

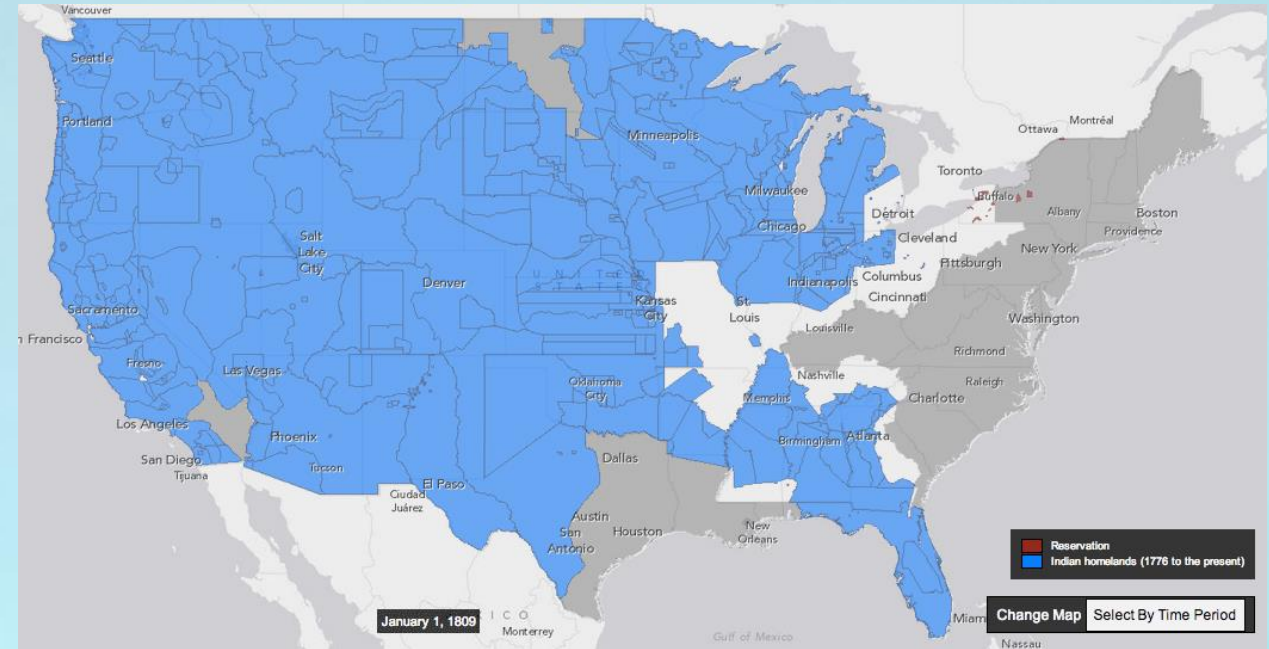
A misty, teal-toned landscape with mountains and a lake. The scene is hazy and atmospheric, with a color palette ranging from light blue to deep teal. The mountains are silhouetted against a bright, hazy sky, and their reflection is visible in the calm water of the lake in the foreground.

# Home and Homelessness

A Systemic Examination – Jake Bradley – they/them

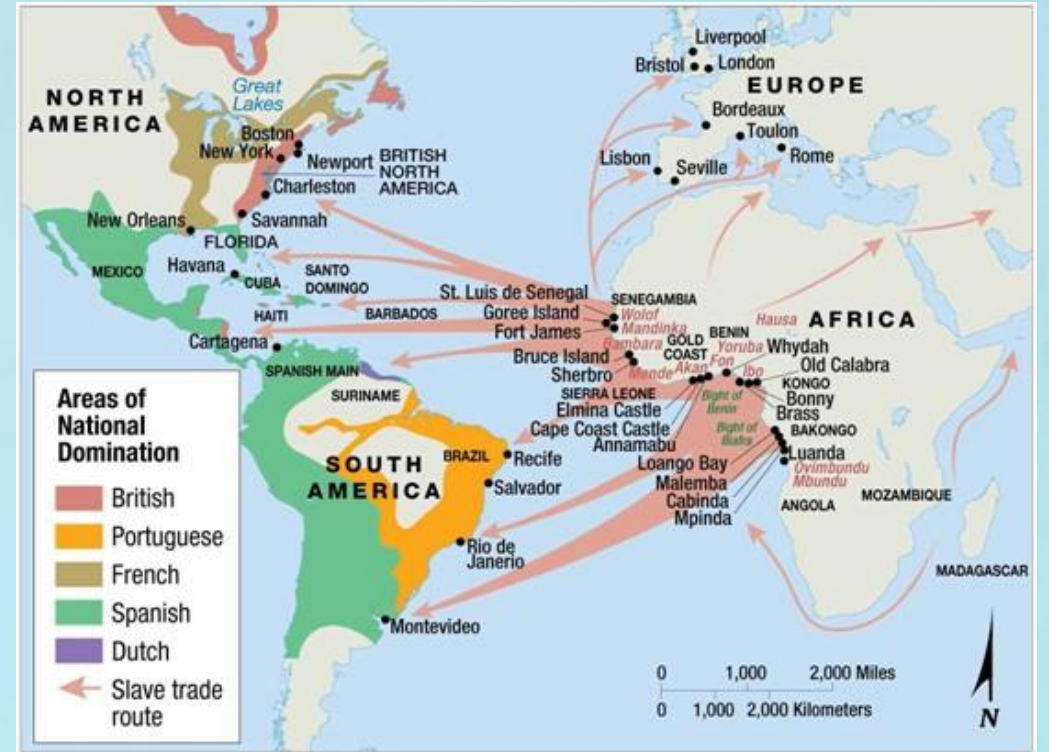
# Land and First Nations Acknowledgment

We honor the history and contributions of Native peoples in this land, and we recognize a legacy of broken treaties and covenants, and the need to strive to make right with all our relations.



# Acknowledgment of Human Enslavement:

We acknowledge the kidnapping and enslavement of people from the African continent and that, as a nation, we have not yet begun to the right the hundreds of years of oppression of the people who built this country with free labor and who continue to endure social and economic injustices. We acknowledge that we live and work within a system that was not designed for everyone and continues to result in the increased death and abuse of black communities.



# Welcome to the Home and Homelessness training!

- Some tips to get the most out of this training (and get credit for attending):
- Please be here and participate the whole time!
- We will have at least 2 breaks
- There will be 3 code words to watch for and write down
- Check out the handout(s)
- We will use an online / app game called Kahoot
- We have videos and polls
- There is a post-test to take, and an evaluation of the training
- Feel free to ask questions throughout! You can type in the question box to ask questions or pitch in your thoughts



# Overview of today's web cast:

Today, we will cover:

- What is “home” and why does it matter?
- Official definitions of homelessness and its scope
- Impact of homelessness on children and youth
- How homelessness is often criminalized
- Personal, systemic and institutional / structural causes of homelessness
- Structural and personal solutions





# What is “home” and why does it matter?

A place to:

- use the bathroom
- keep your “stuff”
- file documents and records
- stock self-care and first aid supplies
- store clothes, including off season clothes and clothes for all occasions



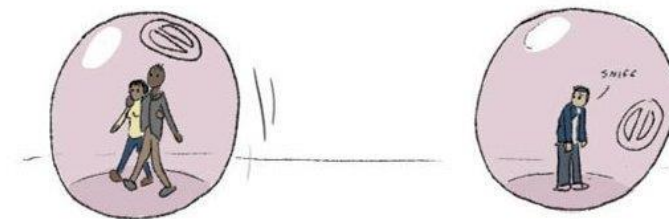
# What is “home” and why does it matter?

