

# [Homeless real story by liz murray, describing her](https://assignbuster.com/homeless-real-story-by-liz-murray-describing-her/)

HomelessYouths and Their Education            In today’s society, homelessness is a major issue in notonly the United States of America, but worldwide. There are no exact statisticnumbers of homeless people in the U. S, however, according to a recent report, over a half million people are living on the streets, in cars, and in shelters, and unfortunately, a quarter of them are children. In the book called “ BreakingNight” by Liz Murray, the author wrote her life experience about how she livedthrough homeless life until she graduated from Harvard University. As theauthor’s life, there are thousands of children living on the streets due toabusive and drug addicted family.

Only in Bay Area, the number of homelesschildren is at an all-time high, and there are more than twenty thousand ofthem, however, the bigger issue is their education. Education is the key tosucceed in their life and to stand on their feet again. Majority of homelesschildren are facing difficulties and having hard times on their relationship toeducation. They need the essentials to have a successful transition toadulthood and start new lives as a normal people.             Breaking Night is a real story by Liz Murray, describingher life journey from homelessness to Harvard. Liz Murray grew up in the Bronxin 80’s to drug addicted parents, who love their children, though unable toprovide anything for Liz and her older sister Lisa. Her family survived onwelfare from government, however her parents would spend all their monthlychecks for drugs, leaving Liz and Lisa without food.

As she mentions, at theage of 6, she already knew how to do drugs and also how to care for parents whoare supposed to take care of her. She knows that her mother began doing drugsat the age of thirteen to escape her own painful childhood. Her mother fallsdown under the unhappy memories and a diagnosis of HIV. At this point, hermother finally decides to recover and leaves her father, Liz decides not to gowith her, staying in the bad environment she grew up in.

However, having nohome to stay leads to her nonattendance from school, and she eventually went tofoster care. She is released into her mother’s care, but she decides to stay onstreets, making her life homeless at the age of fifteen. During this timeMurray looked for shelters, slept in friends’ apartments and in stairwells, andkept skipping school.

When her mother died from AIDS, Murray finally feltmotivated to return to school and look for her own stability in life. Althoughshe was still homeless, she decided to finish high school in two years andearning everything she needed. As she approached graduation, she began to thinkof college and applied to a New York Times scholarship and gained access to Harvard, which she achieved both. Then, she rents an apartment with her sister, finally creatinga true home.             It is not only her story, there are many people who wentthrough this life whether they succeeded or failed, and there are many peoplewho are living in this unpleasant life. Regardless of whatever situation, everysingle homeless child must go to school and get their education in order tomove forward in their lives. Although they are still able to attend publicschools, schools often do not provide what they exactly need and resulted inmost of them refuse to attend school.

The increase in the number of homelessfamilies in the United States has brought an increase in the number of homelesschildren going to public schools. Meanwhile, the U. S. public school system isstruggling to meet the education essentials of their homeless students.

As theU. S. Department of Education reported, there are approximately 615, 000school-aged children who are living as homeless, which is more than double thenumber in 1989. Both Increase in the number of low-rent housing and workingpoor families are main factors, according to a recent report by the federalDepartment of Housing and Urban Development.

Also, drug addicted and abusiveparents are other factors for homeless children because they are seeking safeplaces to sleep and escaping from their homes, and ending in shelters andstreets. Saddest part is that “ there is no indication that homelessness amongchildren and youth is getting any better,” said David J. Davidson, presidentof the National Association of State Coordinators for the Education of HomelessChildren and Youth. “ The impact on their well-being and education isdevastating.

” (Rodriguez and Maryellen). In 1987, there are more than 50percent of homeless children were not attending school. In spite of the risingnumber of homeless children, current government funding for the McKinney act’seducation program ($28. 8 million) is the same as in 1995 and remains at only 58percent of the $50 million approved by Congress. The program has never beencompletely funded. Just 3 percent of public school districts across the nationget McKinney funds. In majority of districts, any additional services providedto homeless students would come from the school budget.

The McKinney–Vento HomelessAssistance Act of 1987, is a federal law that provides funds for homelesspeople, was passed by the United States Congress on July 22, 1987.            Housing stability is an important part for the positivedevelopment of youth. Housing stability ensures children and youths keep connectedto their family and community, providing them with right support to developemotionally, socially, physically and mentally. As time passes day by day, economics of U. S is getting unstable resulting in increasing payment of foodand rent. Specifically, in Bay Area, mid-class family can barely afford theirneeds, and lower than mid-class families are at the risk of becoming ahomeless.            There are some homeless children who attend school, evencollege.

They seem more likely to succeed in their career and achieve theirdream. On the other hand, majority of homeless children choose not to attendschool because of the school’s lack of support. There are some unbelievablefacts that homeless students feel they should leave school. For instance, once, school district withheld the homeless student’s academic record because thestudent did not return a textbook. It is unimaginable that world’s mostpowerful country could not be able to provide textbooks to homeless students. Theremust be solution to these children. Children are born to be happy with theirfamily, they do not have to go through this life.

Homeless children usually do not attend school. Most ofthem help their family to find foods and shelters, and it is obvious that theydo not get enough sleep. With all that information about their life, we areable to solve issue. To give homeless youth the best possible chance tosucceed, it is significant that we provide them with high-quality educationservices, wherever they go, and maintain strong partnerships between localeducation agencies and housing authorities. In fact, we must to do more toprevent youth homelessness in the first place, and if they already becomehomeless, housing must be our first priority. Also, schools should have a clubcreated for students who support other homeless students.

They can all be inthe club together so the homeless students will not feel left out and be moreinvolved. They should do fundraising or other fun activities, so that theywould be interested and want to come school more often. Another solution couldbe that regular family offers a housing to homeless children.

Exchange studentsfrom foreign countries must stay in local families. When the family decides tolet the students stay in their house, they get some discount or decreasedpercentage on tax or some services. Why could not we offer the same to homelesschildren? It is hard for families to let homeless children to stay in theirhouse, but giving them last chance to get on their feet is the best supportthat we can be able to give. They do not choose this life, they do not deservethis. What we offer to our children tells them what it is that we value. Byprioritizing the needs of homeless youth, we tell them that we believe in themand are willing to be advocates on this challenging pathway called life.            As the research has demonstrated, homeless childrengetting education is important to succeed in their life and achieve theirdreams. In today’s society, many homeless children are going throughdifficulties in their life and having hard times on their education.

It isimportant that we provide the right essentials to them to have a successfullife. Number of homeless are increasing day by day in the U. S as well as homelesschildren, but the support they get from both government and us is not enough tohelp them to get on their feet again. Although the U. S government took an acton homelessness and created McKinney Act to help and support them, it has notbeen that effective for fifteen years.

Thus, it is our obligations to find anothersolution to help them until we find the right one. We are all born to be humansand have equal opportunities and lives, if ones do not have them, it is our jobto change them. Loving is the one thing we can give and get for free and unlimited.