

Hidden Homelessness

~ raising awareness and promoting change

AUGUST 2022

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Getting to Know You:

Nicole Verhagen

What is your job, and how long have you been in it?

I am the Case Manager for the Connections program with Middleton Outreach Ministry (MOM). My role is to support households in doubled-up living arrangements to find and maintain stable housing. I am pretty new to this role as I started in April 2022, but I am very honored to be in this position and to be working to help fill this big gap in our system.

What does a typical day look like?

A big part of my day is to look and share resources with my program participants, primarily housing resources but also anything that will help participants meet their needs. I am constantly providing housing navigation services, contacting landlords, submitting applications and finding housing opportunities. My hope is that with time, I will be able to form strong relationships with landlords in the area which will ease the transition into stable housing for the program participants.

What is the best part of your job? The hardest part of your job?

I really love working with people, the best part is that I get to be present in the participants' journey towards stability. I am grateful that I get to support such strong, determined and resilient individuals and families. I think that the hardest part is finding landlords and property managers that are willing to work with the specific backgrounds of the participants, I wish there was a faster way to get people housed but it is all about time and perseverance.

If you could change one thing about the service system, what would it be?

With the housing shortage in Dane County I wish there were more active efforts to provide affordable opportunities to all people experiencing homelessness, specially doubled-up households that don't receive enough support or opportunities.



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Define It

What does TEP (*Transition Education Program at Madison Schools*) mean?

Our goal is to reduce barriers to school enrollment and achievement so that children from families who are experiencing homelessness have a "full and equal opportunity" to succeed in school. Services include, but are not limited to advocacy, transportation, school supplies, resource and staff development, community education about homelessness and mobility and coordination with community partners.

What's on Deck...

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The **Madison Area Early Childhood Homelessness Work-group (ECHW)**, in conjunction with the Madison Public Library, invites you to join us for A Critical Conversation: Understanding the Child Care Crisis.

A panel event on **Wednesday, October 12th from 6-7:30** at the **Pinney Branch of the Madison Public Library**.

Panelist will include leaders in early childhood from Madison and Dane County brought together to discuss issues that impact our children and families relating to childcare.



Introducing Nicole Verhagen (Continued from page 1)

One random fact about you!

I didn't like cheese at all until moving to Wisconsin, now I love it and I'm addicted to cheese curds!

One thing you want people to know about doubled up homelessness in our schools/community?

Housing is the first step towards stability. When families are living in such uncertain and fast changing environments it makes it very difficult to break the cycle, build community and create a safe environment for families. There are so many reasons why households are doubled-up and not enough resources to support them.

Sign Me Up...



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TEP is happy to announce the offering of our 6 week MMSD Understanding Mobility and Homelessness class.

Learn answers to these questions and more: What contributes to mobility and homelessness in our community? What is high mobility and homelessness like for a student or a family? How can educators respond?

Topics include:

- Introduction to issues
- Knowing resources
- Building supports
- Understanding needs
- Supporting students
- Creating interventions

Due to the active and rich schedule of planned learning events, we expect all participants to make a firm commitment to attend all sessions and complete all out of class assignments.

When: Thursdays on September 29 - November 10 (no class on Oct 27th)

Time: 4:30 - 7:00pm

Where: TBD

Instructors: Jani Koester, Shannon Stevens

Questions or interest in attending contact: Jani at jkoester@madison.k12.wi.us or 608-204-2063

Do you see me?

I see you there sizing me up
Trying to figure out who I am
Come ask me

I see you there, walking away
To friends you already have
I could be one too

I see you turning away
Avoiding me so you don't have to get close
I try to stay clean

I see you there among your group
And yet I am still over here
Invite me in - See me

I see you there looking at me
Wondering where I have been
Do you really want to know?

I see you there handing out your treat
A special treat to everyone but me
I am hungry too

I see you there with an open seat to the
game
But no one offers the space to me
I want to be included

I see you there looking for one more player
on your team
You are passing me over again
I want to play -ask me

I see you wondering about me
Trying to figure it out
I would be happy to talk to you

I see you coming this way
Offering me an opportunity to connect
I am afraid of rejections

I see you
You see me
Where do we go from here?

Young homeless teen 2017
TEP Madison WI

This newsletter is brought to you by the Doubled Up Workgroup.

Since 2019, we have been working to raise awareness about doubled up homelessness in our community and advocating for resources to support this population.

Email us at doubledupworkgroup@gmail.com