



## NEW YORK CITY HOMELESSNESS The Basic Facts

- Over the past decade, homelessness in New York City has reached **the highest levels since the Great Depression of the 1930s**.
- In January 2010, there were **more than 39,000 homeless people**, including **more than 10,000 homeless families with more than 16,000 homeless children**, sleeping each night in the New York City municipal shelter system. Families comprise 80 percent of the homeless shelter population.
- During the past City fiscal year (FY 2009), an **all-time record 120,381 different homeless men, women, and children** slept in the New York City municipal shelter system. This includes an **all-time record 43,826 different homeless New York City children**.
- The number of homeless New Yorkers who slept in the municipal shelter system during the last fiscal year (FY 2009) was **45 percent higher** than in FY 2002.
- Research shows that the **primary cause of homelessness, particularly among families, is lack of affordable housing**. Surveys of homeless families have identified the following major immediate causes of homelessness: eviction; doubled-up or severely overcrowded housing; domestic violence; and hazardous housing conditions.
- Research shows that, compared to homeless families, homeless single adults have much **higher rates of serious mental illness, addiction disorders, and other severe health problems**.
- Each night **thousands of unsheltered homeless people** sleep on New York City streets, in the subway system, and in other public spaces. There is no accurate measurement of New York City's unsheltered homeless population, and recent **City surveys significantly underestimate the number of unsheltered homeless New Yorkers**.
- Studies show that the large majority of street homeless New Yorkers are people living with mental illness or other severe health problems. Four out of five street homeless New Yorkers are men.
- As in other American cities, New York City's unsheltered homeless population is concentrated in the central business district – that is, midtown Manhattan. Surveys show that **nearly 60 percent of New York City's unsheltered homeless population is in Manhattan**.
- Approximately 53 percent of New York City homeless shelter residents are African-American, 32 percent are Latino, 7 percent are white, 1 percent are Asian-American, 1 percent are Native American or other race/ethnicity, and 6 percent are of unknown race/ethnicity.
- **African-American and Latino New Yorkers are disproportionately affected by homelessness**. Currently approximately 24 percent of New York City's total population is African-American, and 27 percent is Latino.

*Updated February 2010.*

*For more information, please visit [www.coalitionforthehomeless.org](http://www.coalitionforthehomeless.org).*