

Single mothers and children



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Single Mothers and Children Task One of the most significant causes of homelessness is poverty. Poverty, as opposed to inadequate housing, may be cited as the greatest contributor to homelessness in Europe and America (Paradis et al, 2008, p. i). This means that homelessness is becoming a big setback in the contemporary society as the economic dip in the recent past means highlights the persistence of the setback. A significant portion of the homeless comprises of women with children and children, who comprise the majority of the homeless people in society (Paradis et al, 2008, p. iii). The homeless women and their families are exposed to deplorable living standards that sometimes may be described as inhumane and unworthy of human habitation. Polakow, in her book, succinctly captures this view when she says that, “ This necessitates the decoding of our own myths of democracy and enlightened progress as one out of four infants, one out of five children, and one out of four single mothers already live in destitution, and as thousands more stand on the edge of a landscape that condemns, like young Oliver Twists, to their proper stations” (Polakow, 1994, pp. 3-4). The question that then presents itself is; why single mothers and children? The population of homeless women continues to rise every year, particularly the number of single homeless women. Many scholars have been quick to point out that the rising numbers of homeless single women represents the feminization of poverty across the globe (Rosenheck, Bassuk, and Salomon, 2010, p. 1). Many of the exceptionally destitute women have limited, job skills, earning power and education, and are beleaguered by childcare duties. In families where the woman is the head of the family, it is quite common to find that they are poorer than two-parent families because of the existence of a single income and the cost of bringing up a child. These facts

only serve to prove that poor women do not have a chance in the contemporary labor market, which is primarily planned to support two-parent families with male breadwinners (Rosenheck, Bassuk, & Salomon, 2010, p. 1). This leaves the single mother with no option but to seek additional income, failure of which results in the inability to provide. This ultimately has the effect of forcing such women to seek accommodations in shelters resulting to an increase in the number of homeless people.

The increasing numbers of homeless children may be directly attributed to child abandonment either by parents who cannot be able to provide for their needs, or by death resulting to orphanage. Contemporary lifestyle is centered on individualist needs that are often restricted to the one's family. This is unlike in the traditional setting where the society often participated in communal modes of child upbringing, whereby if a particular family was unable to meet the material needs of their children the society would come together to offer the much needed support. Similarly, in case of orphanage the society would come together to provide care for orphaned children and this could even be through the extended family. However, in the contemporary society such mechanisms of support are either limited or non-existence leaving such children to fend for themselves and thereby contributing to an increase in the numbers of homeless children. Similarly, the increasing cases of child violence at home increase the vulnerability of children to flee from homes. This directly increases the instances of homeless children on the streets. The exposure of children to violence at homes leads to psychological trauma to children that acts to drive them out of their homes and into the streets to fend for themselves, thereby resulting in a significant rise to the number of homeless children (Paradis et. al, 2008, <https://assignbuster.com/single-mothers-and-children/>

pp. 14-15).

The emerging trends of homelessness in women, particularly single women, and children indicate a change in economic trend and lifestyle changes experienced in the contemporary society. It is these changes, together with the other aforementioned factors, that have contributed to vulnerability of single women and children to homelessness.

References

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