

# HOMELESSNESS

## What is the League of Women Voters Position on Homelessness?

### Meeting Basic Human Needs.

Support programs and policies to prevent or reduce poverty and to promote self-sufficiency for individuals and families.

**Income Assistance.** Support income assistance programs, based on need, that provide decent, adequate standards for food, clothing and shelter.

**Support Services.** Provide for essential support services.

**Housing Supply.** Support policies to provide a decent home and a suitable living environment for every American family.

## What advocacy has the LWVCA done to promote these positions?

LWVCA is a founding member of the Affordable Housing Advocates Coalition and continues to support efforts to provide more affordable housing in the area. Several years ago, we were involved in supporting action to clean up lead in inner-city housing. Last year, we advocated for leadership in Cincinnati Metropolitan Housing that meets the mission of providing affordable housing. This year the League also urged Cincinnati City Council to keep the Cold Shelters funding in the budget this year. One councilman said that our letter caused him to reconsider the decision to close them, and Council later voted to retain the cost of cold shelters in the budget.

## Who Are the Homeless?

The federal department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) uses this definition for the homeless:

“an individual who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence; and an individual who has a primary nighttime residence that is - a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations (including welfare hotels, congregate shelters, and transitional housing for the mentally ill);

an institution that provides a temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized; or

a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings. (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Website)

This definition includes people living in their cars but omits people living “doubled-up” or “couch-surfing,” who have no home but are not in shelters or on the street.

## U.S.

The GCCH (Greater Cincinnati Coalition for the Homeless) reports that 3.5 million Americans experience homelessness in a given year and that on any given night, 800,000 men, women, and children are homeless in this nation.

The National Coalition for the Homeless found in 2001 that 42% of people experiencing homelessness are employed.

The National Coalition for Homeless Veterans website states that 23% of the homeless population are veterans and 33% of male homeless population are veterans. (National Coalition for Homeless Veterans website: [www.Nchv.org](http://www.Nchv.org))

## Ohio

The Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio (COHHIO) reports that last year approximately 150,000 Ohioans were homeless. In one 24-hour period in 2008, 12,821 Ohioans were homeless. Of these, 10,327 were sheltered and 2492 were unsheltered.

5,003 (39%) were persons in families  
7,816 (61%) were individuals  
2,431 (19%) were chronically homeless  
2,021 (16%) were severely mentally ill  
3,167 (25%) were chronic substance abusers

## Cincinnati

In Cincinnati between 1,300 and 1,500 are homeless every night. Of these, 25% are children, and 45% of the homeless children are under the age of five. 49% are single men, 16% are single women, and 4% are unaccompanied children. (GCCH)

Determining the number of homeless at a given time is difficult. Many homeless avoid being identified, some may utilize more than one resource, and counting unsheltered homeless in certain areas

may not be possible. Teams from the Coalition for the Homeless go out at night on designated dates to count the homeless. They do not attempt to go into abandoned buildings or where they might be endangered. They do count people sleeping on the streets, under bridges, or wherever they are found in the open. Many people are not counted because they are temporarily living with a relative or friend. The Greater Cincinnati Coalition for the Homeless reports that 78 people were found outside in the middle of the night on January 25, 2010.

### **Two Faces of Homelessness**

Two profiles from Grace Place - Submitted by Joyce Asfour, Director (Names changed to protect the individuals)

Katie is a single mom with two pre-school boys. Katie lost her job because she had too many absences. She had daycare vouchers, but her oldest boy has health problems and cannot go to daycare when he is sick. With her blemished work record Katie did not find another job. She had a credit card she received when she was employed so she used it to pay the rent and utility bills. Soon she exceeded the limit on the card and then she was evicted. She called every day and eventually one of the family shelters had beds available for Katie and her boys.

Joan is 57. She lost the job she had for 20 years due to downsizing. She spent most of her savings expecting every day to find another job. When she could no longer pay rent, she lived with a friend in exchange for cooking and cleaning. One evening her friend went out to get cigarettes but did not return for hours. Worried, Joan went to the store and learned that her friend had been taken to the hospital. The friend died. Joan could not afford to pay the rent so she lived in her car for a while. When she had no money for gas, someone noticed the parked car was inhabited and called the police. The police took her to the Drop Inn Center which was terribly traumatic for Joan.

