

The social injustices of homelessness essay sample

[Sociology](#), [Poverty](#)



Homelessness is a growing social injustice in the United States. The degradation that these people face every day is terrifying. It is a crisis that we too often ignore, hoping it will restore itself. That assumption delivers a widespread lack of understanding about the facts that lead to homelessness. Homelessness exists as a problem that we should acknowledge and treat.

Recent data indicate that the average monthly income for people who are homeless is \$367, less than half the federal poverty level for a single adult. This is ridiculous, especially for a family to live off of. In 14 states and 69 metropolitan areas, the entire maximum Supplemental Security Income benefits do not cover the Fair Market Rent for a one bedroom apartment, and no state in the nation offers SSI equal to the federal minimum wage.

What good is the government doing? Keeping the homeless barely alive and on the streets, without any possibility to recover? Even harder a concept to grasp is that approximately 40 percent of adult males who are homeless are veterans. The government should support the men who once supported and fought for their country. As many as 90 percent of people who are homeless have prior work experience and 15 to 20 percent currently have jobs.

Homelessness is the failure of our society to provide adequate and affordable housing, and fair wages.

Homeless people often depend on the highest-cost public service systems. They need emergency room care, hospital psychiatric beds, detoxification centers, and residential treatment programs, due to the fact that one-third of the people who are homeless have serious mental illnesses, and more than one-half of them also have substance use disorders. Many people who are

homeless and have addictive disorders want treatment, but the service system is ill-equipped to respond to their needs, leaving them with no access to treatment services and recovery supports. Studies show that supported housing is an effective option for communities working to meet the needs of people who are homeless with mental health disorders. Supported housing offers stable homes and services such as mental and physical health treatment, supported education and employment, peer support, daily living skill training, and money management instruction. These unfortunate people are citizens of our country, and it is our duty to help them get the treatment they need for their illnesses and addictions.

When we think about homeless people, we usually think about adults. The fact is that millions of children experience homelessness every year. These children sleep in cars, shelters and abandoned buildings. It is the hardest thing to witness families being homeless. They relocate constantly, which results in their being pulled out of school and away from their friends. Every child deserves to live in a safe, secure environment. America has let these children down, and is allowing a vicious cycle of family homelessness to go on. Most children become homeless because their parents are unable to find affordable housing. Children who grow up on the streets are more likely to repeat the lifestyle with their own children. Nearly one in three children who are homeless has at least one major mental disorder that interferes with daily activities compared to one in five children who are not homeless.

Almost half of all homeless children have anxiety, depression or withdrawal compared to less than one in five children who have homes. More than one

in three children who are homeless manifest delinquent and aggressive behavior compared to less than one in five other school-age children. Homelessness puts a burden on our already heavily burdened tax system and adds to our ever-present crime rate. This causes America to need more police officers on the streets, spending more of our tax money. Instead of preventing crimes by helping the homeless class climb higher in our society, we are only watching and punishing the children who are caught committing crimes.

People who were at one time contributing members of society are now living on the streets. They are prisoners in a lifestyle that causes isolation, hopelessness and humiliation. We have a population of people who are suffering a great injustice mainly due to no fault of their own. For some, committing suicide seems to be the only way out. For others, a physical ailment that is left untreated or a freezing night without shelters takes their lives. One way to help is to recommend to the local, state and national government that there should be more programs that provide community-based treatment and support services for families who are homeless. This will enable them to find homes, receive appropriate physical and mental health treatment, and rebuild their lives in a community. We must fight for higher minimum wage, Social Security Income and Social Security Disability Income rates. If these services are not funded, the social and economical costs to society will have a devastating impact on everyone's future.