackermann- gave me the opportunity to conduct a policy analysis on a critically-significant topic. I am thankful that I was able to learn and grow from so many of my classmates. I want to thank my good friend Stephanie Watson. We made it through the most memorable parts of graduate school together and I am grateful that I have gained such a wonderfully genuine and caring friend. I would like to thank Professor Scheppach, Professor Shobe, and Professor Shimshack. These three professors' knowledge and passion for the subject made me fascinated with budgeting, benefit-cost-analysis, and microeconomics. I thank each of them for their engaging teaching styles and for their unwavering commitment to their students.

Finally, I dedicate my Applied Policy Project (APP) to my brother, Christian Merk and my soon-to-be sister-in-law, Noel Furnish. The amount of support and encouragement that you two have given me over the past two years, is unsurpassable. From the bottom of my heart, thank you. Thank you for more dinners than I can count, for all of the refreshing and fun Remi-dog walks, and for showing me Charlottesville.

Disclaimer

The author conducted this study as part of the program of professional education at the Frank Batten School of Leadership and Public Policy, University of Virginia. This paper is submitted in partial fulfillment of the course requirements for the Master of Public Policy degree. The judgments and conclusions are solely those of the author, and are not necessarily endorsed by the Batten School, by the University of Virginia, or by any other entity.

On my honor as a student, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid on this assignment.

Recoverable Signature

X Monika Merk

Monika Merk

Signed by: Monika M. Merk 3

Monika Merk

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Acronyms

CCC: _____ Commonwealth Catholic Charities

CoC: _____ Continuum of Care

FUSE: _____ Frequent Users Systems Engagement

GRA: _____ Greater Richmond Area

GRCoC: _____ Greater Richmond Continuum of Care

HUD: _____ United States Department of Housing and Urban Development

NIMBY: _____ Not in My Backyard

OCWB: _____ Office of Community Wealth Building

PIT: _____ Point-in-Time Count

PSH: _____ Permanent Supportive Housing

RPS: _____ Richmond Public Schools

S+C: _____ Shelter Plus Care

SES: _____ Socio-economic Status

S.S. _____ Social Security

SRO: _____ Single Room Occupancy

TANF: _____ Temporary Assistance for Needy Families

USICH: _____ United States Interagency Council on Homelessness

VADOC: _____ Virginia Department of Corrections

VDSS: _____ Virginia Department of Social Services

VPI: _____ Virginia Preschool Initiative

GLOSSARY

Continuum of Care (CoC): "A concept involving a system that guides and tracks patients over time through a comprehensive array of health services spanning all levels and intensity of care. The services can be broken down into seven basic categories: Extended care, Acute hospital care, Ambulatory care, Home care, Outreach, Wellness, Housing. The four basic integrating mechanisms are: Planning and management, Care coordination, Case-based financing, Integrated information systems." – Health Information and Management Systems Society (HMISS) (N/d)

Economically Disadvantaged Child: when a child is part of a family that is living at 200 percent of the poverty level and, "lives in a family that struggles to meet basic needs, such as food, housing, utilities, child care, and transportation (Voices for Virginia's Children, 2018).

Greater Richmond Continuum of Care: "serves as the Continuum of Care (CoC) for its geographic area of the city of Richmond, and the counties of Chesterfield, Hanover, Henrico, Powhatan, Goochland, New Kent and Charles City. The Continuum of Care (COC) was designed to address homelessness through a coordinated community-based process of identifying needs and building a system of housing and services to address those needs. The Greater Richmond CoC seeks to prevent, reduce, and end homelessness through effective and coordinated community-wide efforts and services." -Homeward (2016)

Homeless: a term used to describe someone that lacks a fixed, regular, or adequate nighttime residence, i.e. someone that is sleeping in a public or private location that is not ordinarily meant for human habitation. Examples include, but are not limited to: staying in one's vehicle, on the street, in abandoned buildings, or in parks (Henry, et al. 2018). Because there are varying kinds of homelessness, please refer to the annex for a more in-depth breakdown.

Housing First: "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. Housing First does not require people experiencing homelessness to address the all of their problems including behavioral health problems, or to graduate through a series of services programs before they can access housing." – National Alliance to End Homelessness, 2016

Racial disparity: when the proportion of a racial/ethnic group within a system is proportionally higher than in the general population (Schrantz & McElroy. 2000).

Wealth: Net worth or assets, minus liabilities (Boshara, et al. 2015)

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

African Americans are overrepresented, on average, by 15 percentage points in Richmond City's homeless system (Homeward, 2019). African Americans make up, on average, 68 percent of the homeless population in the city but only account for 48 percent of the city's population. In comparison, white people make up 41 percent of Richmond city's population but only account for, on average, 29 percent of the homeless population (U.S. Census Bureau, n/d & Homeward, 2019).

The intent behind this report is not to present ideas about how to tackle racial disparity, housing, and homelessness among the city's current homeless population. Rather, the goal is to provide suggestions about how Homeward may begin to mitigate intergenerational issues that have strong correlations with the likelihood that a low-income disenfranchised individual, will become homeless. While benefits will be observable in the short-term, the long-term effects may not be fully appreciated for a generation or two. It should be understood that the presented recommendation is designed to supplement and complement Homeward's current operations, and it is not designed to replace existing procedures.

The ideal policy to confront and address racial disparity among the homeless community in Richmond, VA, will be assessed in terms of the following policy goals: impact on racial disparity, impact on equity, impact on cost, sustainability, and administrative feasibility. The goal is to reduce racial disparity among the City's homeless population. Between 2014-2018, there was an average increase in 228 African Americans experiencing homelessness, per year (Homeward, 2019). Therefore, the ideal policy will prevent this average increase in 228 African Americans per year, allowing Homeward and other housing services to assist the current homeless population, steadily decreasing the total number of black individuals experiencing homelessness.

This report will explain and analyze two policy options that intend to meet the above policy criteria. Aside from the option of "letting present trends continue" the approaches laid out in this report take a holistic approach to tackling future homelessness. Effort and attention are given to variables that strongly correlate with one's likelihood of becoming homeless, such as early childhood development and re-entry into society from incarceration. Ultimately, it is the recommendation of the author that Homeward implement both alternatives. Alternative two provides a prevention strategy that produces immediate results whereas alternative three offers a long-run approach aimed increasing access to early child care services, credits, and/or subsidies for low-income families living in Richmond City's South Side, North Side, and East End neighborhoods. Implementation of the alternatives could begin as early as the summer of 2019.

BACKGROUND

Problem Statement: African Americans are over-represented by 20 percentage points in Richmond City's homeless system.

Hypothesis: Racial disparity exists in Richmond City, VA in large part because of the inaccessibility of quality services and opportunities, coupled with intergenerational poverty.

Homelessness is a symptom of market and government failures. The interconnected nature of the system leads to an unfortunate circumstance (e.g. necessary car repairs) having a domino-like effect across other aspects of one's livelihood. Unstable and unreliable societal and/or personal foundations may increase citizen vulnerability and aid the progression of homelessness. Housing, income, education, criminal justice involvement, transportation, and healthcare are just a few of the interconnected systems that still disproportionately provide limitations for low-income black residents, nationwide and in Richmond City.

Traditional housing approaches are ineffective at tackling the root causes behind why people become homeless. Subsidized housing, shelter space, and food pantries, to name a few, are beneficial and necessary for providing basic services to the current people experiencing homelessness. However, the cost of housing is rarely *the reason* behind why an individual becomes homeless. While it may sound counterintuitive, housing and homelessness are not as interconnected as one may think.

Researchers Mago et al. (2013) published in *BMC Medical Informatics and Decision-making,* found that education, family breakdown, addiction, and criminal justice system involvement are the strongest predictors for why an individual becomes homeless. The researchers applied a Fuzzy Cognitive Map (FCM) approach in order to analyze the impact and interdependence of various social factors on homelessness. It should be mentioned that, while commonly associated factors related to homelessness, were included, not all known social factors made it into the analysis. Please refer to "Appendix-Background" for a visualization of how the researcher's used a "common sense map" in order to breakdown connection points within the systems.

Table 8 Degree centrality and closeness centrality of every concept

Concepts	Degree centrality	Closeness centrality
Criminal Justice System Involvement	3.0485	9.9514
Poverty	2.0451	8.3195
Unemployment	2.3763	9.0566
Education	5.4201	11.1514
Income	1.3978	8.3441
Addiction	3.7027	9.9533
Social Support Network	0.8656	9.1302
Family Breakdown	2.2862	9.9533
Mental Illness	2.2609	9.9446
NGO	0.5000	8.3472
Childhood Homelessness	1.2500	8.3445
Government Assistance	1.3844	8.3443
Cost of Housing	0.4984	8.3194

Public opinion has long held that homelessness can only be mitigated and not cured (Teixeira, 2017). This report maintains that by directing attention and services on root cause issues, homelessness can, be cured, and prevented from occurring in the first place.