### **Causes of Homelessness**

Homelessness stems from desperate poverty along with lack of affordable housing. According to the National Alliance to End Homelessness, housing is considered affordable when a household spends no more than 30% of its income on housing. Mental disabilities, job loss, low-wage jobs, medical problems, and/or housing costs can mean that even working families may lose their

housing. Fewer jobs for those with high school education or less, lack of support for people with mental illness, and zoning restrictions that prevent affordable housing alternatives contribute to the homeless population. Other factors including disabilities, alcohol or drug use, and lack of family support can increase the possibility of becoming homeless.

In her report to the Affordable Housing Advocates in Cincinnati, Coordinator Michelle Dillingham quotes from a study by the Metropolitan Housing Coalition in Louisville, Kentucky.

“A study released this year by the Kent School of Social Work at the University of Louisville examined the cost of housing, healthcare, correctional facilities, and shelters to determine the true costs of homelessness to our community. The study found that Louisville spends about \$88,802,380 every two years to aid 7,108 adults in our community (Coalition for the Homeless, 2009), an amount that is unsustainable.” It is information such as this that is useful when trying to convince policy-makers that investing in permanent supportive housing is indeed more cost-effective than simply ignoring our citizens who are homeless.”

The coalition also reports, “About one-third (31 percent) of the survey respondents became homeless because of an inability to pay their rent or mortgage, up from 29 percent the previous year. Inability to afford housing costs is now the most-cited cause of homelessness by survey respondents, up from the third most cited cause last year. Only 16 percent became homeless because of substance abuse and only 6 percent because of mental illness... Taken together, these data show that many of the people who are homeless in Louisville are educated and employed, have families, and often became homeless because of an inability to pay for housing costs.”

Cincinnati’s family shelters now have waiting lists. Louisville’s data analysis shows what many of us know to be true here, that the economy and families’ inability to pay their housing costs have caused a substantial increase in the number of individuals who are homeless in Cincinnati. (The 2009 State of Metropolitan Housing Report can be found at: [www.metropolitanhousing.org/reports.cfm](http://www.metropolitanhousing.org/reports.cfm))

The problem of foreclosures is also seen as a reason for increased homelessness in Cincinnati.

### **Predictors of Homelessness**

According to a report by Martha R. Burt for the Urban Institute, "extreme poverty (incomes at less than half the federal poverty level) is, of course, the most important predictor.

Virtually every study shows that adverse childhood experiences are also strong predictors of homelessness. These experiences include physical and/or sexual abuse by family members and removal from one's home to be placed in foster care or other institutions. Also important are alcohol or drug abuse as a teenager, current alcohol or drug abuse, mental health problems, chronic physical problems, and, for males, incarceration."

People become homeless when all family resources to help them have been exhausted. Family resources are weaker when the family is damaged or when most of the family members are also poor, stressed, and at risk of homelessness.

### **Effects of Homelessness**

According to a report by Martha R. Burt for the Urban Institute "most children living with homeless parents are very young and are therefore physically and emotionally vulnerable in the event of household disruptions." Homelessness has also been correlated with poor physical health conditions in adults and children. The lack of structure and safety and lack of rest in experiences of homelessness usually exacerbates mental illness.

Homeless individuals are routinely victims of crime – losing the few belongings and dollars they have to theft, and they are frequent victims of violent crime, including assault and rape.

Homelessness can lead to incarceration, as many activities – urination, drinking, but even sitting or sleeping, can be "status crimes" -- legal if one has a home, but illegal if done in a public park or street.

It is also extremely difficult to better one's situation (get a job, etc.) while homeless. Without a regular address or phone number or place to wash or sleep regularly, it is very difficult to get or keep a job.

### **Major Federal Programs that Address Homelessness**

**Overall strategy:** The US Interagency Council on Homelessness includes 12 cabinet secretaries: most notably the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the Department of Health and Human Services. It is tasked to develop and submit to Congress and the President a National Strategic Plan to End Homelessness.

**"Section 8/Public Housing.** HUD provides housing assistance to low-income families primarily through the Section 8 and public housing programs. The Section 8 (Housing Choice Voucher) program provides rental assistance for tenants who live in privately owned units, while public housing does the same for those living in units owned by the federal government. Tenants of both programs pay 30 percent of their income for housing, with the government making up the difference between that amount and the rent. Locally, these programs are administered by Cincinnati Metropolitan Housing authority (CMHA). The number of eligible individuals and families far exceeds the number of vouchers and homes available, with waiting lists of over two years. Many low income and homeless individuals are also ineligible for vouchers or public housing; people applying to CMHA cannot owe back rent, previous eviction histories are taken into account, and jail records are considered.

