

Rent reform continues to improve lives



In an effort to open up more affordable housing, be more efficient with federal funds and create a path to financial independence for more families and individuals, AHFC introduced rent reform in 2014.

The Step program is one part of rent reform and is geared toward families with at least one adult in the household who is able to work. **It promotes independence by offering several layers of incentives and targeted support for families.** Participants receive up to five years of subsidized housing.

The progress of the program and its participants is closely monitored. At the end of FY18 2,243 families were enrolled in Step.

Compared to 2014, the inception year, data show more families on the road to financial independence with outcomes including working and earning more.

FROM FY14 TO FY18...

- Annual gross income per household has increased from \$19,929 to \$29,817
- Annual earned income has gone up from \$11,997 to \$20,775
- People working full-time (32 hours or more per week) has increased from 40 to 56 percent
- People working at least part-time went from 54 to 71 percent
- Average monthly rental assistance payment has decreased by \$200
- Savings have been re-directed to add 100 vouchers for vulnerable families and individuals

A humble beginning for Samantha



AHFC's *Jumpstart* program supports families who wish to better their employment and financial opportunities and become financially independent.

The program had 787 individuals enrolled in 15 communities statewide at the end of FY18.

Samantha is one example of many who have experienced positive outcomes through the program.

She dropped out of high school in 10th grade and had kids young. **When her baby started preschool, the teacher told Samantha about AHFC's *Jumpstart* that is part of Step.** Samantha enrolled.

With the help of *Jumpstart* resources, goal planning and financial rewards, Samantha completed her high school education.

"Enrolling gave me the opportunity to let go of the negative influences in my life and move forward."

Samantha now works full-time, attends the University of Alaska Anchorage and plans to be a caseworker.

"I'm incredibly humbled to be where I'm at today. I have plans to purchase a home. My children are my everything, I want to be sure that they are set up to be independent."

"Sometimes, people see things in you that you don't see in yourself. My Caseworker Michael really pushed me to do better. He would always say, 'I believe in you. I have faith in you.'"