

Homelessness melissa st

[Life](#), [Home](#)



Homelessness Melissa St George SOC 203: Social Problems Instructor: Risa Garelick August 28, 2011 I intend to show the meaning of homelessness and the different ways that people become homeless. I will also show how we can go about preventing homelessness. Homelessness means that one has no place to live. " The most prominent sociodemographic characteristics identified with high risk of homelessness have been male gender, Black race, being unmarried, and being middle aged" (Greenberg & Rosenheck, 2010, p1234-1235). Most of the homeless live in cities but there are those who live in the rural areas.

Most of them are hidden because they are homeless for shorter periods of time. There are several causes or reasons why people are homeless, some of them are by choice and others are forced, contrary to most people's beliefs that they " are drug addicts, alcoholics or are mentally challenged" (syzygyastro). The different types of homeless people are " push-outs", victims of environmental catastrophe, mentally ill, the new poor, the technologically unqualified, the elderly, runaways, the demoralized, alcoholics, ease addicts, travel addicts, and excitement addicts (Henslin, 2008, p 228).

The " push-outs" are people or families that have been forced out. They can be teenagers who are thrown out by their parents. The parents may have thrown them out due to They can be adults or families who have been evicted by landlords. Due to the high costs of rents, they may have had to choose between paying the rent or other necessities such as food, clothing, or gas. Or they could have lost their home due to the " sub-prime mortgage catastrophe that has made more than families homeless in 2008 and now

threatens a further 48 percent of the rest sub-prime mortgage holders who are late in payments or in default" (Syzygyastro).

Victims of environmental catastrophe have been forced out due to hurricanes, floods, fires, tornadoes, tsunamis, or other environmental disasters. The mentally ill have been forced out by hospitals or insurance companies. They are unable to care for themselves, so they live out on the streets not knowing how to survive in the "real" world. They can also become homeless because they need to choose their medications over rent. "20% to 50% of homeless adults suffer from a serious mental illness" (Greenberg & Rosenheck, 2010, p 1235).

The new poor are forced out from a job due to technological change. There jobs are taken over by machines and/orglobalization. The company moves to another part of the world, so that they can pay fewer wage to their employees. The technologically unqualified have been forced out because they never posed any technological skills, so they are unable to keep or get jobs. The wages that they do receive are so low that they can not afford an apartment. The elderly have been discarded.

They have nofamilysupport, no income, and most are unemployable.

Runaways choose to be homeless due to unstable living conditions. Most of these runaways are teenagers who have been physically abused. Some are the results of the system failing them. Most of the runaways are between the age of fifteen and seventeen but there are some that are as young as age ten. The demoralized are the depressed who have given up. The addicts are those who have been addicted to alcohol or drugs and choose their

addictions over their homes. 0% to 80% have a history of substance use disorders" (Greenberg & Rosenheck, 2010, p 1235), " thirty eight percent of homeless people have a problem with alcohol addiction and that another twenty six percent of homeless people have addictions to other drugs" (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2003). The Anti-Drug Abuse Act has made impossible for people who are convicted of a drug-related crime to keep their public housing. In the 1950's the deinstitutionalization of psychiatric treatment was the major factor of homelessness. The ease addicts choose homelessness.

They are usually in their early twenties and want to escape responsibility. The travel addicts choose to be homeless and want to roam. The excitement addicts choose to be homeless. They enjoy the thrill of danger and because it offers the " edge". The other things that are also associated with homelessness are past incarceration, exposure to trauma, lack of low-income housing, and the decrease in public funds. " As a result of loss of benefits, low wages, and unstable employment, many families leaving welfare struggle to get medical care, food, and housing" (National Coalition for the Homeless, 2009). A lack of affordable housing and the limited scale of housing assistance programs have contributed to the current housing crisis and to homelessness" (National Coalition for the Homeless, 2009). There are many ways that we can help to prevent homelessness. In 1987, the McKinney Homeless Act took the first steps to this by making it a federal law that there needed to be funding for the homeless. The next steps that we need to do is to evaluate the homeless in our communities to see what

programs or services are most in need. We need to evaluate our homeless shelters.

We need to have job training and financial programs. We need to keep track of the people that we help. We need to set up supportive housing and/or “ Unfortunately, government action and public policy of recent has not necessarily helped the plight of the homeless, in fact in some cases it has served to compound the problem” (Gaddis, 2007). When we evaluate the homeless in our communities to see what programs or services that we need most, we need to do it in a way that is nonthreatening and compassionate. We need to evaluate our own bias, so that we can put them aside and help them. Many of the people that experience homelessness are not the stereotypical homeless persons that would come to mind when thinking about this problem” (Gaddis, 2007). We need to find out why they are homeless and look to the local government for help. Public assistance programs can help the homeless with some of their problems. There needs to be some type of coordination between homeless shelters and public service agencies. Some people will not go to public agencies for help because of the bias of others and/or because of their pride.

Many of the reports that I read told of conditions at shelters as being in poor condition. An example of this is when FEMA set up the social housing after Hurricane Katrina. “ Some people are highly critical of these camps, calling them nothing more than concentration camps complete with barbed wire and gun towers” (Syzygyastro). The other reports that I read talked about shelters that were run down, very few of them, and they were riddled with

disease, pests, and thefts. Job trainings and financial programs will be able to help the homeless get back on their feet.

We should have some kind of job training programs for these people because most of them are there due to a job loss. This would also help the runaways who need to the life skills to survive in the world. Financial programs could be very helpful because it can help them get their finances in order and to teach them how to stretch their earnings by budgeting. We need to keep track of the people that we help. Too many times people get the help that they need and then they are forgotten about. We need to set up programs that help this people and offer support over a long period of time. Studies of placement programs often find that they lose track of residents within the first year, so track clients carefully, and assess their need for specific services” (Solutions for America). We need to look at supportive housing or “Treatment of substance abuse has been reported to improve outcomes in homeless persons with dual diagnoses of serious mental illness and substance abuse” (Folsom, Hawthorne, Lindamer.. , 2005). When we set up supportive housing for addicts, we can help them to beat their addictions and set up their new “ life”.

We can also help the people with mental health disorders; get the supports that they may need. We will only be able break the cycle by coming together as a community and working on ways to help those that are having a difficult time. We need to remember that one day that could be us and we would want someone there to help us. Annotated Bibliography: Why Are People Homeless?. (July 2009). Retrieved August 12, 2011, from National Coalition

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