### **HUD Homeless Assistance Grants. Emergency Shelter Grants, Community Development Block Grants, Shelter Plus Care**

Since the passage of the McKinney Homeless Assistance Act in 1987, the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) funds programs specifically targeted to address homelessness. HUD currently provides funds for permanent and supportive housing, shelters, transitional housing, and services.

Locally these funds are administered through HUD directly, through the City of Cincinnati and also through the Continuum of Care for the Homeless, a nonprofit collaboration of homeless service providers.

Generally HUD homeless services are classified as

- street outreach;
- shelters;
- transitional housing (up to two years) for individuals and families leaving shelter;
- permanent supportive housing for individuals with disabilities
- supportive services (which can include health care, transportation, childcare, case management and other services for homeless individuals.)

Shelters generally divide up around the types of people they can serve: youth, single men, single women, women with children, families, and victims of domestic violence. In most cases, government services start when a person enters shelter.

HUD homeless housing and service programs are required to address three main goals:

1. To help program participants obtain and remain in permanent housing
2. To help participants increase skills and/or income. Meeting this goal will allow the participants to secure an income to live as independently as possible.
3. To help participants achieve greater self-determination. "The condition of homelessness itself can be damaging to one's self-determination; achieving a greater sense of self-determination enables the participant to gain needed confidence to make the transition out of homelessness."

Grantees report progress in achieving these goals annually to HUD through their Annual Progress Reports (APR). Individual programs and the entire HUD/CoC funded community's outcomes are measured and scored annually by HUD in order for the CoC to receive funding.

**Health Care for the Homeless** This is the only federally funded program specifically designed to meet the complex health care needs of people without homes. Health Care for the Homeless projects all over the country offer an integrated, community based approach to make sure people without homes receive the health care services they need."

In Cincinnati, HCH programs include a homeless health van and a respite center for homeless individuals being released from hospitals who are too sick to go to shelters.

PATH, or Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness, through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), funds community-based outreach, mental health and substance abuse services, case management, and limited housing services for people experiencing serious mental illnesses (including those with co-occurring substance use disorders) who are experiencing homelessness or are at risk of becoming homeless.

**Homeless Prevention Funds** As part of the Stimulus package, Cincinnati has a new program to assist individuals and families in preventing homelessness through case management and grants to pay rent, mortgage, utilities and other housing related costs. In addition, there are also specific funding programs for housing and serv-

ices for homeless individuals who are diagnosed with HIV/AIDS and/or with chronic mental illness, for veterans, and for education of homeless children.

### **Facilities in the Cincinnati Area That Deal with Homelessness Issues**

The Homeless to Homes plan of 2009 identified the following inventory of housing services for the homeless within the Cincinnati area:

#### **Current Inventory by Housing Type**

##### *Emergency Shelter*

Beds for Individuals 422 (+ 20 DV\* beds)

Beds for Families 185 (+45 DV)

##### *Transitional Housing*

Beds for Individuals 229 (+9 DV beds)

Beds for Families 82 (+60 DV)

##### *Permanent Supportive Housing*

Beds for Individuals 863

Beds for Families 456

(\*DV= Domestic Violence)

This plan, prepared by the Continuum of Care, City of Cincinnati and a variety of providers, makes recommendations for needs of homeless individuals, but did not study families. It found a need for a total of 422 shelter beds (same number, configured differently), 456 transitional and 1,936 permanent supportive beds for individuals. This requires over 1,000 additional permanent and transitional beds for homeless individuals.

Included in the following list are agencies that deal with homelessness issues, including food, health, addictions, and housing. These are only some of the agencies in the area that are available. Georgine Getty, Director of Interfaith Hospitality Network, reported last year that Cincinnati has fewer homeless on the streets and more in shelters because of the large number of agencies working to provide services.

Anthony House

Bethany House Services

Caracole, Inc.

Center for Chemical Addictions Treatment

Center for Independent Living Options

Center for Respite Care, Inc.

Charlie's 3/4 House, Inc.

