Illini Union Office of Volunteer Programs

Issues

Homelessness:

Ever since the 1970s, low-income households have failed to keep pace with rising housing costs across the nation. The widening gap between rent and income in these low-income households is dramatically visible in society today. For numerous households, rent and utility costs consume more than half of their income. These families are often forced to make the hard decision between paying rent or for other needs such as food, clothing, transportation, child care, and health care. It is these families that are most likely to miss rent payments leaving them vulnerable to eviction and in turn homelessness.

According to the NPACH reports:

- On average, to afford a modest two-bedroom apartment, a family will have to work full-time at $15.37/hour, which is well beyond the earnings of low-income households.
- In 57 percent of the cities, families may have to break up in order to be sheltered. In 48 percent of the cities families may have to spend their daytime hours outside of the shelter they use at night.
- Compared to other children, homeless children have twice as many ear infections, four times as many asthma attacks, five times more stomach problems, six times as many speech problems, and twice as many hospitalizations – including 60% percent more emergency room visits.
- Almost half (47%) of homeless school age children have problems such as anxiety, depression, and withdrawal, compared to 18% of other children.
- People remain homeless an average of seven months in the survey cities

National & Local Homelessness Agencies


The Interagency Council on Homelessness


USICH's mission is to "coordinate the Federal response to homelessness and to create a national partnership at every level of government and with the private sector to reduce and end homelessness in
the nation while maximizing the effectiveness of the Federal Government in contributing to the end of homelessness."

**National Alliance to End Homlessness**


The National Alliance to End Homelessness is a leading voice on the issue of homelessness. The Alliance analyzes policy and develops pragmatic, cost-effective policy solutions. The Alliance works collaboratively with the public, private, and nonprofit sectors to build state and local capacity, leading to stronger programs and policies that help communities achieve their goal of ending homelessness.

**Harper House, Chicago**

[http://www.geocities.com/Pentagon/Quarters/6674](http://www.geocities.com/Pentagon/Quarters/6674)

To be of service to Homeless, the poor and to provide a safe refuge from the streets. To provide food shelter and clothing to all in need. The promise to respect the dignity and worth of all who enter and provide the opportunity for people to care for each other and to achieve self-sufficiency.

**Warm Wishes**


Warm Wishes is a not-for-profit organization that is tax exempt under Section 501(c)3 of the U.S. Tax Code. The purpose is to provide blankets, comforters, quilts, and sleeping bags to those in need. Deliveries are made to overnight shelters, the homeless, or other financially disadvantaged people. Women and children, recovering substance abusers, and the elderly are just some of the beneficiaries. Although winter is the primary season for blanket distribution, the need is year round. Victims of fire, newborns, and street people cannot afford to wait until winter for a blanket.