



DCF sponsors Partners for Promise

Goal is to help one family at a time

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Published On: Jan 06 2012 07:41:38 PM EST Updated On: Jan 07 2012 05:09:25 PM EST



ORLANDO, Fla. -

As recently as this past fall, Nelda Evans and her four children were calling a late model Chevy Venture their home.

"Not in my wildest dreams did I think I would be in a situation like this, said Evans. "It's just hard."

The Evans are like many Central Florida families who

are struggling to survive in tough times.

A medical emergency drained their savings and put them on the streets.

Evans works full-time, but said it's just not enough to pay the bills.

"When I look at my paycheck, I look at it and have tears in my eyes," said Evans.

For families in need, finding help and knowing where to turn can be one of the biggest challenges.

That's why the Department of Children and Families held a "Call to Action" meeting at First Baptist Church in Orlando on Friday.

The department hopes to connect those wishing to volunteer with those needing help.

"I think today is all about trying to give the community a handle to grab a hold of, how they can plug into and help in the homeless situation," said Tracey Schmidt, a member of the Commission on Homelessness.

Nearly 250 people attended the meeting, representing local business, faith-based organizations, homeless services and non-profits.

The theme for the meeting was "One Family at a Time."

While the number of homeless can seem overwhelming, tackling the problem on an individual basis puts the problem in perspective.

It's a change in thought from when Denise Cullen asked how the group Team Gamez could help.

"The response that stuck with me was there are just too many to pick one. And my thought process is that's where you start, you pick one," said Cullen.

DCF also introduced the website [Florida Partners for Promise](#). It's a way for organizations and individuals to talk to one another and help on an individual basis.

"It's like how do you tackle any big problem, said Schmidt. "You just tackle them one small bite at a time, and I think when our community realizes that you know what I may not have a lot of financial resources to help out, but I do have time and I do have talent that I can lend."

With help like this, Evans and her family have moved into a hotel along Lee Road near I-4 in Orange County.

It's still not home but it's one step closer to being there.

"We always try to look towards the future. You never know what the future holds," said Evan's 16-year-old Nasondra.

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