

# It Takes An Army

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○ How Outreach Teams are Addressing the Systematic Gaps within the Homeless Response System

# Menti- Let's get interactive!

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Join at [menti.com](https://menti.com)

Use code 7857 6372



# Who We Are

- Toni Benson-Atkinson  
Director of Program Operations  
CFTH Houston
- Omar Richards  
Associate of Outreach  
CFTH Houston

Lead agency for the TX-700  
Continuum of Care (CoC)

- AKA- The Way Home
- Consists of Harris, Montgomery, and Fort Bend County

Homeless Management Information  
System (HMIS) lead

Coordinated Access Lead

The Way Home is:

- The collaborative model to prevent and end homelessness in Harris, Fort Bend, & Montgomery Counties
- Comprised of 100+ stakeholder partners from all sectors of the community
  - Nonprofits
  - Government
  - Philanthropy
  - Faith-Based Organizations



# Who Are you?

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## Who's in the room?



- Front Line Worker(Outreach Case Manager, Assessor)
- Manager(Ex Team Lead, S



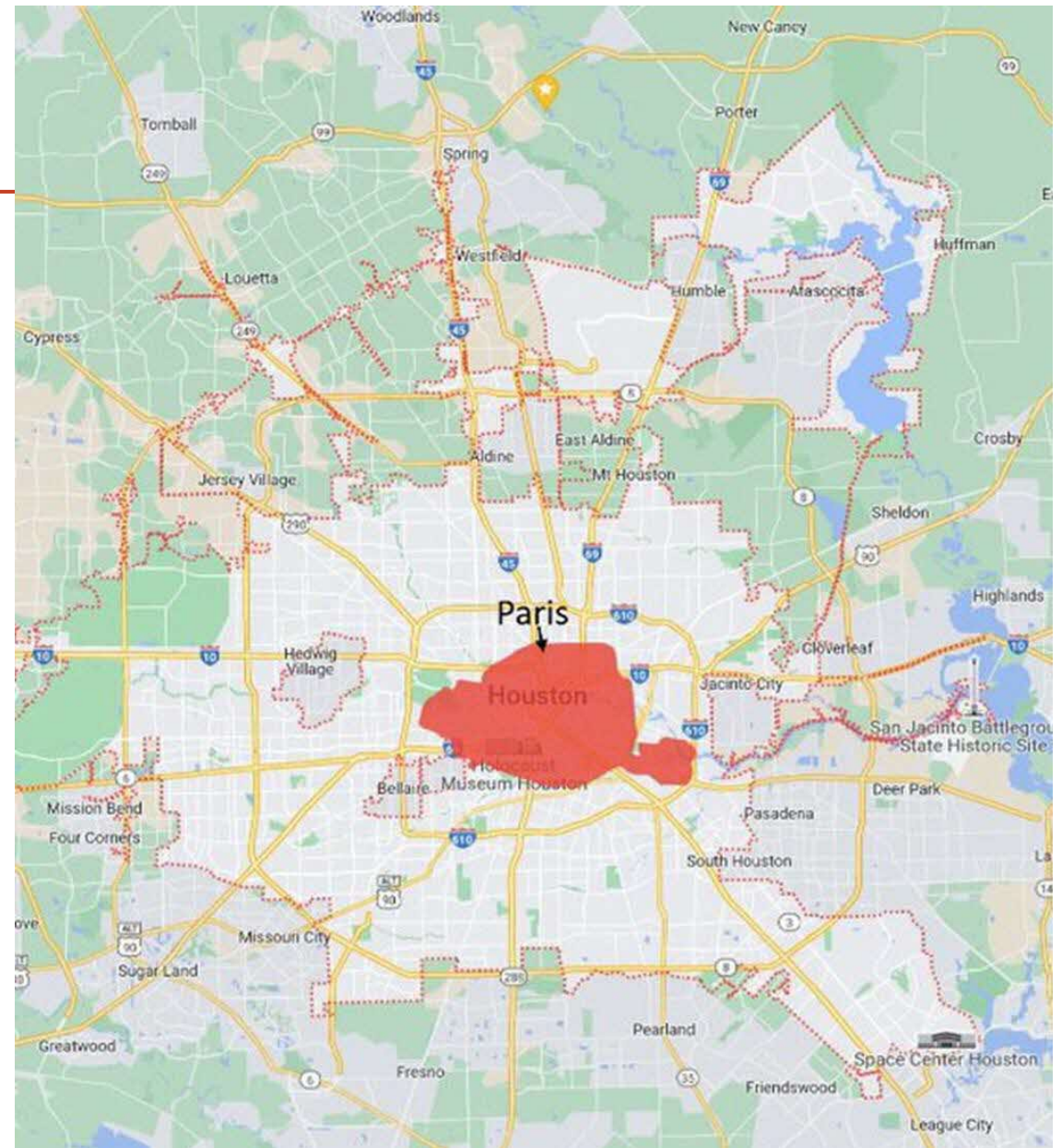
**"Alone we can do so little;  
together we can do so much."  
Helen Keller**