A place to:

- decorate / express yourself / display your keepsakes, “nest”
- have privacy and space / be an introvert
- be creative, silly, grumpy, vulnerable, “yourself”



## 2. HOW TO INTERACT WITH THE INTROVERTED



JUST BECAUSE SOMEONE IS INTROVERTED DOESN'T MEAN THEY DON'T LIKE COMPANY.  
INTERACTION IS JUST EXPENSIVE AND THEY DON'T WANT TO SPEND IT ON SOMETHING ANNOYING (READ: WASTEFUL)  
HERE'S WHAT YOU DO:

# What is “home” and why does it matter?

A place to:

- shower and perform hygiene and self-care tasks
- do laundry
- relax or recuperate when you're sick or tired





# What is “home” and why does it matter?

A place to:

- prepare food, keep groceries
- provide hospitality, host guests, socialize
- have celebrations and observe holidays
- do homework or other business



# What is “home” and why does it matter?

A place to:

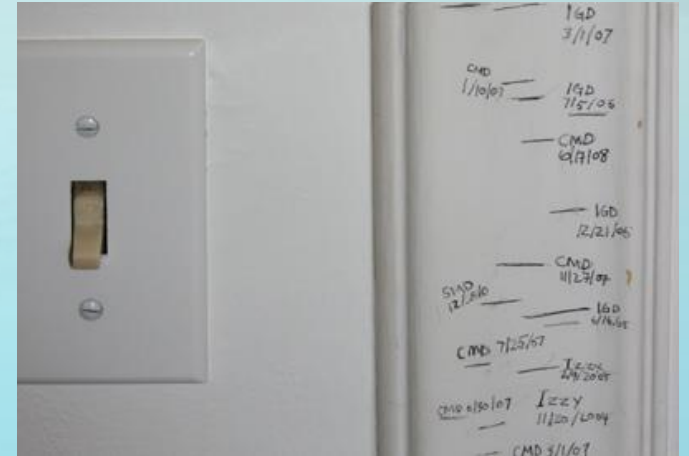
- plug in / charge your devices
- access entertainment and social media connection
- access to utilities like phone and internet
- get mail and deliveries



# What is “home” and why does it matter?

A place to:

- have pets
- have plants or plant a garden
- make memories



# What is “home” and why does it matter?

- Safety from assault and predation
- Protection from the elements
- “Sanctity” from intrusion by others or “unreasonable search and seizure”





# What is “home” and why does it matter?

- An address:
  - The way to interact with other institutions and structures (school, cops, ambulance, etc.)
  - The way to be “counted” and get representation in government



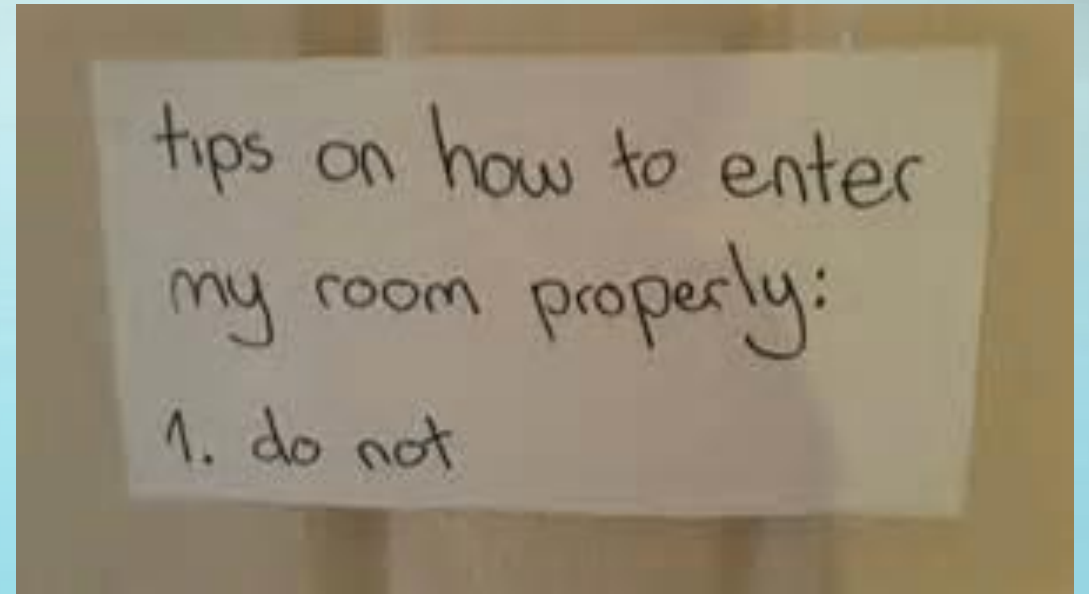
# What is “home” and why does it matter?

- A private place to parent, have relationships, have sex with self and others
- A “neighborhood” – a structured way to participate in community, belonging
- A way to structure a social unit or family / household



# What is “home” and why does it matter?

- Place where you are allowed to be at any given time without hassle
- Agency / choice / control over making space how you want it to be



# What is “home” and why does it matter?

- “Home base” – daily place to regroup and relaunch from – “staging area” for the rest of life’s endeavors
- A center of daily routines.
- Place for acts or artifacts for religious devotion





# What is “home” and why does it matter?

- Place for in-home care, childbirth, hospice, etc.
- Place to observe curfew or complete parole or probation if applicable



# Homelessness Definitions:

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (*updated in 2009*).

There are four federally defined categories under which individuals and families may qualify as homeless:

- 1) literally homeless;
- 2) imminent risk of homelessness;
- 3) homeless under other Federal statutes; and
- 4) fleeing/attempting to flee domestic violence.



Homelessness by the Numbers:

**What do  
we know?**

# Homelessness by the Numbers:

- 35% of all homeless persons nationwide are families with children.
- The average age for a homeless person in the USA is:

9





# Homelessness by the Numbers:

- 2.5 million children will experience homelessness this year in America, an increase of 64% since 2007.
- 1 in 30 children in the United States experience homelessness annually.
- Chicago Public Schools reports that 98% of its homeless students are children of color.



# Homelessness by the Numbers:

- Over 1.3 million US school children were homeless in school year 2014-15, a 70% increase since the inception of the housing foreclosure crisis in 2007.
- 51% of homeless children are under age 5 and, therefore, too young for school and are not counted.



# Homelessness by the Numbers:

- In the USA, it's estimated that 1.6 million unaccompanied youth are homeless each year.
- Over the course of a year in Illinois, there are an estimated 25,000 unaccompanied homeless youth.



# Homelessness by the Numbers:

- On Chicago's streets every night, it's estimated that up to 2,000 unaccompanied young people experience homelessness.
- Family conflict is the primary cause of youth homelessness, with 46% having experienced abuse.





# Homelessness by the Numbers:

- A 2014 survey in the National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty's report, *Welcome Home: The Rise of Tent Cities in the United States*, showed media reports of tent cities in 46 states across the country.



# Homelessness by the Numbers:

- The Illinois “housing wage” (what someone needs to earn per hour to afford fair market rent) is \$28.81 an hour.
- The housing wage in Chicago is over \$30 per hour.



# Homelessness by the Numbers:

- There is no single state, or even county, in the nation where a worker earning the federal minimum wage can afford a modest two-bedroom apartment at market rent.



# The Impact of Homelessness on Children and Youth:

- Homelessness has particularly adverse effects on children and youth including hunger, poor physical and mental health, and missed educational opportunities.
- Homeless children lack stability in their lives with 97% having moved at least once on an annual basis, which leads to disruptions in schooling and negatively impacts academic achievement.





# The Impact of Homelessness on Children and Youth:

- Schooling for homeless children is often interrupted and delayed, with homeless children twice as likely to have a learning disability, repeat a grade or to be suspended from school.
- Homelessness and hunger are closely intertwined. Homeless children are twice as likely to experience hunger as their non-homeless peers. Hunger has negative effects on the physical, social, emotional and cognitive development of children.



# The Impact of Homelessness on Children and Youth:

- A quarter of homeless children have witnessed violence and 22% have been separated from their families. Exposure to violence can cause a number of psychosocial difficulties for children both emotionally (depression, anxiety, withdrawal) and behaviorally (aggression, acting out).
- Half of school age homeless children experience problems with depression and anxiety, and one in five homeless preschoolers have emotional problems that warrant professional care.



# The Impact of Homelessness on Children and Youth:

- Homelessness is linked to poor physical health for children including low birth weight, malnutrition, ear infections, exposure to environmental toxins and chronic illness (e.g., asthma).
- Homeless children also are less likely to have adequate access to medical and dental care.



# The Impact of Homelessness on Children and Youth:

- Unaccompanied youth are often more likely to grapple with mental health (depression, anxiety and PTSD) and substance use-related problems.
- Up to 75% of homeless youth engage in survival sex trading within 48 hours of becoming homeless, generally after being approached by predatory adults.