Cincinnati Union Bethel (Anna Louise Inn)

CincySmiles Foundation

City Gospel Mission

Drop Inn Center

Faces Without Places/Project Connect

First Step Home  
 Franciscan Haircuts from the Heart  
 Grace Place Catholic Worker House  
 Interfaith Hospitality Network  
 Joseph House  
 Lighthouse Youth Services  
 Mary Magdalen House  
 Mount Airy shelter  
 Off the Streets  
 Our Daily Bread  
 Over-the-Rhine Community Housing  
 Prospect House  
 Salvation Army/Sober Living Greater  
 Cincinnati  
 Society of St. Vincent Depaul  
 St. Francis/St. Joseph Catholic Worker House  
 Talbert House  
 Tom Geiger Guest House Walnut Hills/  
 Over-the-Rhine Kitchen  
 Welcome House of Northern Kentucky

Over the last two years, service providers in Cincinnati have collaborated on a central access phone system to assist homeless individuals and families seeking shelter. Most HUD funded services also share a database system, VESTA, which allows them to provide accurate counts and outcome data required by funders, and to confidentially share some client case management data.

Several area agencies are collaborating on a new "Housing First" program, the Jimmy Heath House, a 25-unit development which is scheduled to open this summer. Housing First is a nationally recognized evidence-based best practice model which targets the chronically homeless who make up 34 percent of the homeless population and spend years cycling between the streets, shelters, jail cells, and emergency rooms — and provides them apartments without requiring them to get sober. Housing First is based on two core convictions:

1. Housing is a basic human right, not a reward for clinical success, and
2. Once the chaos of homelessness is eliminated from a person's life, clinical and social stabilization occur faster and are more enduring.

### **Three Local Agencies:**

In the summer of 2009, the LWVCA Housing Committee held a housing tour in which members toured three different facilities: The Drop Inn Center, Interfaith Hospitality Network hosted by Christ Church Cathedral, and Bethany House. Below are descriptions of these three agencies taken from their websites. For more information, consult the website addresses given.

## **The Drop Inn Center**

### ***Mission***

"At the Drop Inn Center, our mission is simple – as a community of residents, staff and volunteers, we work together to provide basic human services for the men and women of the Greater Cincinnati area who are experiencing homelessness. Our primary commitment is to shelter – offering a place to stay for those in need now, and helping find and maintain a permanent place of residence for the future.

For those who don't have to imagine what it's like to be hungry, alone, frightened, homeless, people for whom this is a reality, the Drop Inn Center is a place they can turn to – for hope, for help."

The largest area program of its kind, the Drop Inn Center provides shelter and meals to over 250 men and women each day, and over 3,000 each year. <http://www.dropinn.org>

### ***Homeless Individuals Partnership Program***

In 2004, the Drop Inn Center formed its Homeless Individuals Partnership Program (better known as the HIP Team), stemming from HUD's (Housing & Urban Development) Continuum of Care assistance program and its Homeless Individuals Task Force. The HIP Team provides intense supportive services to men and women who have been homeless for a long period.

This project creates a new paradigm for assisting chronically homeless individuals. It utilizes a six-person Collaborative Case Planning Team to engage, assess and provide case planning and treatment for chronically homeless single men and women. This team provides intensive services designed to help the individual access mainstream disability support services (mental health, substance abuse, etc.), and assists them in securing housing and income and/or benefits to sustain themselves. <http://www.dropinn.org/shelter-and-recovery/default.aspx>

### ***Shelter Based Case Management***

The Shelter Based Case Management Program targets homeless men and women 18 and over, and those on whom the Drop Inn Center can have the greatest impact – effecting the best chance to deconcentrate the shelter and reduce homelessness. This project enables us to provide more one-on-one counseling to each homeless individual because case workers manage smaller groups – approximately 20 residents for each social worker.

In the long run, this helps to ensure the success of each person's transition from homelessness back into housing.

### ***Men's Recovery***

The Drop Inn Center runs an 18-unit residential alcohol and drug recovery program for men. The Men's Recovery Program is a certified, six-month treatment program. The program involves individual and group counseling, chemical dependency education, community service, job training, and employment and housing acquisition.

### ***Transitional Housing***

Twenty-four transitional housing units are operated by the Drop Inn Center with on-site supportive services. These residences provide an important first step in helping a person transition from homelessness to permanent housing – average stay ranges from 6-24 months. During this time, Engagement Specialists work to develop individual action plans that enhance each client's life skills and best prepare him or her for obtaining – and maintaining – permanent housing.

