



**ReThink:**  
**Why Housing Matters**  
**2017 PSA**





Thank you for your continued support of [ReThink: Why Housing Matters](#), an initiative that encourages Americans to realize the benefits that public and affordable housing offer individuals, families, and the greater community. We are excited to share two new videos with you, the HAI Group Membership, as we aim to debunk the stereotypes of those in need of public and affordable housing.

Please use the following toolkit as a resource to share these new videos and further encourage Americans to realize the benefits that affordable and public housing offer.

This toolkit provides access to:

- [PSA](#) and [long-form](#) video
- Online video embed instructions
- Downloadable [ReThink](#) logos
- Messaging and media materials, including:
  - o Social media posts
  - o Discussion overview
  - o Key messages
  - o Q&A

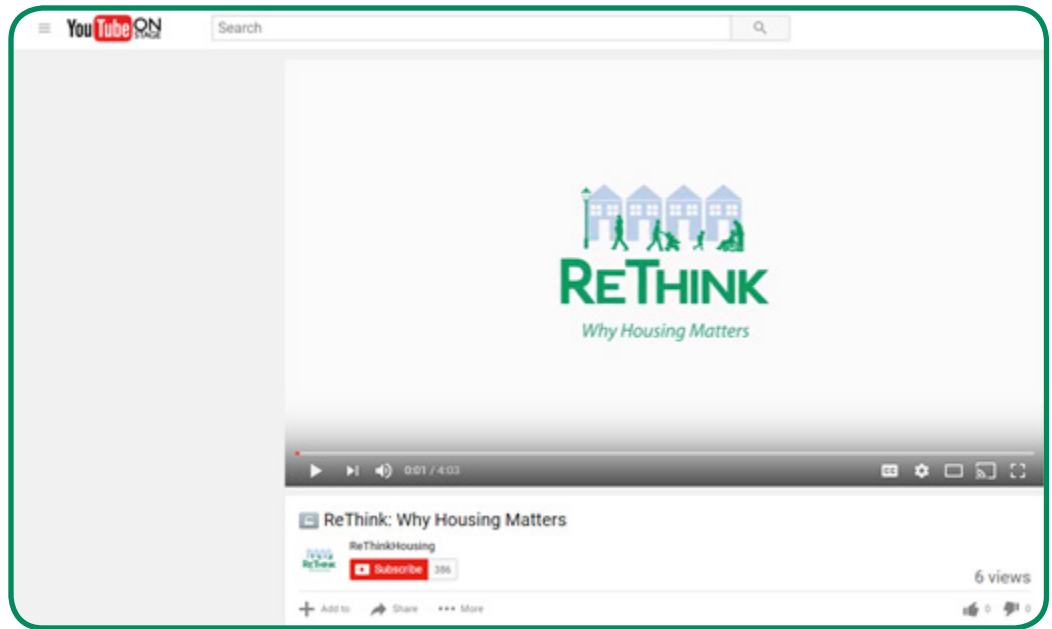
If you have any questions about this toolkit or its contents, please reach out to Jessica Rosa at HAI Group at [jrosa@housingcenter.com](mailto:jrosa@housingcenter.com).