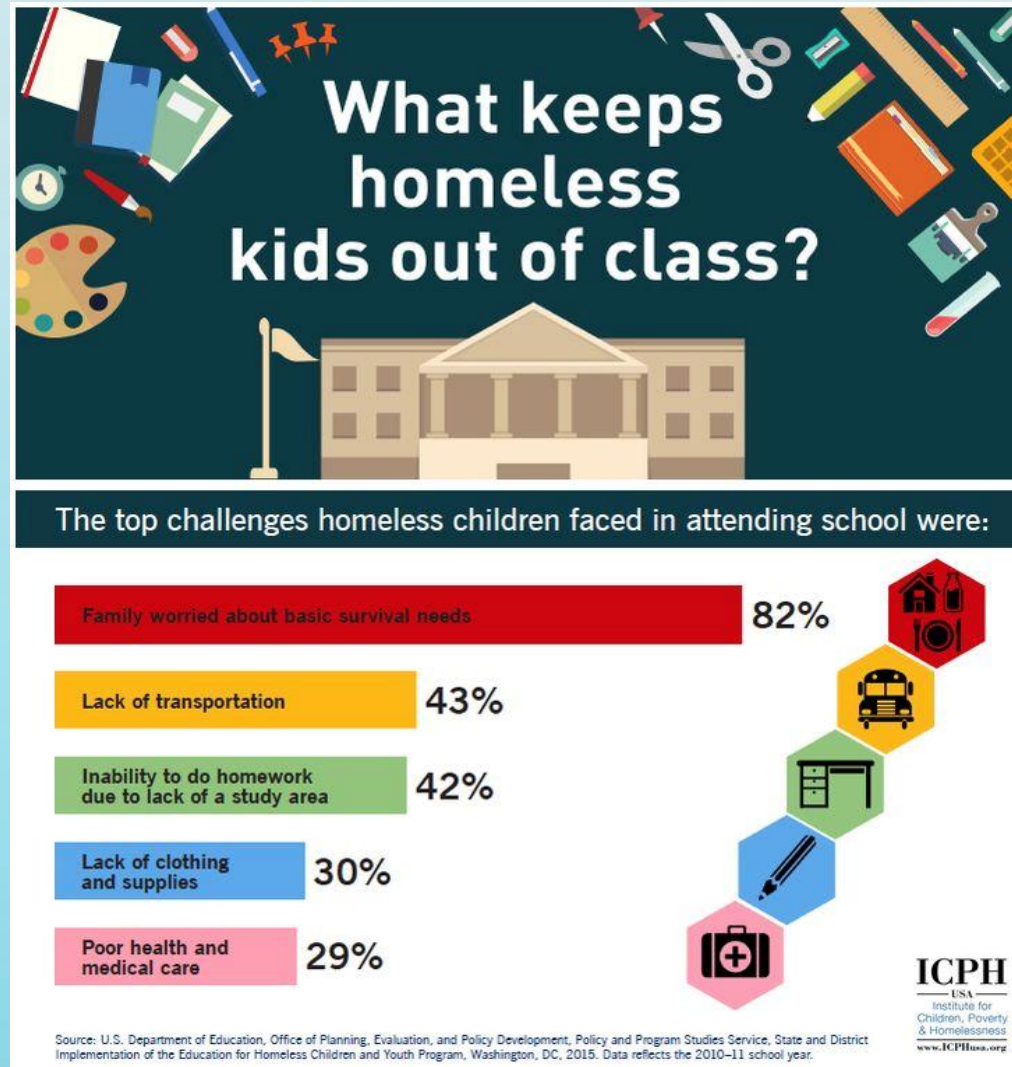


# The Impact of Homelessness on Children and Youth:

- Runaway and homeless youth face higher risk for sexual assault, HIV other STDs, and unintended pregnancies.
- LGBTQ homeless youth are 7 times more likely to be victims of violent crime.
- LGBTQ homeless youth are 62% more likely to attempt suicide than their heterosexual and cisgender counterparts.



# The Impact of Homelessness on Children and Youth:



# Homelessness Criminalized:

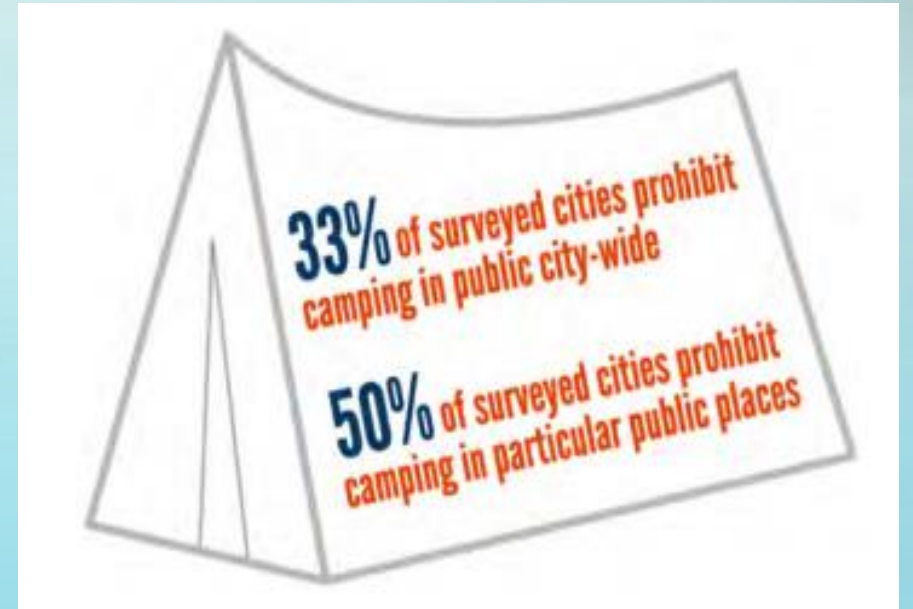
The National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty surveyed **187 cities** and assessed the number and type of municipal codes that **criminally or civilly punish the life-sustaining behaviors of homeless people**. The results of our research show that the criminalization of necessary human activities is **prevalent and increasing** in cities across the country. Of the 187 cities measured by the Law Center for this report, they found ...



# Homelessness Criminalized:

Laws prohibiting camping in public:

- 33% of cities prohibit camping in public citywide (bans have increased by 69%).
- 50% of cities prohibit camping in particular public places (bans have increased by 48%).






# Homelessness Criminalized:

Laws prohibiting sleeping in public:

- 18% of cities prohibit sleeping in public city-wide (bans have increased by 31%).
- 27% of cities prohibit sleeping in particular public places (bans decreased by 11%, but have been replaced by city-wide bans).


#WARONTHEPOOR



**DOWN AND OUT IN HONOLULU.  
GO TO SLEEP. GO TO JAIL.**

*The homeless population of Honolulu is falling victim to one of the meanest attacks in the country, as their rights are limited and they are forced out of sight. It's wrong. It's heartless. It won't solve anything.*

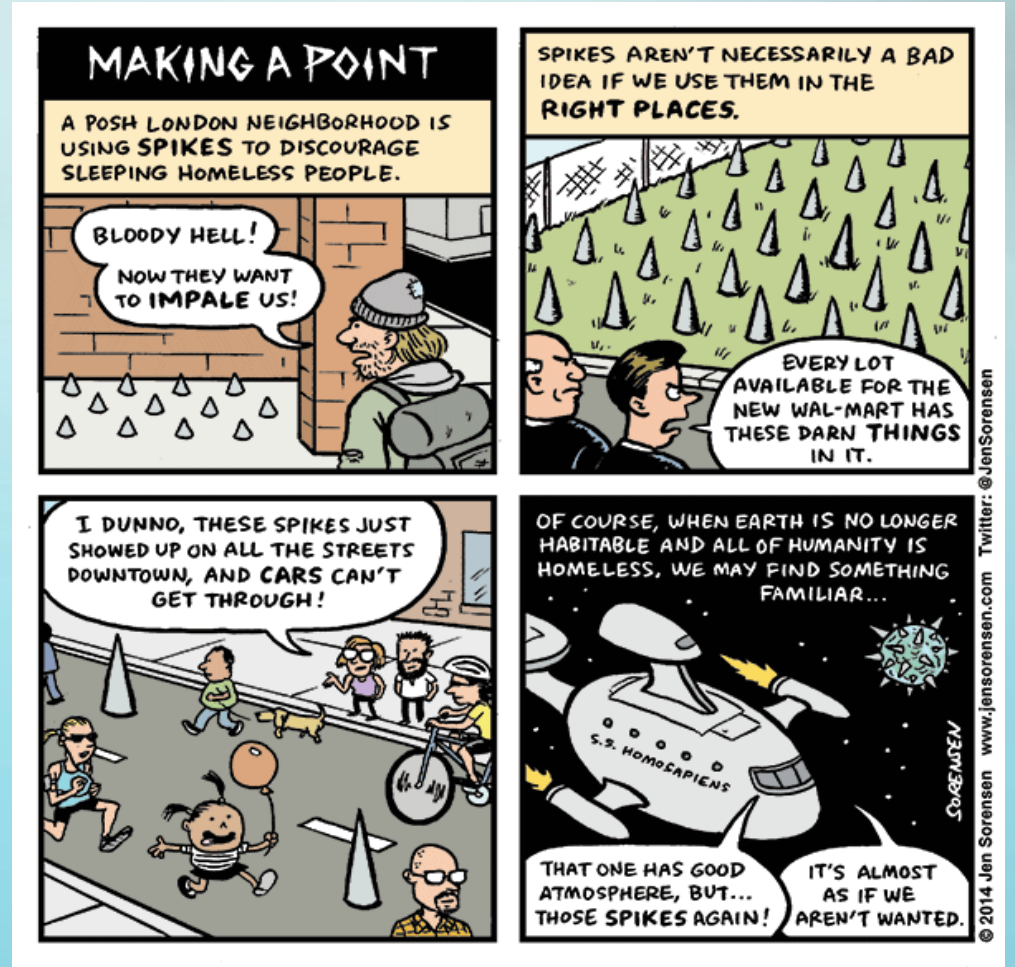
*Affordable housing is the solution. Contact the **National Coalition for the Homeless** to find ways to **DEMAND** that cities develop real solutions to address poverty and stop degrading the dignity of their citizens.*