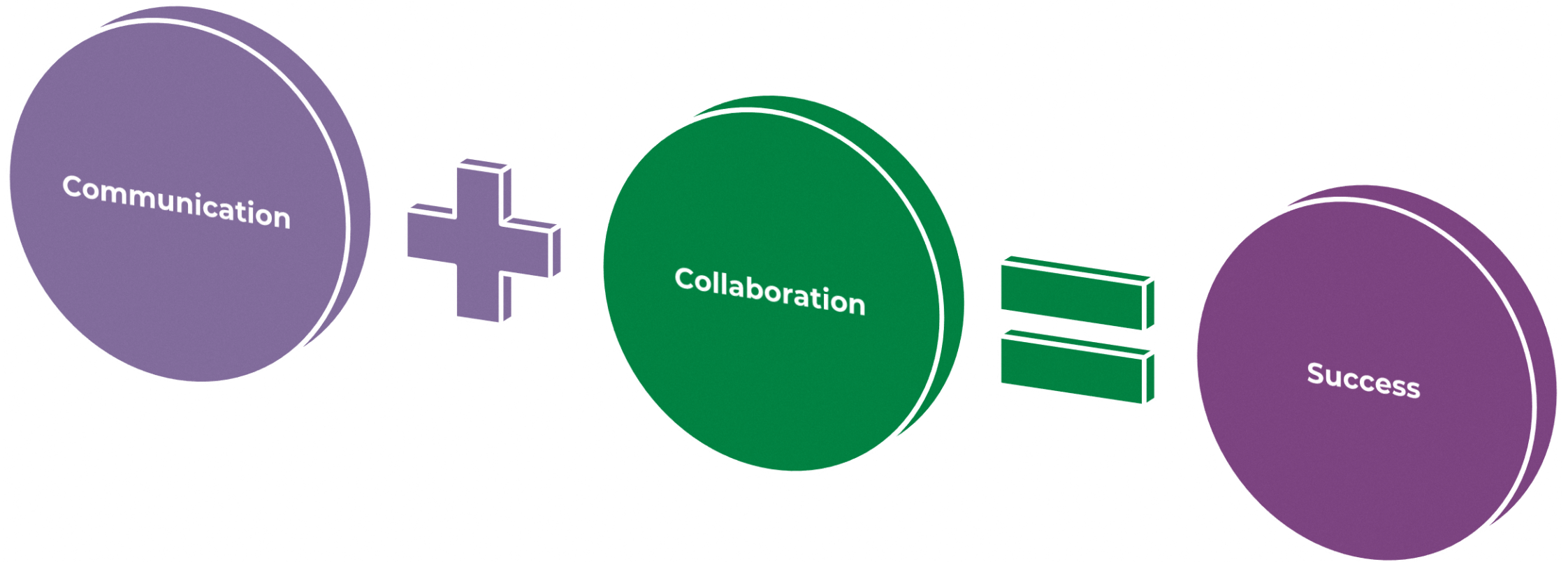
System Outreach is designed to foster collaborative thinking to further drive our homeless response system. By closing the loops and leveraging agile frameworks, we help our CoC grow organically and foster innovative solutions for achieving our goal of ending homelessness.



