

RECOGNIZING THE HIDDEN HOMELESS

An educational resource for raising awareness on the issue of homelessness. This lesson package can also be used as a companion for the WE Won't Rest campaign.

LESSON PACKAGE

AN INITIATIVE OF



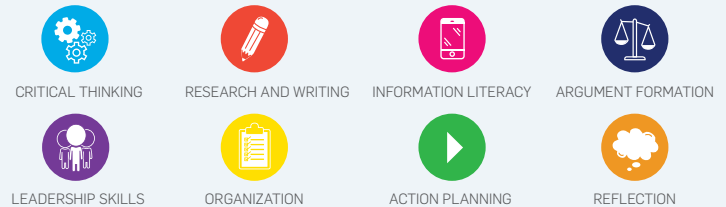
■ RATIONALE

In January 2015, 564,708 people across the United States experienced homelessness. It takes many forms and affects people of all ages. People find themselves homeless from any number of reasons: if they lose their job, their health deteriorates, they are fleeing domestic violence or are youth runaways. Women and children in particular are often part of the “hidden homeless,” people living in friends' homes and temporary accommodations. Homelessness exists all over the world, in our cities and communities, often hidden in plain sight. With this educator resource students will have the opportunity to look below the surface and spread the word about the causes and realities of homelessness.

This educator resource consists of five lessons designed to bring the issue of homelessness into the classroom. Students will learn about the many faces of homelessness, the different causes, the misconceptions, and connect with the issue in their community. These lessons are grounded in the WE.org Learning Framework ensuring students develop the core skills sets they need to become young leaders and help build a better global community.

Core Skill Sets

Look for these icons at the top of each lesson. The icons identify the most relevant core skills being developed. Learn more about the WE.org Learning Framework at www.weday.com/weschools.



■ DETAILS

Themes: Advocacy, Character Education, Empathy, Local Issues, Politics, Poverty, We Won't Rest

Estimated time: 175 minutes

Learning goals:

Students will:

- Discover their own meaning of homelessness and discuss common misconceptions of the issue
- Compare and contrast different types of homelessness
- Prepare a mock budget for an average household
- Share learnings and experiences on a topic of homelessness with others
- Work independently as well as participate in active group work

Course connections: Arts, English Language Arts, Health and Physical Education, Mathematics, Social Studies

Resources required:

- Front board
- Computers with internet capabilities

Assessment:

- Appendix 1: We Won't Rest Fact Sheet
- Appendix 2: Learning from the experts
- Appendix 3: Assessment rubric

■ INTRODUCTORY LESSON: THE MANY FACES



Purpose: To reveal what students don't know about homelessness, their reactions to homelessness and to discuss common misconceptions about the issue.

Instructional method(s): Directed drawing, class discussion

Differentiated instruction:

- Use this activity over a few classes. Each time, look at a different myth. At the end compare how the pictures progressed as they learned more about homelessness. Discuss these changes.

Course connections: Arts, English Language Arts, Health and Physical Education

Estimated time: 30 minutes

Steps:

1. Tell students that after taking a moment to clear their minds, you will say a word. Once you have said this word, students are to open their eyes and begin drawing a picture that describes this word. There will be no discussion; they are to draw the first thing they associate with the word. Students may draw a whole picture or focus on one specific aspect.
2. Ask students to close their eyes, put their heads down on their desks and let their minds relax for one minute.
3. Say the word "homelessness."
4. Provide students with ten minutes to draw their picture. Afterwards, put each picture on display. Ask the class to spend five minutes discussing them.
5. Ask students to pick out the most common depictions. Group them according to appropriate categories.
6. Reveal the myths and realities outlined in the We Won't Rest Fact Sheet (Appendix 1) and discuss why each myth is a common misconception.

■ CORE LESSON:

THREE TYPES OF HOMELESSNESS



Purpose: To compare and contrast different types of homelessness and discuss formal definitions.