### ***Permanent Support***

In partnership with community housing providers in Over-the-Rhine, the Drop Inn Center currently is able to provide case management and sobriety support to 55 units of Permanent Support Housing – including Recovery Hotel, buddy's place and Sharp Village.

### ***Shelter Plus Care Program***

This program provides 25 units of scattered-site housing vouchers for the chronically homeless and disabled as part of the community's Shelter Plus Care Program. Residents are matched up with ongoing advice and support counselors.

### ***Drop Inn Center Statistics***

- 2,747 – number of homeless individuals served each year
  - Open 24 hours, 365 days a year
  - 80% male, 20% female
  - 80% stay 1 month or less
  - 15% stay over 1 month
  - 5% stay over 90 days
  - 250 – daily average of residents receiving food and shelter
  - 34,000+ – number of meals served each year
  - Distribute toiletries, towels, blankets, and clothes to thousands of homeless residents”
- (Information collected during 2007 calendar year, VESTA)” <http://www.dropinn.org>

### **Interfaith Hospitality Network**

“IHN is a Unique Response to Homelessness, combining volunteers from the religious community with full-time professionals to reintegrate families into the community.

- Host Congregations are area churches and synagogues that provide three meals a day, private sleeping space, and volunteers to create a “home away from home” for the families.
- Support Congregations assist the Host Congregations by providing donated meals and volunteers.
- Case Managers help families find and maintain permanent housing.
- Day Vans transport families to appointments, interviews, and day care.
- Bus transports families back and forth between the congregations and the Day Center
- Day Center in Lower Price Hill serves as a home base providing adult education classes, a kitchen, laundry facilities, showers, free telephones, a mailing address, computer facilities, and a children's playroom.
- School-age children attend school and receive after-school tutoring through Project Connect.

The mission of Interfaith Hospitality Network of Greater Cincinnati is to provide homeless families emergency shelter and hospitality through interfaith communities and to work with these families to find and retain stable housing.

Interfaith Hospitality Network of Greater Cincinnati (IHNGC) is an affiliate of National Interfaith Hospitality Network, now Family Promise.

Interfaith Hospitality Networks are unique partnerships of congregations and professionally-staffed day centers that provide shelter, meals, and support services to homeless families in 104 networks in over 90 cities or counties in 30 states. Ohio networks include IHNs in Cincinnati, Lebanon, Xenia, Columbus and Cleveland in Ohio.

The IHN program is unique in that it endeavors to unite all religious denominations (Protestant, Jewish, Catholic, etc.) in its efforts to assist homeless families. The IHNGC illustrates the diversity of IHN with support from all three of these denominations.

Georgine Getty, Executive Director of IHNGC, reports that “there is a continuing need for additional family emergency shelter capacity.

Unfortunately, the need for emergency shelter for families remains greater than IHNGC and the other family shelters are able to meet. IHNGC participates in the Central Access Point (CAP), a phone number that families experiencing homelessness call to access shelter. Between March and July of 2009, over 441 families called seeking shelter and 284 or 64% of them were turned away because the family shelters were full. This is a heart-breaking situation that IHNGC is trying to address by expanding to serve more families.

Five years ago in 2005, IHNGC served 100 families for the first time in its then 14 year history. Since then we have increased the number of host congregations from 21 to 27 for 2010. This has given us the ability to experiment with having several consecutive weeks in the year with three host congregations.

In 2008 we had a real boost in the number of families served with a new record of 112 for the year. Unfortunately, the number of families served in 2009 declined to 101 due to an increase in the average length of stay in IHNGC's Shelter Program which we attribute to the worsening economy.

In addition to the economic devastation that is stripping our guests of jobs and housing, many of our guests are also coping with factors that exacerbate their experience of homelessness, such as domestic violence, chronic mental illness, physical disabilities, lack of positive support systems and poverty. While we facilitate medical check-ups in many situations, these additional factors can often lengthen the stay of a family in homelessness and, more devastatingly, dampen their hope for a better future for their children many of whom experience developmental delays."

### **Bethany House**

BHS addresses the needs of homeless and disadvantaged women and children through direct service and systematic change initiatives, e.g., Greater Cincinnati Coalition for the Homeless, Emergency Services Coalition, Cincinnatians for Affordable Housing, etc.

Bethany House Services is not an agency of United Way or Community Chest.