 National Coalition for the Homeless (202) 462-4822  
[info@nationalhomeless.org](mailto:info@nationalhomeless.org)

# Homelessness Criminalized:

Laws prohibiting sitting and lying down in public:

- 47% prohibit sitting and lying down in public.
- Bans on sitting and lying down in public have increased by 52%.



# Homelessness Criminalized:

Laws prohibiting loitering, loafing, and vagrancy:

- 32% prohibit loitering, loafing, and vagrancy city-wide. This represents an increase of 88% since 2006.
- 54% prohibit loitering, loafing, and vagrancy in particular public places. This represents a 14% increase in the last 10 years.



# Homelessness Criminalized:

Laws prohibiting living in vehicles:

- 39% of cities prohibit living in vehicles.
- Bans on living in vehicles has increased by 143% since 2006.





# Homelessness Criminalized:

Laws restricting food sharing:

- 6% of cities restrict food sharing.



# Homelessness Criminalized:

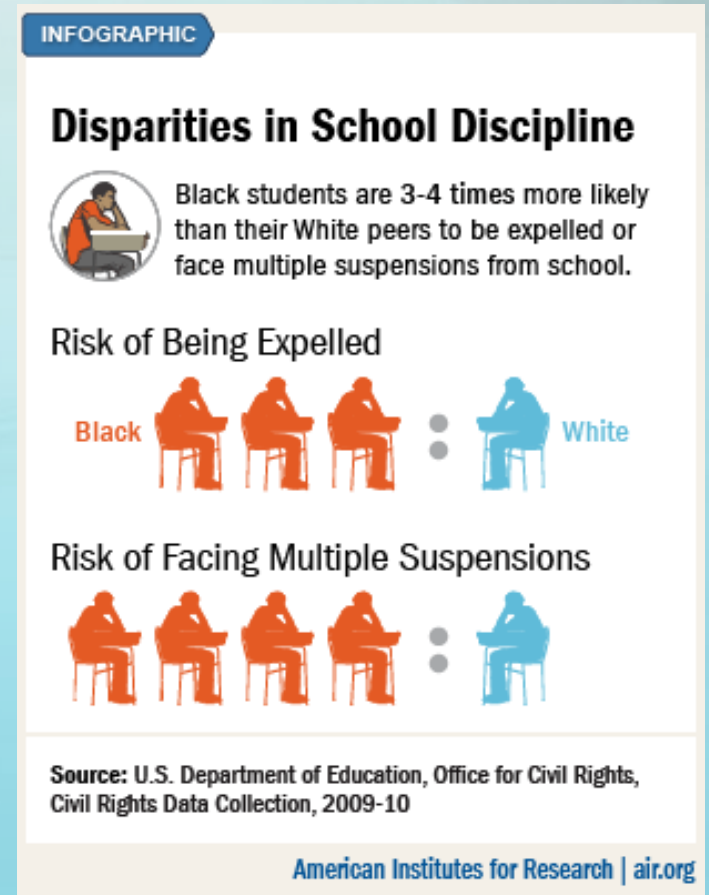
Laws prohibiting panhandling:

- 27% of cities prohibit panhandling city-wide. This represents an increase of 43% since 2006.
- 61% of cities prohibit panhandling in particular public places, an increase of 7%.



# Homelessness Criminalized:

- Homeless children and youth are subject to liability under criminalization ordinances applicable to all age groups, as well as ordinances that apply uniquely to them, such as “status offenses.”
- Schools also play a role in entangling homeless children and youth with the juvenile and criminal justice systems through harsh, zero-tolerance school discipline policies.



# Homelessness Criminalized:

- Running away is a crime in some states. Unaccompanied youth, even those who may be fleeing homes where they have been physically, sexually, or emotionally abused, can be liable just for being unaccompanied.
- Some jurisdictions even allow runaway youth to be held with juvenile offenders.





# Homelessness Criminalized:



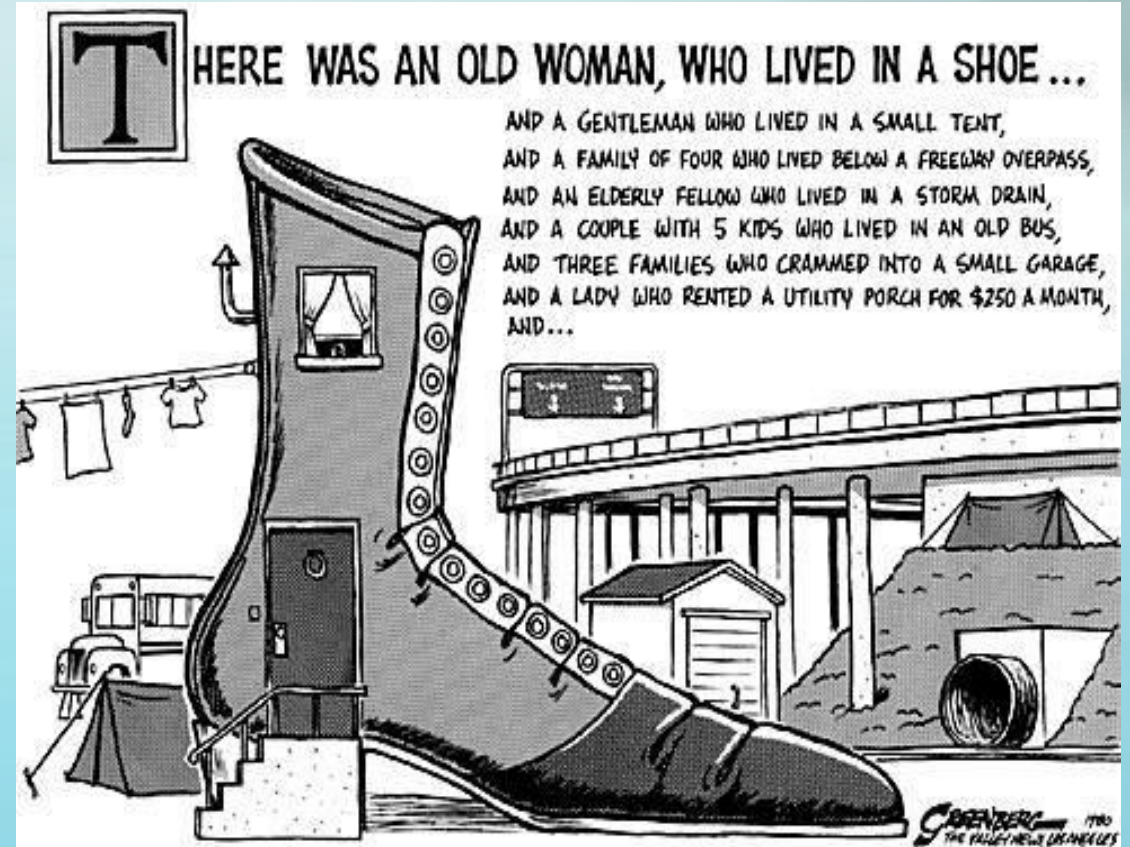
# The Homelessness Epidemic in the Making:

- Homelessness emerged as a national epidemic in the 1980s, and has remained a national crisis since that time.
- A reduced federal commitment to making housing affordable for all began during the Reagan Administration and continues today.
- Other tax and economic policies started the path toward the recession of 2008



# The Homelessness Epidemic in the Making:

- The loss of subsidized housing has corresponded with increasing unaffordability in the private housing market.
- Increased demand for rental units and low vacancy rates have caused rents to rise at an annual rate of 3.5% - the quickest pace in three decades.





