

Diversion: A Housing First Response to Family Homelessness Crises

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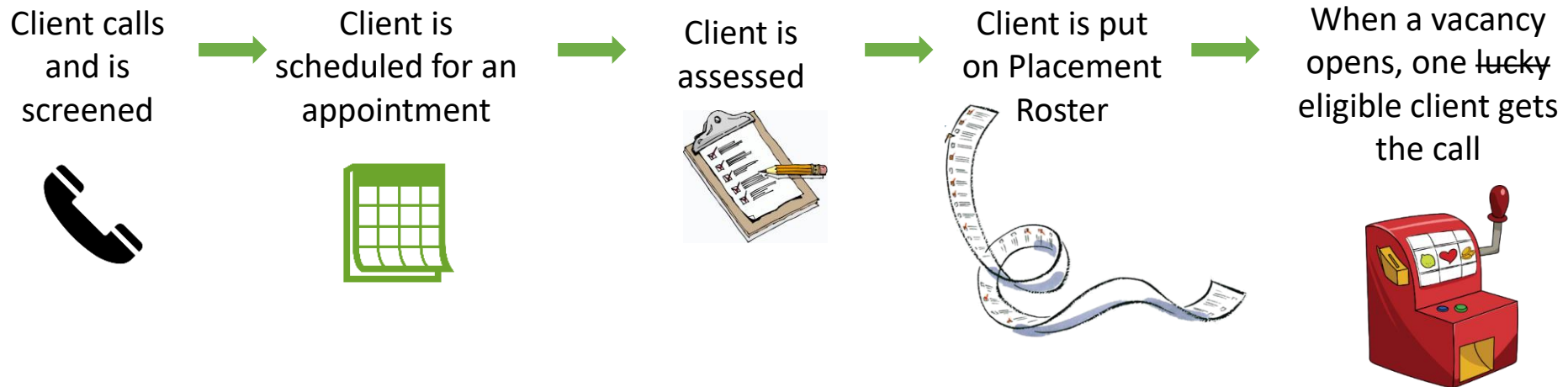


Diversion in Pierce County

- What prompted us to think about diversion?
- How did we respond?
- What did we learn?
- Why is it the first conversation we have with everyone?



What Prompted Diversion?



- Lost contact with about 1/3 of the people on the placement roster
- Around 20% found housing on their own
- Only 20% were entering our system
- Remainder stayed on wait list... for a long time

How Did We Respond?

- Acknowledging the Resiliency of Families
- Trained Staff in Mediation
 - Objective, no pre-determined outcome
 - Active Listening and Reflecting techniques
- Placed Staff at Coordinated Entry
 - FIRST system response focused on immediate housing options



How Did We Respond?

