



Thought Leadership

NHPF is leading the thought process by which we identify new ways to talk about the need for affordable housing in our country. These NHPF-commissioned national **surveys** are offered as part of our commitment to thought leadership.



Where You Live Matters

Survey: Top Money Myths Affirmed by Recent College Graduates

Gens X, Y & Z Unrealistically Optimistic?

New York, NY—88% of college graduates under 30 strongly believe they will live as well or better than their parents, (contrary to available evidence), according to a new survey of 21 to 30 year-olds conducted by The NHP Foundation, a not-for-profit provider of affordable housing. That is true even for many of those saddled with student loans. Other responses include:

55% have student loans, 10% owing more than \$50k, yet nearly 40% (38.8) expect to pay their loans off in 1 to 3 years. In truth, although standard repayment “puts borrowers on a 10 year track” according to this report, the average bachelor’s degree graduate actually takes 21 years to pay off loans.

89% of the cohort are comfortable renting a home vs. owning for the foreseeable future, though 60% fully expect to be able to “afford the kind of housing they most prefer” in 1 to 5 years.

70% of respondents consider home ownership “important” to “very important.” Some research shows that home ownership is more achievable than previously thought for “Generation Rent” (young adults who, because of the high cost of home ownership, stagnant wages, and toxic debt, live in rented accommodations for longer periods than previous generations).

However other economists believe that prices will continue to rise, as the construction industry under-builds (rather than increasing density) or incorrectly builds for this demographic. As a result, there will be too many large, expensive homes located in the suburbs and not enough smaller, more affordable for-sale units in the cities that this generation has gravitated to. In addition, it is much harder for younger works to qualify for home loans.

46% of graduates expect to live on their own, paying rent with no help from roommates or parents. The truth is, today, according to US Census data, more recent graduates are living at home than ever before. In markets like New York, Miami and Los Angeles, grads back under the family roof can number as high as 45%.

Amidst this unbridled optimism, some responses are much more in touch with reality. **For example, 66.6% expect to spend more than 30% of their income on rent.**

“We were surprised to learn that 54% of these young graduates know that they could potentially qualify for affordable housing under HUD’s definition,” stated **Richard Burns, President & CEO of The NHP Foundation**. “This helps us understand how we need to consider housing to suit these renters, who may be in apartments for longer than they think.”

Affordable housing, long thought of as the purview of the very poor is fast becoming the housing need for many demographics—graduates on tight budgets, Baby Boomers caught in an economic squeeze and many middle income families whose paychecks can’t always cover housing and healthcare.

This reality is a wake-up call for housing providers and those who invest in its construction. “Generation Rent” expects to live as well or better than their parents. Affordable housing can provide a necessary stepping stone for this most optimistic demographic.



Survey: 50% of Seniors and “Near-Seniors” Start the New Year with Financial Fear

Housing costs, Rise of “surprise” ER charges, chronic health conditions compound financial worries

New York, NY—Half of Americans over the age of 55 who earn less than \$60,000 per year—accounting for 25% of households—feel they can’t afford to cover both housing and healthcare, according to a new survey conducted by The NHP Foundation, not-for-profit providers of affordable housing.

WHERE SENIORS ARE FEELING THE PINCH

48% of seniors surveyed are “concerned to extremely concerned” that one costly emergency room visit will have devastating financial impact. The phenomenon of high “surprise” ER charges has prompted current Senate-sponsored bills to curtail outrageous fees.

75% have monthly prescription drug costs with 20% footing bills over \$50.00 per month. Rising prescription drug costs have been likened to a cartel. Additionally, many in this income and age bracket have trouble affording medicines not entirely covered by private health insurance or Medicare Part D.

50% of respondents have a chronic health condition, requiring regular checkups, yet 25% put off recommended medical procedures or appointments due to monetary worries. Although Medicare typically covers 80% of costs (as do many private or ACA insurance plans), 20% of costs must still be paid, which can add up depending on prescribed treatments.

25% of those surveyed consider their health insurance burden only “somewhat or not manageable at all.” The recent Texas court ruling that the ACA is “unconstitutional” adds to the senior woes about affordable health care.