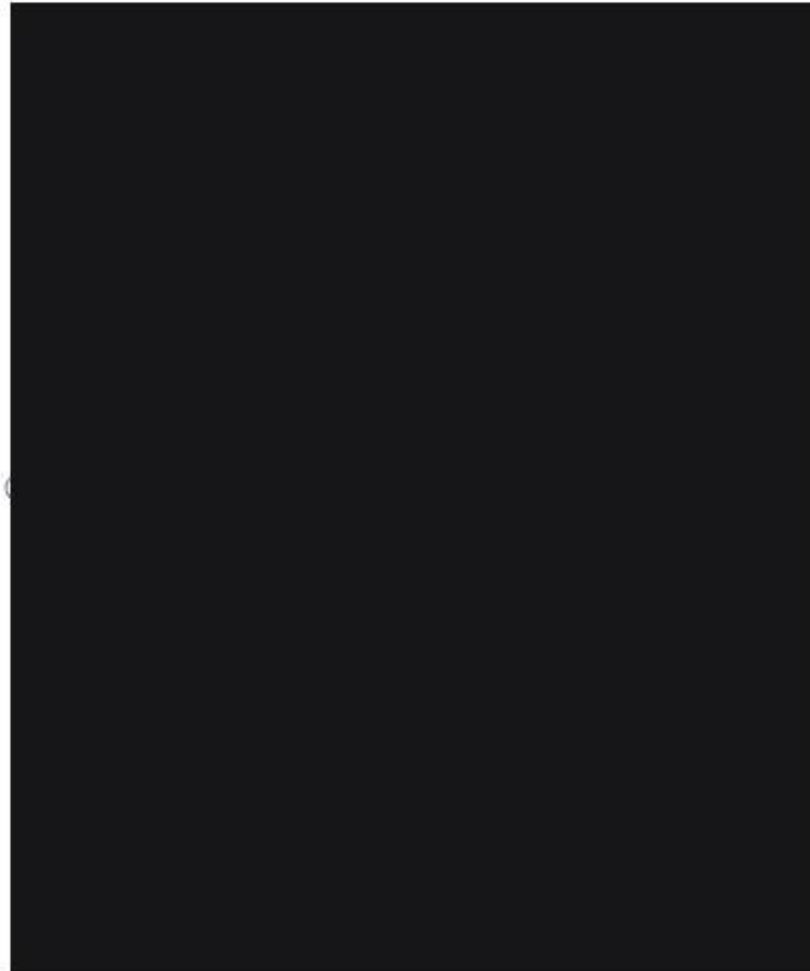
# Fun Facts

- The Houston MSA covers 9,444 square miles, larger than five states, including New Hampshire, New Jersey, Connecticut, Delaware, and Rhode Island.
- Paris fits within Houston's 610 Loop





# Issues to Tackle



THIN Presentation  
Created by Toni Atkinson

Disconnect

TA  
Account

## Add a question

### Question types

Multiple  
Choice

Word Cloud

Open Ended

Scales

Ranking

### Quiz competition

Select Answer

Type Answer

Leaderboard

### Previously created



Help &  
Feedback



# Areas For Growth

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- Geographic Coverage
- Cross-System Communication
- Cross-System Collaboration
- Mitigate Duplicate Resources
- Reduce Redundant Data
- Community Integration
- Special Populations
- Disaster Response Efforts



# Client Experience

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# Connecting The Response System

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## System Standardized Practices

Implementing standardized best practices  
across our response system

- Training and practice
- Enhances collaboration for wrap-around  
services
- Mitigates miscommunication



## Community Response

Addressing the community's concerns  
surrounding homelessness

- Citizen's Request Portal
- Dispatching specialized outreach teams
- Education
- Emergency response & relief efforts
- Show The Way



## In-Reach

Meeting people where they frequent

- Day service agencies, faith-based  
organizations, community partners
- Community Integration
- Pre-Navigation
- Maximizes resources and time
- Coverage throughout the geographic area  
of our CoC.



# Outreach Practice Standards

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# Practice Standards Goals

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**Outcome Goal: Establish baseline performance expectations** for delivery of essential services in TWH CoC



**Performance Goal: Alignment of service delivery practice** across multiple providers and programs



**Process Goal: Research, evaluate, iterate,** building consensus among TWH stakeholders and partners



# Types of Outreach

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## General Community Outreach

Community Outreach refers to outreach activities exclusively focused on engagement, comfort, and care. Community Outreach is not currently integrated into the CoC's coordinated outreach response, but Community Outreach services provide a valuable and necessary component of the community's overall response to unsheltered homelessness.