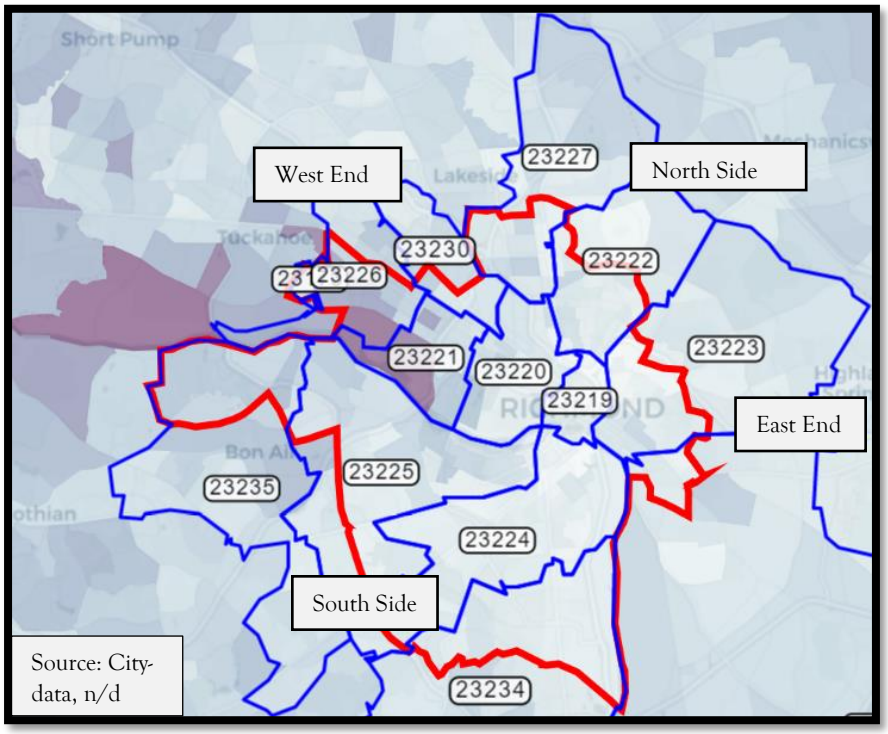
RICHMOND CITY

The city of Richmond, Virginia has a population of roughly 213,700 people. Forty-eight percent of its citizens identify as black or African American, 40 percent identify as white, and 6 percent identify as Hispanic/Latino(a). (U.S. Census Bureau, 2018). Richmond's demographic makeup does not resemble that of the nation. The city's African American population is more than three times higher than the national African American population of 13 percent; the city's white population is roughly 40 percent compared to the national white population of 60 percent (not Hispanic or Latino(a)) (U.S. Census Bureau, n/d). This report uses the terms, "African American" and black interchangeably. This report uses the term "white" to represent only the white, non-Hispanic non0Latino(a) population.

Snapshot of Richmond's Homeless Geography

> "The effects of long-standing discrimination linger and perpetuate disparities in poverty, housing, criminal justice, and health care, among other areas. These disparities, in turn, can contribute to more African Americans experiencing homelessness."
>
> – National Alliance to End Homelessness, 2019

The housing and highway policies of the twentieth century largely shaped the geographic communities that are found in Richmond City, today. The ability to access quality services is limited for residents based on where in the city they live, their income, and the availability of public transportation. The city is divided into four regions: the north side, east end, south side, and west end. The west end is known for being more suburbanized, with more white and affluent residents, than are found in the other three regions.



(Note: the author inserted the four geographic names onto the map, for context)

Roughly 88 percent of homeless individuals in Richmond, between 2014-2018, identified with just 5 zip codes: 23223, 23224, 23222, 23220, 23225 (Homeward & HCIS, 2019).

Please refer to "Appendix E-Richmond City" for a breakdown of the population demographics that are found within these zip codes. Three of the five zip codes have the following characteristics.

- a population that is predominantly black
- higher poverty rates than the city's average of 25.2 percent
- more than double the state's poverty rate of 11.2 percent
- higher eviction rates than the city's average rate of 11 percent
  (Data USA, n/d, Howell, 2018).

It is presumed that the migration of Virginia Commonwealth University students, into predominantly black neighborhoods like Carver (23220), and young white professionals' migration into the neighborhoods of Westover Hills (23225), is leading to gentrification and displacement. Leading gentrification experts, Loretta Lees, Tom Slater, and Elvin Wyly have suggested adding the term "studentification" to describe gentrification caused by college students (Osman, 2015). Therefore, while the zip code 23220 now has a predominantly white population, and 23225 is beginning to even out racially, it is highly unlikely that this was the scenario- a decade or two ago.

Racially and ethnically concentrated areas of poverty (RECAP) are present in the North side, East end, and South side (Benjamin, 2018). Between 2014-2018, A quarter of the homeless population, identified with the East End zip code: 23223. It just so happens that this zip code also has two notorious public housing complexes, experiencing high rates of poverty and crime: Creighton Court and Mosby Court. Commonly, the poverty rate is used as a proxy for neighborhood distress (Communitas Consulting, 2017).

Virginia Commonwealth University's Eviction Lab has found that, the eviction rate within a neighborhood increases as the share of African Americans, within that neighborhood, also increases (Benjamin, 2018). In 2016, nearly 60 percent of black heads-of-households, nationwide, were renters, compared to 30% of white heads-of-households. In a survey, almost three quarters of renters stated that they wanted to own a home at some point but cited financial reasons as the main driver behind why they are still renting and not owning. (Cilluffo, et al. 2017).

Princeton's Eviction Lab (2018) found that, out of the nation's top 100 largest cities with the highest eviction rates, Richmond City ranked second, with roughly 17 evictions per day. In other words, the eviction rate per 100-renter occupied households is 11.44 percent. Richmond's eviction rate is three to four times higher than the national eviction rate. Certain Richmond neighborhoods, particularly Battery Park in the North side and along Hull Street on the South side, have an average eviction rate that is at least three times higher than the city's average, 76 percent and 33 percent, respectively (Teresa, 2018).

Snapshot of Richmond's Homeless Population

In 2014, roughly 1,880 people were considered homeless in Richmond City, Virginia. African Americans represented 68 percent of the total homeless population and whites accounted for 31 percent (other races accounted for the last one percent). Within five years' time, the city's homeless population increased by 30 percent. Over 3,000 people were identified as homeless throughout 2018. African American representation increased to 71 percent of the total, while white representation decreased to 27 percent. In the span of five years, the African American homeless population grew by over 900 people compared to an increase in white homelessness of 265 (Homeward & HCIS, 2019).

Figure 1 shows that, as overall homelessness increased, so too did homelessness among African Americans. However, homelessness among white individuals remained relatively constant, with a slight increase in 2018.

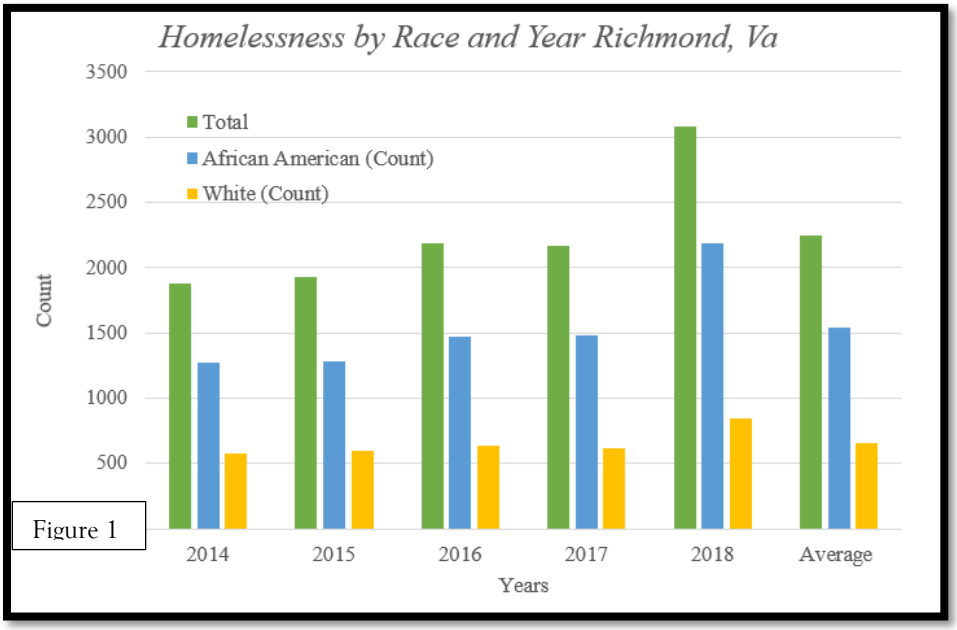


Figure 1

Figure 1 Source: Homeward & HCIS, 2019

Barriers to Ending Homelessness

> "To understand racial inequality today, it is crucial to approach racial inequality from a multigenerational perspective" (Sharkey, 2013).

When it comes to garnering community support for homeless solutions, stigma and stereotypes often make progress difficult. The public tends to overlook the relationship between homelessness and poverty or other foundational causes. Instead, individuals are more inclined to believe that homelessness stems from individual circumstances and poor choices (Teixeira, 2017). Individuals that follow this approach are more likely to overestimate the relationship between housing and homelessness.

When impactful and influential variables are not addressed, they are likely to be passed down to the next generation and continue the cycle of instability. Patterns show that it takes five generations to move from a low-income neighborhood to one where the average income is close to the national average (Sharkey, 2013). This implies that neighborhood characteristics affect mobility and economic progress for low-income individuals.