WHAT’S THE BEST “PRESCRIPTION?”

50% of respondents ranked “stable housing” and “steady income” as the greatest factors to staying healthy yet the same percentage is “concerned to extremely concerned” about maintaining this stable housing as they age. This information dovetails with Harvard’s Joint Center for Housing Studies (JCHS) recent look at older adult households. Housing America’s Older Adults 2018, which showed that 50% of all older renter households are cost-burdened and 41% of those 65+ still have mortgages.

10,000 Baby Boomers Hit Retirement Age Every Day

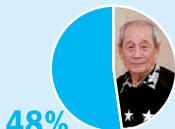
50%

rank "stable housing" and "steady income" as the greatest factors to staying healthy, but are concerned about maintaining their current housing as they age



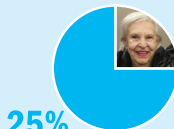
50%

of Seniors and "Near-Seniors" lack resources to fund both housing and healthcare



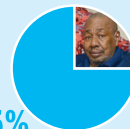
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consider their health insurance burden only "somewhat or not manageable at all"

HOW THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING INDUSTRY CAN HELP

1. Unite

with healthcare, insurers, and others to stimulate privatized funding options for housing

2. Build

more housing with senior features, amenities

3. Work

with Congress to maintain/create senior-friendly legislation

Data courtesy of The NHP Foundation

Housing, studies show, provides the greatest determinant of social well-being and health, particularly for low to middle income people living with chronic conditions, such as many seniors.

Joshua Bamberger, a physician working with homeless seniors recently said that his greatest hope for America was that "no one over the age of 55 spend a night on the streets, a 55 year old homeless person has the health status of a 70 year old housed person," and he feels that the housing and healthcare industries can do a lot more to ensure that low income seniors have adequate housing and healthcare.

THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING INDUSTRY NEEDS A 'REBOOT'

Dick Burns, President & CEO of The NHP Foundation is proposing new strategies such as a "collaborative funding model of privatized housing vouchers to cover the rent for those in need," and adds "Partnering with others in affordable housing as well as healthcare, investment, policy and social services, we can keep people from having to choose between housing and health."

The health industry is also heeding the call. Health insurance giant Kaiser Permanente recently pledged \$200M toward affordable housing that will particularly aid those for whom medical care and housing costs are a serious burden. And the University of Illinois has seen successful outcomes arising from housing many at-risk seniors and others.

"When all the partners in the housing and health equation commit to resources and investment, older Americans will have fewer concerns about aging well," added Burns.

Survey: Boomers Unprepared for Looming Retirement

Over one-third have no retirement budget

New York, NY—After a year of budget cuts to various federal government programs, and the potential for entitlement reforms on the horizon, an already weakened social safety net could become even weaker, which prompted The NHP Foundation, a not-for-profit provider of service-enriched affordable housing, to ask how financially confident are Baby Boomers as they grow nearer to retirement.

This new survey of 1000 non-retired Americans aged 50+ identifies a serious disconnect between saving and planning for retirement and actually affording a desirable lifestyle.

Of the estimated 78 million Baby Boomers, about 10,000 hit retirement age every day, but according to The NHP Foundation data, 73% of Baby Boomers expect to delay retirement. Compounding these findings, a full 31% stated that they have not prepared a retirement budget, while 62% of those who have budgeted stated that SSI (Social Security Income) will contribute to at least half of their monthly income.

UNFORESEEN HEALTH COSTS A FACTOR

While roughly three-quarters of Baby Boomers expect to delay retirement to continue working, an anticipated decline in health tends to cut those plans short for many. However, 65% of those surveyed stated that they have not budgeted for unforeseen health-related expenses. Of those without a retirement budget and planning on SSI for at least half of their income, 72% noted that they have not accounted for unforeseen health-related expenses.

When parsing this data, tax consultant and financial advisor Paul Shapiro said, “Although this generation is statistically healthier and living longer than previously, it’s still startling to see people taking such a laissez-faire attitude to long-term health and retirement planning.”

