



Child Homelessness Increases in New York City But Better Policies Could End It.

There are more homeless children in U.S. public schools than ever before, according to the U.S. Department of Education. Public schools are required to report how many of their students are unstably housed during the school year including those doubled-up with friends or extended family because they have no housing of their own. A homeless student report for the 2012-13 school year, released last month, found a devastating 1,258,182 unstably housed students in the U.S.

It's terrible for the families and students who are forced to sleep on relatives' couches because they have nowhere else to go, but all too many of the students are in even worse situations: 192,391 of the students were living in homeless shelters and 41,635 were reported as "unsheltered" or living in places like cars or parks not meant for housing.

The report documented, as numerous studies have found in the past, that unstably housed children face dramatically increased academic and other problems. Homeless students miss far more school, drop out before graduation far more often and perform much more poorly on standardized academic tests than other students. On average they get in more trouble and are suspended much more often than the general student population. We also know homelessness can adversely affect health and well-being of children, often for a lifetime.

The problem is worse in New York City. The City Department of Education reported 80,574 unstably housed public school students in the McKinney-Vento report. The City Department of Homeless Services shelters document, among the 56,000+ (56,219 on September 24, the last daily census available before our publication) people in homeless shelters daily, well over 24,000 children sleep in homeless shelters nightly (24,214 on September 24).



Care for the Homeless client leader Garrett McMahan (on right) assists Courtney Sparkman in registering to vote at the Peter J. Sharp Shelter on Porter Avenue in Brooklyn last month. This annual registration effort signed up over 250 new voters.



In New York City, unstably housed students transfer schools during the year 22% of the time. On average they miss 24 school days a year. Over 30% of all homeless tenth graders have to repeat that school year. Their average proficiency in reading and math is about 20% lower than the average for all students.

The life-long cost is tragic to the students, their families and the community. It's also very expensive in public resources. The City Dept. of Education estimated it cost \$135 million extra education dollars annually just to pay the increased "repeat" of grade expenses for homeless students.

Sadly, those are both human tragedies and public expenses that could be avoided with better public policies providing stable housing and adequate health and human services to homeless families and individuals, and it would cost no more than the current cost of homelessness. That's why the core of the CFH policy program is that poor policy choices caused modern day homelessness as we know it, and better policy choices can end it!

Become an advocate today! Join us on Facebook and on Twitter for up-



Homeless Persons' Memorial Day Program: December 18

MARK YOUR CALENDARS: The Care for the Homeless annual Homeless Persons' Memorial Day (HPMD) program will be held this year on Thursday, December 18th at the New York City Rescue Mission at 90 Lafayette Street in Lower Manhattan. Care for the Homeless and our client leaders are teaming up with the country's oldest continually operating rescue mission (in service since 1872), a site where CFH regularly delivers health care services to people experiencing homelessness, so that more people than ever can be part of this year's event.

As in year's past, Homeless Memorial Day will both memorialize those who died without stable housing in New York City this year, many of whom would have no memorial service or remembrance at all without the HPMD event, and serve as an opportunity to advocate for better health care and services for homeless people until we can end modern day homelessness as we know it. The program will also feature entertainment and an open meal for all who attend.

Last month, and for some time now, Care for the Homeless has been advocating for renewed federal funding for health clinics like those we operate because they serve the needs of otherwise often underserved vulnerable populations like New York City's homeless communities. Everyone deserves basic health care, regardless of ability to pay, status in life or



whether or not they have a home.

And it's not just the right thing to do – failure to provide basic health care only costs far greater public expense in emergency room use, unnecessary hospitalizations, provision of expensive procedures with worse outcomes and in expensive avoidable interactions with emergency mental health, public safety and corrections systems.

Advocacy Alert - We Need Your Help Now More Than Ever

We've been reporting that the federal government needed to both reauthorize the community health clinic program and appropriate funding for it before the October 1st start of the new federal fiscal year to avoid tragic consequences. Last month Congress passed and the President signed a "Continuing Resolution" that continued all federal spending at current 2014 spending levels through December 11, 2014, after the November elections.

That avoided the October 1st deadline; but it didn't solve the problem. Congress still needs to reauthorize the program and appropriate funding for it before the new December "drop-dead" date. It's more urgent than ever. So we're once again asking everyone who supports the human right to basic health care to please contact your Members of Congress and ask them to reauthorize community health clinics and adequately fund clinics like those Care for the Homeless has operated for almost 30 years now to deliver desperately needed services to people who would go without it if not for our clinics.

Please contact your members of Congress (U.S. Representative and Senators) through the Congressional phone line at 1-800-828-0498. If you don't know who your Congress person is, they can tell you. There is no better time to call with this urgent, potentially life-saving, message.

