

Destination: Home 3rd Anniversary Celebration
Thursday, December 13th
10 am – Central Library, Browning Rooms A & B

Welcome and Statement of Purpose Mayor Jonathan Weinzapfel

On any given night in Evansville, at least 400 people experience homelessness. One-third are children under the age of 18.

Nationally the number of homeless is generally increasing, but estimates here have been fairly consistent over the last several years. That can be directly attributed to the specialized homelessness service agencies, numerous volunteers, and hundreds of support organizations working to end homelessness in our community every day.

Evansville is one of over 300 communities, regions or states to create and institute a plan to end homelessness. Ours is called "*Destination: Home*."

We are the second community in Indiana to develop a plan. We have received calls, emails and at least one visit from other communities looking for information as they begin their planning- including Columbia, South Carolina and Erie, Pennsylvania.

In the early years, the focus of *Destination: Home* was to create a strong foundation upon which to build long-term strategies. Foundation building activities included:

- Formation of new working groups
- Development of prevention tools
- Community awareness and promoting plan
- Coordinating services and community collaborations
- Developing public and private partnerships

Destination: Home was developed through the efforts of more than 200 community volunteers representing broad community support and perspectives. The plan took 29 months to complete and was released to the community in December 2004.

Implementation of *Destination: Home* began in January 2005. We are celebrating the completion of the 3rd year.

As you can see, this plan wasn't allowed to be forgotten. It is actively monitored and executed by the joint city-county Commission on Homelessness through active committees and other collaborative groups throughout the community.

Everyone can help prevent and end homelessness. By working together, we can ensure that everyone in our community reaches their destination: HOME.

Thank you for joining us as we celebrate the accomplishments of this year and look forward to the challenges of the next.