Neighborhood Coalition for Shelter (NCS) helps New Yorkers who are struggling with homelessness, often compounded by mental illness or substance use, to achieve their highest level of independence. We were established in 1982 by faith and community leaders on Manhattan’s Upper East Side who believed that homelessness was the responsibility of the entire community. Forty years later we are still guided by the principle that neighbors should help neighbors.

NCS provides New Yorkers who are homeless or at risk of homelessness with a home, a community, and access to the services that they need to thrive.

SUPPORTIVE HOUSING
The NCS Residence on the Upper East Side houses 65 individuals who have a history of homelessness. Most live with mental illness, often accompanied by substance use disorder.

Louis Nine House is home to 46 young adults who have aged out of foster care or experienced homelessness and mental illness. On-site supportive services help them work toward independence.

What’s next? NCS’s new pilot program will provide stable housing and on-site support to unhoused CUNY students, giving them the best chance to complete their degrees and begin successful futures.

PROGRAMS
Chance for Change is an outpatient substance-use treatment program uniquely designed to serve individuals who are homeless and battling addiction, often combined with mental illness.

Options, our vocational, education, and employment program, helps individuals overcome barriers to employment and progress toward a career that provides a living wage and growth over time.

Through the Community Human Services Information and Referral Program (CHIRP), NCS places a social worker at free neighborhood meals to connect homeless or hungry guests who need other services with information, resources, and referrals. During the pandemic, NCS introduced a CHIRP hotline to make sure this important service remained available.

Our neighborhood-focused Street Sheets are pocket-sized guides that provide information about meal programs, shelters, drop-in centers, legal services, medical care, and more.
The NCS Residence

The NCS Residence is the first supportive housing NCS opened shortly after our founding, providing permanent supportive housing on the Upper East Side of Manhattan for 65 individuals who have a history of homelessness.

Designed as a permanent housing option for those who have experienced chronic homelessness, the Residence serves adults with a history of mental illness, often in combination with substance use, who cannot live independently without support. For many, the Residence is their first stable home after long-term homelessness, and it is not uncommon for tenants to age in place.

Social workers, case managers, and a part-time psychiatrist provide case management and mental health counseling. In addition, we provide a full range of services including money management, vocational and educational training, community meals, and recreational activities all aimed at enhancing and supporting residents’ independent living.

Tenants also enjoy common areas including a community kitchen, TV lounge, rooftop atrium, terrace, and garden.
Louis Nine House

Louis Nine House, located in the Bronx, has 46 studio apartments for young adults who have aged out of foster care or experienced homelessness and mental illness. Many of our tenants have experienced multiple foster care placements, emotional trauma, neglect and/or abuse, and substance use disorder.

Louis Nine House provides affordable housing and an integrated continuum of support services designed to help young adults achieve stability, maintain sobriety, and work toward the self-sufficiency needed to secure and sustain permanent housing and independence. Through case management, onsite mental health services, and Options (NCS’s vocational and education program), residents are supported to advance their personal development, pursue education, identify career interests, acquire vocational skills, and secure employment.

Aim High with the Arts! (AHA!), an arts program located at LNH, uses music, visual arts, performances, and other forms of self-expression to engage residents and encourage their participation in personal and professional development activities.
Chance for Change (CFC) is NCS's licensed outpatient substance-use treatment program for New Yorkers experiencing homelessness. Located at Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church on the Upper East Side of Manhattan, CFC is the only program in New York City specializing in providing substance use treatment and mental health services for homeless or formerly homeless clients.

Our small, welcoming clinic environment and holistic, trauma-informed, harm-reduction approach allow clients to seek treatment free of judgement or stigma. Individual counseling and group sessions help clients address not only substance use and co-occurring mental health issues, but other life areas as well, including homelessness and housing, unemployment, relationships, medical conditions and more. Customized treatment plans help clients take steps toward stability and recovery.

Contact us at:
Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church
921 Madison Avenue
New York, NY 10021
917-677-0723
The Community Human Services Information and Referral Program (CHIRP) provides information and referrals to those in need of but disconnected from services. NCS started CHIRP in response to a community need — many free meal programs are staffed by volunteers who lack the resources to respond to requests for information and referrals for other services needed by guests. Our social worker meets privately with guests to understand their needs and help them access the necessary information or services. Types of support most frequently requested include shelter and housing, public assistance, mental health counseling, and substance use treatment.

During the pandemic, NCS introduced a CHIRP hotline to make sure this important service remained available at a time when the need was most acute and the ability to provide in-person services was limited.

NCS also produces and distributes Street Sheets, pocket-sized guides that outline neighborhood-specific resources. Street Sheets are distributed widely, at CHIRP sites and other meal programs, faith-based institutions, libraries, emergency rooms, and a variety of community-based social service sites. Street Sheets offer detailed, accessible, and portable information on where and when individuals can find meal programs, shelters, drop-in centers, legal services, medical care, and other services in their area. More than 50,000 Street Sheets have been distributed to date. In 2022, Streets Sheets will be available in English and Spanish for four Manhattan neighborhoods: the Upper East Side, the Upper West Side, Midtown, and Downtown.
Options

Options, NCS’s vocational, education, and employment program, helps individuals overcome barriers to employment and progress toward a career that provides a living wage and growth over time.