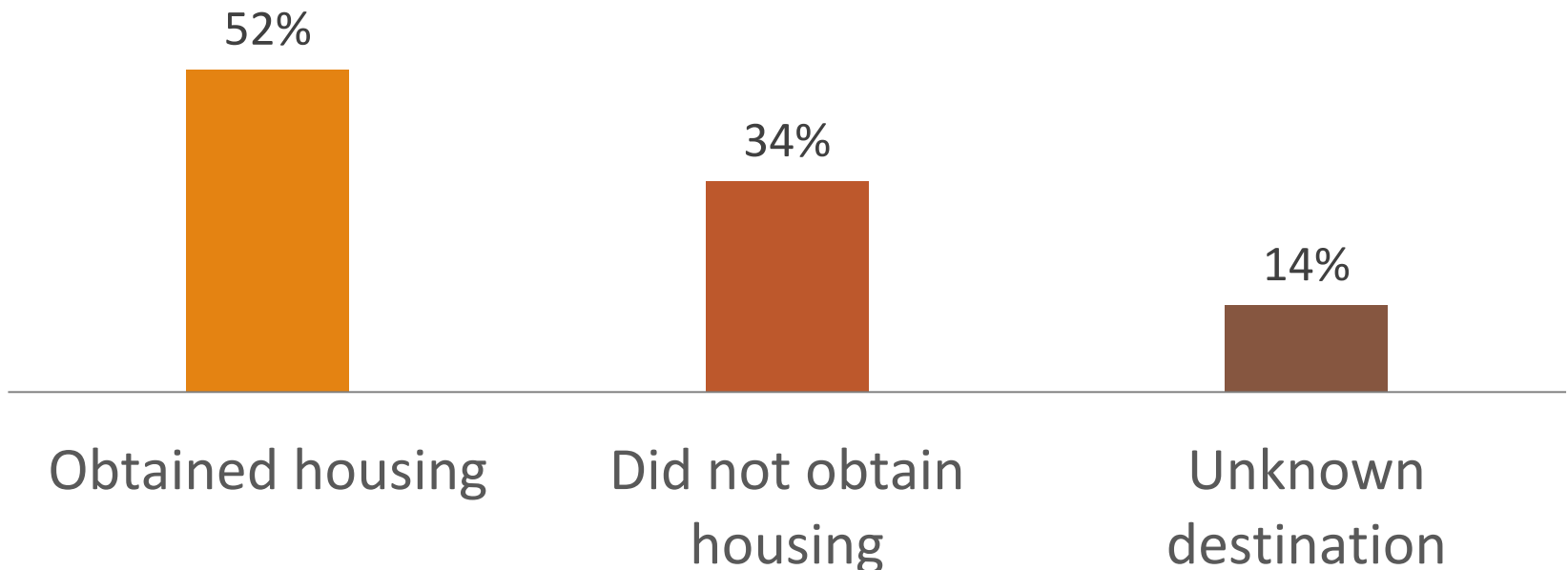
- Creative Conversations
 - Safe Space
 - Exploratory, Problem Solving Conversation
 - Strength-Based and Client-Driven
- Staff Role
 - Creativity
 - Reality Testing



What Have We Learned?

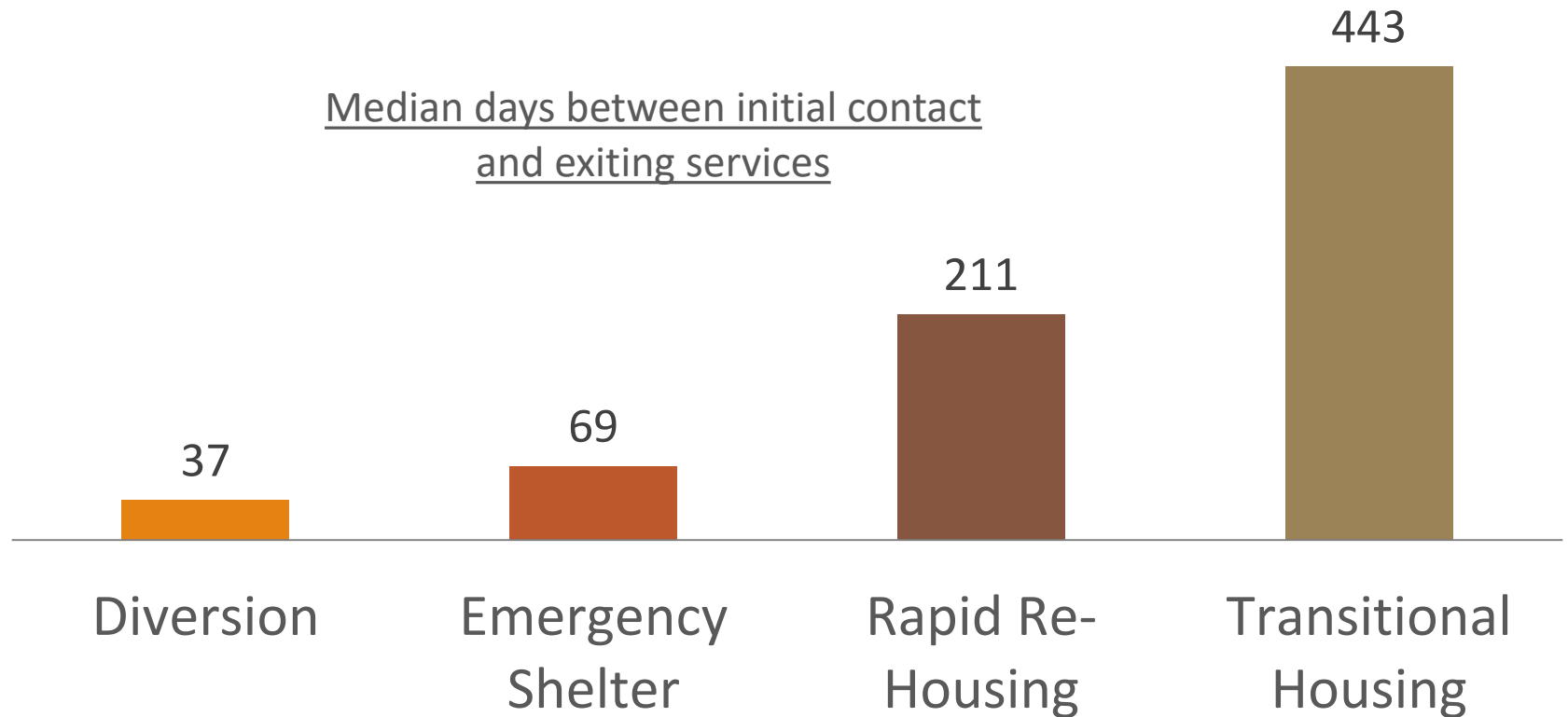
Many Families Obtained Housing Through Diversion

