

Case studies in housing instability

Housing is the number one reason people with disabilities contact The Arc of King County for assistance and is a top five reason parents/caregivers contact us.

Client Story #1:

In July 2017, “S” connected with The Arc for support accessing permanent housing. “S”, a single, adult, autistic woman was homeless for several years and was living in transitional housing upon connection with The Arc. Due to the nature of her disability, “S” is not able to maintain full-time competitive employment and depends on social security benefits for her primary income. While “S” is highly resourceful and knows her rights, she struggles to communicate with the array of professionals needed to stabilize her housing. She found herself frequently confused and frustrated when trying to work with professionals, which provoked intense anxiety for her. She worried she was going to be evicted from the transitional housing program.

The Arc partnered with “S” to help facilitate effective communication. With support from The Arc “S” could fully understand the expectations of her transitional housing program, which reduced her debilitating anxiety caused by fear of eviction. In early 2018 “S” was awarded a Section 8 Voucher from the Seattle Housing Authority. Again, The Arc partnered with her to help facilitate communication with the Housing Authority and potential landlords to ensure she could find and secure an apartment that met her health and sensory needs. “S” moved into her own home in spring of 2018.

Client Story #2:

TC is a 44-year-old single parent with intellectual disability. Their 14-year-old son also has a learning disability. TC lived with their son in Burien and was on the brink of becoming homeless after the passing of her mother, whom she lived with. Due to the nature of TC’s disability she is unable to maintain full-time competitive employment and depends on social security benefits as the only source of income for the family. TC has been denied low-income housing across Washington because the family income is not 2-3 times the rent.

In January 2019 TC moved into an apartment in Lakewood. The rent in this new unit exceeds the family budget by about \$200/month, which is better than the place she exited, which exceeded the budget by about \$800/month. The Arc is subsidizing the rent for up to 6 months while still working to find a sustainable solution which requires either a Section 8 Voucher or a long-term subsidy program.

Client Story #3:

A couple with a 3-month old baby with Down syndrome connected with The Arc while living in their car. The father’s employment as a delivery driver provides the sole source of income for the family. Mom has disabilities that limit her ability to work. Additionally, the baby requires close attention and care as he had heart surgery soon after birth and requires a feeding tube for all nutrition.

The Arc helped the family access a homeless shelter, where they stayed for over 6 months while searching for an affordable apartment in King County. The family reports that they now have an apartment, but the rent is at the maximum limit of their budget and they are fearful that they will not be able to remain stable.

Client Story #4:

A family of 4 connected with The Arc after they were forced to vacate their home due to rat infestation. They had been living in their car for over a month before being referred to The Arc by Seattle Children's Autism Center, which serves their 9-year-old son with profound autism.

The family had a Section 8 Voucher as the parents also have disabilities impacting their ability for stable employment, however they struggled to find an apartment that met the unique needs of their autistic son within the required price range of the Section 8 Voucher. Due to their son's disability, which included a lack of safety awareness and tendency to wander, the family could not live near busy streets or waterways, which was where more of the affordable apartments were located. Additionally, because of his disability he often makes loud noises and may jump or hit walls throughout the day and night, making neighbors angry. The family needed a single-family home or ground-floor corner apartment to minimize conflict with neighbors.

After over a month living in their car and another six weeks living in a hotel, the family settled for an 3rd floor, corner unit as it was their best option within their price range.

Client Story #5:

A single mother of an adult daughter with developmental disability connected with The Arc for support to have her daughter move into supported housing immediately. Mom was dying of cancer and given only months to live. The daughter's only income was from social security. The adult daughter is a client of the Developmental Disabilities Administration and approved for Supported Living services through the Core Waiver, however she was unable to secure a provider as each provider was unable to secure an apartment in which the individual could live.

The Arc partnered with the family, DDA, and a willing Supported Living agency to find a housing and care solution. The daughter moved into her home weeks before her mother passed away.

Client Story #6:

A single father and 20-year-old son with autism were referred to The Arc after the father was admitted into the hospital for a heart attack. Because of health problems, the father was unable to work and the only source of income for the family was the son's SSI. Upon release from the hospital, the father and son stayed in their apartment without paying rent until they were evicted about a month later. When last we heard from them, they were living in their car. The son is a DDA client but at that time the family was unable to access a Section 8 Voucher.

Client Story #7

Mother with 2 Children in Seattle School District, family is of Somali descent. Family (currently immigrant status) is based in Northern Mary's Place Shelter. Not currently aware of CEA/VI-SPIDAT Score, but five year old daughter highly impacted by Autism, including difficulties with communication, toileting and following directions. Son currently undiagnosed with DD. Family currently in process of DDA approval, unsure of yet. Family is on waitlist for Compass Housing Alliance through normal portal, but have been referred via SPSS as well. Due to their situation, TW has been advocating for family to receive Unit, however, only may be considered in family who qualifies on ADA reasons is rejected.

Client Story #8

Immigrant Mother with one Child approximately 10, again of Somali Descent. Child appears to have diagnosis of Trisomy 21/ Down Syndrome. Currently based in Northern Mary's Place Shelter. No CEA/VI-SPIDAT Score that TW has been made aware of. Client currently making approximately \$950 per month between working part time and care for Son. Client undoubtedly on Coordinated Entry for All, but based on presentation, likely does not score highly enough to qualify for limited programs currently.

Client Story #9

Single, adult trans female with autism diagnosis, Substance Use Disorder and Mental Health Concerns. Client has been admitted to hospital for assault twice in last 3 months. Client has been hospitalized and placed on psychiatric holds twice in last four months. Client scores an 11 with VI-SPIDAT and currently hospitalized. Client currently in INPTX.

Client Story #10

Refugee Mother with 5 year old daughter. Daughter presents with extremely impacted autism. Mother also suffering from PTSD from extensive abusive during pregnancy. DDA Eligible and receiving services. Family is on KCDDD list, waiting for PBV unit. Currently at Imminent Risk of Homelessness, however not BSK-YFHMPI Initiative due to Income Requirements for the Program. Family is not in Shelter yet, have not been assessed via VI-SPIDAT.

Client Story #11

Approximately 50 year old, DDA eligible female, Hard Of Hearing. Due to a fire started by client in previous apartment, client is trying to qualify for Live-In Care Giver, whom she has already identified. Once client qualifies, will qualify under Reasonable Accommodation to Modify Housing Voucher she already has received.

