

Promoting Health Equity: Housing Programs and Policies, Tenant-Based Rental Assistance Programs

Task Force Finding

Intervention Definition

Tenant-based rental assistance programs provide vouchers or direct cash assistance to allow low-income families more housing options than they could afford by themselves. This assistance is designed to allow families to move to safer neighborhoods.

Task Force Finding (February 2001)*

Tenant-based rental assistance programs, supported by public housing funds, use vouchers to subsidize the cost of housing secured by low-income households in the private rental market. Because these programs give participants a range of rental options, participants are less likely than residents of public housing projects to live in high-poverty neighborhoods. On the basis of sufficient evidence of effectiveness in improving outcomes of reduced victimization of household members (i.e., being mugged, beaten or assaulted, stabbed, or shot) and improved neighborhood safety (i.e., reduction of public drinking, public drug use, seeing person carrying weapon, or hearing gunfire), the Task Force recommends housing subsidy programs that provide low-income families with rental vouchers for use in the private housing market and allow families choice in residential location.

Evidence is insufficient to determine the effects of tenant-based rental assistance programs on housing hazards, youth risk behaviors, mental health status, or physical health status.

*From the following publication:

Task Force on Community Preventive Services. Recommendations to promote healthy social environments. *Am J Prev Med* 2003;24(3S):21-4.

Publications

Anderson LM, Charles J, Fullilove MT, et al. Providing affordable family housing and reducing residential segregation by income: a systematic review. *Am J Prev Med* 2003;24(3S):S47-67.

Task Force on Community Preventive Services. Recommendations to promote healthy social environments. *Am J Prev Med* 2003;24(3S):S21-4.

Task Force on Community Preventive Services. The social environment. In: Zaza S, Briss PA, Harris KW, eds. *The Guide to Community Preventive Services: What Works to Promote Health?* Atlanta (GA): Oxford University Press 2005:329-84 (Out of Print).

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