Family destination after Diversion



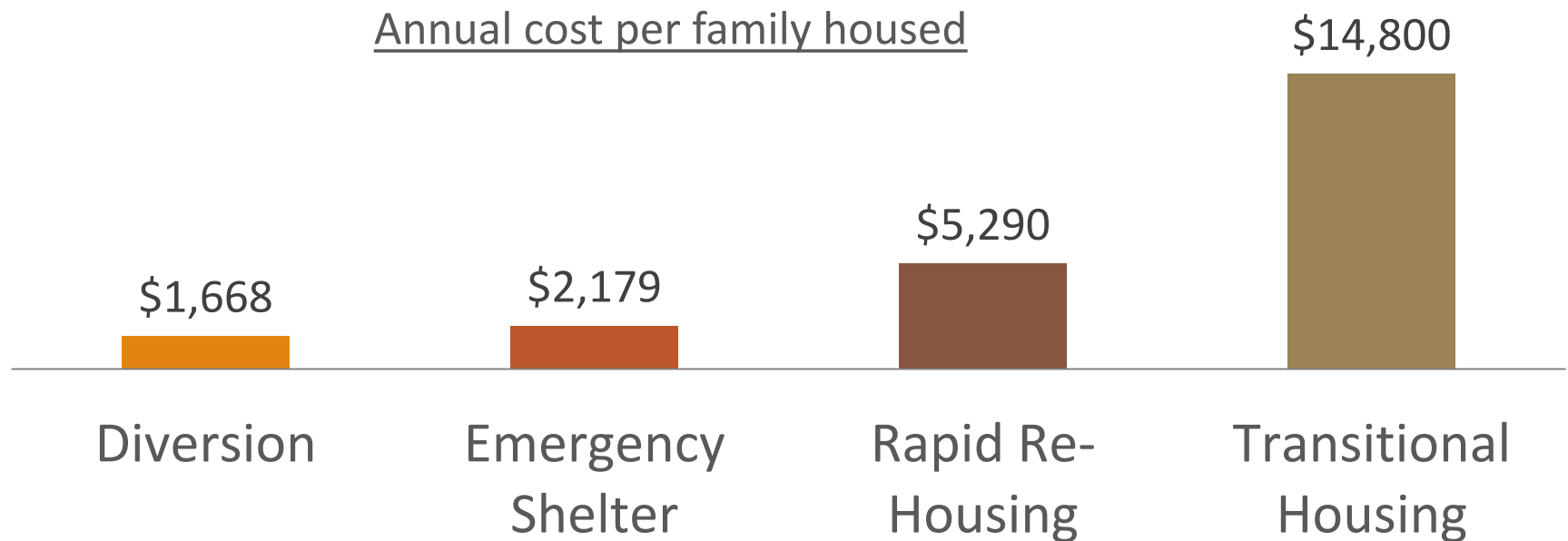
What Have We Learned?