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## Focused Outreach & Engagement

Outreach and Engagement refer to service providers and teams engaged in outreach with multiple sets of agency-specific and community-driven goals that inform outreach work, some of which are not exclusively about housing (i.e. navigation, housing placement, housing retention). Outreach & Engagement includes specialized teams focusing on unique health needs of persons living with HIV/AIDS, teams addressing the specialized needs of youth, Veterans, and/or persons who are victims of sex trafficking.

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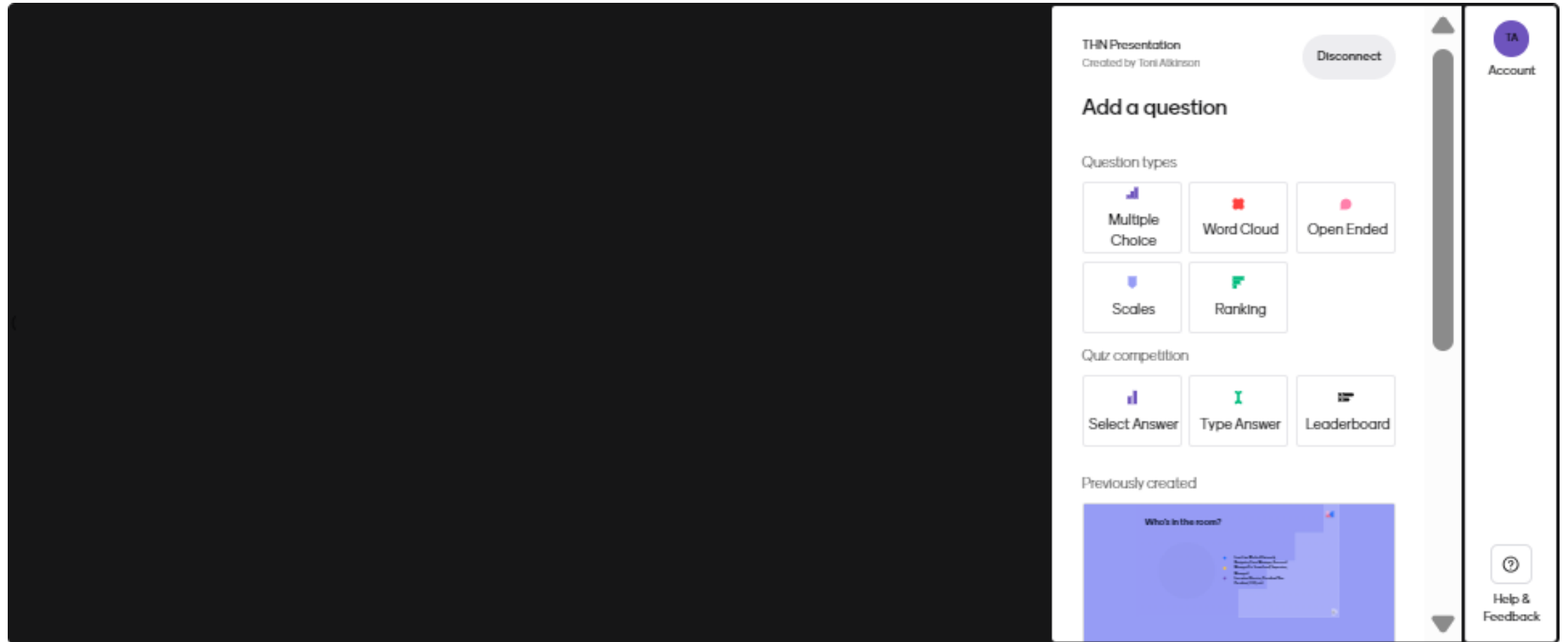
## Specialized System Outreach

System Outreach refers to a CoC-wide focus, across multi service provider teams and agencies, and integrating services and resources from multi public and private sources. The emphasis is on housing focused assessment, system navigation, and encampment response.

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# What type of Outreach is prominent in your Community?



