

# Homelessness

It describes the condition of people without a regular dwelling. People who are homeless are most often unable to acquire and maintain regular, safe, secure, and adequate housing, or lack "fixed, regular, and adequate night-time residence." The legal definition of "homeless" varies from country to country, or among different entities or institutions in the same country or region



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# Homeless kids

One in 45 children experience homelessness in America each year. That's over 1.6 million children. While homeless, they experience high rates of acute and chronic health problems. The constant barrage of stressful and traumatic experience also has profound effects on their development and ability to learn.



## What is homelessness?

Literal homelessness refers to the status of people who are either sheltered homeless — using emergency or transitional housing — or unsheltered homeless — living on the streets or in parks, abandoned buildings, cars, subway tunnels or other places not meant for human habitation). Chronic homelessness occurs when people have long or repeated episodes of homelessness, such as living continuously in a shelter for one year or on at least four separate occasions in the past three years.

## What causes homelessness?

Homeless teens often become so due to family conflicts. They're kicked out or choose to run away over issues of drug/alcohol addiction, physical abuse, sexual orientation or teen pregnancy. Mental illness can play a significant role in teen homelessness just as it does in adults. Teens in foster care often end up on the street after they "age-out" of the system at age 18, a sad situation in which many feel alone or abandoned.

## How do we do to stop homelessness?

In 2007, the National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty estimated that more than 3 million people in America (1.3 million of them children), were likely to experience homelessness in a given year. While difficult to measure, the increase in the demand for shelter beds each year is a strong indicator that homelessness is on the rise, and not only in America. According to the United Nations, there are at least 100 million homeless in the world today.