Families Exited Services Relatively Quickly



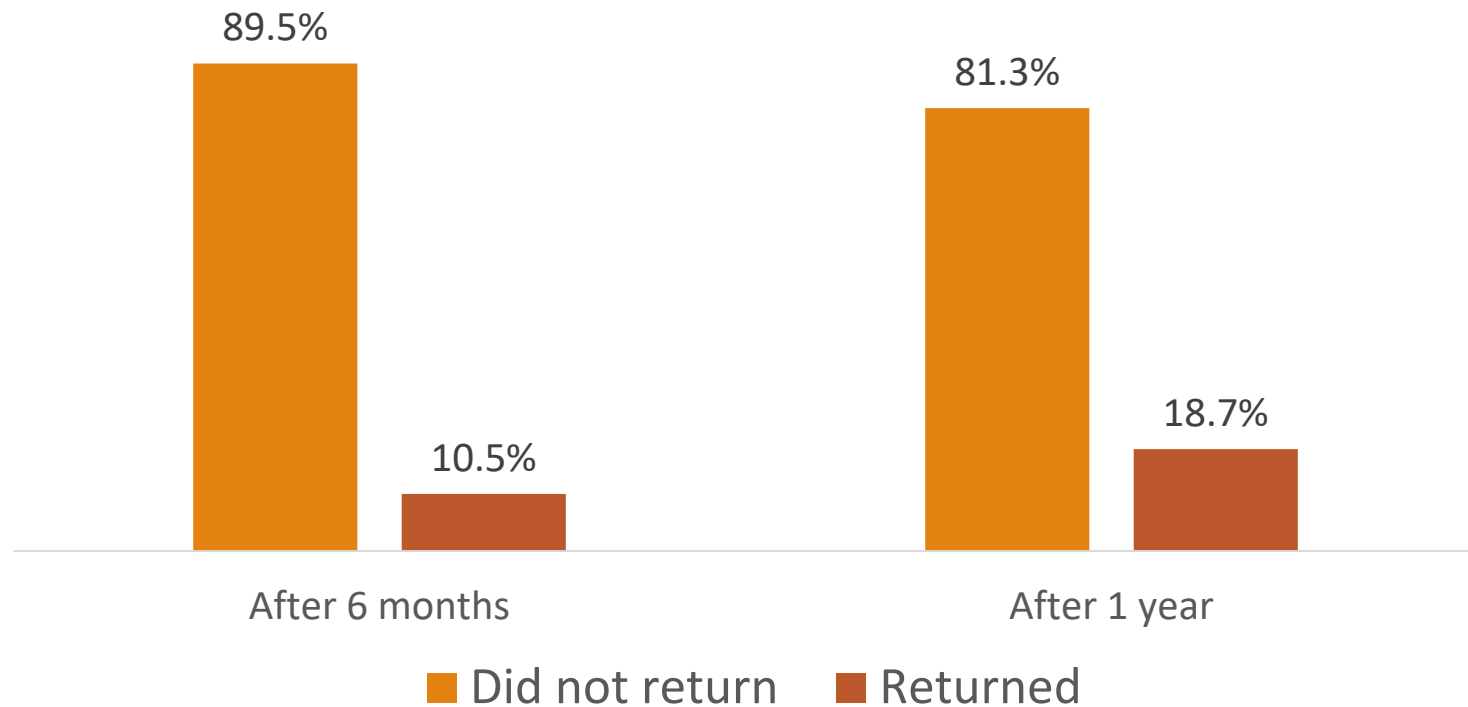
What Have We Learned?

Families Obtained Housing at Relatively Low Cost



What Have We Learned?

Returns to the Homeless Response System Are Low



Why Is This Our First Conversation?

- Screening for diversion is ineffective
 - Households will self-select
- Diversion is an organic prioritization
 - Progressive Engagement for the system
- Creates positive urgency
 - Maximizing opportunity
- Sets a problem-solving, housing-first orientation within the system



How could you see your community using an approach like Diversion?