RETIREMENT REALITY VS. “WISHFUL THINKING”

Juxtaposed to the above findings, 70% of those surveyed are at least somewhat confident that they will experience the retirement that they seek, and out of those that expect to delay retirement, 63% believe they will achieve their desired retirement.

But, according to Richard Burns, President & CEO, The NHP Foundation, “There is a disconnect between Baby Boomers’ current financial status and where they perceive themselves in retirement. This ‘wishful thinking’ carries potential consequences that will likely have a large impact throughout all areas of the economy.”

Data from the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau substantiates this. Older homeowners owe almost double on their current mortgage, than the same age group did a decade ago, a likely driving force for why well over a majority of Baby Boomers expect to delay retirement, and why “affordability” is the most essential housing aspect of retirement according to respondents, with 60% ranking it as their greatest desire.

WHAT WORRIES RETIREES MOST

In order of importance, the three outcomes that worry prospective retirees the most are: an inability to afford quality healthcare (36%), dependency on children (28%), and being forced to choose a living situation inferior to their preference (22%).

For 85% of those surveyed, their preference is the ability to continue living in their current home. Of the two-thirds of those surveyed that rent or have a mortgage, 76% either have no retirement budget or will rely on SSI for at least half of their income, though 83% still believe they will be able to age in-place. Along with these findings, only 17% of those who have no retirement budget and will rely on SSI for at least half of their income, think they will have to move.

But the evidence shows that many will have to consider alternatives to aging in-place. These include everything from renting out a room (though less than 17% of those surveyed feel this is a likely option) to seeking out affordable housing. “Renting quality affordable senior housing may be the best answer for many older Americans,” continues Burns, “With 1 in 4 in desperate need of affordable housing, equating to 2,500 new retirees every day, there needs to be a priority to create an adequate supply of affordable rental housing for boomers now and in the future.”

For those approaching retirement who haven’t got a sound financial plan in hand, the need to take a hard look at available options and make decisions they can live with today and in the future, is paramount.

Survey: Nearly 63% of Moms Say Their Adult Children are Unprepared to Live On Their Own; Over One-Third Unwilling or Unable to Pitch In Financially

This Mother's Day finds moms anxious about affordable housing for themselves and their families

New York, NY—This Mother's Day, adult children living with their parents might consider moving out as a gift to mom, if they're financially prepared to do so. According to a new survey of 1000 mothers by The NHP Foundation, a not-for-profit provider of service-enriched affordable housing, many are concerned about the ability of their adult children to live on their own. Nearly a third (29.86%) of the moms queried are anxious about their grown children needing to stay with them for an extended period of time. Here's a look at what else concerns today's moms.

FAILURE TO LAUNCH?

Nearly 63% of moms say their adult children are not fully prepared to live on their own.

Only 30% of moms say that their adult children who live with them are actively looking for other places to live, and less than half (41%) say their kids pay rent. On the bright side, 67% of the adult children help around the house, and 65% of them are employed.

The mom cohort is very aware that their grown children don't have it easy. Ninety percent are concerned about rising housing costs, with 43% saying they are "very concerned" on their kids' behalf. And nearly 40% of moms worry at least once a day about their adult children's ability to afford desirable housing.

Yet, some moms are either unwilling or unable to offer financial help once the kids do move out. Only one-third of moms would co-sign a loan for their children, and even fewer (24%) would help subsidize rent or a mortgage. Nearly 36% say they aren't prepared to help their adult children financially in any way.

MOMS RULE THE ROOST

Fifty-two percent of those surveyed make family financial decisions either alone or with "some input" from a partner.

These moms operate as family CFOs, taking a more active role in family finance and investments—not surprising since women make up 47% of the nation's workforce.

“Women wield more and more influence in the management of personal and family finances,” comments NHPF CEO Richard Burns, “Thirty seven percent of married women are now the breadwinners in their families. That statistic alone made it crucial for us to tap into this group and gauge their thoughts about housing for their family.”

