



## Denver MC Resident Staff Candace Redshirt on the need to find ways to respond to people's day-to-day crises

“One of our biggest challenges is finding ways to respond to residents who need help. If you can't meet their day-to-day survival needs, we are not going to be able to engage them in a long-term initiative like Making Connections.

“Sometimes it feels like we're out there all by ourselves in the name of Making Connections. How do we maintain all these relationships, connect everybody to resources, be there when crises happen? We're one of the first safety nets in peoples' lives. It gets overbearing sometimes and not everyone understands this.

“What do we do when someone says we can't pay our rent or our phone has been shut off? We're in a relationship with them, we want to bring them in, but they are in a crisis. When we're in that relationship we're helpers.

“It's just a natural thing we do, but we're not a social service agency and we're not counselors. But we can be a resource for them. That's a part of our job.

“Thank God we're resourceful women! Most of our resident staff are women. We're all these natural helper women. We just do it.”

“But it's hard. We need to identify and respect this issue and get better on how we deliver resources. We need to be more proactive about it. We need to know more about what resources are available.”

“It would be very helpful to have a small pot of money available if someone needs to buy a bus pass or can't pay their phone bill.

“Right now Making Connections is not a social service agency, but when someone has a crisis, as a community person, you need to respond to show your good faith in that relationship, to show you are genuine and you are there to help them. That you're not all talk. You have to build that relationship so they can see that they can eventually make a change on a bigger scale.”