

Poverty, Hunger, and Homelessness

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Written by: Fernando Vazquez

According to the American Psychological Association (APA), when a series of economic and interpersonal problems accumulate in the lives of marginalized people, it leads to homelessness (2009). Inadequate income results in an inability to obtain and keep affordable housing in most cases (APA, 2009). Before 2008, most people experiencing homelessness were far below the poverty line but after the 2008 recession, many blue-collar workers and middle class people experienced the same problem (APA, 2009). Despite this, most people seeking emergency shelter were recognized as extremely poor (APA, 2009).

People living in poverty are most vulnerable to job layoffs, unemployment, evictions, and crime (APA, 2009). Besides that, they are also much more likely to have inadequate food and nutrition which leads to associated health problems (APA, 2009). When these problems are combined with an inability to access medical and dental care, children miss more school and adults lose time at work (2009). Poor education and high rates of dropouts limit many opportunities to earn enough to meet the rising cost of living (APA, 2009). When you combine these factors with limited assets, you find that impoverished people compete with one another for affordable housing (2009).

The APA also reported that American housing policies have not sufficiently addressed the needs of low-income persons (2009). There is an imbalance between the demand for low-income housing and the availability of it (APA, 2009). Combined with a failure to create new affordable housing, gentrification, discriminatory housing and zoning laws, and foreclosures on buildings with affordable apartments, it places a heavy burden on people living below the poverty line (APA, 2009). High rates of unemployment, limited supplemental security income, and the ever rising cost of bare essentials push people who are already poor, deeper into poverty (APA, 2009).

The rising cost of living in this country puts many poor people at a greater risk for hunger. Without adequate food and nutrition, people are more vulnerable to illness. Children may miss school or perform poorly. It is difficult to focus on your studies when you have not eaten well. Adults miss time at work causing them to lose income they most likely can not afford to lose. When you combine this with a lack of affordable housing, it intensifies the problem. It is our mission at T's 4 Hope to not only bring awareness to the issue of homelessness, but to the issue of hunger as well. Helping needy families get the nutrition they need could possibly help lighten the already heavy load they carry. We accept donations and volunteer work as well. If you are interested, please contact us at Ts4Hope@yahoo.com or 954-867-6765.

Reference:

American Psychological Association. (2009).