Resources available to Options clients include:
- Tutoring and test prep support
- College application assistance and financial scholarships
- Computer classes and an open computer lab with set-up and access to phones, internet, fax, voicemail, and email
- Employment research support
- Assistance with resumes, cover letters, and applications
- Interview preparation including coaching, referrals, and proper attire
- Career development and job readiness workshops

Because keeping the job is often a greater barrier than landing the job for our clients, the holistic approach we employ addresses soft skills such as difficulties with social skills and workplace expectations, anger management, learning disabilities, managing routine stress and anxiety, and fear of failure that often undermine our clients' workplace experiences. NCS builds relationships with local employers to help clients secure jobs, and we continue working with both the client and the employer to help our clients overcome obstacles and ensure long-term success.

Contact us at:
1323 Louis Nine Blvd
Bronx, NY 10459
917-477-2477
CONCEPT PAPER
HOUSING SOLUTION FOR HOMELESS COLLEGE STUDENTS

In the fight against homelessness, and chronic homelessness, in particular, permanent supportive housing and the Housing First approach are widely recognized best practices, providing permanent housing without preconditions, and simultaneously providing the services and supports that are needed. These practices offer the best opportunity for safety and stability for individuals who have struggled with long-term homelessness.

These solutions are necessary and effective for the most highly challenged homeless individuals. However, in prioritizing the needs of the most vulnerable and chronically homeless individuals, we must not overlook the needs and potential at the opposite end of the spectrum. In 2020, 14% of college students in the country reported experiencing homelessness and 48% reported housing insecurity. Here in New York City, in a study released in March 2019, 55% of City University of New York (CUNY) students reported experiencing housing insecurity, with 18% in the community colleges and 14% in CUNY overall having been homeless in the previous year. The COVID-19 pandemic and resulting economic downturn suggest these numbers, like those nationally, have and will continue to escalate. These students work toward their future while struggling to find a place to sleep. If they received just some support at this critical juncture, they would be more likely to graduate to self-sufficiency and avoid a future of long-term homelessness.

As we contemplate the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on college students, we anticipate that this problem will become more acute. Accessing CUNY’s gateway to the middle class could become significantly more challenging for students who struggle with housing insecurity or homelessness.

NCS opened Louis Nine House, a supportive housing facility in the Bronx, in 2009 to serve young adults who have aged out of foster care or experienced homelessness. Providing a stable place for our clients to live offers them the chance to focus on other aspects of their development and the services to help in that process. With mental health and other supportive services, including an on-site vocational and education program, the model provides a setting where young adults receive the guidance and support they may have lacked as children, compensate for lost learning, address trauma, and focus on the personal development and skill-building they need to achieve independence and stability. With stable housing supports, tenants have completed vocational and degree programs while living at Louis Nine House.

Building on our experience operating Louis Nine House, our newest concept is to provide year-round housing and support for homeless college students, age 18 and over. It will function essentially as a student residence, but with additional on-site services designed to help residents navigate obstacles that can derail progress toward a degree or credential. The residence will be staffed 24-hours/day, much as a dorm has a Resident Advisor. On-site staff, including a social worker, will help connect

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1 #REALCOLLEGE 2021: Basic Needs Insecurity During the Ongoing Pandemic, The Hope Center
2 City University of New York #RealCollegeSurvey, The Hope Center
residents with necessary social services and entitlements, resources for mental and physical health, academic and employment support, and financial assistance. By eliminating housing insecurity and providing targeted support, we will afford residents the chance to have a fuller, more focused college experience and make sustained progress toward a degree or credential that will ultimately help them achieve self-sufficiency.

Our goals are to prevent past histories of homelessness from determining students’ futures and to avert some of the dismal outcomes, including chronic homelessness, that are common for this population. In short, we aim to infuse critical support at a pivotal time, creating an opportunity for independence.

We are working with CUNY representatives and have secured funding for planning and early implementation with the goal of replication across the CUNY system and beyond.

ABOUT
NEIGHBORHOOD COALITION FOR SHELTER

Neighborhood Coalition for Shelter (NCS) helps New Yorkers who have a history of homelessness, often compounded by mental illness or substance use, to achieve their highest level of independence. We were established in 1982 by faith and community leaders on Manhattan’s Upper East Side, who believed that homelessness is the responsibility of the entire community. More than 35 years later, we are still guided by the principle that neighbors should help neighbors.

When a solution doesn’t exist or isn’t working, we work to create one. Homelessness isn’t a new issue, and NCS was among the first organizations to tackle the problem of widespread homelessness back in the 1980s. NCS takes on these challenges, applying creative thinking to develop new solutions to the problems faced by our community. Over the years, we have pioneered innovative solutions to complicated issues. NCS was among the first organizations to offer supportive housing, young adult housing, and ground-breaking harm-reduction substance-use treatment.

NCS provides New Yorkers who are homeless or at risk of homelessness with a home, a community, and access to the services that they need to thrive.

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