Instructional method(s): Scenarios, reading comprehension, class discussion

Differentiated instruction:

- Divide the class into three groups. Have each group engage with one scenario. Then, present their findings with the rest of the class. Unite the presentations by encouraging students to compare and contrast the scenarios.
- Have students work individually in their notebooks instead of as a class with discussion.

Course connections: English Language Arts, Social Studies, Health and Physical Education

Estimated time: 40 minutes

Steps:

1. Make copies of the three scenarios below and distribute them to the class.
 - a. Rob is a 47-year-old bachelor who has struggled with bipolar disorder for the majority of his life. In his early twenties, Rob's behaviour became unpredictable; his mood swings and manic episodes started to occur more frequently. When he was 32, his condition worsened, causing him to lose his construction job. As a result he lost his apartment and found himself homeless. During the next 15 years, Rob stayed in more than twelve different shelters in three cities, unable to find work or a place to call home. Making matters worse, his brother—and only remaining family member—died of cancer, leaving him without anyone to turn to for help. Today, Rob remains homeless.
 - b. Jennifer is a victim of child abuse. The abuse began when Jennifer was nine—the year her parents got divorced. After Jennifer's mother moved away, Jennifer was left in the custody of her father, who blamed her for the failed marriage. At first she didn't want to make a big deal out of it, but things only got worse so she ran away from home. For the first few nights Jennifer stayed at a friend's house, but she couldn't stay there for long. Distracted, she began to get into trouble at school and eventually she felt she needed to drop out. Before long, Jennifer was spending nights on the street. A few months later, she moved to a new city where she was adopted by her aunt. Their relationship became strained as Jennifer continued to get into trouble and she was asked to leave after two years.
 - c. Greg and Veronica are a young married couple. For many years they lived in a small apartment, and dreamed of living in a house of their own. One day, they were excited to learn they finally qualified for a mortgage. Within eight months, Greg and Veronica bought their first home. Even with their bank loan, money was tight and home insurance was too expensive. Unfortunately, when a fire broke out, their home suffered severe damage. Without insurance, they could not make the necessary repairs. With the house deemed unlivable, the bank took possession of their home. Hoping to get back on their feet as soon as possible, the couple spent some time living with friends but eventually they went back to living in a small apartment.
2. Have a volunteer read the first scenario out loud while the rest of the class follows along.
3. Ask the class what stood out to them (for example, character traits, causes of homelessness assumptions, implied facts, etc.). Record the answers on the front board.
4. Move onto the second scenario. Repeat steps 2 and 3. Do the same with the third scenario.
5. Next, ask students what similarities and differences exist between the scenarios. Write the answers on the board.
6. Using the following definitions (also found in the We Won't Rest Fact Sheet) of the three types of homelessness ask students to apply each definition to the scenario they believe it aligns with best.
 - a. Chronically homeless—people who have been living for more than one year on the street, in shelters, friends' homes, abandoned buildings, mental health hospitals, rehabilitation centers, or jails. Those who are chronically homeless often struggle with mental illness or drug abuse which makes it extremely difficult to find and keep a job without reliable social support.
 - b. Cyclically homeless—people who lose their homes when some part of their daily life changes—for example, if they lose their job, have to go to the hospital or move to a new city or town. They are often women escaping domestic violence (sometimes with their children), runaway youth and people recently released from prison or a psychiatric institution.
 - c. Temporarily homeless—people who lose their homes for a short time. Victims of disasters like floods or fire are in this category, as well as some people who lose their job or experience a difficult divorce. These people are usually able to get back on their feet in a few weeks.

■ CORE LESSON 2: MOCK BUDGET



Purpose: Mock budgeting is used to help students understand how difficult it can be to live in poverty.

Instructional method(s): Mock budgeting, group work, class discussion, presentations

Differentiated instruction:

- Have students also find the cost of living in their local community.