TRADITIONAL HOUSING APPROACH & AN UNCERTAIN FUTURE

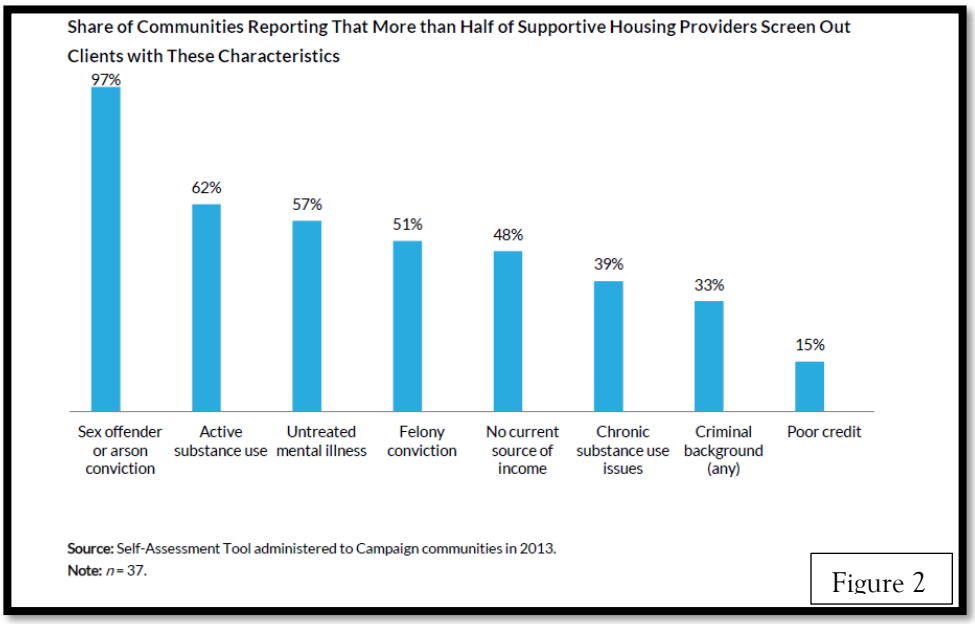
In Virginia in 2018, roughly 6,000 people were identified as experiencing homelessness on any given night (USIH, 2018). Richmond City's homeless population accounted for 13 percent of that total. Advocates for ending homelessness have often relied on traditional housing models such as the Housing First model. The Housing First approach gained legitimacy and popularity during the nationwide 100,000 Homes Campaign. The campaign successfully placed 105,000 chronically homeless individuals and/or homeless veterans into permanent housing, regardless of their health and/or substance abuse status (Leopold & Ho, 2015).

The Housing First Model is currently a top approach in tackling current homelessness. However, it is unlikely that the model alone will be able to keep up with the consistent growth of homelessness, in large part, because supportive housing services have been declining. Of the communities that participated in the 100,000 Homes Campaign, 68 percent indicated that the lack of supportive housing vacancies was the biggest barrier to reaching the desired housing placement goal (Leopold & Ho, 2015). The limitations of Housing First in Richmond are apparent given the unavailability of subsidized housing coupled with the growing rate of homelessness. The U.S Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) reported a shortfall of 5.1 million rental units that were in acceptable physical condition. This shortfall was mentioned during the same time period as the Campaign, adding increasing difficulty in securing affordable housing (Egleton, et al. 2016).

Even with a four-year national effort to house the most vulnerable individuals, the lack of government-assisted housing provided a barrier to fully address this issue. There is no national effort to mitigate racial disparity among the African American homeless population. Even if there were, there would not be nearly enough government-assisted housing available to house the low-income African Americans that are experiencing homelessness in Richmond City. Furthermore, because systemic inequality present in the criminal justice system results in African Americans being more likely to have a criminal record, *i.e.* an "undesirable tenant characteristic," the traditional model of providing government-assisted housing to mitigate racial disparity among the homeless, is an ineffective approach.

Figure 2 captures the reality of hard-to-house individuals: even though the effort to house the most vulnerable individuals was the focus, supportive housing providers often screened out those who were perceived to be undesirable tenants.

Figure 2.
Source: Lepold & Ho, 2015



EVALUATIVE CRITERIA

The goal is to reduce racial disparity among the African American homeless population by preventing, at least 228 at-risk individuals from entering the homeless system every year.

It is assumed that the overall racial and ethnic demographics in Richmond, City will not notably change during the policy intervention

Policy options that mitigate racial disparity among the homeless population in Richmond City need to be assessed against the following policy goals: impact on the reduction of homelessness among African Americans, impact on equity, impact on cost, sustainability, and administrative feasibility.

Criterion	Definition
Impact on Racial Disparity	The ideal policy will prevent an increase in racial disparity, among the homeless population. Between 2014-2018, there was an average increase in 228 African Americans per year experiencing homelessness (Homeward, 2019). Therefore, the ideal policy will prevent an average increase in 228 African Americans, entering the homeless system, per year.
Impact on Equity	The ideal policy will establish more access to opportunity. The likelihood that an individual becomes homeless should not depend on one's race, class, or wealth.
Impact on Cost	The ideal policy should be able to access funding through federal, state, and local government grants and/or through private and foundational support. If funding is not currently accessible within Homeward's budget, it should be sought out. The policy costs should not financially burden Homeward; it would be beneficial if CoC funding could be utilized to fund the program.
Sustainability	Sustainability relates to the ability to have consistent and committed partnerships between community collaborations. Funding is heavily reliant upon the political climate and social interest. The ideal policy will be able to have a secure funding mechanism in place relevant to carrying out the objective.
Administrative Feasibility	The ideal policy will be relatively easy to implement. It is beneficial if the policy expands upon an existing system since that will save time and energy in assessing the outcomes and implementation.

EVALUATION OF POLICY ALTERNATIVES

Alternative 1: Let Present Trends Continue

In 2018, the Continuum of Care (CoC) adjusted the city's coordinated entry system. The city's coordinated entry system from 2011-2016, the "hub" of coordinated entry, was a program called Homeless Point of Entry (HPE), ran by the Commonwealth Catholic Charities (CCC). HPE operated out of a brick and mortar building, near the heart of the city and was relatively accessible for individuals who were homeless and/or within 14 days of facing homelessness. Individuals would be able to go to a specific address and have the ability to speak with a social worker about their housing concerns.

Between 2017-2018, HPE's coordinated entry system was replaced by the Homeless Crisis Line that homeless individuals and/or individuals within three days of becoming homeless, can call. While there are "connection points" throughout the city, the clarity and familiarity of a "one-stop-shop" may be lost on some. Individuals experiencing homelessness are less likely to have access to a working telephone, know where to find free access to a phone, and/or have available minutes on their phone, throughout the month. While it requires 10 years' worth of data to determine a trend, the preliminary findings from the percent change in the 2017-2018 Quarterly Report show an increase in 42 percent of the overall homeless population and a 47 percent increase in the number of African Americans experiencing homelessness (Homeward & HCIS, 2019). This change could be due to an increase in collected data, overrepresentation of the number of people that are homeless, and/or an increase in the number of people experiencing homelessness in the city. While no clear explanation for this increase has been determined, the potential implications of changing the coordinated entry system should be thoroughly analyzed.

More than half the 6,630 homeless individuals that provided income information for years 2014-2018, earned less than $750/month and 21 percent had $0 income/month (Homeward & HCIS, 2019). On Average, 68 percent of the homeless individuals that were surveyed in the PIT Count in Richmond, between 2008-2018, had spent "some time in jail or prison" (Homeward, 2008-2018). The present system is actively addressing a considerable workload. Given the barriers that the community's homeless population is facing, the system may have difficulty reducing disparity while attempting to house the current homeless population.

It is uncertain whether the increase in homelessness in 2018 was an anomaly or the start of a new trend. The future of the "Letting Present Trends Continue" alternative looks unclear at this point. As mentioned earlier in the report, subsidized housing is becoming increasingly more difficult to attain, the Housing First Model is already highly practiced in the city, and financial prevention assistance is not easily accessible. Even if an individual were to receive a highly-sought after housing voucher, there is no guarantee that this individual would be able to utilize it. If a subsidy-approved individual does not locate a subsidy-accepting unit, that is willing to rent to them, then it is possible that the time horizon for securing a unit had passed and the subsidy would expire.

Criterion Analysis. Please Refer to Appendix C: Outcomes Matrix for Detailed Explanations

Impact on Racial Disparity	Low
Impact on Equity	Low
Impact of Cost	N/A – Grants & Subsidies (redistribution of services has no transfer costs)
Sustainability	Medium
Administrative Feasibility	High

Alternative 2: Connect Ex-Felons with the Work Opportunity Tax Credit

Literature Review: Incarceration & Homelessness

The Prison Policy Initiative (2018) found that formerly incarcerated individuals are ten times more likely to become homeless than the general public. Research findings also revealed that 1 in every 111 released prisoners in the United States becomes homeless as a result of limited access to resources to facilitate reintegration (National Law Center for Homelessness and Poverty, 2013). Racial disparities persist in incarceration rates. **Black men overall are six times more likely to be incarcerated than white men and black men between the ages of 19 and 21 are 9.5 times more likely to be incarcerated than their white counterpart.** It follows that proportionately more African American men will become homeless, as a result of incarceration and insufficient discharge (DOJ, 2013 & Egleton, et al. 2016).

Virginia's correctional facilities held 36,860 incarcerated inmates in 2016. The Central Region of Virginia, which includes Richmond City, had 11,795 incarcerated inmates in 2016. Given the limited available data about the number or incarcerated Richmond City residents in the Central Region, assumptions had to be made. It was determined that Richmond City residents accounted for 13 percent or 1,500 incarcerated inmates and that African Americans represent 57 percent of that total number and whites account for 40 percent. For a detailed explanation about how I came to this conclusion, please refer to Appendix F for table, "Incarceration Demographics" that explains the demographic makeup of the inmates.

Based on the Sentencing Project (n/d), Virginia's black imprisonment rate, in 2014, totaled 1,386 (per 100,000 residents) and the white imprisonment rate was 280 (per 100,000 residents). With the exception of "Juvenile Detention," forecasts predict that the state's offender population is not expected to decrease in the next five years (Office of the Secretary of Public Safety and Homeland Security, 2018).

> "For many young males, especially African Americans and Hispanics, the threat of going to prison or jail is no threat at all but rather an expected or accepted part of life." – Irwin & Austin (1997) (Pettit & Western, 2004)

Re-integration into the community is a daunting endeavor for a variety of reasons. Most notably because of challenges relating to: securing employment and income, family support, and "systematic barriers such as public housing restrictions and landlord discrimination" (Egleton, et al. 2016). Over half of the 650,000 inmates that are released every year, are re-incarcerated within three years (Jail to Jobs, 2017). Research suggests that a large reason behind this recidivism rate is because 50-80 percent of released inmates are unable to secure a consistent job within six months of release (Minor, et al. 2017). There is evidence that the strongest correlation with recidivism is the failure to obtain suitable employment (Minor, et al. 2017).