Many women live with extended family. Seventeen percent of those with a partner and children also report parents or other relatives living with them, emblematic of the modern “sandwich generation.” Coined by social worker Dorothy Miller in 1981, the term refers to women in their 30s and 40s who were sandwiched between young children and aging parents as the primary caregiver for both. But The NHP Foundation’s Burns has expanded the term’s definition beyond health to other basic needs such as housing, finding that those who fall under this new “sandwich generation” bracket have a new set of housing anxieties.

NEW ADMINISTRATION BRINGS CONCERNS

Nearly 40% of moms in the survey say they have no confidence that the new administration will make affordable housing a priority.

This is coupled with worries about affording rent or mortgage—56% of those surveyed worry about affording those payments. Nearly 74% are concerned that they or someone they know will find themselves “cost-burdened,” defined as spending more than 30% of one’s income on housing.

Is there a bright side for anxious moms this Mother’s Day?

According to NHPF President and CEO Burns, his organization is looking to the government to continue such successful programs as LIHTC (Low Income Housing Tax Credit), which gives incentives to private equity for the development of affordable housing. Explains Burns, “LIHTC is vital to enabling providers to offer stable, long-term affordable housing options.”

The NHP Foundation is going even further to find solutions to help alleviate family concerns about housing. The organization is looking at new private and public partnerships designed to increase its stock of quality affordable housing. NHPF has also been selected by the University of Virginia School of Public Policy as part of a study seeking new models to help ensure that this and future generations are able to afford desirable places to live.

Other research undertaken by NHPF has found that 75% of Americans worry about losing their housing. The organization determined that 76% of millennials have made compromises in order to find affordable housing and, a third of Baby Boomers report “housing affordability” anxiety at least monthly.



Survey: One-third of Boomers Report “Housing Affordability” Anxiety at Least Once a Month; 42% of Retirees Have Such Anxiety Daily

New research also finds housing affordability anxiety now “multi-generational”

New York, NY—While it is too soon to tell how the new administration will affect the construction and cost of affordable housing, the nation’s 75 million baby boomers are weighing in with their housing concerns. According to a new survey of 1000 Americans aged 55+ from The NHP Foundation, a not-for-profit provider of service-enriched affordable housing, 30% experience anxiety about being able to afford where they live at least once a month, with 42% of retirees reporting such anxiety at least once daily. When asked what causes the greatest anxiety, 46% of respondents said they worry about “the ability to afford desirable retirement living.”

Nearly 65% of boomers worry at least once a month about their adult children’s ability to afford desirable housing

Over 10% of boomer parents worry about this at least once a day, with most (64%) concerned about their adult children’s ability to afford rent or mortgage, and 43% most concerned about the next generation’s retirement savings.

“The anxiety is now multi-generational,” according to NHPF CEO Richard Burns, “So we are working today to increase our stock of affordable housing to ensure that this and future generations are able to afford desirable places to live.”

The NHP Foundation Baby Boomer survey is the third in a series. The first queried the general population about housing affordability, determining that 75% of the population worried at any given time about losing their housing. The second zeroed in on millennials, finding that 76% of that group have made compromises in order to find affordable housing.

“These findings underscore the urgency to make housing affordability solutions a priority in America especially for those most vulnerable,” added Ali Solis, President and CEO of MakeRoom, a national renter’s advocacy group.

Nearly one-quarter of boomers worry about affording rent/mortgage payments, but geography plays role

Although 24% of those queried say they're most anxious about being able to afford their rent or mortgage, there are geographical differences. Just under 20% of those in the midwest worry about affording rent or mortgage payments while 38% of those in the south rank this their biggest worry.

According to the survey, housing-related anxiety is most acutely felt in the south, followed by the northeast and midwest. Boomers in the west experience housing-related anxiety least often.

“Though housing insecurity is a national problem, these geographic differences demonstrate the need to tailor housing options to the unique needs of each region,” said Stefano Rumi, an advisor to NHPF and a senior fellow at the Batten Center for Social Policy of the University of Virginia specializing in the housing needs of America, “The winning solutions will incorporate private and public partnerships to finance affordable housing. This means a ‘YIMBY’ (yes in my backyard) attitude on the part of local communities and elected officials.”