# Functions of Outreach

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| Focus                            | Assist                                                                    | Coordinate                                     | Facilitate                                                             |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Focus on Unsheltered Individuals | Assist in encampment decommissioning, planning, execution and monitoring. | Coordinate warm hand-off to next level of care | Facilitate access to low-barrier shelter and other temp accommodations |



# Functions of Outreach

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## Leverage

Leverage both mainstream housing and healthcare resources to assist in their efforts to end unsheltered homelessness

## Provide

Provide specialized and targeted outreach during extreme weather events and public health crises, to ensure unsheltered persons have access to emergency services, information, and temporary housing supports

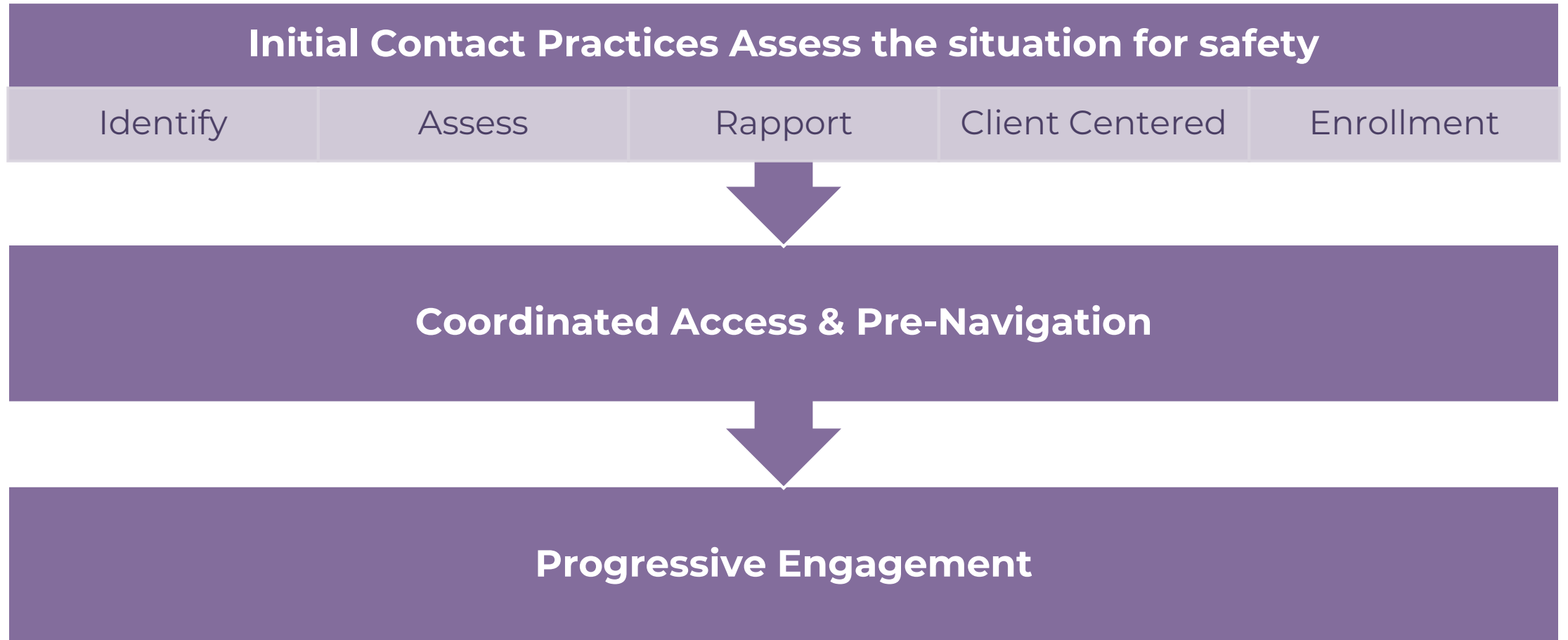
## Comfort

Provide “comfort and care” supports (engagement and service activities not directly tied to housing)



