



# SHC

**Somerville Homeless Coalition**  
**Support, Housing, Community**

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Thanksgiving, 2009

Dear friends and supporters:

I wish I could say Happy Thanksgiving and Happy Holidays, but this is a very difficult time for many people in our community. More and more people are coming to us for help and our resources can not keep up. Our prevention money from the United Way lasted 11 months last year; this year it was all gone in four. The state just cut our Adult Shelter budget – retroactive to July 1<sup>st</sup> – and our Family Shelter contract ends December 31st because the state doesn't have enough money, so we expect that budget to be cut also.

That United Way prevention grant helped 56 families to stay housed and not become homeless, a much better outcome for the family and much less expensive for the community. Here is a typical example. A family came to us last summer because the mother had lost her job due to a difficult pregnancy. She was eligible for unemployment – but it takes weeks to begin collecting. In the meantime she fell behind on her rent and the landlord began eviction proceedings.

We are able to help her with a short-term subsidy until she is able to go back to work. We also helped her develop a budget and we accessed enough money from various resources to help pay some of her rent arrearage to make the balance manageable for her. It was hard to gain her trust and negotiate through all of these systems, but that is what we do.

Our success rate to keep people housed or get them back into housing quickly is gratifying, but it takes resources. That is why we need your help. Your help allows us to feed the hungry and house the homeless. We have the skills and the experience to solve these terrible problems; what we lack are enough resources. **Please help us again if you can and help bring the happy back to these holidays.** Thank you.

Sincerely,

# Mark

Mark Alston-Follansbee  
Executive Director

To learn more about us or donate online, please go to our website:

[www.shcinc.org](http://www.shcinc.org)

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