Course connections: Social Studies, Mathematics

Estimated time: 45 minutes

Steps:

1. Divide the class into smaller groups of about four students each.
2. Instruct each group to create a monthly budget for an average household with an income of \$1,513/month. This amount places the household roughly at the poverty line. Students must save enough money for a fixed number of items such as food, shelter, clothing, healthcare, transportation utilities, etc.
3. Instruct groups to prepare a presentation of their budget and the reasoning behind the allotments of money. Give students fifteen minutes to prepare the budget and presentation.
4. Once finished, give groups two to three minutes each to present.
5. After the presentations, reveal the actual average cost of each item. Give each group an opportunity to adjust their budget where necessary.
6. Discuss which items students would spend less on or exclude altogether and why.

List of expenditures faced by the average American household living at the poverty line:

- Food: \$312
- Housing: \$593
- Utilities: \$228
- Transportation: \$335
- Healthcare: \$169
- Education: \$29
- Miscellaneous: \$401

Note: Statistically, the average family at the poverty line is spending \$9,500 more every year than it earns just to get by.

■ CONCLUSION LESSON: ISSUES WEB



Purpose: Students will examine the interconnectivity between the many different causes of homelessness and determine what can be done to alleviate them.

Instructional method(s): Mind mapping, class discussion, cause and effect, problem solving

Differentiated instruction:

- Instruct students to work on the webs independently or in small groups.
- Divide the causes amongst small groups allowing students to focus on drafting a comprehensive solution for one cause of homelessness.

Course connections: English Language Arts, Social Studies, Health and Physical Education

Estimated time: 30 minutes

Steps:

1. Write the word "homelessness" in the middle of the front board or on a large piece of paper. Draw a circle around it.
2. Ask the class for ideas of possible causes of homelessness. Ensure students explain their suggestions.
3. Write each cause in a blank space around the word "homelessness." Draw a circle around it and connect the two words with a line. If the cause relates to other suggestions, draw another line connecting those two related words. For example, both unemployment and poverty might be identified as separate causes of homelessness. However, unemployment can also cause poverty so a line should connect them as well. Continue until all possibilities have been exhausted.
4. Allow the class a moment to note how daunting all the problems may seem.
5. With your hand, cover one of the causes in the web. Ask students to think about how removing one cause there is a ripple effect and other causes are consequently removed too while others are alleviated. For example, by removing unemployment there is one less connection to poverty on the web.
6. Working through the web list on the board, ask students to identify solutions or existing social structures (many are outlined in the We Won't Rest Fact Sheet) that can help remove the causes of homelessness. If one cause is connected to

another, eliminate them both. Attempt to remove all causes shown and finally homelessness itself, through discussion. Ultimately the board will become blank.

■ EXTENSION LESSON: WE WON'T REST



Purpose: Students will have the opportunity to raise awareness, break stereotypes and challenge misconceptions about homelessness by engaging in the WE School's WE Won't Rest campaign.

Instructional method(s): Class discussion, group work

Differentiated instruction:

- Have students review the WE Won't Rest How-to Guide individually.
- Have students work individually to create a promotional advertisement.

Course connections: Arts, English Language Arts, Mathematics, Health and Physical Education, Social Studies

Estimated time: 30 minutes

Steps:

1. Ask students to reflect on what they have learned throughout the previous lessons. Explain to them that it is easy to feel helpless when learning about the issues of homelessness since it is difficult to determine how to help. Let students know that they can apply what they have learned about homelessness by raising awareness, squashing stereotypes and challenging misconceptions by getting involved with WE School's WE Won't Rest campaign.
2. Distribute the WE Won't Rest How-to Guide. Ask students to review the guide quietly with their desk partner.
3. Discuss the logistics of the campaign by asking the following questions:
 - What steps can you take to participate in this campaign?
 - Why is January a good time to hold such a campaign?
 - How can we raise awareness, squash stereotypes and challenge misconceptions by becoming involved with this campaign?
 - How can we achieve the best results?
 - What can we do around our school?
 - What can we do in our community?
4. Sign up for the campaign by filling out the registration form at www.weday.com/wewontrest.

Reflection

Write the following sentence starters on the front board:

- In my opinion...
- I noticed...
- I believe/believed...
- I feel/felt...
- I predict...
- I don't/didn't understand...
- What if...