Background: Work Opportunity Tax Credit

The Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) is a federal tax credit that is provided to businesses as an incentive for them to participate in hiring individuals from any of the following ten specific target groups: Qualified IV-A Recipient (TANF), Qualified Veteran, **Ex-Felon**, Designated Community Resident, Vocational Rehabilitation Referral, Summer Youth Employee, SSI Recipient, SNAP Recipient, Long-Term Family Assistance Recipient, and Qualified Long-term Unemployment Recipient (IRS, n/d). The WOTC refers to felons as "ex-felons." Please be aware that the program's definition of a qualified ex-felon is, "a person hired within a year of: Being convicted of a felony or Being released from prison from the felony" (IRS, 2019).

The objective of the program is to encourage self-sufficiency among the target groups. For ex-felons, is it an opportunity to stably re-integrate into society. The idea behind providing a reduction in federal income tax liability for businesses is that it would help to off-set the accompanied risk of providing employment for these target groups. The amount of tax credit that a business can receive varies depending on: a.) the target group b.) the amount of qualified wages earned, and c.) the number of hours that the target employee works. Employers are able to receive up to 40 percent tax credit on $6,000 in paid first-year gross wages. This amounts to $2,400 credit/target employee that works 400(+) hours.

For target employees that work between 120-400 hours, employers are able to receive 25 percent credit on $6,000 in paid first-year gross wages. This amounts to $1,500 credit/target employee. Employers are unable to claim a tax credit for target populations that work less than 120 hours (Hoffmann, 2018).

According to Dr. Peter Cappelli at the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania, the WOTC saves a significant amount of money for the federal and state government due to them not having to pay/pay a reduction in federal benefits, such as SNAP, TANF, housing subsidies. It is estimated that the federal government sees a net return of $7,600 per target employee. With 1.9 million approved and active certificates in 2015, that equates to the federal government saving $14.4 billion/year; states additionally save an average of $4 billion/year (Hoffman, 2018). Furthermore, as mentioned above, half of the 12,650 released inmates from Central Region are likely to end up re-incarcerated due to the inability to attain employment. This recidivism rate can be offset by immediately connecting released felons with employers that participate in the WOTC program.

In 2018, Virginian businesses received 52,982 WOTC's for employing any of the 10 targeted populations. Ex-felons only accounted for 0.7 percent (384) of those credits (DOLETA, 2018). The Virginia Employment Commission (VEC) confirmed that they do not distribute city-level data in terms of how many or what kind of businesses are participating in the program (VEC Representative, 4/24/19). There is no limit to how many or the type of "qualified" employees a business can hire. It is logical to assume that the stigma associated with hiring ex-felons is a primary reason behind their low participation in this program, not due to their lack of capacity, willingness, or work ethic. In fact, Northwestern University researchers found that employees with

a criminal record had a 13 percent lower turnover rate. This retention rate ended up saving company's roughly $1,000/year per employee with a criminal record (Jail to Jobs, 2017).

Policy Option: Homeward and WOTC

Mayor Levar Stoney's Office of Community Wealth Building (OCWB) Anti-Poverty Commission identified the following five frameworks as foundational for poverty reduction in the city of Richmond: expanded workforce development, targeted job creation, improve educational outcomes, development of a regional transportation system, pursue the redevelopment of public housing communities with the commitment of no involuntary displacement (Stoney, L., 2017).

The first course of action that Homeward should take is to join the OCWB's expanded workforce development task force. Even though Homeward is the lead agency for housing services in the Greater Richmond Continuum of Care (GRCoC), it is not listed as a partner in any of the nine economic mobility focus areas: employment stability, income, mobility, childcare, housing, quality of life, food, legal, and recovery (Stoney, L. 2018). It is recommended that Homeward join the workforce development task force and advocate for the importance of connecting felons with businesses that participate in the WOTC program. Homeward will likely have to do substantial outreach with the private businesses in the community in order to a.) identify how many businesses currently participate in the program b.) what kind of workforce is being sought c.) encourage additional enterprises to join the program.

Homeward has the ability to increase its collaboration with the city's criminal justice system and to work with inmates prior to their release in an effort to connect inmates with employers that receive a reduction in federal tax liability specifically, for hiring ex-felons. By providing a financially stable and clear path to re-integration, this option would reduce the likelihood that African Americans would fall into the path of homelessness and ultimately, reduce the number of African Americans from becoming homeless, in the first place.

Criterion Analysis. Please Refer to Appendix C: Outcomes Matrix for Detailed Explanations

Impact on Racial Disparity	High
Impact on Equity	High
Impact on Cost	Low-Medium
Sustainability	High
Administrative Feasibility	High

Alternative 3: Investment in Early Childhood Development

Literature Review: Impact of Poverty on Child Development

Areas that have high levels of poverty are often associated with higher eviction rates, levels of crime, social isolation, lack of trust, unreliable transportation, and overall stress (Communitas Solutions, 2017). The impact of stress and instability have serious long-term effects, not only on parents' physical and mental health, but also on the development of their children. Please refer to Appendix B: Methodology for an explanation of the metrics utilized in this section.

Higher levels of stress tend to lead to decreased sensitivity when responding to children. Children from lower-income, high-stress neighborhoods receive less social and cognitive stimulation from their parents. The amount and quality of language directed at children is a likely contributing factor to the observed language differences among children from different socio-economic backgrounds. The difference in vocabulary knowledge between children from lower SES backgrounds and higher SES backgrounds is "stunning." By the time children are 36 months of age, those from advantaged backgrounds have, on average, heard 30 million more words directed at them than children from disadvantaged families. More and richer language leads to faster and more efficient language, processing, and comprehension skills. Receiving high quality social and cognitive attention, early in life, is predictive of important long-term life outcomes. (Fernald, et al. 2013).

> "93 percent of (Northside) families surveyed said they experience stress every day due to concerns about physical safety, reliable transportation, arranging and paying for child care, and/or managing health." - Communitas Consulting (2017)

Researcher's Farkas and Beron (2004) found that the disparity in vocabulary growth, listed above, originates prior to 36 months of age, widens further throughout preschool, and is still evident by the time the child turns 13 (Fernald, et al. 2013). In other words, by the time a child has turned 3 years old, his/her developmental and social-emotional ability and capacity has largely been formed. **Findings such as these are crucial to understanding the link between intergenerational poverty, education gaps, disruptive behavior, and later in life, criminal justice involvement and homelessness.**

Literature Review: Inequitable Education Opportunities and Outcomes

In 2017, the Robins Foundation hired Communitas Consulting to report on the vulnerability and school readiness of children living in North Side, Richmond. Given that no such report has been conducted on children living in the south side or east end, data from the Communitas Consulting report will often be drawn upon to explain the effects of child care, education, and poverty on children living in low-income neighborhoods in Richmond City. I will then use that information to analyze how it may translate to future rates of homelessness among black residents in the city, living in similar neighborhood conditions.

In the fall of 2018, there were roughly 600 more students enrolled in Richmond City Public School's (RPS) Kindergarten program, than in the school's pre-kindergarten program (VDOE, 2018). This large of an enrollment gap in children, from one grade to another, is not observed between any other K-12 grade levels. A reason behind this gap may be because certain Richmond regions, such as the North side, have significantly less access to the public school system's pre-school program, even though six elementary schools are located in the Northside and offer these services.

Out of the 1,500 children, under the age of five in the north side region, only 405 child care slots were available through the public-school, pre-kindergarten program. Furthermore, 20 private licensed child care providers, in the North side, had the capacity to serve 1,050 children under the age of five. However, only 6 percent of those 1,050 slots offered pre-kindergarten instruction, compared to 22 percent of child care slots throughout Richmond as a whole (Communitas Consulting, 2017).

Therefore, this gap may be present, not because parents did not want to enroll their children in public pre-school, but because the school system and private child care providers, did not provide enough capacity, to meet demand. The importance of early childhood care and development are especially critical for children that are already facing challenges of a high stress and high poverty community. For a brief overview of the number of African American children in Richmond that are not Kindergarten ready, please refer to Appendix G: Increased Access to Quality Child Care.

The third grade is a crucial indicator of future academic success. After the third grade, children are no longer learning to read, but reading to learn. Therefore, if a child is struggling to read at a proficient reading level, at minimum, then there is a 75 percent chance that he/she will continue to struggle academically (Communitas Consulting, 2017).

Of the 24,765 students that attended Richmond City Public Schools in 2018-2019, 66 percent were black, 17 percent were Hispanic and 13 percent were white (VDOE, 2017). Richmond City Public School, class of 2018, had 20 percent of its students drop out and 65.6 percent of its total students were economically disadvantaged. In comparison, the state's average dropout rate was 5.5 percent and 34 percent of its students were economically disadvantaged. Furthermore, the city only had 23 percent of its students graduate with an advanced diploma compared to 52 percent of the state's students (VDOE, n/d). Wong et al. (2008) maintain that there is an overwhelming amount of evidence that suggest that preschool programs, not only increase performance in early school grades, but also positively affect later high school graduation rates, labor force participation, stable household formation, and criminal behavior.

For a visual about how child development affects life outcomes, please refer to Appendix G: Increased Access to Quality Child Care.

