

Family interaction and personal well-being

Overall

Family dynamics

Two-thirds of homeowners said they get along better with their family than they did before becoming a Habitat homeowner. Approximately one-third said there was no change, and only 2 percent of homeowners said they get along worse than before.

We get along a lot better. Before we lived in a very cramped place, we fought a lot more - my two sons were not friends at all - now they are best friends. My daughter and I did not have a relationship but since the Habitat house, my daughter and I are very close.

Similarly, regarding spending quality time with their families, 70 percent said they spend “much more time” or “a little more time” with their families. A quarter said there was no change, and 6 percent reported spending less time with their families.

I was working 2 and 3 jobs to pay bills and barely feed my family. I was feeling guilty not being there for my family. My kids were always at day care. Now I can spend time with my children. I have everything that they need. They don't have to decide to buy shoes for one and the other one is left out. It's just a blessing.

Personal well-being

Overall, 89 percent of homeowners said they feel at least “somewhat better” about themselves than before becoming a Habitat homeowner; 75 percent rated themselves as feeling “much better”. Only 2 percent indicated they feel worse. This suggests that Habitat homeownership influences self-esteem.

It has affected us watching the community come together- helped us as a family realize that we are important, and having a house to live [in] gives you hope. It helps your self-esteem and have hope for the future.

Ninety-three percent of homeowners feel at least “somewhat more positive” about the future, with 75 percent of homeowners feeling “much more positive” about the future. Only 2 percent said they feel more negative. This indicates a strong relationship between Habitat homeownership and hope for the future.

It made us a lot happier. I worry less. I feel much better for me and my children's future. I have more energy now. Everything is much better, much happier for me and my family.

In addition to our structured questions regarding self-esteem and feelings about the future, in our open-ended question, homeowners repeatedly talked about personal well-being and expanded the concept of personal well-being. They reported less stress, embarrassment, and shame, and more freedom and independence, security and stability, peace of mind, and pride and happiness in owning their own home.

It makes me feel more independent. Being a homeowner instead of a renter, being that I have more of my own, and then I can spend a lot more time with my [child who has a disability]. Being more independent and feeling like I've achieved something, having my own home. And having that responsibility makes me feel a lot better about myself.

We're more together now, we do more things and my grandkids that live with me see that I'm a homeowner and want to do the same thing. I feel more motivated because I worked hard to get this house and to maintain it.

Regional

Family dynamics

Twin Cities homeowners reported the biggest change in family dynamics, with 74 percent saying their family got along “somewhat better” or “much better.” In contrast, only 53 percent of the respondents in the North said their family dynamics were better. The North had the highest proportion of people who said the dynamics did not change (47%). The South was right around the overall percentage with two-thirds of homeowners saying their family dynamics were better.

A higher percentage of Twin Cities homeowners also reported spending more time with their families (76%), compared to 63 percent of greater Minnesota homeowners.

Well it has improved our connection with the family socially. We have enough time to be together with my family and do our garden, and we have also enough rooms for us and our kids.

Personal well-being

For both feeling better about themselves and for feeling more positive about the future, the regions appear relatively similar.

[Habitat homeownership has] given me a sense of dignity which allowed me to instill that in my kids. I feel so proud of myself and independent because of the house.

Length of homeownership

A higher percentage of shorter-term homeowners (75%) reported spending more quality time with their families since becoming a homeowner than longer-term homeowners (65%).

Analysis revealed no differences between longer- and shorter- term homeowners regarding their personal well-being.

I've gotten to know the community better, greatly reduced our housing costs, we're more stable and feel more like a true family.

It's amazing to have our own backyard and have play time and be together, and to come into the house and have our own space. We have our own bedrooms. My boys feel better about themselves and where they live. They are not embarrassed anymore.