Thank you,  
The ReThink Team

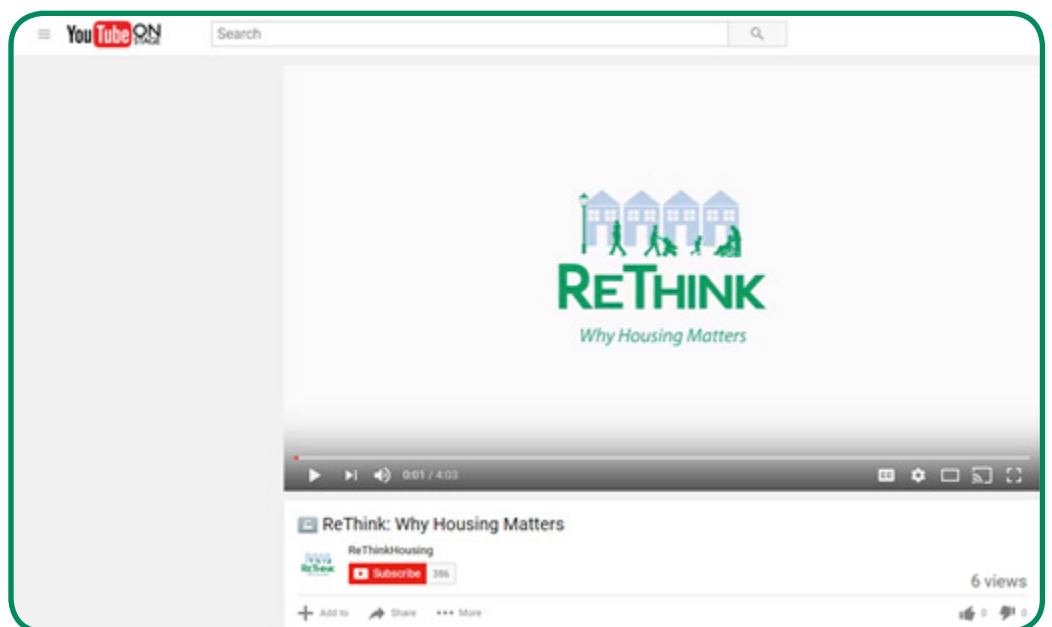
## ONLINE VIDEO EMBED

Follow the below instructions to embed YouTube videos on your website

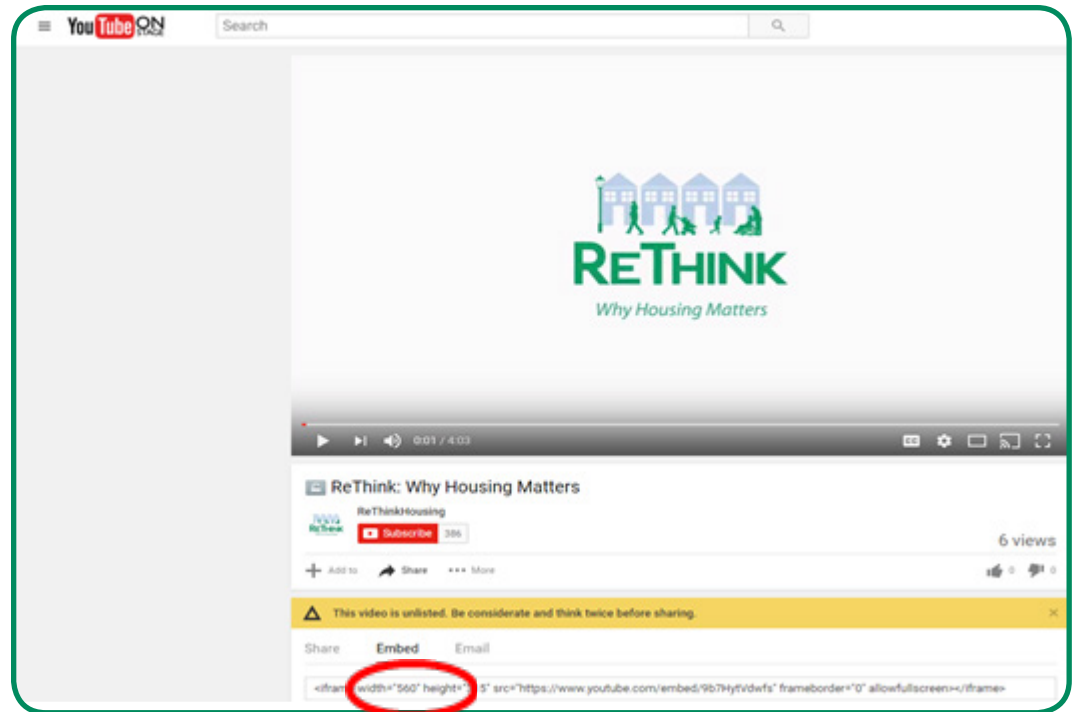
1. Visit the YouTube page for the video you want to embed. The URL will look similar to this: <https://youtu.be/9b7HytVdwfs>