Background: Child Care in Richmond City

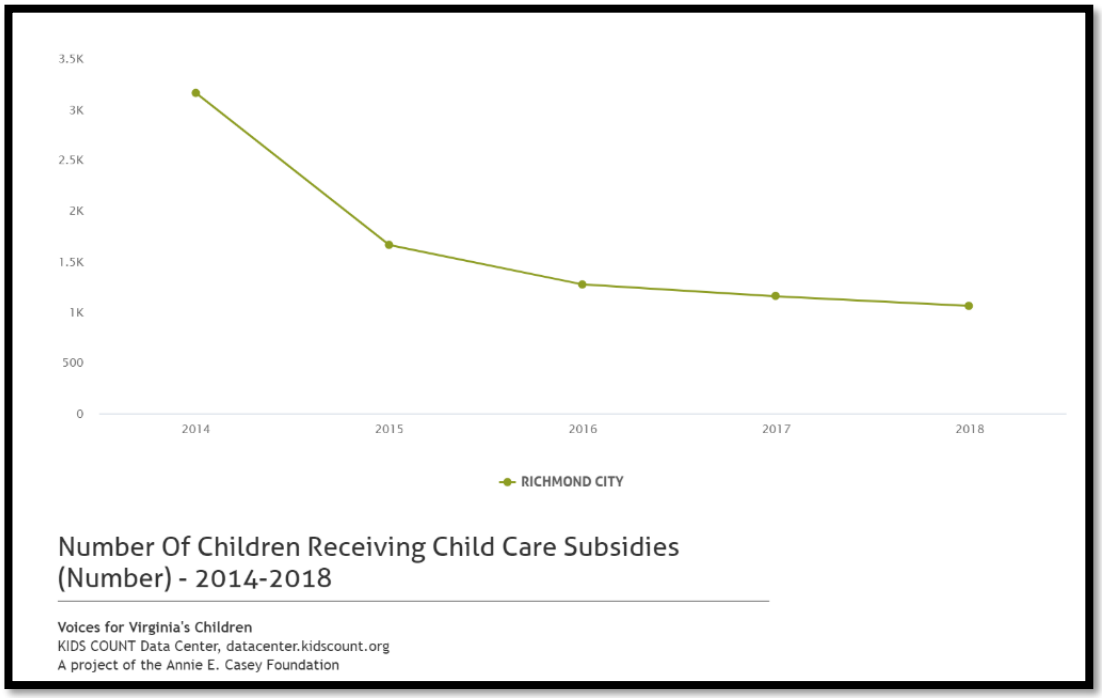
> "Inequality would be immediately reduced as resources to provide quality child care are progressively made available to families with children, and the ***next generation*** would benefit from a more level playing field that allows for real equality of opportunity" (Bivens, et al. 2016).

The Commonwealth of Virginia allocated over $168 million towards child care subsidies in 2019. Sixty-five percent is dedicated towards at-risk children and the remaining thirty-five percent is restricted to families who receive TANF (LIS, 2018).

The Code of Virginia (2019) defines an "at risk" family or child as one that is, "at risk of developing emotional or behavioral problems, or both, due to environmental, physical or psychological stress." For a brief overview of the types of subsidized child care in the City of Richmond, please refer to Appendix G: Increased Access to Early Child Care. When referring to child care subsidies going forward, it is assumed that I am referring to the at-risk subsidies.

The City currently has $3.5 million/year to allocate towards low-income, at-risk, child care (Ward, M. 2019). This amount is enough to cover 435 subsidies, at an annual reimbursement rate of $8,045. According to Child Savers and the Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) Licensing Center, Richmond City has been unable to process and provide all of the available subsidies, to those that are eligible. There are currently 204 at-risk children on the wait-list.

Early child care funding for at-risk children has received increased attention and funding in the last few years. The reimbursement rate for subsidized child care was raised to 75 percent in Virginia, in recent years. However, with this increased funding came increased requirements and paperwork. While the eligibility guidelines did not change, the licensing and training requirements became substantially more cumbersome. So much so that parents that applied for subsidies, and centers that accepted subsidies, were unable to keep up with the paperwork. Between 2014-2018 the number of economically disadvantaged children that received childcare subsidies decreased by two-thirds (Kids Count, 2018)



Policy Option: Increase Access to Early Childcare

Wong, *et al.* (2008), maintain that there is an overwhelming amount of evidence that suggest that preschool programs, not only increase performance in early school grades, but also positively affect later high school graduation rates labor force participation, stable household formation, and criminal behavior. Because education, employment, housing stability, and criminal behavior are all intimately related to homelessness, it is the author's recommendation that Homeward join the City's Office of Community Wealth Building OCWB Anti-Poverty Commission and specifically to join the Housing and Childcare Focus groups.

The intent is to educate, enforce, and mobilize efforts toward ensuring that every eligible at-risk child, has access to quality, subsidized child care. The current number of at-risk subsidies is severely limited given the large amount of at-risk children in the city. Given the increased burden of the required paperwork, the current capacity to process all eligible applicants is limited. However, the Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) does have the ability to provide additional funding for at-risk child care subsidies, if it is found that there is capacity to serve the additional children (M. Ward, personal communication, April 26, 2019). No child from 6 months- four years old, should be prevented from having the ability to be mentally, socially, and emotionally developed for Kindergarten and primary school education. Before the interdependent system of homelessness can be addressed on the national level, individual communities need to act in earnest to tackle the root-causes of homelessness that are unique to their communities while staunchly advocating for largescale investment in their youth.

Because this educational gap has been formed by the time children reach kindergarten and because distressed families are unable to provide the same attentive care as advantaged families, it is vital for the Richmond community to step in. Providing accessible high quality child care services to the lower-income, predominantly minority children in the south side, east end, and parts of north side, allow disadvantaged children the same educational and developmental opportunities that their white, economically advantaged counterparts are privy to.

Criterion Analysis. Please Refer to Appendix C: Outcomes Matrix for Detailed Explanations

Impact on Racial Disparity	Medium-High
Impact on Equity	High
Impact on Cost	Low
Sustainability	High
Administrative Feasibility	High

"…in addition to a very strong association between education and wealth, there also is a strong association between race or ethnicity and education. on current trends, there is virtually no chance that blacks and Hispanics will narrow the economic and financial gaps they face vis-à-vis whites and Asians. Indeed, the gaps are more likely to widen as the importance of educational attainment continues to grow."

OUTCOMES MATRIX

Please refer to Appendix C

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Homeward adopt Alternative Two by summer 2019. It is recommended that the agency conduct an in-depth financial analysis of their Coordinated Entry/Collaboration budget, the CoC Budget, and seek out additional grants where possible. Benefits, costs, and unexpected occurrences should be closely monitored and tracked. The intent is that Alternative Two will capture felons that are at-risk of becoming homeless, thereby reducing the likelihood that more African Americans will end up in the homeless system. It is believed that the benefits will be seen immediately after the program is effectively implemented, across the community.

It is recommended that Homeward adopt Alternative Three once Alternative Two is stability functioning and producing positive results. Because alternative three targets children, the primary benefit will not be observed until those children are 18 and graduate from high school. However, secondary benefits of increased income for working mothers, would likely be observed within a matter of months of the program's implementation.

If alternative three proves successful, it is the hope that alternative two will be able to be phased out. The idea is: as more African American children successfully complete school, graduate, gain employment, and/or go to college, less African Americans will enter the criminal justice system and become at-risk of becoming homeless, and therefore, less prevention will be needed at this stage.

IMPLEMENTATION

The CoC Program is designed to, "***promote community-wide planning*** and strategic use of resources to address homelessness; improve coordination and integration with mainstream resources and other programs targeted to people experiencing homelessness; improve data collection and performance measurement; *and* ***allow each community to tailor its programs to the particular strengths and challenges*** in assisting homeless individuals and families within that community" (HUD Exchange, n/d).

<u>Steps to Connecting Ex-Felons with WOTC in Richmond, VA:</u>

1.) Connect with current businesses in Richmond and surrounding areas that patriciate in the WOTC program, establish working relationships
2.) Outreach businesses in Richmond that currently do not participate in the program, establish relationships, and encourage them of the benefits of the program in order for them to become participating members
    - Reach out to existing partners, funders, and board members to assist in this effort
3.) Connect with the Virginia Department of Corrections (VDOC)and identify where the majority of Richmond residents are incarcerated

- Work closely with those prisons in order to develop appropriate system of connecting with inmates

4.) Hire a Community and Social Services Specialist to work closely with the Virginia Employment Commission, the VDOC, and regional prisons
5.) Adjust the Housing Crisis Line to become the Community Crisis Line
    - Allow at-risk community members to seek assistance. Homelessness is a symptom of multiple issues, assist and connect individuals to the proper services in order to end the spiraling effects caused by a relatively small misfortune
    - Collect demographic data on all people who you connect to services. Increased data about community concerns leads to increased ability to properly assist
    - 211 often has outdated service information and is ineffective in ensuring that vulnerable individuals get connected with the services they require

<u>Steps to Expanding Access to Early Child Care Services for Low-Income, Predominantly Black Children in Richmond, VA:</u>

1.) Connect with Child Savers, the Central Region's Child Care Aware Resource Center
    - Child Savers (J. Burke, phone conversation, March 12, 2-19) stated that the lack of capacity was a burden in quickly processing the applications
2.) Join the Office of Community Wealth, Child Task Force
3.) Adjust the Housing Crisis Line to become the Community Crisis Line
    - Allow at-risk community members to seek assistance. Homelessness is a symptom of multiple issues, assist and connect individuals to the proper services in order to end the spiraling effects caused by a relatively small misfortune
    - 211 often has outdated service information and is ineffective in ensuring that vulnerable individuals get connected with the services they require
4.) Hire a Community Service Specialist
5.) Allow for the Community Crisis Line to Have a Brick and Mortar Facility
    - Allow face-to-face access between people seeking assistance and those offering it
    - Provides the opportunity to build trust between community members
6.) Expand on Data Collection
    - Collect demographic data on all people who you connect to services. Increased data about community concerns leads to increased ability to properly assist

Implementation challenges vary by jurisdiction, but some common and expected challenges include:

- Consistent engagement and long-term commitment of partners to implementing strategic plans to prevent and end homelessness
- Funding for expanding community services while maintaining existing capacity
- Lack of uniform data collection by multiple health, housing and service providers

Additional Considerations

It is in the best interest of the Richmond community, to provide equitable opportunities to all of its residents. Financial and physical stability allows resources to be dedicated towards innovative projects, instead of towards remedial efforts. There are additional actions that Homeward may take, beyond the suggested alternatives.

