



Making-It-Home, a program of the Bergen Volunteer Center, is a public/private partnership that works with businesses, individuals, government, and nonprofit agencies in Bergen County to bring home furnishings to formerly homeless, disabled, and low-income individuals and families in need.

Our primary collaboration is with Bergen County's Housing, Health and Human Services Center: A Shared Services Project between the County of Bergen and the Housing Authority of Bergen County. We furnish and decorate the apartments of formerly homeless people moving from emergency shelter to new apartments.

Making-It-Home provides a critical missing "piece" for low-income individuals, children, and families who are leaving emergency shelter, further enabling them to live in a safe environment that improves their quality of life and ability to achieve greater self-sufficiency and a brighter future. The program ensures that those who are ready to make a fresh start are able to move into their new apartments knowing they will have basic furniture on which to sleep, sit, and eat. This essential ingredient helps complete the picture and "make their house a home." It provides a safe, healthy and comfortable home environment that encourages people to secure and hold down a job, their children to achieve in school, and individuals and families to thrive.

Another unique aspect of our model lies in the way we are working together to solve not only the problems related to housing and homelessness, but also environmental concerns about the disposing of unwanted furniture into our landfills. Our constellation of partners includes generous donors who, at their own expense, seek to recycle their unwanted furniture and, most important, give it to people who can truly benefit. In the same fashion, clean out services do their part for the environment by alerting us to furniture they've acquired for disposal and volunteering their time to deliver it to our warehouse.

Making-It-Home coordinates individuals and companies who donate new and gently-used furniture, moving companies who help transport the furniture from donors to clients, and clean-out services, professional organizers, realtors, and others who serve as marketing channels to help spread the word about our work. The program receives 250 square feet of donated space from Westy's Self Storage in Hackensack to warehouse the furniture before transporting it to our clients.

To learn more, please contact Cynthia Massarsky at 201-803-4608 or cmassarsky@making-it-home.org