Instruct students to use a sentence starter to shape a reflection statement on their learning experience on the issue of hunger in their community and experiences raising awareness of homelessness, breaking stereotypes and challenging misconceptions with the WE Won't Rest campaign.

Allow students a few minutes to think of what they would like to share using the sentence starters. Ask for a volunteer to start the sharing session. After each statement is made allow a moment to pass before moving onto the next volunteer to help facilitate the listening and reflection process. Take enough time for everyone to share their reflection statements.

Let us know what you think. We are always working to make our educational resources better for teachers and students. Answer the short survey and help shape the educational content we offer.

Recognizing the Hidden Homeless (WE Won't Rest):

www.surveygizmo.com/s3/2498877/RHH

■ Appendix 1

WE WON'T REST FACT SHEET

This resource is meant to dispel the myths surrounding homelessness in the United States. Homelessness is a difficult issue to understand because it has so many different forms, and many different people are affected by it. It's even harder to talk about because there are stigmas and myths that influence how we think about homelessness and those affected by it. One of the most important things we can all do is to learn about the realities of homelessness, and especially what it looks like in our own community. Dehumanization, or treating someone without the respect and kindness that everyone deserves, is both a cause and effect of misunderstanding how people become homeless, who is homeless, and what people experiencing homelessness must face. Using this Fact Book, the We Won't Rest campaign hopes to humanize homelessness and show the realities of those who struggle with the many challenges related to homelessness. The problem of homelessness may seem like a huge challenge, but when we focus on raising awareness and taking action, we can make our communities better for everyone. That is our hope. Thank you for bringing it to life.

Be the change,

Free The Children Team

WHAT DO WE MEAN BY "HOMELESSNESS"?

Homelessness is more than what we see on the street. There are hundreds of thousands of people experiencing homelessness who sit on sidewalks and in parks, asking for spare change to help them get through the day. But this is just the tip of the iceberg.

The United Nations estimates there are 100 million people experiencing homelessness globally. Another 1.6 billion have inadequate housing.

In the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights there are certain rights which are considered essential for everyone to have. The following is from Article 25 of the Declaration: "Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control." For those experiencing homelessness, however, these rights can be difficult to access.

Though there have always been people labelled "homeless," the bigger problem of homelessness as a local and global issue is a much newer idea. It wasn't until the 1980s that the word "homelessness" was commonly used to talk about a society-wide issue. Today, we recognize that homelessness is a problem of "de-housing"—not having stable housing to live in—but that it is also connected to extreme poverty, unemployment, and social dislocation (not having family or social services for support).

Researchers have identified three types of homelessness. First, there are the chronically homeless, people who have

been homeless for more than one year. According to the National Alliance to End Homelessness and the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness, the chronically homeless often struggle with mental illness or substance abuse, making it extremely difficult to find and keep a job.

Second, there are also people who are cyclically homeless. Because of poverty and a lack of social support, these people lose their homes when some part of their daily life changes—for example, if they lose their job, have to go to the hospital or move to a new city or town. The people in this category include women escaping domestic violence (sometimes with their children), runaway youth and people recently released from prison or a psychiatric institution.

DEMYSTIFYING HOMELESSNESS IN THE UNITED STATES

Homelessness is surrounded by ideas that are based on misunderstanding. "Demystify" means to clarify what we don't understand by breaking myths and clearing up misconceptions. If we look more carefully, we can see the diversity of homelessness throughout American society. This is very important to keep in mind.

Though it's impossible to count exactly how many people are "homeless" on any given night, it is estimated that more than 1 million Americans use homeless shelters throughout the year and many more spend their nights without shelter or support. On a given night in January 2015, 564,708 Americans were homeless.

Myth 1: Homeless people are all men on the street

In January 2015, 47,725 veterans were homeless on a single night. Fewer than 10 percent (4,338) were women. In January 2015, 83,170 individuals and 13,105 people in families with children were chronically homeless. There were 36,907 unaccompanied youth on a single night in 2015. Most (32,240) were youth between the ages of

18 and 24, and 13 percent were children under the age of 18.