It is highly recommended that Homeward analyze the budget of Virginia and Richmond, in order to stay up-to-date about where funding is increasing and decreasing in terms of child care, criminal justice, and homelessness. The City's budget line-items show increased funding for certain homeless providers that receive CoC funding. It is suggested that CoC funding may be geared towards other services if agencies are receiving funding from other sources, to maintain their operations.

Richmond City has a landlord problem. In fact, it has multiple landlord problems. Hard-to-house individuals are often at the mercy of whether or not a landlord will accept their "undesirable tenant characteristics." As mentioned in the section, Traditional Housing Approach…, even individuals that receive housing vouchers are not always guaranteed to find a place. It is recommended that Homeward staunchly advocate for more tenant rights and landlord oversight in the City of Richmond. Since other states have more equitable tenant rights, it is recommended that the City adopt from already existing models.

Lack of trust and fear for one's safety leads to social isolation (Communitas Consulting, 2017). The historical and current inequitable practices, throughout the City's systems, prevents honest trust from being built between low-income, predominantly black neighborhoods, service providers, and the politicians that are supposed to represent their interests. Families want access to services and the opportunity for their children to flourish. It is recommended that Homeward have a larger outreach presence in the north side, east end, and south side regions.

As the leading agency for the CoC, Homeward would benefit from being more intimately involved in the community. By having more of a presence in the community, the agency can become more acutely aware of when individuals are struggling and provide the necessary resources or referrals to mitigate the vulnerability. In turn, this could lead to an increasing sense of trust towards service providers. Furthermore, direct involvement allows for potential data collection opportunities to expand one's understanding about how neighborhood factors affect families differently.

There are an abundant amount of primary and secondary benefits associated with increased at-risk child care and an effective prison discharge-employment process. The Benefit-Cost Analysis (BCA), that supplements this report, provides a brief description of some of the costs and benefits of the program.

<u>Major benefits that should be considered but were not, given the time constraint:</u>

Re: Increased Access to Subsidized Child Care for 200+ Low-Income Black Children

- Benefit of increased income for working mothers due to receiving a reimbursement rate of 75 percent on child care
- Benefit to mothers and society of less children being suspended and expelled. Remember, the more behind a child generally is in school, the more likely they are to act out and receive (Jordan, et al. 2013)

Re: Connecting Ex-Felons with WOTC

- Benefit to felons and society of receiving an income and being a tax-paying member of society

CONCLUSION

Observing the racial disparities that exist in these institutions is not coincidental but was engineered (Rothstein, 2017 &Sharkey, 2013). Given the political feasibility that is currently available in Virginia, Homeward has the opportunity to begin to redress centuries of grievances. Homeward has the ability to actively engage with, and work towards, increasing community collaborations in the name of addressing and ending racial disparity among the homeless community.

Homeward's mission specifically states that it aims to "end homelessness by facilitating creative solutions through the collaboration, coordination, and cooperation of regional resources and services." Now it the time to invest in innovative ideas by ramping up cross-sector collaboration and tackling homelessness from a comprehensive city-wide approach and city-wide mission. The programs and guidelines are already in place, they simply lack the motivation, manpower, and morale to be effectively and fully carried out.

Homeward should join the Mayor's Community-Wealth Building task forces and relentlessly engage with service-providers to 1.) build trust in the community, listen to community needs and react accordingly 2.) outreach to businesses and convince them of the benefits of the WOTC program 3.) have a job-placement plan in place for discharged felons, specifically African Americans 4.) outreach low-income black families throughout Richmond and get them connected with subsidized child care, at any means necessary 5.) outreach child care centers and assist them with becoming subsidy-eligible, at any means necessary.

Homeward must take on a trustworthy, honest, and transparent leadership role in the community in order for this problem to be efficiently and equitably mitigated. In order to properly and honestly mitigate racial disparity among the homeless community, the agency should expand its focus area to extensively collaborate with the criminal justice department and the early childhood sector. Homeward should be a pioneer for CoC's across the nation by actively acknowledging that homeless exists, in large part, because our nation's institutions are still providing inequitable treatment across race and class.

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APPENDIX A: TERMS

Categorizations of Homelessness

The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has four categorizations for defining homeless: Category 1 – Literally Homeless, Category 2- At Imminent Risk of Homelessness, Category 3 – Homeless Under Other Federal Statues (e.g. persistent housing instability but not sufficient to fall under Category 1), and Category 4 – Fleeing/Attempting to Flee Domestic Violence (HUD, n/d). The literature in this document will be focusing on Category 1 when referencing homelessness, unless otherwise stated.

Homeless individuals may be considered episodically and/or temporarily homeless or chronically homeless; both fall under Category 1's definition of homeless. Furthermore, episodically/temporarily and chronically homeless individuals may be considered sheltered (including transitional housing) or unsheltered depending on where they slept the night of the point-in-time (PIT) count.

Point-in-Time (PIT) Count

The Point-in-Time (PIT) count is a national survey used to collect various data-points about the homeless population. It allows community-members and policy-makers to get a sense of where progress is being made and/or where additional services are needed (The National Alliance to End Homelessness, 2018). The survey is conducted annually on the number of homeless, but sheltered individuals, and biennially on the number of homeless, and unsheltered individuals, within a Continuum of Care (CoC) (HUD, 2012). A CoC is a region's communitywide planning collaborative responsible for coordinating the area's homeless services; they are responsible for conducting the PIT count and may be led by nonprofits and/or city and state governments (National Alliance to End Homelessness, 2017).

Historical Race-Based Housing Policies

After the Civil War came to an end, the Civil Rights Act of 1866 was passed by Congress. Essentially, it, "prohibited actions that it deemed perpetuated the characteristics of slavery;" in 1883, the Supreme Court rejected the notion that this law could be enforceable in the housing market. Real estate companies, housing authorities, and localities throughout the nation promulgated segregating neighborhoods and actively desegregated integrated communities throughout the 20th century (Rothstein, 2017).

When the U.S. found itself immersed in World War II, black and white workers pooled into centralized locations seeking employment, often around shipyards. This influx of war workers resulted in the demand for nearby affordable housing and thus, construction of the country's first

public housing began. However, local governments throughout the nation, supported by the federal government, enacted zoning ordinances which prohibited black individuals and families from accessing public housing units in "white" neighborhoods. Furthermore, private developers, backed by government-funded mortgage loans, primarily from the Federal Housing Administration (FHA), built restrictive residential neighborhoods and created "covenants" which essentially prohibited the sale to black individuals.

Black families were unable to access the mortgage loans and subsidized rental housing that were catered for white families. Instead, black families had little option but to accept the housing projects, with their exorbitant rental rates, that were developed near hazardous waste facilities and/or in isolated areas that lacked economic opportunity (Rothstein, 2017). The effects of the *de jure* segregationist laws that were created throughout the 20th century created crippling barriers and inequitable guidelines that disabled the majority of black families from accumulating the wealth that white families today are privy to (Rothstein, 2017 & Sharkey, 2013).

APPENDIX B: METHODOLOGY

The methodology section will explain what databases were used to extract reports on homelessness in Richmond City, Va. Explanations about rounding calculations, are included. The assumptions section will explain what assumptions are being made in this report, aside from the ones that are already explained in individual sections.

Homeward Community Information System & Homeless Management Information System

The Homeward Community Information System (HCIS) and the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) are two data collection tools for the city's homeless service providers. These database systems collect client-level data on homeless individuals and on individuals at-risk of becoming homeless.

Due to Homeward's position as the agency lead of the Contiuum of Care (CoC), it has the ability to run a plethora of reports. Homeward has the ability to pull data from a variety of organizations. For instance, the Quarterly Report, mentioned above, captures the demographic and geographic information about Richmond City's homeless population; it is able to extract information about carious agencies homeless clients. The reports are pulled from the city's community-wide homeless database, Homeward Community Information Systems (HCIS).

Yearly reports highlighting demographic and financial information about the individuals experiencing homelessness, for the years 2014-2018, were pulled from the Homeward Community Information System (HCIS).

Point-in-Time Count

The Point-in-Time Count is conducted annually, nationwide. The intent is to capture how many individuals are homeless at any given night, in the U.S. Homeward is unique because it conducts the PIT count twice, once in January and once in June. For purposes of this report, January Point-in-Time (PIT) numbers, from 2008-2018 (with exception of 2009) were utilized to evaluate the incarceration and education demographics of homelessness in Richmond, Va. Since criminal justice involvement and educational attainment are not required data to be collected by HUD, it is not asked by service providers, rarely if ever collected by them, and therefore, not part of an HCIS report.

When evaluating the criminal justice involvement and education figures, only January's PIT data will be utilized. The reason for this stems from the belief that the January report captures and accounts for individuals that were missed in the July report. This belief is supported by the

understanding that conditions of homelessness get substantially worse in inclement weather which leads individuals to seek out shelter, when they normally might not otherwise do so in mild weather. Therefore, individuals are more centralized in the winter and easier to locate, count, and consider. The summer months offer more opportunity to spread out throughout the community and potentially be overlooked in the July count.

The Greater Richmond Region PIT count technically encompasses the following locations: Richmond City, Charles City, Chesterfield, Goochland, Hanover (including the town of Ashland), Henrico, New Kent, and Powhatan. However, since most homeless shelters and services are located in Richmond City, it is reasonable and acceptable to assume that the figures in the PIT count represent a portion of the homeless conditions in Richmond, City, alone.