Election impact on housing reflects national mood

Housing concerns brought on by the new administration mirror America's divided population. Nearly half (49.96%) report little or no anxiety, yet the other half (50.04%) have substantial or great anxiety. Of those who experience greater anxiety about housing due to the new administration, the highest percentage, (30%) worry about a lack of sufficient retirement funds, followed closely (27%) by those who fret about tax increases.

Nearly 50% of those queried believe their housing related anxiety could be alleviated if the new administration assured stable property and other taxes, meaning a guarantee of no substantial tax increases. Those seeking assurances about job security and legislation to protect from rent/mortgage increases followed at 24% and 23% respectively.

Interestingly, nearly 14% of respondents indicate that construction of more affordable housing would help alleviate their housing-related anxiety. To this, NHPF's Burns adds, “Government measures, particularly the LIHTC (Low Income Housing Tax Credit) which gives incentives to private equity for the development of affordable housing, will continue to be vital to organizations such as ours to provide the country with stable, long-term affordable housing options.”



Survey: 76% of Millennials Have Made Compromises to Find Affordable Housing

New research finds that many individuals aged 18–34 stay at home longer and opt to rent due to high cost of housing and changes in lifestyle priorities.

New York, NY—As the issue of housing continues to be hotly debated, one group in particular has had to compromise in order to find suitable living situations that are also affordable: America’s millennials. According to a new survey of 1000 Americans aged 18–34 from The NHP Foundation, a not-for-profit provider of service-enriched affordable housing, a majority of millennials have had to delay or rethink traditional ideas of the “American Dream” of home ownership. The survey’s highlights include the following:

76% of millennials have made compromises in order to find affordable housing.

Seventy-six percent of respondents said that they have made housing compromises in order to find something affordable. Of those who admit compromises, 46% say they live with parents or family; 43% say they have put off saving for the future; 41% say they live with a roommate; while 36% say they have had to move further away from school or work to find something affordable. Thirty percent have said they have put off home ownership entirely.

“Millennials, America’s largest generation, already saddled with record-breaking student loan debt, no longer think homeownership is in their future,” said Richard Burns, CEO of The NHP Foundation. “This group mirrors much of society, which is also frustrated by the lack of affordable housing and seeking rental options. Working to solve this problem is NHPF’s primary mission.”

69% of millennials are “cost-burdened.”

Affordable housing is housing for which occupants pay no more than 30% of their income. Those who spend more than that on rent or a mortgage are considered “cost-burdened”, and over 69% of millennials put themselves in that category. Of those who describe themselves as “cost-burdened,” 67% say they are saving for the future purchase of a home; 20% say they are delaying getting married or having children; and 17% are putting off paying for preventative healthcare.

Nearly one-third plan to continue renting and/or living at home, 50% prefer renting to ownership.

Sixteen percent said they plan to continue renting and 12% say they plan to continue living with their parents or family. Of the respondents who said they plan to continue renting, 57% said they will continue to do so because the “expenses of home ownership are too great.”

Despite some renters forced to do so by high costs, some respondents prefer renting to ownership. Fifty-one percent said they will continue to rent because of the location of their rental and 31% said that their “mobile professional life” (defined as “frequent moves necessitated by climbing the career ladder”) was more conducive to being a renter.

On the other hand, 61% of those who plan to continue living with parents or family said that they will do so because the expenses of home ownership are too great; 53% said that location was the primary reason; while 31% said they would continue to do so because of their “mobile professional life.”

“The contrast between Gen Y’s housing goals and that of previous generations is stark,” said Burns. “In order to meet demand for quality rental options, a combination of public, private and government entities need to make sizeable investments in the country’s housing infrastructure.”

Affordable housing top social issue for millennials.

Sixty-three percent of respondents said that affordable housing is “very important” to them, with 50% saying that beyond their own situation, affordable housing is a very important social issue. Fifty percent of respondents also said that they would be “very likely” to give to affordable housing causes by volunteering time (60%), attending events (50%), championing the issue on social media (36%) or contributing money (32%).