Many women, children and youth are part of what is often called the "hidden homeless." These are people living in homeless shelters, friends' homes and temporary rooming houses. They don't "look" homeless because they work and go to school and dress like everyone else. When we pass them in the street we don't see a stereotypical homeless person, but the challenges they face related to housing and job stability are very real.

Hispanics or Latinos comprise 20 percent of the homeless population, regardless of sheltered status. Most homeless people were either white (49%) or African American (40%).

The American population that is experiencing or has experienced homelessness is very diverse. Single women, families, youth, veterans, African Americans and Hispanics—social services, like shelters and food banks, are struggling to help them all. And, it is important to recognize this diversity in the homeless population.

Myth 2: Homeless people stay homeless for the rest of their lives

The homeless are often described as a fixed population, as individuals who lose their homes and spend the rest of their lives on the street. In reality, the people who are sometimes called "homeless" can come from anywhere. They face different challenges, and are without a home for varying lengths of time.

Some people are homeless just once, and succeed in landing a new job or paying off debt to get their life back together. Others live in poverty and move in and out of apartments, houses and shelters as pay checks come and go. Still others need the support of community organizations, charities and government programs to cope with mental, physical and emotional challenges.

In the United States, 358,422 people are chronically homeless and nearly 64 percent were homeless as individuals. According to the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness, the chronically homeless also have high rates of mental illness or substance abuse.

While this portion of the homeless population deserves a lot of attention, it is important to realize that for many, their stay in a shelter is temporary.

Myth 3: Homeless people don't want to work

A lot of people assume that if homeless people just wanted to, or if they tried harder, they could get and keep a job, which would give them enough money to pay rent. This is often or sometimes not true. In fact, some people experiencing homelessness are employed but they can't earn enough to save up a month's worth of rent. Single mothers also have to support and care for their children: you can't work 18 hours a day and still be there when

your children need you. But some single women can't support their children unless they work these long hours. Many single mothers face this impossible challenge.

There are 45 million people living in poverty in the United States, and minority groups are at a much higher risk of experiencing poverty. A lot of people in poverty work, but they spend a large percentage of their income on shelter. That makes it difficult to save money. So, when a parent loses his or her job, or if someone has to go to the hospital, then the family or individual no longer has the money to pay for next month's rent.

Economic recessions and housing crises cause a jump in the number of the transitional homeless, because many people are laid off and it's hard to get a new job.

It's not that people experiencing homelessness don't want to work. A person or a family on the edge of poverty can easily lose their home, or even their job. And it's not nearly as simple to get another job, especially when you don't have a home and access to everything that it entails. Without a home, you have no address and no place to keep your things, cook meals or prepare for school or work.

Myth 4: Homeless people are mentally ill or drug addicts

A study in 2010 found that 26.2 percent of sheltered homeless have a serious mental illness, while 34.7 percent are substance abusers. An estimated 46 percent of sheltered adults have a chronic substance abuse problem and/or a severe mental illness.

Those numbers are very high. Those who struggle with these issues often require social support and help groups to find a job and to get off the street and out of shelters. However, these statistics also mean that more than half of all sheltered homeless adults don't have a mental illness or a substance abuse problem. Many of them struggle to balance low-paying jobs with the high costs of living today.

Myth 5: Homeless people commit violent crimes more often than people who have a residence

People experiencing homelessness are less likely to be charged with violent crimes than the rest of the population according to a 1999 report. In general, homeless people are more likely to be arrested for non-violent crimes like loitering, disturbing the peace, panhandling, drug abuse or theft. This is partly because

they have no private space and often attract the attention of the police. It is also because shelters and social may not have enough resources to assist everyone, so some people slip through the cracks and find themselves in bad situations.

Homelessness actually makes people more vulnerable to violence. Because they don't have private space for periods of time, people experiencing homelessness are targets of assault (any kind of physical attack) and theft—both on the street and in shelters.

