



Homeless in a Big City

By: Antion Williams-Brown

Large cities like New York have a large percentage of homeless people. In 2019 the largest estimated rate of homelessness in a city was Washington D.C ranking in with 94 homeless people per 10,000 citizens. This is just to put things into perspective, see these larger cities have this higher percentage of homeless people because of a few things. First off it is quite expensive to live in a big city and second, they have a large population confined into a smaller space hence why most cities build these tall buildings to maximize population without giving up a lot of space. Now these large cities do a lot of good things for their homeless population, but they also do things that can be harmful or bothersome to them. I am going to focus on the things done in New York and sort of generalize them for some other big cities.

New York has done great things to try and help its homeless community everything from shelters to food drives. In fact, back in 1997 the New York City Department of Homeless Services began an initiative designed to reward both contracted and directly run homeless shelter facilities. This brought about a bunch of places improving and expanding their shelters giving many more of the homeless community a chance to have a safe place to sleep or a steady place to eat. Initially this was good, but it brought about its fair share of problems, because shelters were focused on volume and utilization instead of outcomes from their programs. This caused a shift in places becoming a kind of temporary stop for the homeless community. They didn't do much

for rehabilitation and focused mostly on being able to fit a large amount of people. Now places have been shifting in the more recent years they are now more focused on rehabilitation and housing during the process of getting back on your feet. Not just a place where you can get a good night's sleep and a meal. This is allowing the homeless population to get help and get pointed in the right track to getting back on their feet. This is great because now not only do these people have a place to sleep and eat, but they are also getting help to get back on their feet. New York City even today is still finding better ways to help their homeless community. But they also have some things that deter them from certain areas.

New York with all its good that it has done for the community has been slowly integrating new ways to deter the homeless from certain places. In parks and in front of buildings there are clear and apparent architectural structures that make it hard or impossible for homeless people to sleep or rest. Things like dividing park benches with metal poles or bars, they also have some ledges outfit with bolts or spikes that stick out of them. These things are a bit hostile towards the homeless community, I can understand maybe trying to deter the population from a capitol building or something along those lines, but a public park seems a little out of line. It is understandable that they are trying to move them out of certain areas and towards the shelters, but there is always the chance that people cannot get to the shelters or the shelter gets full. Then they have no where to sleep and this presents more problems in its own.

In conclusion these larger cities like New York are doing great things to help their homeless community, but they are also doing things that can be harmful to them. I personally believe that the good they do outweigh the bad things they have done. And this means that overall, the laws, policies, and shelters made to help the homeless community are doing their job. But there will always be some problems that affect the homeless community and these big cities are doing a good job helping them. However, a lot still needs to be done to help our homeless people.

Sources:

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