

# Homeless childre



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Homeless Children Alia Abutaa BSHS/302 July 12, 2010 Anie Sklar Homeless Children Driving around at times a driver is bound to see a person standing on a corner with a sign reading, homeless and in need of money.

That driver may hand out a dollar or keep going thinking that their money is going to someone who is being lazy. The world of the homeless is much more than a person realizes. Every person on the street has a story of why they are living on the streets.

Many of those that have made their home on the streets are children, in fact, ??? Based on a 2004 report 1. 35 million children in the United States experience homelessness each year (Petersburg, 2008).??? Why and how are the children of America living on the streets, so many ask Like what was said before, everyone has their story. It is certain that homeless children and youths included are quickly growing in number. Some of them are homeless with a single parent or are runaways. Another question to ask is what happens to them if they do not receive help Having youth on the streets increased dramatically by 350% during the 1990??™s (Petersburg, 2008). Many children can be found homeless with a parent, more likely with their mother. Children can get caught up in the unstableness of drama of their parent.

The drama can range from being several issues such as they happen to be young mothers, who possibly are teenagers. Their parents might have decided to kick the mother along with baby out of the house and with no place to go that means more than likely living in a shelter and having trouble attending school because day care becomes an issue. Another scenario

could be that the mother decides she can longer handle remaining in an abusive relationship with a spouse and takes off with her child and finds out that they will be struggling for a while. They are not all single mothers out there with kids but some of them are with both set of parents.

A family that goes from living in a house or apartment to a shelter could be from the result of losing their job and not being able to make their payments. The past couple of years many families struggled to keep a job during the recession and ended up living in shelters. If it continues to escalate there will be a great deal more of children at risk who will be homeless (Cohen, 2009). These are possible scenarios that are reality for many children out there. A human service worker needs to take into account of what the situation is with the family. That means that the social worker is going to have to work with both parent and child to make sure that their needs are being met. That could mean finding job training, adult education classes as well as making sure that the child is attending school regardless if they are living at a shelter and more. Not all homeless children are found to be with their mom on the street but many of them are runaways.

Countless number of others leave their home for numerous reasons. Those reasons could be leaving on account from physical and sexual abuse, or simply not getting along with their parents. They most likely say enough is enough and leave feeling like they cannot depend on anyone else but themselves. What happens is that because they feel like they cannot rely on anyone else they will end up sleeping on a street corner versus going to a shelter (Martin, 2007). Being a runaway they know that there is a chance that if found their parents will be contacted and authorities will be involved

so they want to remain as distant if able. A concern with that is they end up relying on the wrong people who convince these kids that they know what they are going through and offer them all sorts of wrong advice. Life on the street is not easy, in fact its quite the opposite.

??? They are also far more likely to participate in dangerous behaviors such as drug abuse (including needle sharing), panhandling, theft, drug, abuse and survival sex (sex for food, money, and shelter), (Martin, 2007).??? As a last resort at times runaways know that they have no choice but to ask for help from the right people. They are not happy about it but the last thing that these teens are about to do is be openly trusting of someone who will try to reconcile them with their parents. Human service workers need to be extra cautious about when lending a hand to runaways because they are just more likely to leave the next day if they feel uneasy. Without a doubt these teens will have a wall put up to protect them and will put up a tough person attitude. A good human service worker needs to work with slowly bringing down the wall and show them that they are here to help no matter how hard the teen might appear. The social worker must make sure not to show that the teen is in any way being judged for their actions on the street and what they had to do for survival.

After trust is gained then steps can be taken to make sure that their basic needs are met such as, shelter, food and education. Not all teens reconcile with their parents because not all problems at home are fixable but they should know that they have choices they can make then having to live on the street. Life on the street means a lack of education for many of these homeless children. ??? Fewer than one in four will graduate high school,

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(Cohen, 2009).??? That means that there is a small window of opportunity for these kids to better themselves and will continue living in poverty as adults, (Petersburg, 2008). Runaways might decide that they have no use for school and want to leave the school where they attended while they were at home. In their minds it is just another step to distance them from having any contact to their previous life at home. For children who are living at shelters either by themselves or with their parent, it could be that the shelter is a distance from their school and find it difficult to reach.

A thought to keep in mind is that every time a child misses a day or has to switch schools at a rapid rate all that happens is interference in their education which may mean that they would have to repeat a grade. A good way to help solve those issues might be able to suggest that it might be a good idea to look for a closer shelter that may be available to the school or to see if the school might provide some sort of a program that is designed to help homeless children. A good piece of legislation passed was passed in 1987. This legislation is called the McKinney -Vento Homeless Assistance Act. This act is designed to help give funds to the aid of the homeless, which includes help with education for children. This legislation helped in part to ??? for all children with equal access to the same free appropriate public education as provided to other children and youth, (Petersburg, 2008).??? Every child deserves a chance at a proper education and this act helps with those that who are struggling. Once again, a social worker should make sure they know how to be wise with the child and know to familiarize themselves with the Act so that they know how each child can benefit from it.

Homelessness has been a problem in our country for years, and it goes back farther than the Great Depression. The fantastic thing about our society today is that it is no longer a subject that has to remain quiet and ignored. With the level of education today we all have a proper understanding of what causes homelessness and realize that it is not due to laziness. The fact that many children out there would rather leave their homes due to certain circumstances and live on the streets means that things need to change and offer them an alternative that says let us think of an option that would work and be beneficial. A struggle in the beginning is to be expected but the end is the reward knowing that a child that a social worker has helped now has the basic needs met for instance, food, health, shelter, education as well as knowing they are safe. ReferencesCohen, A.

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