A Tale of Two Students: The Housed and the Homeless

Dona Anderson
Director
Definitions of Homelessness

- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
  - Literally homeless: emergency shelter, transitional housing, places not meant for human habitation (outdoors, abandoned buildings, cars, etc.)
  - Fleeing domestic violence

- U.S. Department of Education
  - HUD definition
  - Doubled-up
  - Hotels/motels (out of pocket)
NYC’s Homeless Population in Shelter

- 53,910 homeless people living in shelters
- 11,275 families, including
  - 23,260 children
  - 16,140 adults (parents)
- 14,510 single individuals and adult families
- Families make up almost three-quarters (73%) of the population
- 80 to 150 families request shelter each day
Typical Homeless Households

- Race/Ethnicity: 58% Black, 37% Hispanic, 5% Other

- Age:
  - Most parents (78%) are 21-44 years old
  - 55% of children in shelter are ages 6-17

- Family composition:
  - Mother with 1-2 children
Path to Homelessness

- Own housing
- Trigger for financial/housing instability
- Exhaust savings
- Medical or detention facility
- Homelessness services system
- Double up with family or friends
## Vulnerability Factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Individuals</th>
<th>Both</th>
<th>Families</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Disability (42% of adults, vs. 15% of adults in families)</td>
<td>Unemployment/underemployment/low wages/lack of education</td>
<td>Domestic violence (over 90% of mothers)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Veterans (13%)</td>
<td>Lack of affordable housing</td>
<td>Need child care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institutional settings (13%, vs. 2% of adults in families)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Discrimination and Homelessness

- Race: housing, employment, generational wealth accumulation
- Sexuality: shelter, family support
- Domestic violence: housing
- History of incarceration: housing, employment
- Criminalization of homelessness itself: pan-handling, loitering, sleeping or going to the bathroom in public, etc.
Children’s Access to Education

- Head Start
  - Homeless children are prioritized for enrollment
  - Program structure & regulations don’t accommodate mobility of homeless children

- K–12: Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program
  - Identify homeless students, many of whom try to hide their homelessness
  - Transportation so that kids can attend same school
  - Clothes, food, school supplies, etc.
Effect of Homelessness on Children

+ Health
  + Poor prenatal environment $\rightarrow$ Low birth weight, etc.
  + Poor nutrition $\rightarrow$ higher rates of obesity, 7x more likely to have iron deficiencies
  + Poor housing $\rightarrow$ higher rates of asthma
  + 2x as likely to have chronic or acute illness
  + Limited access to ongoing health care

+ Education: Lower proficiency in math and reading, with gap increasing with age (housed children are 2–3x more likely to be proficient by high school)
  + 2x rate of learning disabilities
  + 3x rate of emotional/behavioral problems
NYC’s Homeless Student Population

NUMBER OF NEW YORK CITY HOMELESS STUDENTS IN SY 2012–13
(by housing type)

- Doubled-up: 44,532 (55%)
- Sheltered: 28,157 (35%)
- Hotel/motel or unsheltered: 7,885 (10%)
Impacts of Homelessness on Students

+ Miss more days of school
  + 24 days vs. 16 days for all students

+ Transfer schools more often
  + 22% of homeless students transfer at least once
  + 18% transfer two or more times

+ Are held back at higher rates
  + 9% of homeless 1st graders are held back
Reading and Math Outcomes

PERCENT OF STUDENTS PROFICIENT IN READING IN SY 2011–12
(by grade level)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Homeless students</th>
<th>All students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PERCENT OF STUDENTS PROFICIENT IN MATH IN SY 2011–12
(by grade level)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Homeless students</th>
<th>All students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>65%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
High School Graduation Outcomes

FOUR-YEAR GRADUATION OUTCOMES FOR NEW YORK CITY CLASS OF 2012

- Graduated in 4 years: 50% (Homeless students), 65% (All students)
- Still enrolled after 4 years: 35% (Homeless students), 21% (All students)
- Dropped out: 15% (Homeless students), 11% (All students)
Services for Homeless Students

- After school programs
- Early childhood education programs
- Community Schools initiative
- Community Residential Resource Centers
A Tale of Two Students

Available on the ICPH website:

ICPHusa.org
Thank you!

Dona Anderson
Director, danderson@icphusa.org