HOW DO PEOPLE BECOME HOMELESS?

Every person has their own story, and the ways people fall into homelessness are as diverse as the people themselves. Each individual's situation can be very complex and the longer they stay on the street or in shelters the more complicated it gets. It is important to remember that homelessness means not having access to housing.

With that in mind, we can say that poverty and unemployment are two of the most common causes of homelessness in our society.

A 2012 survey indicated that 68 percent of Americans were living pay check to pay check. That means that they can't save money for a rainy day. If they lose their job, they would quickly run out of money for a home, and even money for food. On top of that, some people don't have family that can help out in hard times.

In addition to poverty and unemployment, physical abuse is a major cause of women and youth leaving their homes for the relative safety of shelters. According to a 2003 study, 38 percent of participants (women who had experienced domestic violence) reported being homeless immediately after separating from their partners.

People with severe mental illnesses face challenges holding onto jobs, and some communities don't have the funding to provide services to assist them. According to the National Alliance on Mental Illness, adults who live with mental illness have a three to five times higher unemployment rate than those who do not suffer from mental illness.

In addition, a government study from 2006 found that 56 percent of state prisoners and 45 percent of federal prisoners have had mental health problems. This is a similar issue for people who are released from jail and hospitals, or who have recently moved to a new city. Without community and government support services, they are uprooted and suddenly friendless, jobless and homeless.

Veterans are another vulnerable group. In January 2015, 47,725 veterans were homeless on a single night.

In addition to the challenges of affordable housing, health care and employment, many veterans have post-traumatic stress disorder—a complicated condition that can overwhelm a person at a basic mental and emotional level. For veterans, this psychological issue is

often made worse by a lack of family and social support networks. Approximately 45 percent of homeless veterans experience mental illness.

WHAT IS BEING HOMELESS LIKE?

Cushing Dolbeare, a researcher of homelessness in America, wrote that "homelessness may not be only a housing problem, but it is always a housing problem." This means that even though there are many different issues involved in homelessness—unemployment, domestic abuse, mental illness, immigration, social displacement, etc.—people experiencing homelessness always share one thing: they do not have access to a safe and secure home. This is the heart of the problem, but it has different implications for different people.

One of the most common challenges faced by those experiencing homelessness is the lack of a phone and address. This makes finding a job extremely difficult. Without an address you can't receive letters or bills, and without a phone prospective employers typically can't contact you.

An address is a symbol of stability and reliability. But a fixed address also means that a person is based in a community. Without one, people can become excluded from society. Without a home, the security of daily life, which we often take for granted, is replaced by a moment-to-moment struggle for basic survival. For example, a mother may have to find a way to care for her children and keep them safe, when she doesn't have a home and she is still trying to work.

Individuals and families may be able to find refuge in a shelter. However, there are often problems of violence and theft in these situations. If a person is forced out of their apartment, they have to take all of their clothes and possessions with them. These things—the only semblance of a "normal" life that a person has left—are not necessarily protected in a shelter. Many people experiencing homelessness must be on their guard at all times, juggling the search for work, food and shelter with the need to protect their possessions, not to mention the need to maintain their own health.

The Wellesley Institute suggests that homeless people experience a rate of assault that is 35 percent higher than those who are housed. The dangers associated with being homeless, even for a short time, make symptoms of posttraumatic stress disorder common. Homelessness is such a traumatic and difficult experience that a person's mental and emotional health is at risk. Physically, homelessness has devastating effects on people, particularly for the chronically homeless. The average life expectancy in the homeless population is estimated between 42 and 52 years, compared to 78 years in the general population.

Homeless youth—whether they are on the street, in shelters, on couches, or in jail cells—have a different experience than homeless adults. A big part of growing up is trying different things and being able to fail and start again in a supportive environment. Homeless youth don't have this. Young people are resilient and creative, but

homelessness exposes them to exploitation by adults and peer pressure that often leads to substance abuse, violence and crime.