“Millennials are already well known for their social consciousness and attention to ‘pet’ causes,” said Burns. “To see that the need for affordable housing for all resonates with this group is gratifying.” Burns continues, “Creating programs that encourage millennial participation is a key objective of NHPF moving forward.”

Survey: 75% of Americans Concerned About Losing Housing

New research by The NHP Foundation also finds 40% of Americans fear losing a job will render them homeless

New York, NY—With the August Jobs Report cited as the “worst month for job gains” of the year, The NHP Foundation, a not-for-profit provider of service-enriched affordable housing, polled 1000 Americans to gauge their feelings about housing and job security. The survey’s highlights include the following:

75% of Americans are concerned about losing housing.

When asked how concerned Americans are that they or a friend or relative could lose housing, 30% consider themselves “very concerned”, 27% are “concerned” and another 19% are “somewhat concerned.” Eighty-three percent of respondents are concerned about housing costs in America overall.

Over 65% of Americans are “cost-burdened.”

Affordable housing is housing for which occupants pay no more than 30% of their income. Those who spend more than that on rent or a mortgage are considered cost-burdened; over 65% of Americans put themselves in that category.

80% welcome more affordable housing in their communities.

With this many Americans feeling “cost-burdened,” it’s no surprise that 80% welcome affordable housing. Nearly 40% of those polled welcome affordable housing simply because “everyone deserves” it, while twenty-five percent cite the opportunity for “people to live in the community where they work.” Nearly 20% agree that affordable housing lets a wider range of individuals share a community, and 16% acknowledge affordable housing’s ability to revitalize neighborhoods.

Only 20% of those polled were unlikely to welcome affordable housing in their neighborhoods. The NHP Foundation President and CEO Dick Burns attributes this to “an outdated concept of affordable housing.” He adds, “Today’s affordable housing is comprised of new and upgraded garden apartments and high-rises; amenity-laden developments that look nothing like ‘projects’ of the past.”

Onsite financial education and workforce development programs rank highest.

Amenities that attend to life improvement needs and goals have become a critical component of high- quality affordable housing. The survey asked respondents to rank such services on a scale of 1–5, with “1” being “most likely” to improve quality of life.

- “Financial education” and “workforce development programs” had the highest number of “1” rankings (25.82% and 27.5 respectively)
- “After-school and summer youth programs” (20% ranked number 1)
- “Fitness and health programs” (14.5% ranked number 1)
- “Community building social events” (12% ranked number 1)

“Clearly a majority of Americans consider financial wellness ‘job one’,” said NHPF VP of Resident Services, Ken White. “This finding reinforces the need for affordable housing providers to offer a wealth of onsite educational and other services.”

Nearly 40% of respondents fear job loss will lead to loss of housing.

In addition, those polled also felt that the following could lead to a loss of housing: Perceived lack of affordable options (28%), increased rents (24%) and retirement (21%).

“Job loss is the top concern to those who fear losing their housing; the two go hand-in-hand,” added Burns.

Despite these fears, CEO Burns is buoyed by the positive attitudes of survey respondents about affordable housing, adding, “It all starts with housing. Without the underpinning of a secure place to live, it’s nearly impossible for an individual or head of household to find and keep a job and provide for themselves and their loved ones.”

To that end, The NHP Foundation is looking to increase its construction and preservation of affordable housing units substantially this year.

About The NHP Foundation

Headquartered in New York City with offices in Washington, DC, and Chicago, IL, The NHP Foundation (NHPF) launched on January 30, 1989, is celebrating its 30th year as a publicly supported 501(c)(3) not-for-profit real estate corporation. NHPF is dedicated to preserving and creating sustainable, service-enriched multifamily housing that is both affordable to low and moderate income families and seniors, and beneficial to their communities. NHPF also provides a robust resident services program to nearly 18,000 community residents. Through partnerships with major financial institutions, the public sector, faith-based initiatives, and other not-for-profit organizations, NHPF has 52 properties, with more than 8,000 units, in 15 states and the District of Columbia.



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