

Homelessness In NYC

by: Oliver

Introduction

As of 2014, there are still so many people living in conditions that aren't suitable for anyone to live in. Imagine an old man that has no family and no friends and spends his days begging for money from pedestrians.

Some days he doesn't have anything to eat and is too tired to ask for money. If you live in the same planet Earth as I do, you don't have to imagine this, you see it wherever you go! That is probably the most common way homeless people are "living", but not the only one. Your son or daughter could have a classmate that comes back from school every night to his/her parents in a homeless shelter. There are so many people that live like this.

Homelessness is an issue all around the world, and in N.Y.C. alone, you can tell what a huge problem this is. A lot of people think that homelessness only exists in poor and developing countries, cities, towns, etc. But that is totally incorrect. For example, there are about 3 million homeless people in Europe, 15,000 homeless people in Buenos Aires, 10,000 in Australia, about 14,000 in Austria, 20,000,000 in Brazil, and many more in other places.

Although it might be far-fetched to set a goal at stopping homelessness all over the world, we can at least start small, here in NYC. Also, if you walk around you see that most people pass homeless people on the streets and don't give them money, or if they do it's very little. As a city and a community we all have to work together to lower and hopefully stop the issue of homelessness in N.Y.C.

Explain the Issue

All around the world homelessness affects people. In places where it's hard to get a job there are more people that live on the streets. In NYC alone there are over 60,000 people that are homeless, living in shelters, including 22,000 homeless children but not including the people that live on the streets. All of these children and adults have to use every day to beg for food and money that is barely enough to survive, and much less "live" and thrive.

People who are homeless around the world in places with harsh weather have to live through either blistering cold winters or blazing hot summers, and they have no shelter to stay in. Many homeless will sleep outside on park benches, the street, church stairs, etc. This causes not only dirtiness but leads to the growth of other typical stereotypes of homeless people. Some stereotypes are that homeless people are extremely dirty and smelly, and that they all usually do things like drinking and are addicted to drugs. The same goes for the homeless in New York.

Also, sometimes housing may be so expensive that people end up having to go into homelessness temporarily and it becomes harder to find a job and a place to stay. Often they end up stuck without a shelter. This issue is usually caused just by people not being aware that you will likely end up homeless if you don't have a job. Also, they don't know how hard it is to get a job without a proper education, and most people that don't get a proper education or a proper childhood either end up homeless, or with a bad job and not much money. This makes them not able to support any family, or friends, or even themselves! This is a huge issue that people think is not likely to happen to them, but it is. This has to stop!!!! And we are the only ones that do it.

Current Events

In 2013, there was an article about a homeless girl and her family who live in a shelter in New York. Dasani, (the girl) went to a public school like normal kids, and kept it a secret that she was homeless and blended in with all of the other kids. This makes her weekday life at school much easier, but outside of school, life is more rough. And not just for her, for her whole family. She is the eldest of her 7 siblings except for her mom and dad. Her parents always get into fights and other peoples buisness on the streets. Both of her parents take a daily dose of methadone as part of their drug treatment program, and for Dasani or any of her siblings to act rambunctious is to risk a beating.

This whole family barely survives and certainly does not thrive the way people should. They live in a small place in a shelter with a 10 person family and have just enough food to get by on. This is one family of many that live in just as harsh conditions all throughout the city of New York and along the face of the whole planet. There are (as of 2013) 12,734 homeless families, 22,712 homeless children, 19,555 homeless adults in families, 8,470 homeless single men, and 2,882 homeless single women.

That's.... a whole lot more homeless people than there should be. People aren't reacting as much to this issue as they should. This story being told to the public has caused awareness which in turn caused people to spread awareness, and this makes people want to help and donate. It goes to show that a little can go a long way.

Methods of Change

There are already a decent amount of organizations working to stop this issue but they need our help! Two of these organizations are The Coalition for the Homeless, and The National Alliance to End Homelessness.

For 30 years, the Coalition for the Homeless has worked to create and implement humane, cost-effective strategies in an effort to lower and hopefully end mass homelessness all over the city of New York. They are dedicated to a principle that affordable housing, sufficient food and the chance to work for a living wage are all fundamental rights in civilized society. The National Alliance to End Homelessness works with other public private and nonprofit sectors and end up with stronger programs that, in turn, help other communities reach their goal of ending homelessness. Both of these organizations work to reach the same goal in the same way, knowing that they can't do anything on their own so they try to get help and donations from people just like us.

These organizations and many more are run and organized by adults, but there are still a lot of things that kids can do. Just like I'm doing with this report, kids can spread the word about this issue and get more people with more power and influence that can in turn help this issue. We (kids) can also volunteer at shelters and help at fundraisers and such. Because of the fact that most kids don't have that much money, you can also donate things like food and other things people need that you may have more than enough of. This now means that there's almost no limit on who and how we can help, so why aren't we? Don't just sit on your couch and read this and feel bad for homeless people, let's all get up and try to make a change!!!

Call for Action

Are you interested and ready to make a change? Here are some organizations that you can donate to and help out in whatever way you can.

Organizations	Specifics on how you can help out	Contact information
The National Alliance to End Homelessness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donate • volunteer • share your story • recruiting others to join your efforts 	National Alliance to End Homelessness 1518 K Street NW, Suite 410 Washington, DC 20005 (Tel) 202. 638.1526 (Fax) 202.638.4664
The Coalition for the Homeless	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • donate • volunteer • advocate with the Coalition or other related homelessness organizations 	Coalition for the Homeless 129 Fulton Street New York, NY 10038 Telephone: 212-776-2000 Facsimile: 212-964-1303 Email: info@cfthomeless.org
The Bowery Residents Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer • donate • food service • administrative work for the Committee • check these link for more info: http://www.brc.org/volunteer_projects_indv.php 	By mail, please write: BRC 131 West 25th Street 12th Floor New York, NY 10001 By phone: 212-803-5700 By fax: 212-533-1893By e-mail: info@brc.org
Goddard Riverside Community Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tutor children to help them improve 	Goddard Riverside Community Center

	academically <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • serve meals or prepare meals <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • donate • volunteer to help out in any other way 	593 Columbus Avenue New York, NY 10024 Phone: (212) 873-6600 Email: info@goddard.org
Citymeals - on - wheels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donate money or food for them to serve at their 120 centers for homeless 	www.citymeals.org E-mail: info@citymeals.org Phone: 212-687-1234 Fax: 212-687-1296 Citymeals-on-Wheels 355 Lexington Avenue New York, NY 10017

I want to make a change by using things I like to do like drawing and playing guitar. So, I want to spread awareness by either making a song or a piece of art that people will take notice of.

Conclusion

I hope this report has not only informed you and made you feel sad, but hopefully underlined the fact that we need to take steps to stop this issue. I encourage you to take action and try to get rid of this problem by either spreading the word, directly donating and supporting the above organizations, or starting your own! If we all work together as a community, we can change the world as we know it one step at a time.

Bibliography

www.bowery.org/

www.coalitionforthehomeless.org/pages/basic-facts

www.goddard.org/

www.endhomelessness.org/

www.brc.org/

www.nationalhomeless.org/

www.nyc.gov