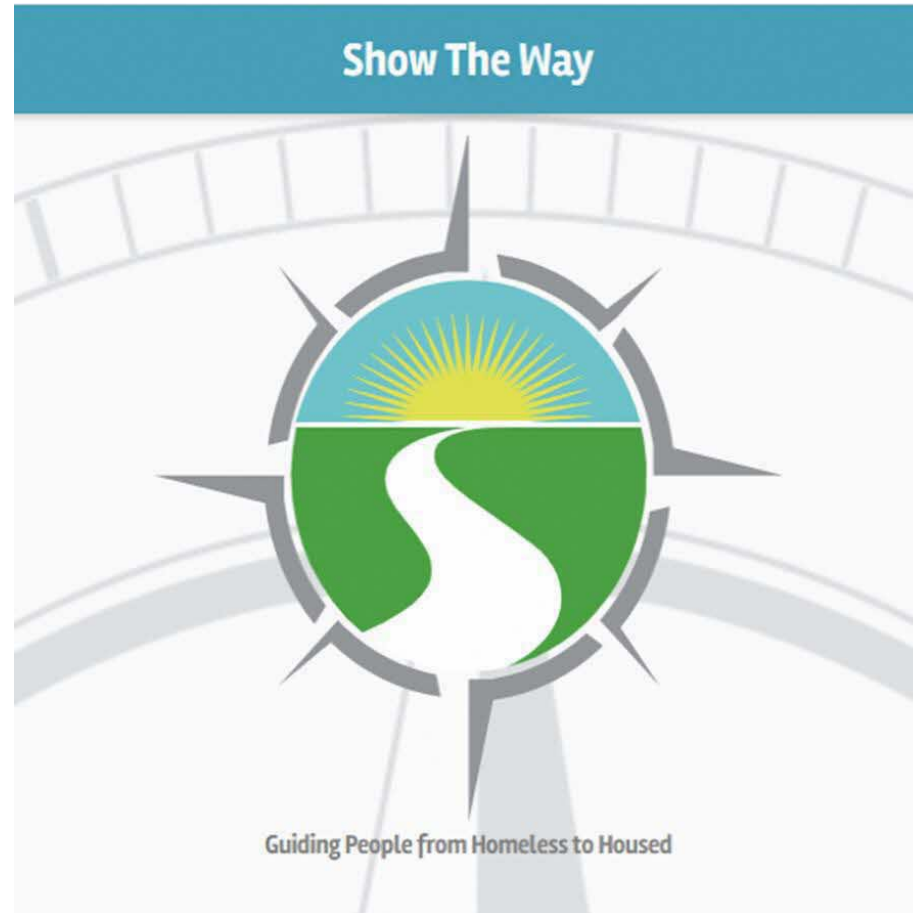
# Key Responsibilities

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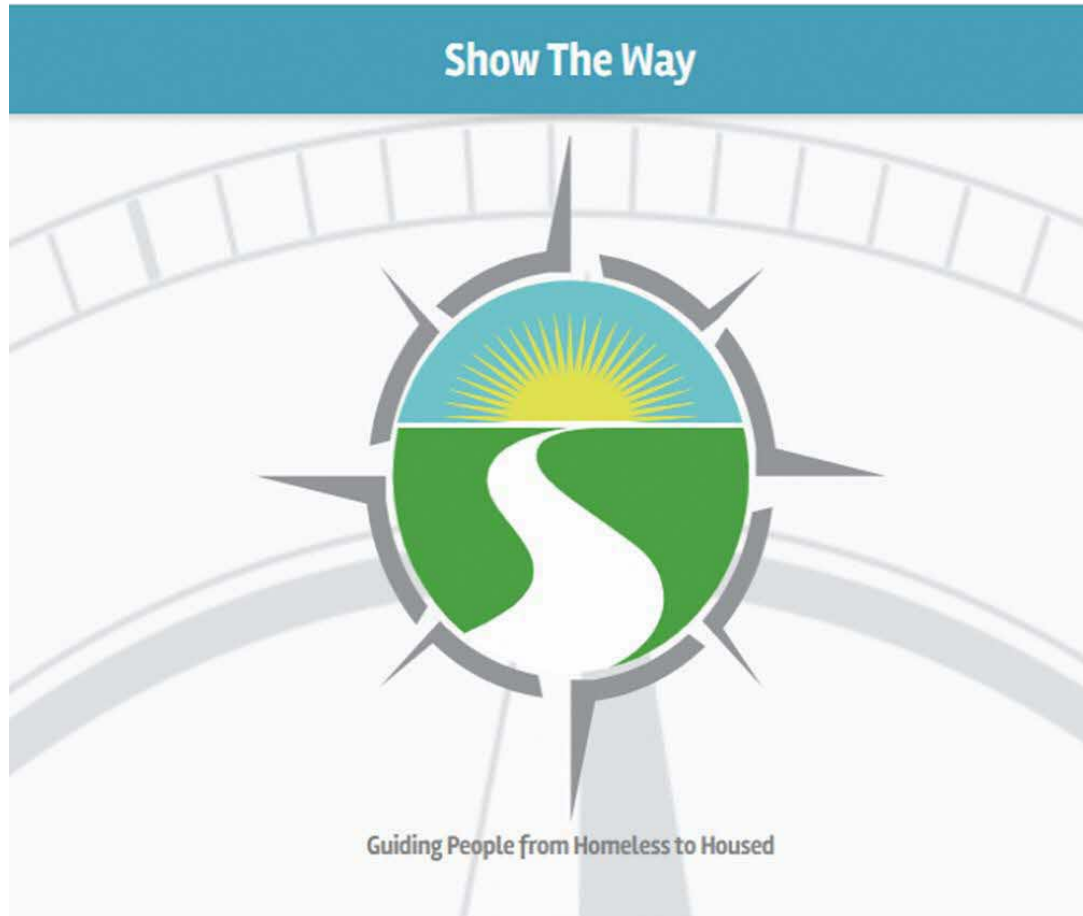
# Show The Way