There have been opponents of the PIT count because it only provides a detailed representation of roughly 70 percent of individuals that agreed to be surveyed. In other words, roughly 30 percent (+) of the homeless population is not represented in the PIT demographics because they did not agree to be surveyed and/or were not found during the PIT count and were therefore not counted. It is important to be aware of, and account for, the potential gaps in the PIT incarceration and education figures.

A portion of the documents utilized in this report did not differentiate between white, alone and white, Hispanic and/or Latino(a). Therefore, it is possible that the white count may be slightly over-represented if it is including white, Hispanic and/or Latino(a). This over-representation is not expected to have a notable impact on the figures or results.

All percentages listed in this report are rounded up or down to the nearest whole number, i.e. 73.8 percent is rounded to 74 percent and 23.1 percent is rounded to 23 percent .

Literature Review: Early Child Care Metrics

It should be noted that the metric used to describe the proper development of children was developed using western (white) standards of quality. For instance, western standards of desirable development, in children, tend to focus more on academic achievement and language growth and focus less on the resilience and personal character traits of the child. Therefore, there are implications associated with using western (white) standards of desirable development, when comparing low-income black children to affluent white children. However, because the western standards are imbedded into our society - academic achievement and language growth, among others - are the main methods available to compare development among children from different races and economic backgrounds. The reports mentioned in Alternative 3 were produced by researchers, utilizing western standards of development and quality.

APPENDIX C: OUTCOMES MATRIX

GOALS	IMPACT CATEGORY	ALTERNATIVES		
		Let Present Trends Continue	Connect Ex-Felons With WOTC	Increase Access to Quality Early Child Care
Impact on Racial Disparity	**Ability to reducte the the current number of African Americans experiencing homelessness**	**Medium.** While efforts to house African Americans experiencing homlessness are ongoing, the system is unable to outpace the influx of new homeless cases.	**High.** On average, 290 homeless African Americans have a felony record, per year. Connecting them with WOTC programs would reduce racial disparity by more than the annual goal of 227.	**Low.** The benefits of increased quality child care and subsequent, academic and life success will not be evident for roughly 18-20 years
	Ability to prevent an increase in the number of African Americans that enter the homeless system	**Low.** Based on trends from the past five years, this alternative is unable to prevent an average increase of 227 African Americans into the homeless system, per year.	**High.** 690 African American, City of Richmond residents, get released from prison every year. At least 69 become homeless after being released	**High.** Given the impact of quality child care on life outcomes, the ability to prevent homelessness among black city residents significantly increases
Impact on Equity	**Ability to increase the number of African Americans that have access to services/resources**	**Low.** At the time of exit from the Housing Crisis Diversion Program, Over 9,000 individuals did not know where their destination would be and over 800 stated their destination would be to a place not meant for habitation (homeless). Note that the interpretation of the HCIS Prioritzation Spreadsheet may impact these figures	**High.** between 345 and 552 African American felons will be unable to attain a legitimate job, within 6 months of being released from prison. That equates to an average of 450 African Americans that could receive employment through the WOTC program, translating to increased access	**High.** Virginia Department of Social Services will consider increasing funding for at-risk subsidies, if capacity goal of 435 is reached.
	Ability to assist in breaking the cycle of intergenerational poverty	**Low.** This option does not address root causes of poverty, it addresses symptoms of poverty	**High.** Increased access to income allows for financial stability which leads to less stress and a healthier society	**High.** Low-income mothers spend roughly 50 percent of their income on rent and 30 percent of their income on child care. Offering subsidized child care allows those, 70 percent of low-income working mothers, to reduce their child care costs by 75 percent. This savings in child care costs translates to the ability to save money or shift money to other needed resources
Impact on Cost	**Additional Cost to Homeward/Year**	**Low.** Not Applicable	**Medium.** Homeward may need to hire an additional staff member to operate outreach and manage coordination between community services. **$46,050**	**Medium.** Homeward may need to hire an additional staff member to operate outreach and manage coordination between community services. **$46,050**
	Additional Cost to Other Service Providers/Year	**Low.** Not Applicable	**Medium.** **$15,600 (Offset by Benefits, Please refer to BCA)**	**High.** **$550,000 (Offset by Benefits, Please refer to BCA)**
Sustainability	**Ability to utilize community collaborations**	**Medium.** As funding changes and staff turn-overs continues, collaboration may becomde stagnant and morale can become low.	**High.** There are vairous employment agencies in the city that are equipped to asssit ex-felons with attaining employment. The goal needs to be to focus on those employers that participate in the WOTC	**High.** There are over 57 providers throughout the city that accept subsidies. Their capacity is 3,417. Connecting with these service providers would increase access to subsidies
	Ability to maintain objective in a changing political climate	**Medium.** The homeless service system's objective is susceptible to change, given campaign efforts	**Medium.**	**High.** The importance of child care is gaining national attention. Virginia received $9.9 million for early child care research. Increased funding is expected. However, community providers and Homeward need to ensure that at-risk children are not left behind, again.
	Ability to maintain funding in a changing political climate	**Low**. Government-assisted housing has been in decline	**Low.** Ex-felons are generally not a priority for representatives, in times of budget cuts	**Medium-High.** As mentioned above, access to early child care is becoming more acceptable, as a basic service
Administrative Feasibility	**Availability to expands upon an existing system in order to save time and energy in assessing the outcomes and implementation.**	**High**	**High.** There are various employment agencies in the city that are assisting felons with connecting to jobs. Homeward would need to collaborate more often and establish best practices, community-wide	**High.** Child Savers is familiar with the community and has an understanding of what type of outreach needs to be completed. However, given their limited capacity, Homeward has the ability to provide outreach services and connect eligible individuals to subsidies

APPENDIX D: Background

Figure: Common-Sense Map

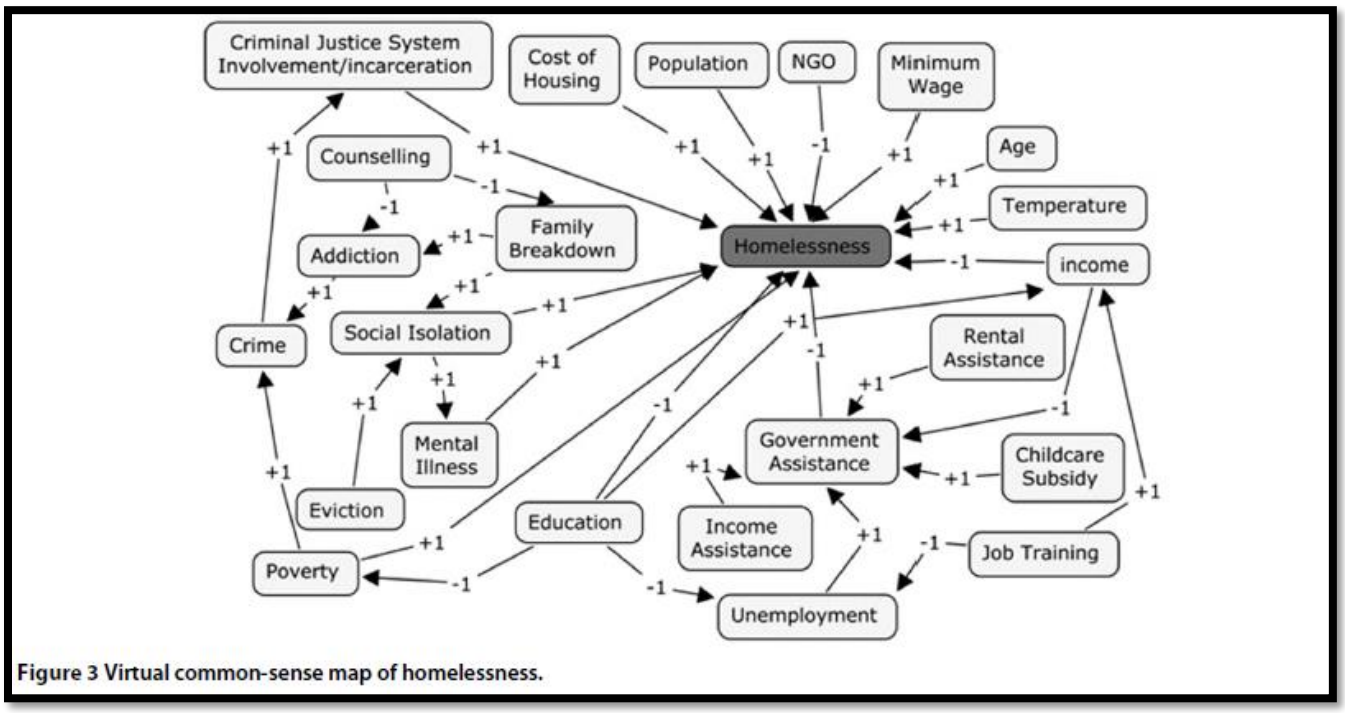


Figure 3 Virtual common-sense map of homelessness.

Source: Mago et al. (2013)

APPENDIX E: Richmond City

Table: Breakdown of Population Demographics Per Zip Code

Demographic Breakdown Per Most Common Zip Codes Among Homeless Population	**23223 (E. End)**	**23224 (S. South)**	**23222 (N. Side)**	**23220 (VCU)**	**23225 (Westover Hills/ S. South)**
Black (alone) Population Percentage	77.40%	66.20%	84.80%	31.10%	45.10%
Black (alone) Population Count	40,165	25,838	20,838	10,701	19,101
White (alone) Population Percentage	17.40%	13.60%	12.90%	58.10%	45.90%
White (alone) Population Count	9,009	5,315	3,157	19,981	19,467
Total Homeless Population in Richmond City, Va (2014-2018)	5422	5422	5422	5422	5422
Percent of Richmond City Homeless Population That Identified With the Zip Code (2014-2018)	25%	24%	15%	13%	9%
Count of Richmond City Homeless Population That Identified With the Zip Code (2014-2018)	1347	1285	894	725	515

Source: Homeward & HCIS, 2019

APPENDIX F: ALTERNATIVE 2: EX-FELONS & WOTC

Central Region Incarceration

At the state level, African Americans accounted for 57 percent of the inmates and whites accounted for 40 percent. At the Central Region, African Americans accounted for 55 percent of the inmates and whites accounted for 41 percent. Of the 12,650 released inmates in Virginia, in 2016, a disproportionate number were white, compared to the amount of white people that were incarcerated. Fifty-one percent of the released inmates in 2016 were white and only 46 percent were black. Therefore, there is an 11-percentage point difference between black incarceration rates and release rates, at the state level.

