

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 November 2014, there were an all-time record **60,352 homeless people**, including **14,519 homeless families with 25,640 homeless children**, sleeping each night in the New York City municipal shelter system. Families comprise nearly four-fifths of the homeless shelter population.
- Over the course of the year, **more than 110,000 different homeless men, women, and children** sleep in the New York City municipal shelter system. This includes **more than 40,000 different homeless New York City children**.
- The number of homeless New Yorkers sleeping each night in municipal shelters is now **64 percent higher** than it was ten years ago.
- 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; job loss; 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 57 percent of New York City homeless shelter residents are African-American, 31 percent are Latino, 8 percent are white, 1 percent are Asian-American, and 4 percent are of unknown race/ethnicity.

Updated January 2015.

For more information, please visit www.coalitionforthehomeless.org.