

## NEW YORK CITY HOMELESSNESS The Basic Facts

- In recent years, homelessness in New York City has reached **the highest levels since the Great Depression of the 1930s**.
- In October 2011, there were an all-time record **41,200 homeless people**, including **10,000 homeless families with 17,000 homeless children**, sleeping each night in the New York City municipal shelter system. Families comprise three-quarters of the homeless shelter population.
- During the past City fiscal year (FY 2010), **an all-time record 113,553 different homeless men, women, and children** slept in the New York City municipal shelter system. This includes **an all-time record 42,888 different homeless New York City children**.
- The number of homeless New Yorkers who slept in the municipal shelter system during FY 2010 was **37 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, triggering 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**.
- **African-American and Latino New Yorkers are disproportionately affected by homelessness**. 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.

*Updated November 2011.*

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