# The Homelessness Epidemic in the Making:

- As rents have risen, federally subsidized housing has continued to decline. Today only 1 in 4 eligible renters receive federal housing assistance, and waiting lists for the resources that do exist are long - sometimes numbering in the tens of thousands.

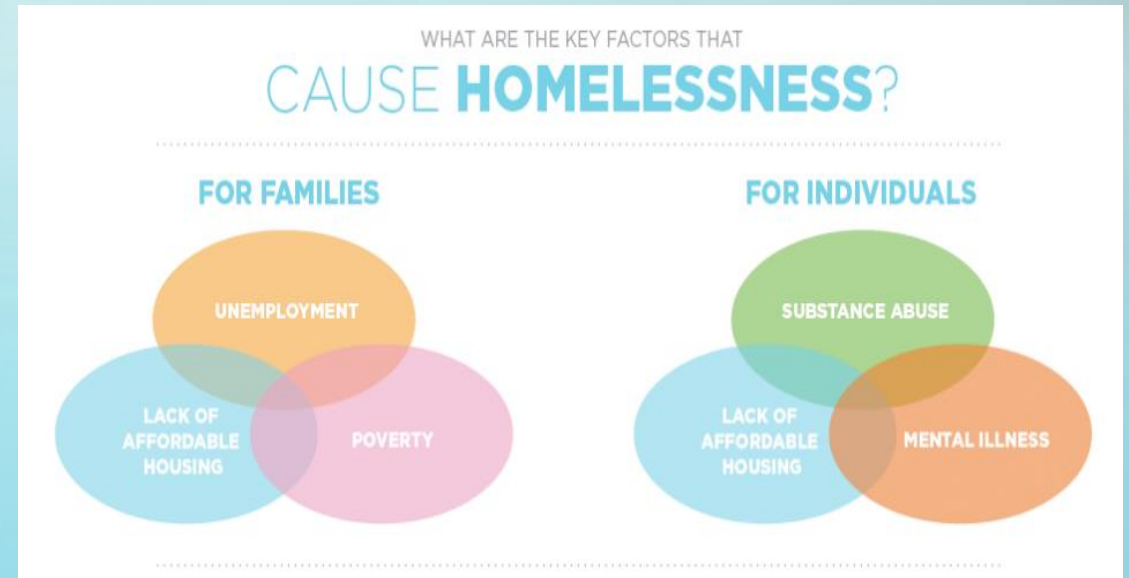




# Causes of Homelessness:

According to the most recent annual survey by the U.S. Conference of Mayors, major cities across the country report that top causes of homelessness among families were (in this order):

1. Lack of affordable housing
2. Unemployment
3. Poverty
4. Low wages



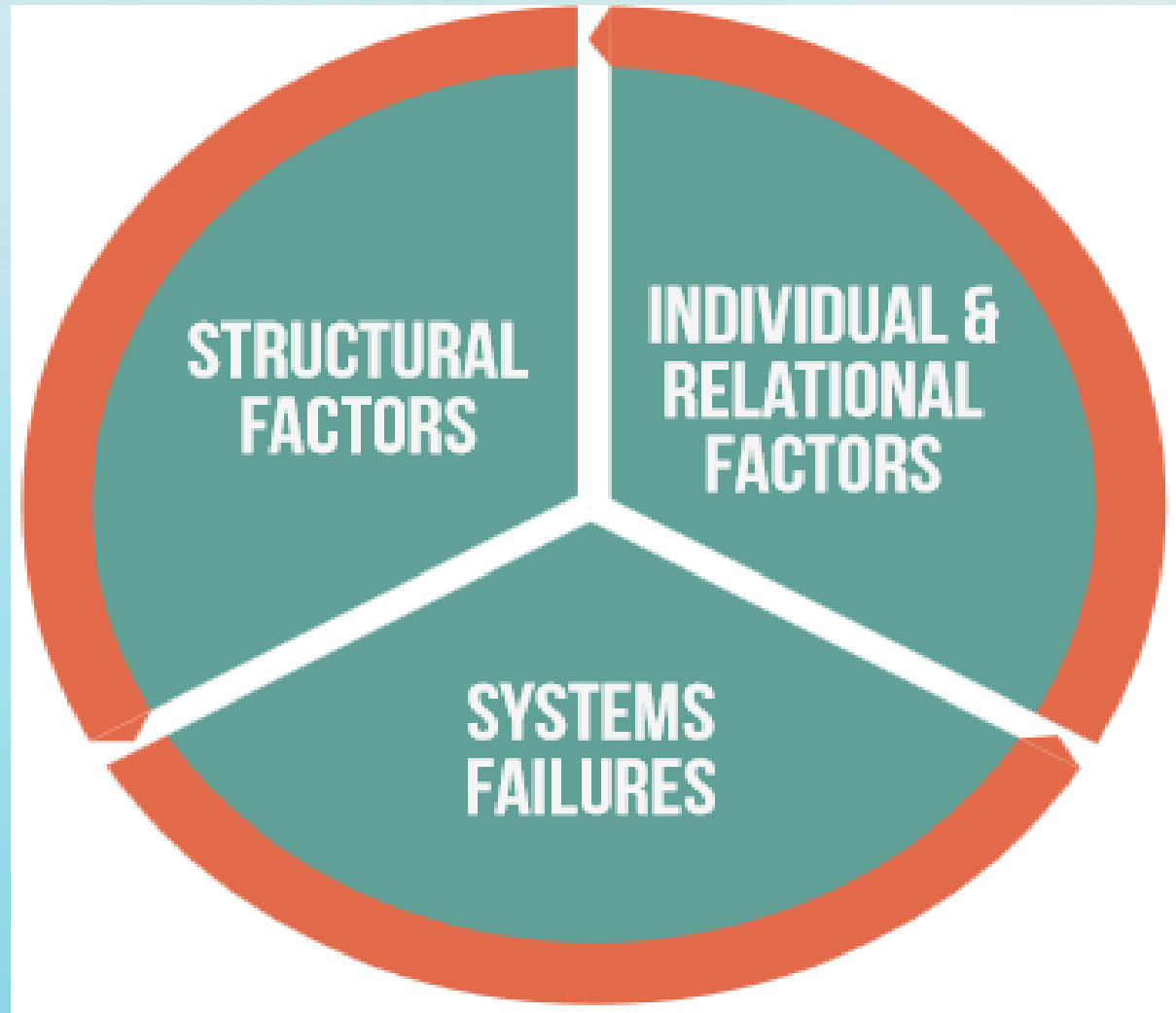
# Causes of Homelessness:

The same report found that the top four causes of homelessness among unaccompanied individuals were:

1. Lack of affordable housing
2. Unemployment
3. Poverty
4. Mental illness and the lack of needed services
5. Substance abuse and the lack of needed services