### ***Bethany House Services 2008 Program Statistics- From Bethany House Annual Report 2008***

**Emergency Shelter** was provided for 427 unduplicated woman and children in 2008 at our 14 room

home on Fairmount Avenue and at other off-site facilities. Bethany House provides a safe, secure environment, supervised meals, transportation assistance and enrichment programs. Daily case management services include on-site access to physical and mental health professionals and regular program evaluation to assess the guests' growth in personal dignity, life skills, budgeting, parenting and independence. Housing, counseling and jobs program referrals take place, 10,289 supervised shelter nights were provided, 20,038 meals were prepared, and clothing was laundered. Bus cards and/or transportation assistance was provided to all of the shelter guests as was regular hands-on guidance and support regarding the use of public transportation and access to child care. 81% of the women completed the program successfully – that is, they established an income and moved into permanent housing.

***Child/Parent Program*** focuses on the special emotional, physical and relational needs of homeless children in crisis. The program is specifically designed to prevent neglect and abuse of the children through the implementation of the Parenting Plus curriculum with mothers, weekly support groups and children's enrichment programs. 297 homeless and formerly homeless women and children benefited from this multi-faceted program this year. Collaboration with *Project Connect* led to all school age children attending school at least 90% of the time. Community volunteers provided planned evening activities attended by 176 unduplicated children. The *Summertime Kids Fund of GCF*, the *Charles H. Dater Foundation* and AAA provided funding for 30 family outings and 61 Parenting Plus sessions.

***Life Skills Literacy*** is an original training program which includes classes that focus on health and wellness, budgeting, housekeeping, time and stress management, job training and retention as well as a variety of enrichment topics to educate, enhance and help stabilize shelter program participants. Organization, problem-solving and socialization skills are also taught and practiced. 145 women participated in an average of 12 classes. Evidence of skills growth was evaluated as positive in two or more areas in 100% of the participants.

***Post Shelter Support*** includes follow-up house and phone visits with formerly homeless women and children who have successfully completed the Shelter Program. The Post Shelter Support Program is designed and implemented by the shelter

case managers to help formerly homeless women maintain stable housing, income and family life. Information, referrals, financial assistance and other essentials for daily living are provided as requested and available. 175 persons benefited from the program in 2008 with nearly 3,500 instances of contact, information and referrals.

*Bethany Place Transitions for Singles* provided a unique, individualized housing experience for 9 women who were in a period of transition in their lives. During 2008, strong case management services were combined with a supportive, shared home-like environment and life skills instruction to assist the women on their life journey. This combination taught the women to more effectively deal with a variety of challenging personal, professional and social problems. They each built a supportive network to sustain them as they moved toward employment and permanent housing. 95% of the program participants were successful.

*BHS Family Shelter Partnership Program* provides a coordinated, integrated approach to meeting the needs of homeless families in the Greater Cincinnati area beginning with a central access point – CAP. BHS serves as the lead agency bringing together 6 family shelters, the Hamilton County Department of Jobs and Family Services, and a comprehensive network of supportive collaborators to include social services, job training and retention coaches, and a shared communication and information data system. FSPP serves over 2,272 unduplicated high-risk, homeless women and children.

Participating family shelters are: *Bethany House, the Interfaith Hospitality Network, Mercy Franciscan at St. John, at the Anna Louise Inn, the Salvation Army and the YWCA Battered Women's Shelter*. The majority of the families served in the partnership left the shelters with income, housing and a stabilization plan for promising new beginnings.

Bethany Homes provides permanent, safe, affordable housing for 24 families, often with a single female working provider. BHS offers a community center and seasonal activities, as well as a playground and outdoor picnic area.”  
[www.bethanyhouseservices.org/annualreview](http://www.bethanyhouseservices.org/annualreview)

## What Can Be Done to Prevent Homelessness?

Many people cite the lack of affordable housing opportunities as the main reason for homelessness and urge that emphasis be placed on expanding affordable housing. Also, though many homeless are working, they are making too little to afford a home. Some authorities see better education and training as well as more and better available jobs as the answer. For people who are addicted, mentally ill or who lack life skills, additional support beyond bricks and walls is need to help the individual successfully maintain housing. In addition, preventing child abuse and childhood poverty may prevent the homeless cycle from recurring.

## SOURCES

“A Homelessness Fact Sheet for High School Students” prepared by National Alliance to End Homelessness”

“A Homeless to Homes” Plan, Cincinnati/ Hamilton County Continuum of Care for the Homeless, Inc., March 2009

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