

[FUNDRAISERS]

Making Yourself at Home

Although home ownership may be nothing more than an artificial symbol of success for some, the absence of a stable home environment can have major consequences on children. In addition to a host of other factors that affect childhood prospects for success, living in a home has a significant impact on early behavioral and social development, especially in children under 5, according to the Economic Policy Institute. South Florida's real estate market may have crashed, but considering the current economic crisis and credit crunch, who can afford a house or get a loan these days? If more and more middle-class wage earners are defaulting on mortgages, what does that portend for the prospects of low-income families? The nonprofit Habitat for Humanity tries to break the cycle of intergenerational poverty by



building "simple, decent, affordable homes" for those who qualify. The homes are not given away — instead, they are financed with zero-interest loans, with the homeowners' payments going to support other Habitat projects.

Habitat Broward will partner with Whole Foods (2000 N. Federal Hwy., Fort Lauderdale) for "5% Day" Wednesday to raise money for its Family Support Program, which allows the nonprofit to assess the individual needs of each family and connect them with resources from credit counseling to insurance. Five percent of proceeds will go to sustaining the program, the only real justification for spending \$10 on an artichoke. Call 954-565-5655, or visit habitatbroward.org. ERICA K. LANDAU