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# What is it?

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- Show the Way is an online platform designed to enhance communication and collaboration amongst our homeless response system.
- Focused on better servicing our unsheltered population in accessing housing and other pertinent resources throughout our targeted region.

# ADVANTAGES OF SHOW THE WAY

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Improve  
Communication



Enhance  
Coordination



Locate  
Encampments &  
Clients



Track Trends



Disaster Relief  
Efforts



Minimize  
Redundant Data  
Entry



Streamline  
Housing Efforts



Address  
Response  
Requests



# Pre-Navigation

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# What is it?

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- In our community Pre-Navigation is the work accomplished with clients prior to a housing referral, with a focus on assisting a client to be “referral ready”
- Outreach = Pre-Navigation – Progressive Engagement with a client includes not only assisting with basic day-to-day needs but also pre-navigating those clients
- Pre-Navigation Services include:
  - Assisting clients obtain needed documents- ID’s , Social Security Cards, Birth Certificates, Verification of Disability, Verification of Homelessness, etc.
  - Linking to resources to assist with stability- Physical and mental health resources, employment services, etc.
  - Maintaining regular contact with clients so that when they do receive a referral, we can assist with locating and a warm hand-off to the next service provider



# Why Pre-Navigate

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- 🔄 To achieve better referral to accepted percentages
  - Since these clients will either have their documents or have already begun the procedure to get their documents, Service Providers will be to enroll and start on the housing process quicker
  - Having regular contact with those we are pre-navigating helps with locating and notifying clients when they receive a referral and also allows for a warm hand off to the new provider
- 🔄 Supportive Services may be able to begin before housing
  - Clients can be referred to other supportive services to start the process of stabilization before they get housed
  - This can also help to remove some of the barriers when housing a client
- 🔄 Pre-Navigation Services may assist a client to self-resolve
  - Being connect to substance abuse or employment services, assisting with SSI/SSDI, helping a client obtain their social security card, or getting them a referral to homeless court may be the thing they need to be able to self-resolve their current situation



# In-Reach

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# What is it?

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Engaging unsheltered individuals at organizations that provide homeless services.



# Why in-reach

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Establishes positive relationships with organizations and service providers that do not utilize our homeless management system.



Creates a relaxed atmosphere for crucial and confidential conversations with individuals.



Maintains consistent ongoing communication with clients



Maximizes resources and time for staff to locate clients, collect pre-navigation documents, and enhances communication with clients and partners.



Assist outreach teams in locating and accurately verifying persons are experiencing street homelessness.