Since no demographic data about the population of released inmates was provided for the Central Region, it will be assumed that the racial proportion is the same. Furthermore, since the Virginia Department of Corrections was unable to provide the number about how many Richmond residents were incarcerated throughout the various facilities, an assumption needs to be made. For the purposes of this report, it will be assumed that thirteen percent of the Central Region's inmates are from Richmond City, Va, i.e. 1,500. It will further be assumed that the proportion of African Americans will be the same as it is for Central Region. Thus, it is assumed that 55 percent of the 3,795 Central Region inmates are black (825) and that 41 percent are white (615) and from Richmond.

It is crucial to note that there are roughly 23,000 individuals in jails throughout the state (Prison Policy Initiative, n/d). However, generally, individuals in jail are not convicted of felonies and would therefore, not fall under the "targeted population" of Ex-Felon in the WOTC program. Thus, this report will focus is on the incarcerated individuals in the public prison system (36,860) and how to assist individuals.

Table: Incarceration Demographics

Incarceration Demographics Virginia and Central Region, VA	Count	Percent
Total number of incarcerated inmates in VA (2016)	36,863	100%
Total Number of incarcerated Inmates in VA that had demographic data collected	**33,884**	**92%**
Number of black inmates based on the available demographic data	20,030	57%
Number of white inmates based on the available demographic data	12,778	40%
Total number of realeased inmates in VA (2016)	**12,650**	**100%**
Number of black releases	5,837	46%
Number of white releases	6,460	51%
Total number of incarcerated inmates in Central Region, VA (includes Richmond City)	11,820	100%
Total number of incarcerated Inmates in Central Region that had demographic data collected	**9,672**	**82%**
Number of black inmates based on the available demographic data	6,501	55%
Number of white inmates based on the available demographic data	4,863	41%
Total number of realeased inmates in Central Region, VA (2016)	Not Available	Not Available
Source: VADOC, 2016 & VADOC, 2018		
Number of Total Juvenile Detainments in Richmond (2017)	437	100%
Percent of Juveile Detainments in Rihcmond that are Black	240	55%
Total Number of Incarcerated Individuals in Richmond City (Exlcuding Juveniles)	1500	100%
Number of black inmates based on the available demographic data	825	55%
Number of Black Releases	690	46%
Sources: Block, 2017		

Table: Credit-Wage Breakdown WOTC

Traditional Credit-Wage System		
	25% of gross wages paid on 120 hours of first-year wages. Cap of $6,000	40% of gross wages paid on 400(+) hours of first-year wages. Cap of $6,000
Target Group	120-400 hours	400+ hours
Ex-Felon	**$1,500**	**$2,400**
Designated Community Resident	$1,500	$2,400
Vocational Rehabiliation Referral	$1,500	$2,400
SSI Recipient	$1,500	$2,400
SNAP Recipient	$1,500	$2,400
Long-Term Family Assistance Recipient	$1,500	$2,400
Qualified Long-Term Unemployment Recipient	$1,500	$2,400
Unique Credit-Wage System		
Summer Youth Employee	Unknown	$1,200
Qualified IV-A Recipient (TANF) (2 Subset Categories)		
1.) TANF: Short-Term Recipient	$1,500	2,400
2.) TANF: Long-Term Recipient	$4,000 (first year) ($5,000 second year)	9,000
Qualified Veteran (4 Subset Categories)		
1.) Veteran (Food Stamps)	$1,500	$2,400
2.) Veteran (Unemployed at least 4 weeks, less than 6 months)	$1,500	$2,400
3.) Veteran (Unemployed at least 6 months	Unknown	$5,600
4.) Veteran (Disabled hired one year after leaving service)	Unknown	$4,800
5.) Veteran (Disabled and unemployed for at least 6 months)	Unknown	$9,600

Discussion on Sub-Sets of Target Group

Summer Youth employees have a max credit that is less than the average max credit of $2,400; employers are only able to earn up to $1,200 credit/Summer Youth employee, regardless of if he/she/they work 400+ hours (CMS, Tax Credit Services, 2018). There is a total of 15 categories that these 10 target groups can fall into. For the purposes of this report, we will be focusing on the number of ex-felons that are hired through this process, the benefits associated with hiring this target group, and the availability of opportunity to significantly increase employment among this population. Ex-felons are one of the target group populations that allows for up to $2,400 credit/$6,000 paid in first-year wages, for 400(+) hours of work. The Ex-felons target group does not have a sub-set group like Veterans do (DOLETA, 2019).

Businesses favored hiring some groups more than others. Long Term IV-A (TANF) and SNAP recipients were hired the most by employers. It is likely that employers hire Long Term IV-A recipients the most because they allow for a maximum of $9,000 credit. However, it is unclear why SNAP recipients were the second most employed group, since their maximum is the common $2,400 credit limit.

APPENDIX G: INCREASED ACCESS TO EARLY CHILDCARE

In the City of Richmond in 2018, slightly over 24,000 children, or two in three children, were defined as economically disadvantaged. (Voices for Virginia's Children, 2018). There are neighborhoods throughout the city that have considerably and consistently less access to educational opportunity, than the rest of the city. Specifically, the south side, east end, and north side.

Of the 24,765 students that attended Richmond City Public Schools in 2018-2019, 66 percent were black, 17 percent were Hispanic and 13 percent were white (VDOE, 2017). Richmond City Public School, class of 2018, had 20 percent of its students drop out and 65.6 percent of its total students were economically disadvantaged. In comparison, the state's average dropout rate was 5.5 percent and 34 percent of its students were economically disadvantaged. Furthermore, the city only had 23 percent of its students graduate with an advanced diploma compared to 52 percent of the state's students (VDOE, n/d).

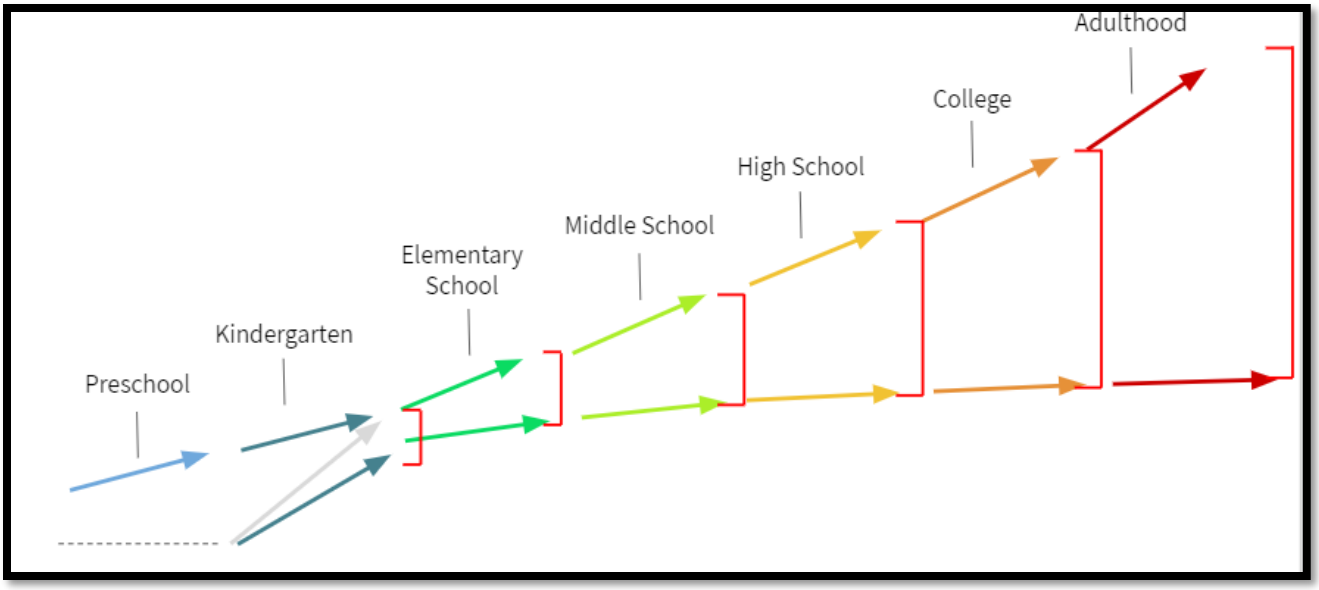
Types of Subsidized Child Care

The City of Richmond has five types of subsidized child care: Head Start (federally run), Head Start Wrap Around Services, Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI), TANF recipient child care, and subsidized child care for at-risk children. Given the wait list and guidelines for Head Start and VPI, this report will only be focusing on the availability and accessibility of the at-risk subsidies. Parents must be economically disadvantaged and working or enrolled in an education program, in order to receive a child care subsidy.

Kindergarten Ready

Over fifteen percent of black children in Virginia, under the age of four, fall below the Kindergarten readiness level, as determined by the PALS-K exam. That translates to over 3,000 black children statewide and 980 black children in Richmond City. The PALS-K exam measures children's knowledge on a variety of literacy components, ranging from alphabet recognition, phonological awareness and the concept of words (Kids Count, 2018).

Visual of How Child Development Affects Life Outcomes



Source: Barton, J. (2019)