All of these challenges add to the way that homelessness can cut people off from society. There is a stigma surrounding the homeless, largely based on myths and misunderstanding. People experiencing homelessness often have extraordinary trouble building healthy friendships and a supportive community. These bonds are often very important to help individuals and families escape homelessness.

WHAT IS BEING DONE TO HELP?

The people affected by homelessness are like everyone else—they need support to get through tough times. As we saw in the previous section, all people experiencing homelessness share the problem of being unable to access housing. So the most direct solution is to create more affordable housing, but there are many other things playing out, which means that solutions need to come from many angles.

Homelessness is a complicated issue, but some researchers and writers see a simple solution. One approach is called “housing first.” Focusing on the chronically homeless and those who need long-term medical and psychological assistance, the housing first approach puts people into apartments first, and then provides optional and extensive treatment and care.

This approach has been shown to be very effective. In New York City, housing initiatives have reached an 85 percent success rate. Individuals gain a sense of independence and self-worth. They have the personal space that is so important for joining a community, finding a job and staying safe and healthy. Plus, it’s much cheaper (and undoubtedly more humane) to house people in this way than in shelters, jail cells or community residences, saving governments and communities significant amounts of money.

Spreading the housing-first model would make leaps and bounds for putting the homeless population back in control of their lives. For some homeless—the women escaping abuse, the families who can’t pay rent this month, the struggling youth—emergency support is crucial. Shelters, food banks and community organizations are the main forms of emergency aid for the homeless as well as those on the verge of losing their homes.

Food banks and community kitchens play a big role. They provide struggling families and individuals with meals, one of the biggest regular expenses after rent. Food banks and community kitchens prevent many people from becoming homeless by helping them before they’ve lost their homes. But food banks across North America struggle to meet their community’s needs, as people lose their jobs and seek the support.

Often, in addition to housing or food, community-based organizations try to tackle homelessness from multiple angles: employment programs, basic health care, child care, advocacy, counselling and support groups.

Homelessness can also be addressed from the perspective of communities. Most shelters are intended for a specific group. This helps promote a sense of safety and solidarity among the people of the shelter, which is especially needed for women escaping abusive relationships, youth who have trouble trusting adults, and marginalized communities.

The localized, comprehensive approach led by community organizations is perhaps the best way to end homelessness because it addresses all the issues involved. One of the great things about civil society is that where there is a need, more often than not there are people filling the gap. And for this issue, affordable housing sits in the middle of a web of tactics to help millions of people get back in a safe and secure home. However, sometimes a community doesn’t have the resources on its own. Government support, directly through policy and subsidized housing and indirectly through grants to community organizations, is needed to meet the needs of all Americans. It’s by coming together, in communities or through our elected officials, that we have a chance of addressing issues that exist throughout our society. Homelessness is not an individual’s problem. It’s not one person’s failure, but the failure of a society to find a place for all people.

WHAT CAN THE REST OF US DO?

While giving money on street may help someone get through that day, it doesn’t address the deeper problems. The first thing to do is talk about homelessness and raise awareness by bringing more and more people into the discussion. Ask questions and think about why people fall into situations of homelessness.

For real change, education needs to be followed by action. You can volunteer at community organizations that deal with the issues surrounding homelessness. If you’re over 18, you can get involved at a local shelter or with a help line for women or youth. Alternatively, talk to a local food bank or shelter and find out what supplies they need and organize a clothing, toy or food drive. Or you can write letters to your mayor or governor in support of funding for housing initiatives. There are many things you can do to help your community. The most important thing is to look around you and see what is needed.