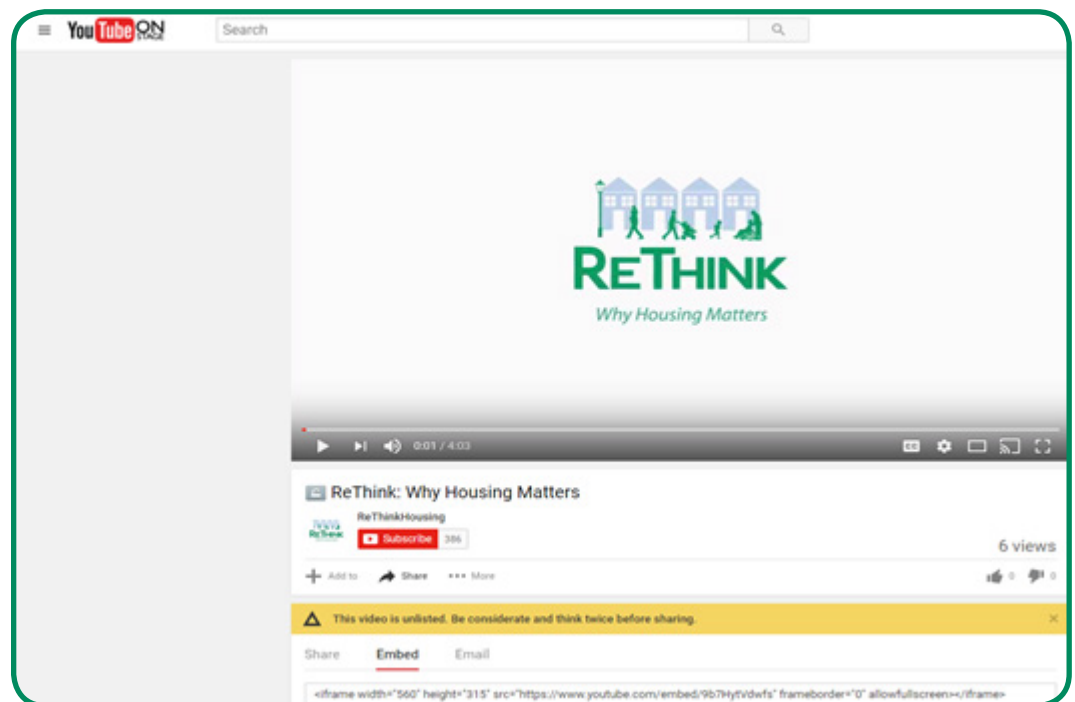
2. Beneath the video, click "Share"



3. Beneath the “Share” link, you should now see “Embed” as an option
  - a. If you’d like, specify the size (in pixels) of the embed that you would like



4. Copy the code in the box



5. Paste the code into a website or blog

## SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS

You can use the following social media messages as a guide to share the videos on your social media channels.

### Twitter

- Growing up in #PublicHousing doesn't define your future. Take a peek at some prime examples: <http://bit.ly/2rDmI3t> #ReThinkHousing
- Teacher. Businesswoman. State Representative. Harvard Student. The past doesn't define your future #ReThinkHousing <http://bit.ly/2rDmI3t>
- Listen to these four stories of perseverance that disprove the common perceptions of #PublicHousing residents: <http://bit.ly/2rDmI3t>

### Facebook

- Meet Tiffany, Karen, Miles and Marjorie – four people who didn't let their upbringings define them, and are overcoming poverty and adversity every day: <http://bit.ly/2rDmI3t>
- These four individuals are challenging many Americans' misperceptions about #PublicHousing residents by showing that your past has no say in your future: <http://bit.ly/2rDmI3t>
- It's time to rethink your perceptions of those in need of housing assistance: <http://bit.ly/2rDmI3t>

## SAMPLE TALKING POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

*Sharing ReThink videos at in-person gatherings is a great way to spark discussion around the issue. The discussion points and questions below can help guide a conversation about shifting misperceptions of public and affordable housing in your community.*

### Introduction (~1 min) before sharing video

Key Points:

- Introduce *ReThink* initiative

### Share Video (~2-4 min)

### Discussion (~5 min)

Key Points:

- Provide reaction to the videos
- How stories like these further the endeavors of the local housing agency and/or *ReThink's* mission to change misperceptions of public and affordable housing
- The importance of sharing the video and what it aims to achieve, e.g.: awareness and call-to-action for the community

### Audience Q&A/Conclusion

Questions (Asked by host/audience):

- Suggested questions:
  - o What is the key takeaway from these stories?
  - o In your experience, how have you seen public and affordable housing change lives?
  - o How common is it to exit poverty and achieve success like these people have?
  - o Why is housing such a big issue in the U.S.? What's being done about it?

*In closing, encourage attendees to follow ReThink on social media and share the videos via social media or direct networks to [www.rethinkhousing.org](http://www.rethinkhousing.org).*

## KEY MESSAGES

You may refer to these messages as supporting materials when communicating about ReThink.

### Background/Overview

- *ReThink: Why Housing Matters* is a national awareness initiative that encourages Americans to realize the benefits that public and affordable housing offer individuals, families, and the greater community.
- This year, *ReThink* is launching two new videos to inspire people to reconsider their perceptions of those in need of housing assistance.
- Watch these two new videos to experience inspirational stories about affordable and public housing – and rethink its impact on individuals, families, and your own community.