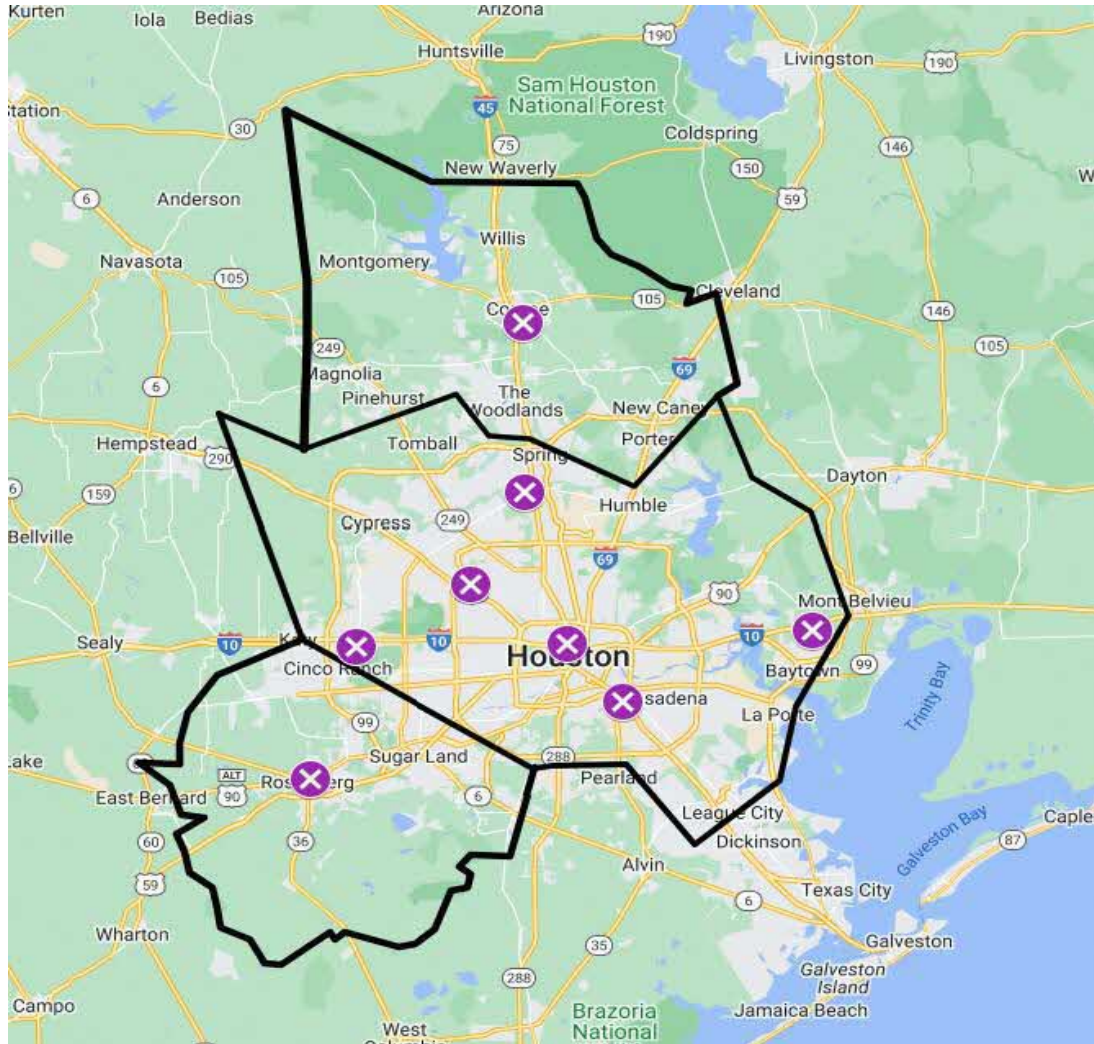
# How is in-reach executed?

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- Outreach teams and partnered organizations collaborate on a schedule for in-reach to take place.
- Outreach team makes introduction to clients during initial visit and explain who they are and the reason for their visit.
- Clients who show interest write their names down on sign in sheet.
- Members of outreach team set up in designated secluded areas pre-approved by partnered organization.
- Outreach team or partnered organization begins to call names off list to speak with outreach team.
- Members of outreach speak with clients to gauge what resources are available for them and proceed accordingly.



# In-reach locations



- Attack Poverty (Rosenberg) -1st Monday of every month
- Compassion United (Conroe) - 2nd Thursday of every month
- Cy-fair Helping Hands (Cypress) 2nd Wednesday of every month
- Hope Center (Cypress Station) 3rd Monday of every month
- Faith Family Church (Baytown)
- Hope Impacts (Katy) 3rd Wednesday of every month
- Crossroads at Park Place (South Houston) 4th Thursday of every month
- Impact Church (4th ward) 4th Monday of every month



# In-reach data

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Between February and August of 2024, we have engaged with over 219 unsheltered individuals.



Conducted over 170 housing assessments.



Connected clients with partners who provided specialized resources.



Obtained identifiers for clients ( HOT ID, state ID, birth certificate, social security card).



# Take-Aways

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Communication + Collaboration = Success



Outreach = Pre-Navigation



Outreach + In-reach for more comprehensive coverage



# Questions & Feedback

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Help & Feedback





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