# Causes of Homelessness:



# Individual and Relational Causes of Homelessness:

Grief and loss

Relational disruption

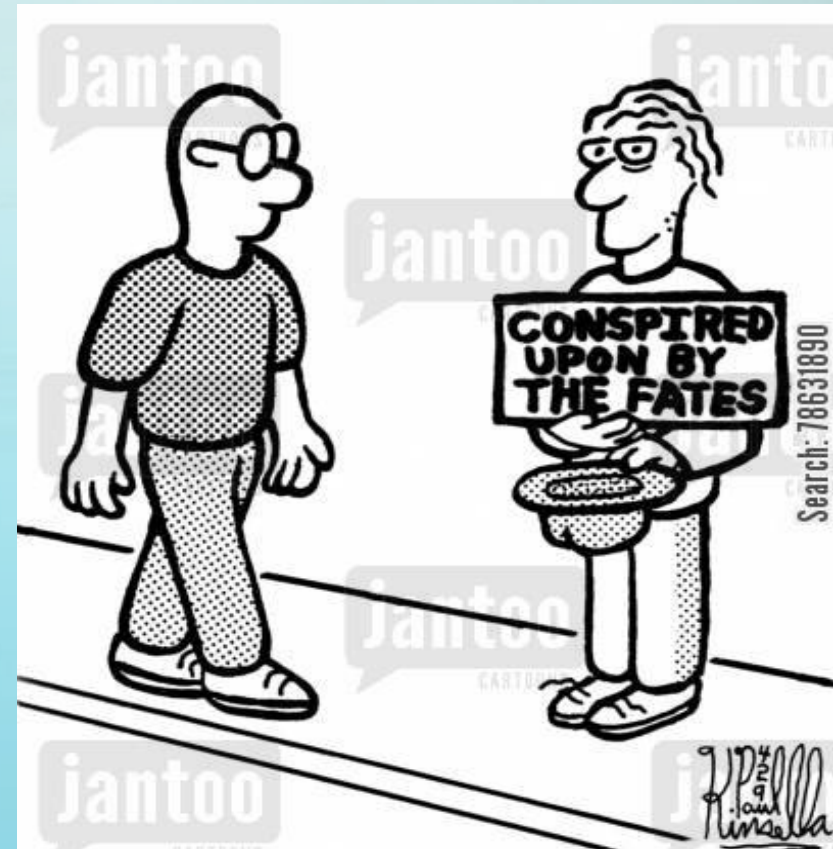
Isolation or lack of support net

Trauma

Mental Illness

Chronic medical conditions

Substance Use

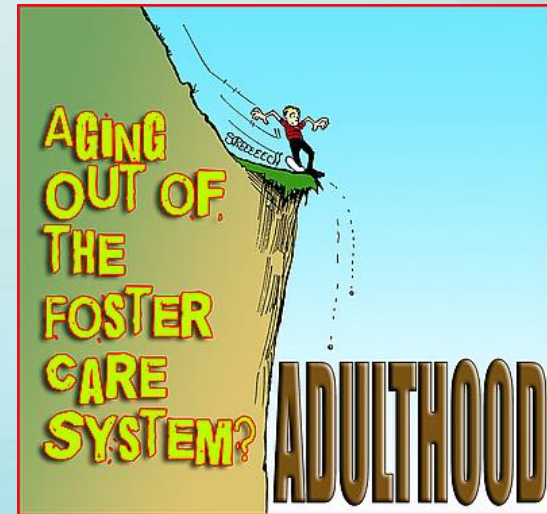




# Systemic Causes of Homelessness:

## The “Child Welfare” System:

- As many as half of all youth who spend any of their teenage years as wards of DCFS experience homelessness in the years following emancipation.
- LGBTQ+ children and youth are more likely to experience abuse and neglect in foster care or group homes, and more likely to run away from those to a life on the streets.



# Systemic Causes of Homelessness:

## Military service:

- Estimates range by source, but veterans account for about 13% of all homeless adults (but only 5% of the population).





# Systemic Causes of Homelessness:

Military service:



# Systemic Causes of Homelessness:

## The “Criminal Justice” system:

- 25-50% of the homeless population has a history of incarceration.
- 5% of general adult population have been previously homeless, versus 15% of incarcerated population, illustrating that homelessness often precipitates incarceration.





# Systemic Causes of Homelessness:

## The “Criminal Justice” system:

- A study of 6,953 jail inmates found that individuals with homelessness in the year prior to incarceration had symptom clusters associated with mania, depression, psychosis, and substance use at 10- 22% higher rates than inmates without prior homelessness.



# Systemic Causes of Homelessness:

## Lack of parity from Social Security:

- For 4.9 million people with disabilities ages 18 to 65 who have limited assets and are unable to work, SSI is their sole source of income.
- The maximum SSI payment for an individual is \$735, meaning to achieve the federal affordability standard of 30% of their income, they would have to find an apartment for less than \$220 per month.



# Systemic Causes of Homelessness:

## The foreclosure crisis:

- In 2008, state and local homeless groups reported a 61% rise in homelessness since the foreclosure crisis began.
- Approximately 40% of families facing eviction due to foreclosure are renters; the problem may continue to worsen as renters represent a rising segment of the U.S. population.





# Structural Causes of Homelessness:

## Homophobia and transphobia:

- an estimated 40% of unaccompanied homeless youth identify as LGBTQ+, and report that as a reason for their homelessness.
- 30% of outreach clients and 30% of those using housing programs identify as LGBTQ+.
- LGBTQ+ people are more likely to have limited family and other traditional community supports.

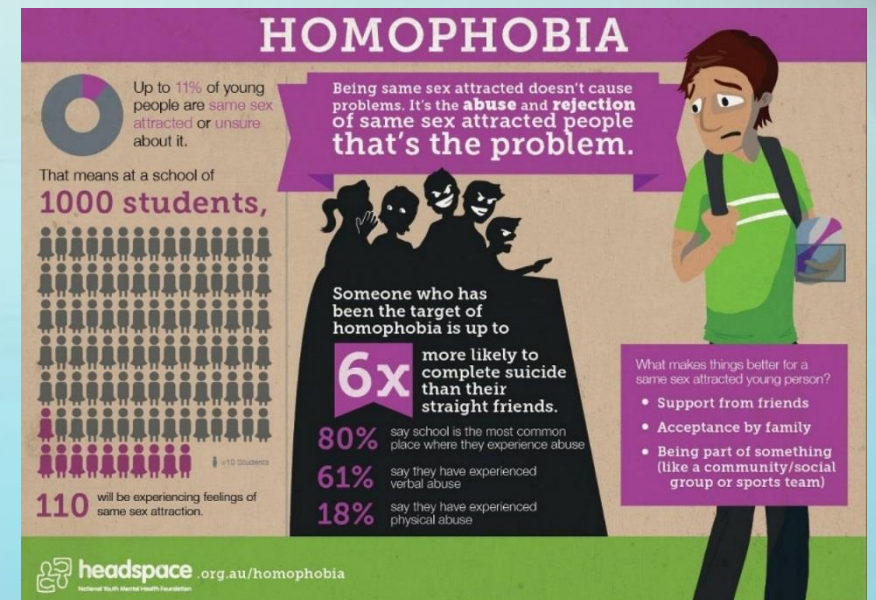




# Structural Causes of Homelessness:

## Homophobia and transphobia:

- LGBTQ+ people face dramatically higher risks for violence, abuse, and exploitation.
- LGBTQ+ people have much greater difficulty accessing shelter and other service programs, and often face harassment and disrespect.
- LGBTQ+ people face housing discrimination, which leads to and lengthens homelessness.



# Structural Causes of Homelessness:

## Homophobia and transphobia:

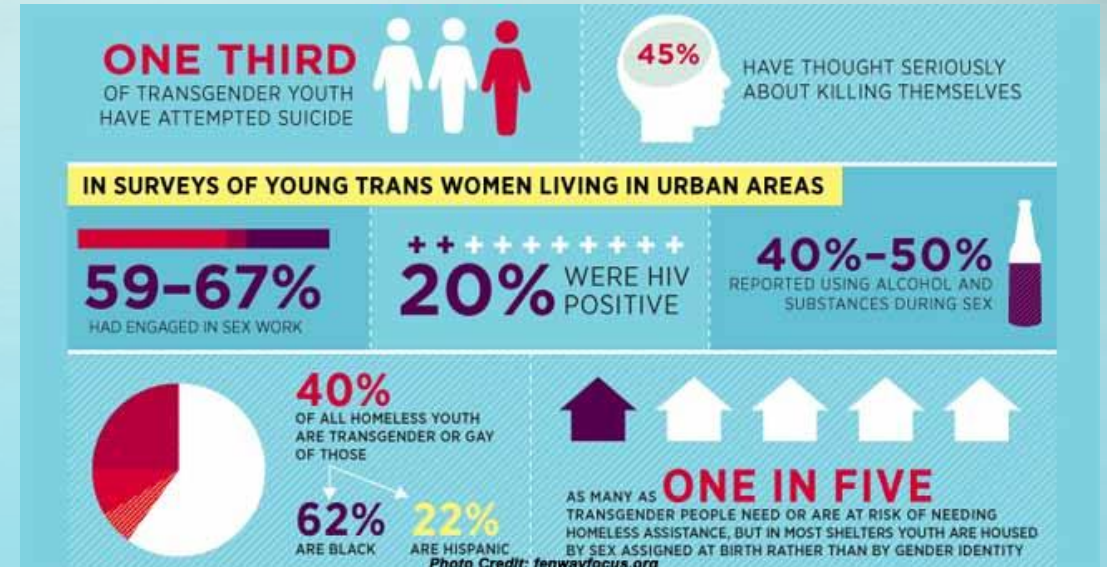
- Trans adults in the USA are nearly 4 times more likely to have a household income of less than \$10,000 a year.
- In more than half of states, it remains permissible to discriminate against LGBTQ+ people, including in the workplace.
- Up to 68% of LGBTQ people have experienced employment discrimination.