### Other General Supporting Messages

- Public and affordable housing provides homes and services for approximately 13MM people in the U.S.<sup>1</sup>; however, the need is much greater than that – 27.8MM are still in need of assistance. Given current economic and federal budget conditions, public and affordable housing availability continues to decrease, while the need for it continues to grow
  - Only one in three families that qualify for housing assistance receives it
  - Nationally, just 53 out of 100 renters live in a unit they can comfortably afford<sup>1</sup>
- According to the 2016 *ReThink: Why Housing Matters* Survey, the majority of Americans (84 percent) believe U.S. citizens deserve a safe and decent place to live, yet most (65 percent) do not support public and affordable housing in their own neighborhoods. At the same time, two-thirds (68 percent) of Americans see an urgency in the need for cities and towns to provide additional public and affordable housing
- Housing subsidies lifted more than 2.5MM households out of poverty in 2016
  - Approximately 38 percent of public and affordable housing residents are children – the largest group in need
- Housing stability is out of reach for many hard-working Americans
  - A wage of \$20.30 per hour is necessary to afford an average two bedroom rental, nationally<sup>2</sup>, while the national average hourly wage is \$15.42, and the federal minimum wage is \$7.25
  - Not even half (45 percent) of households receiving assistance have an adult household member who is able to work (not elderly or a child under the age of six)<sup>1</sup>
- Public and affordable housing doesn't just affect residents – it affects the entire country
  - Providing all cost-burdened low-income renter households in the US with rental assistance would reallocate \$48.8 billion in rent savings into local businesses and industries beyond the rental market and build family savings<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 2017 Annual PAHRC Report "How Sustainable Communities Create Resilient People"

<sup>2</sup> National Low Income Housing Coalition (2015). [Out of Reach 2015](#)

## Q&A

You may refer to these talking points to answer frequently asked questions about the ReThink initiative.

### What is ReThink: Why Housing Matters?

ReThink is a national awareness initiative that encourages Americans to realize the benefits that affordable and public housing offer individuals, families, and the greater community. Visit [www.ReThinkHousing.org](http://www.ReThinkHousing.org) to learn more.

### Why is affordable and public housing important?

Affordable and public housing offers more than a roof over someone's head. It provides the stability a father needs to develop job skills or a mom needs to earn a college degree, and it provides services for veterans, our disabled and our seniors. Affordable and public housing provide homes and services for approximately 2.2MM people in the U.S.<sup>3</sup> ; however, the need is much greater. Given current economic and federal budget conditions, affordable and public housing availability continues to decrease, while the need for it continues to grow. Consider the people and families in your own community who could be served by affordable and public housing. Visit [www.ReThinkHousing.org](http://www.ReThinkHousing.org) to learn more.

### What are the benefits to having affordable and public housing in my community?

Affordable and public housing supports families, fosters education, enables economic self-sufficiency, and strengthens communities. Research from the ReThink initiative shows that the American public recognizes the need for supportive housing, yet is uncertain about its success and impact. Consider the people and families in your own community who could be served by affordable and public housing.

### Isn't there enough affordable and public housing in America?

With high poverty rates and joblessness in the U.S., there is a shortage of affordable and public housing to meet critical needs. To make the situation even worse, many Americans don't understand the role of supportive housing or the acute need for more of it.

- Half of people polled in a recent survey could not accurately define public housing.<sup>4</sup>
- 38 percent of Americans believe the U.S. government provides public housing options for all those who cannot afford decent and safe shelter<sup>5</sup>, when there are at least a half million people on waiting lists across the U.S.
  - o In many cities, like Washington, D.C., waiting lists are closed because the numbers have grown overwhelmingly – 80,000 people waiting for one of 8,000 units.<sup>6,7</sup>
  - o Approximately 2.2MM people currently live in public housing in the U.S.<sup>8</sup> It is estimated that at least a half million more can't get into public housing due to a shortage in supply.

<sup>3</sup> HUD Resident Characteristics Report: <https://pic.hud.gov/pic/RCRPublic/rcrmain.asp>

<sup>4</sup> ReThink Survey: Perceptions of Public Housing 2016

<sup>5</sup> ReThink Survey: Perceptions of Public Housing 2016

<sup>6</sup> Washington Post, "In D.C., a public housing waiting list with no end," April 11, 2013

<sup>7</sup> Washington Post, "D.C.'s Lincoln Heights waits for renewal as city's affordable-housing strategy languishes," January 8, 2014<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> HUD Resident Characteristics Report: <https://pic.hud.gov/pic/RCRPublic/rcrmain.asp>