■ RESOURCES

For more information, visit the following resources:

- Baker, Charlene K., Sarah L. Cook, and Fran H. Norris. "Domestic Violence and Housing Problems: A Contextual Analysis of Women's Help-seeking, Received Informal Support, and Formal System Response." *Violence Against Women*. 9, no.7 (2003): 754-783.
- Bornstein, David. "A Plan to Make Homelessness History." *New York Times*. December 20, 2010: <http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2010/12/20/a-plan-to-make-homelessnesshistory>
- Casavant, Lyne. "Definition of Homelessness." Homelessness. Parliamentary Research Branch, 1999: <http://publications.gc.ca/collections/Collection-R/LoPBdP/modules/prb99-1-homelessness/definition-e.htm#Three-txt>
- DeNavas-Walt, Carmen, Bernadette D. Proctor, and Jessica C. Smith. "Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2011." U.S. Department of Commerce, 2011. www.census.gov/prod/2012pubs/p60-243.pdf
- National Alliance to End Homelessness. "Chronic Homelessness": www.endhomelessness.org/pages/chronic_homelessness_overview
- National Center on Family Homelessness: www.familyhomelessness.org
- National Coalition for the Homeless: www.nationalhomeless.org
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■ Appendix 2

LEARNING FROM THE EXPERTS

Volunteering at or supporting a local shelter or organization is a great way to help address the immediate challenges of homelessness. While you're working with the experts, take time to talk to them and get a better idea of how you can make a difference, both today and over the long term. Show these frontline heroes that We Won't Rest until everyone has access to shelter.

The We Won't Rest campaign raises awareness of the underlying causes of homelessness. From January 26 to January 30, we will be emailing you daily facts to help you raise awareness! Just getting started on the campaign? Visit weday.com/wewontrest for more resources and information.

Follow the simple steps outlined to enrich your experience at your local shelter.

1. Get in touch with a local shelter or organization and find out how you can help.
2. Conduct an interview with someone from the organization. Use the questions below or come up with your own.
3. Share a highlight from your experience on social media with [#WeWontRest](#).

Name of homeless shelter/organization	
Name of interviewee	
Position of interviewee	

Suggested Interview Questions

- How is your organization addressing the issue of homelessness?
- Which of your initiatives are the most successful?
- How many people do you support in a week through your organization? A month? A year?
- If there was one thing you could add to your programming, what would it be?
- What is the most enjoyable part of working at your organization?
- What is the most difficult part of working at your organization?
- How many people work for your organization? How many of them are volunteers?
- If someone wants to get involved with your organization, what opportunities do you have for volunteers?
- What are the most important qualities for a volunteer to have?
- If you could create or change a law related to the issue of homelessness, what would it be?
- What can we do to help stop homelessness?

■ Appendix 3

ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

This assessment rubric is based on Bloom's taxonomy, a multi-tiered model to classify cognitive levels of complexity to evaluate students' comprehension of issues and participation with the lessons.

	Level 1: 50-59%	Level 2: 60-69%	Level 3: 70-79%	Level 4: 80-100%
KNOWLEDGE AND COMPREHENSION	Demonstrates limited knowledge and understanding of the relationships among facts, ideas and concepts	Demonstrates some knowledge and understanding of the relationships among facts, ideas and concepts	Demonstrates considerable knowledge and understanding of the relationships among facts, ideas and concepts	Demonstrates thorough knowledge and understanding of the relationships among facts, ideas and concepts
APPLICATION AND ANALYSIS	Uses critical and creative thinking processes and develops examples with limited effectiveness	Uses critical and creative thinking processes and develops examples with some effectiveness	Uses critical and creative thinking processes and develops examples with considerable effectiveness	Uses critical and creative thinking processes and develops examples with a high degree of effectiveness
SYNTHESIS AND EVALUATION	Demonstrates knowledge and makes connections with limited effectiveness	Demonstrates knowledge and makes connections with some effectiveness	Demonstrates knowledge and makes connections with considerable effectiveness	Demonstrates knowledge and makes connections with a high degree of effectiveness
ORGANIZATION AND COMMUNICATION	Expresses and organizes information while using appropriate language for different audiences and purposes with limited effectiveness	Expresses and organizes information while using appropriate language for different audiences and purposes with some effectiveness	Expresses and organizes information while using appropriate language for different audiences and purposes with considerable effectiveness	Expresses and organizes information while using appropriate language for different audiences and purposes with a high degree of effectiveness