# Structural Causes of Homelessness:

## Homophobia and transphobia:

- 90% of transgender people have experienced harassment, discrimination or mistreatment at work due to their gender identity or expression.
- 19% of trans individuals have been refused a home or apartment and 11% have been evicted due to their gender identity or expression.

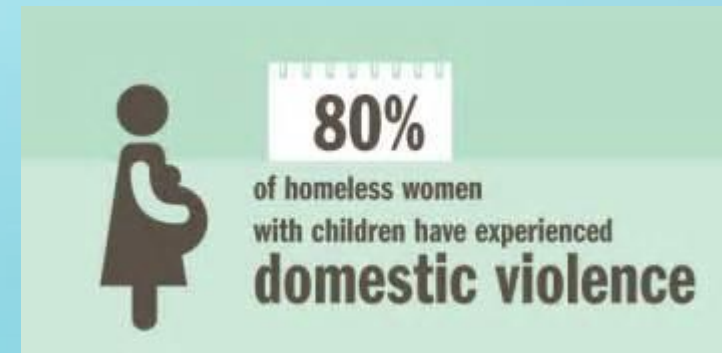
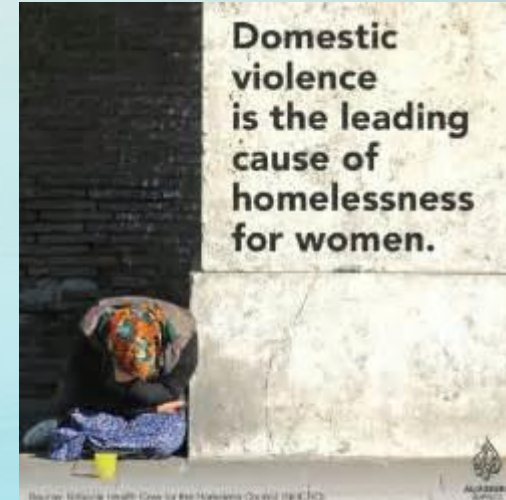




# Structural Causes of Homelessness:

## Domestic Violence:

- For women in particular, domestic violence is a leading cause of homelessness.
- Up to 57% of all homeless adults can be identified as survivors of domestic violence.





# Structural Causes of Homelessness:

## Poverty:

- Nearly 40 million people (1 in 8) in the U.S. live below the poverty line.
- In 2022, 9 million U.S. children (12.4%) lived in poverty.



# Structural Causes of Homelessness:

## Poverty:

- In America, just over 16 million children live in households where they have to skip meals or eat less to make ends meet.
- The poverty line for a family of four is \$31,200.
- A worker needs to earn \$15/hour to reach the poverty level for a family of four.



# Structural Causes of Homelessness:

## Racism and Racial Disparities:

- The poverty rate for Black children was 38.2 percent; 32.3 percent for Hispanic children; 17 percent for non-Hispanic White children; and 13 percent for Asian children.
- Single-mother headed households are more prevalent among African American and Hispanic families, contributing to ethnic disparities in poverty.





# Structural Causes of Homelessness:

## Racism and Racial Disparities:

- A staggering 50.9 percent of female-headed Hispanic households with children below 18 years of age live in poverty; 48.8 percent for Blacks; 31.6 percent Asian, and 32.1 percent non-Hispanic White.

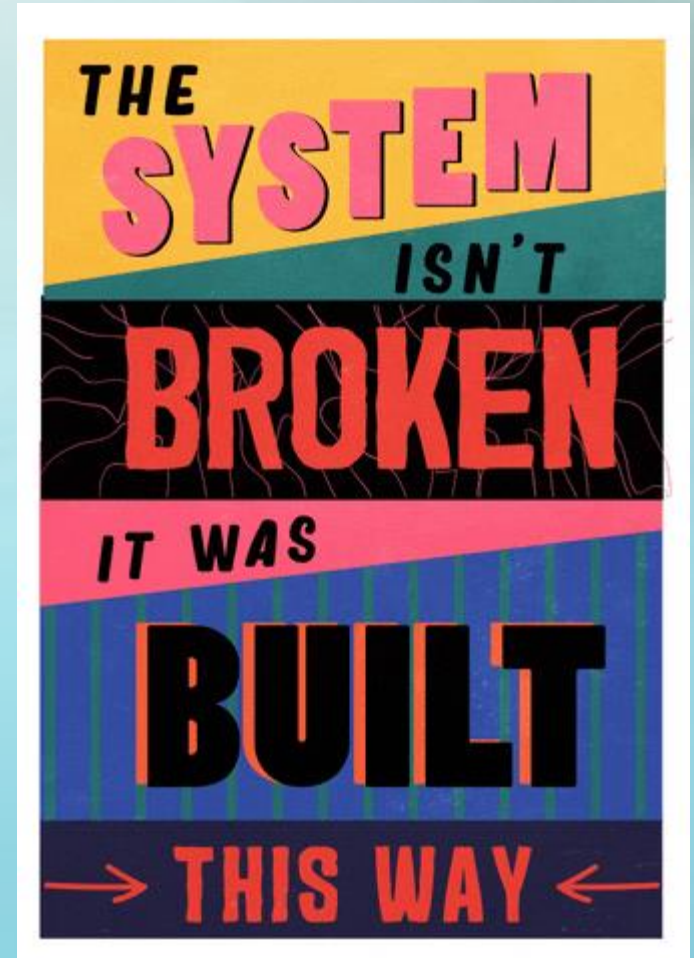




# Structural Causes of Homelessness:

## Racism and Racial Disparities:

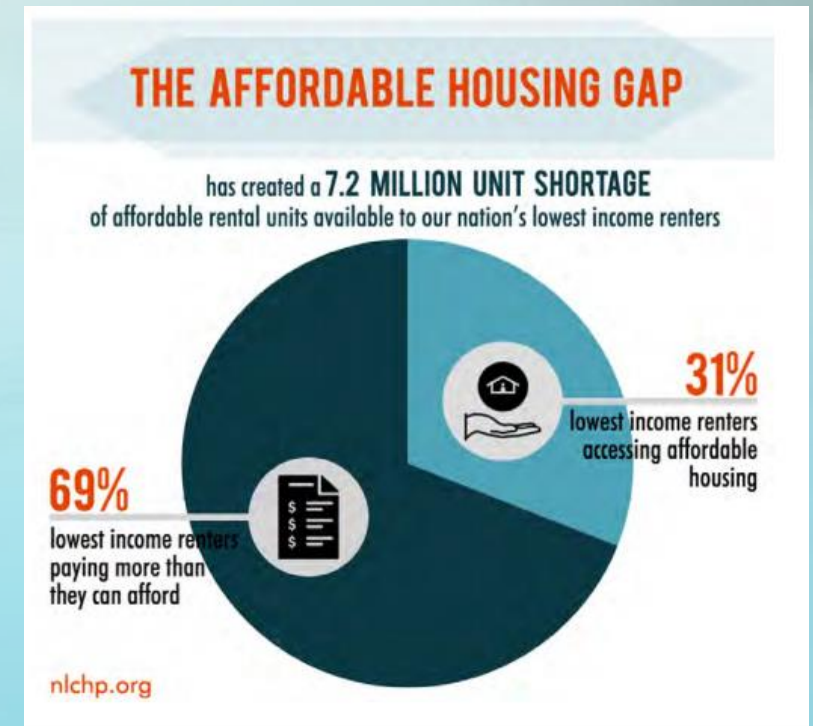
- Approximately 47 percent of children in homeless families are Black, although Black children make up just 15 percent of the U.S. child population (Child Trends Databank, 2012). On the other hand, although White children make up 66% of the child population, they account for 38% of homeless children. Hispanic children make up 13%, whereas Native American children make up 2% of the homeless children population.



# Structural Causes of Homelessness:

## Shortage of affordable housing:

- Between 2003 and 2013, the number of Extremely Low Income (ELI) households rose by 40 percent, to 10.4 million, while the number of units renting for less than \$400 per month only increased by 10 percent, leaving only 31 affordable units for every 100 needy households.
- Only 25% of those eligible for federal housing assistance receive help, due to lack of funding.



