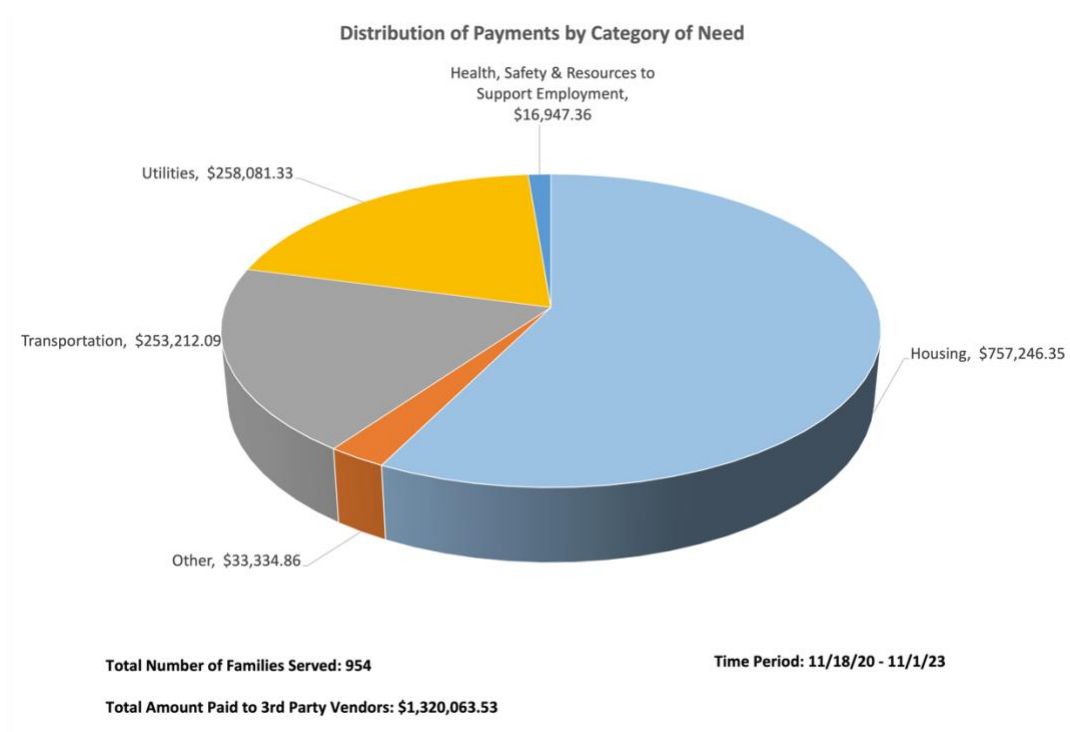




What we do –

Footbridge keeps families together and out of a poverty spiral by providing rapid financial support to short-term financial crises which have no other solution. This carefully targeted stopgap funding both dramatically improves outcomes for families on the brink of a crisis and saves government (i.e., taxpayer) dollars by reducing the need for costly social-service interventions.

It is widely recognized that families’ ability to meet basic needs is the biggest determinant of their ability to lead full and healthy lives. But in many specific emergency situations, existing support structures either don’t cover or cannot act fast enough to cover an acute, unexpected financial need. Footbridge strategically supports only clients for whom our help will make a sustainable difference. Our flexible model complements existing supports, filling in gaps as the funder of last resort. And our organization is poised for expansion across the country.



One-third of participants convey that Footbridge also prevented a mental health crisis

Founding Story –

Footbridge’s model was developed after nearly a year of stakeholder input and received its first infusion of capital after our founder pitched the idea in a tech/social innovation challenge while working full-time as a child-welfare administrator. Footbridge’s initial \$160,000 investment in 2020 grew to \$1.34 million within 18 months as other funders saw the value of its targeted assistance.

Footbridge was designed to be the solution for when a child welfare worker visits a home and

discovers that although there is no abuse, children's health and safety may be at risk because of severe financial need. We can turn around requests to rectify crisis situations within hours, which is critical as some determinations whether to remove children must be made on the day of an initial home visit.

Footbridge can act quickly because families complete their applications for assistance within a few minutes over the phone. And our speed makes all the difference.

95% of those we've helped cite Footbridge as important or critically important in preventing a crisis from escalating, with 99% citing our aid as timely.

Our Model –

Footbridge serves as an intermediary for organizations such as health and human service agencies, foundations and healthcare plans seeking to address the short-term financial crises of individuals and families so as to prevent more expensive negative outcomes. Our model enables these institutional investors to specify who can make referrals. Currently, we have over 100 referral partners ranging from librarians to school counselors, home visitors, physical and mental health providers, child welfare workers and other types of human service professionals. Our evaluation data indicate that our services strengthen the relationship between caregivers and physicians, as well as home visitors—a powerful finding considering how positive relationships can interface with social determinants of health.

96% of those helped feel that the referral partner can help them when they share their problems and 89% are more likely to engage with and attend appointments with the referring organization.

How we make a difference –

Footbridge focuses on only those clients for whom our help will make a sustainable difference and serves as the funder of last resort. We survey program participants at one-, three-, and six-month intervals post-intervention to gauge how long our aid is making a difference. Footbridge is partnering with Allegheny County's Department of Human Services to look at administrative data on the program participants who have received financial assistance, to assess what proportion of families have successfully avoided the child welfare and homelessness systems thanks to our aid. Footbridge is also partnering with a major health plan to examine clients' claims data on healthcare utilization, quality, or cost changes that may be associated with Footbridge outreach, referrals or financial assistance.

80% of respondents to our 6-month evaluation survey indicate that Footbridge assistance is still making a difference in their lives

Footbridge is poised for national growth and offers flexibility in partnerships to ensure the monies that we manage complement existing supports and successfully bridge gaps. If you would like to learn more, please contact CEO Kim Eckel at kimberlyeckel@footbridge.org