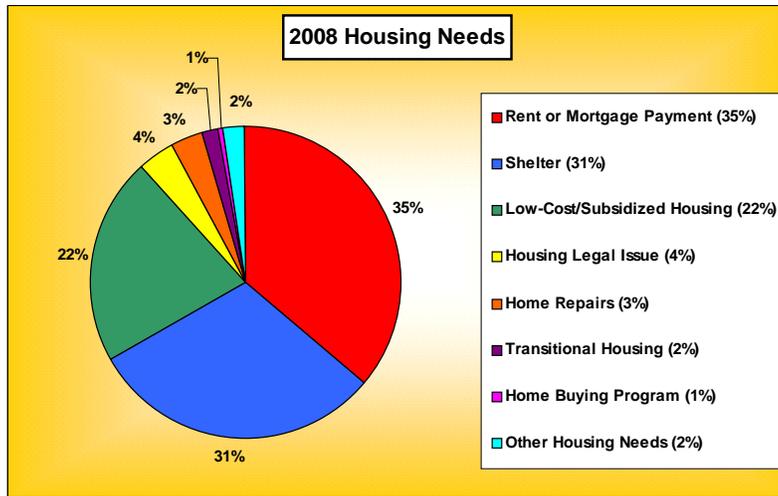


Connect2Help™

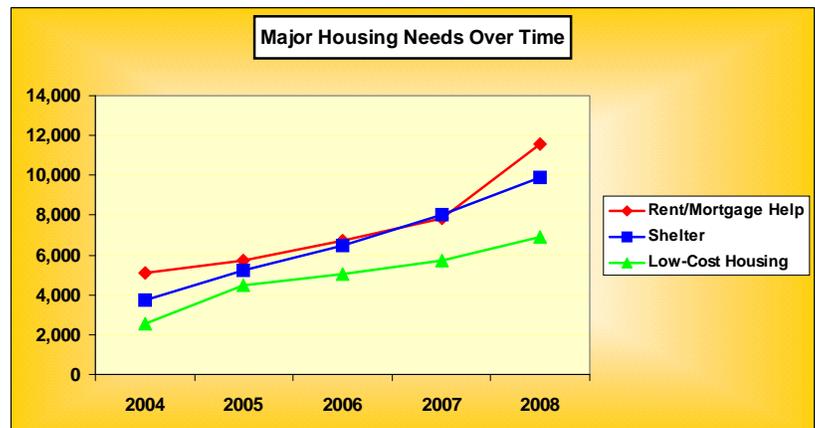
Serving as your 2-1-1 Center for Central Indiana

Housing Struggles Intensify as Recession Persists



- Having a safe place to call home is one of the most basic human needs. Even in good economic times, it can be difficult for many families to meet the goal of safe, affordable housing. Factor in a deep economic recession, caused in large part by the housing market, itself, and it can become nearly impossible.
- During 2008, almost 31,000 people called Connect2Help™ with a housing-related need. This represents 1 out of every 5 I&R callers, and is a 28% increase compared to 2007.
- The vast majority (88%) of these calls were for help paying rent, finding shelter or locating affordable housing.
- The upward trend for these 3 needs over the last 5 years poses a daunting community challenge.

• Calls for help to make a rent or mortgage payment jumped 47% compared to 2007. More than half (56%) of these requests were recorded as “unmet” by C2H. FEMA money for rent assistance continued to be a very scarce resource. The only recourse for most people needing rent was to apply to their township trustee. Allocation amounts and eligibility requirements vary widely among trustees. Most people needing help did not qualify for assistance; this was especially true for those who had been recently laid-off.



- To help offset this growing need, a group of Central Indiana community funders announced the creation of the Community Economic Relief Fund on December 10, 2008. On that day, 403 people called C2H for help with their rent or mortgage; this was a 633% increase in these kinds of calls compared to the same day in 2007.
- Many people calling C2H were past the point of asking for help with a rent payment; they had no place to stay and needed emergency shelter. During 2008, 9,866 callers with 8,374 children asked for help finding shelter; this is a 23% increase compared to 2007. There are 22 shelters in central Indiana that serve homeless women, men and families and people in domestic abuse situations; 14 of these serve Marion County. Despite existing resources, finding shelter space remains difficult; C2H Specialists were unable to help 21% of those calling for shelter. During extremely cold weather, the Winter Contingency Plan offers people a place to sleep for the night; aside from this resource (provided by 2 shelters in Marion county), many people must go without shelter due to limited capacity at existing shelters throughout the rest of the year.
- Calls for help finding low-cost housing continued to grow, increasing by 21% compared to 2007. Many who hoped to qualify for subsidized housing called looking for information on HUD housing and Section 8. Unfortunately, the waiting lists for these housing units often are years long. Thousands were provided information about local rental properties from a database on the www.indianahousingnow.org website. It was difficult to find “affordable” housing for many of these callers, because more than half (53%, based on available data) had no income or were on some form of public assistance.

For assistance or more information about human services needs in Central Indiana, dial 2-1-1 or (317) 926-4357.