# Structural Causes of Homelessness:

## Shortage of affordable housing:

- 11 million households now pay more than 50% of their income for housing—an increase of 20% since 2007.
- After paying their rent and utilities, 75% of ELI households end up with less than half of their income left to pay for necessities such as food, medicine, transportation, or childcare.



# Structural Causes of Homelessness:

## Shortage of affordable housing:

- For every ten extremely low income households, there are only three affordable rentals available on the market.
- Average rents have increased for 23 straight quarters, and were 15.2% higher in 2014 than in 2009.





# Structural Causes of Homelessness:

## Shortage of affordable housing:

- Racial and ethnic minorities are disproportionately affected. In 2012, 27% of African-American households paid over 50% of their incomes in rent, along with 24% of Hispanic households and 21% of Asian households; only 14% of White households paid over 50% of their incomes in rent.



# Structural Causes of Homelessness:

## Discriminatory housing practices:

- Housing discrimination has contributed to racial segregation, concentrated poverty, and other structural inequalities that create elevated risks of homelessness for vulnerable people.



# Structural Causes of Homelessness:

## Discriminatory housing practices:

- People whose social support networks consist of friends and family who may be similarly poor and at-risk of homelessness, for example, cannot rely upon those supports to catch them when they fall through the cracks of an unfair housing market.





# Structural Causes of Homelessness:

## Discriminatory housing practices:

- Landlords in the private market commonly refuse to rent to people using housing vouchers, for example, as too few communities have outlawed discrimination based on source of income, or prevented the use of source of income discrimination as a proxy for other forms of discrimination.





# Structural Causes of Homelessness:

## Discriminatory housing practices:

- Refusal to rent to people with criminal histories also contributes to homelessness and disproportionately impacts people of color. In a study done by the Equal Rights Center of housing discrimination in the District of Columbia, it was found that housing agents discriminated against black women with reported criminal histories at a much higher rate than similarly situated white women.



# Some Systemic and Structural Solutions:

Prevent homelessness by changing laws and policy to strengthen housing protections and eliminate unjust evictions:

- Provide a right to counsel in housing cases involving indigent renters
- Plan for discharges from jails and prisons
- Plan for discharges from hospitals
- Plan for discharges and aging out from Child Welfare wardship



# Some Systemic and Structural Solutions:

Prevent homelessness by changing laws and policy to strengthen housing protections and eliminate unjust evictions:

- Prohibit housing discrimination and enforce anti-discrimination laws
- Prohibit source of income discrimination
- Enact “just cause” eviction laws



# Some Systemic and Structural Solutions:

Advocate to increase access to and availability of affordable housing:

- Dedicate funding streams to housing and services for homeless people
- Invest in permanent housing with supportive services for people experiencing homelessness
- Index minimum wage to actual housing costs for a given area





# Some Systemic and Structural Solutions:

Advocate to increase access to and availability of affordable housing:

- Index Supplemental Security Income and Social Security Disability Insurance payments to actual housing costs for a given area
- Institute a universal voucher program.
- Use surplus and vacant property to house and provide services to homeless people.
- Ensure local zoning restrictions do not impede affordable housing development.



# Some Systemic and Structural Solutions:

- Pay attention to policy and legislation, budgets, etc. as they pertain to poverty and affordable housing.
- Push candidates and officials to make ending homelessness a priority.
- Lobby legislators and government officials to change policies to cut down on housing and other discrimination.



# Some Systemic and Structural Solutions:

- Advance dialogue about systemic failings, including the “criminal justice system,” child welfare, lack of parity between Social Security and housing costs, etc.
- Hold system administrators accountable to their missions and outcomes.
- Advance dialogue about structural problems, including poverty, discrimination, lack of parity between minimum wage and housing costs.



# Some Individual and Community Solutions:

## House people:

- Implement evidence-based practices such as Housing First and Trauma-Informed Care.
- Employ a “Coordinated Entry” process.
- Prioritize housing the most vulnerable people with the deepest service needs, and/or those least likely to resolve their own homelessness without robust intervention.
- Keep trying to house and re-house people! Every night a person is housed is better than a night when they are on the streets!

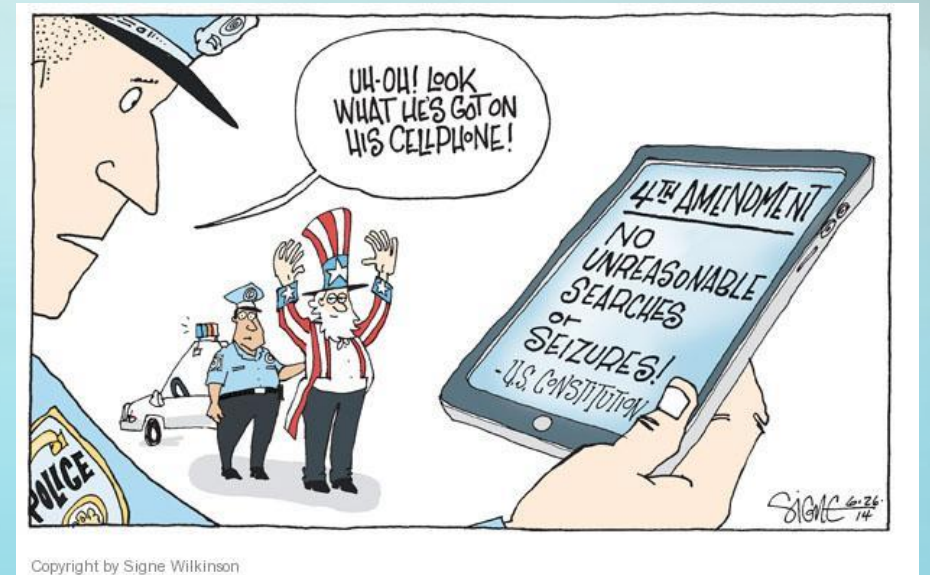




# Some Individual and Community Solutions:

## “Home” People:

- Safeguard residents’ right to privacy and to control access to their homes. Make sure they’re aware of their rights.
- Support residents in making their space their own, personalizing it, decorating it, taking pride in it, making it comfortable for them, etc.
- Encourage people to keep mementos or keepsakes. Give them a keepsake box.



# Some Individual and Community Solutions:

## “Home” People:

- Suspend assumptions and judgments about people’s style and preferences regarding housekeeping. Focus on safety rather than “cleanliness,” tidiness, or aesthetics.
- Teach, model, and support shame-free practicing of skills for self-care and apartment care, organizing documents, etc.



# Some Individual and Community Solutions:

## “Home” People:

- Support people’s engagement with friends, family, and other community support relationships.
- Establish clear goals and agreements about visitors to the unit, and do Harm Reduction around guests.
- Brainstorm and support the client to find and engage hobbies and meaningful activities, especially if they center on their home or neighborhood.





# Some Individual and Community Solutions:

## “Home” People:

- Support clients to gradually adjust their routines and bases of operations. Allow them freedom to return to the places they have been frequenting before.
- Orient a client to their new building, neighborhood, and community, including showing them the library, fire station, grocery store, parks, bus stops, etc.
- Encourage and support home-based observances of holidays and celebrations.





## HOW TO RESPOND TO PANHANDLING



Hello, I am not able to give money, but I hope you have a great day.

Hi, how are you?

- \* Make eye contact
- \* Smile
- \* Have compassion

When you meet a fellow human who is asking for help, it may make you feel uncomfortable. This does not mean that person does not deserve the same rights as you.

I have to keep walking but thanks for saying hello.

Sure, here is a little bit. Have a good day.

Cities are increasingly criminalizing people who are financially poor with laws, such as making it illegal to sit on sidewalks. This works to remove people from sight, but is not a humane or sustainable solution.

GREATER CINCINNATI  
**HOMELESS  
COALITION**

To learn more about the lack of affordable housing and inadequacy of services that contributes to panhandling, visit us at [www.cincihomeless.org](http://www.cincihomeless.org).



## Some Everyday Personal Solutions:

- Be kind to people who are experiencing homelessness, poverty, oppression, etc.
- Make the community safer for LGBTQI+ people.
- Promote consent culture and work to end violence against women and others.
- Call out racial and ethnic disparities and work to dismantle them.

# Some Everyday Personal Solutions:

- Learn more!
- Volunteer your time – be a mentor, or pitch in at a food pantry, soup kitchen, shelter, or other program.
- Donate supplies – toiletries, socks, transit passes, warm clothing, etc.
- Donate or raise money. Participate in fundraising events and challenges (hunger walks, etc.).



# Questions?





Thanks for your participation!





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