

Information Guide

Topic: Homelessness

Who?- Homeless people can be of many different ages and races. A homeless person is usually someone who lives in a public place or a shelter, and has no steady way of earning money.

Why?- Most people are homeless due to financial problems, illnesses, lack of education or health care and mental and physical disabilities. It is important to know that many things can push people to have to live on the streets.

Where?- There can be many homeless people in large cities such as San Francisco. Homeless shelters can be found in many places. The goals of them are to provide food and a stable environment to people who are homeless until they can get back on their feet.

When?- There is no specific time needed to help a homeless person. Any aid is greatly appreciated. Just be sure to check the hours of the homeless shelter you may want to go to.

How?- If you would like to help the homeless, you may want to do any of the things on the list below. People who live in emergency shelters are also without their own home. It would be a great service project to go to a local shelter in the city and maybe host a meal or help with whatever needs to be done there.

What?- Here is a list of things you can do to help in your community.

- Donate money/old clothes/toys to shelters
- Buy and bring food for the homeless
- Raise money for homeless people
- Tutor homeless children

- Write to people in government with ideas to help stop homelessness
- Collect funds to help more shelters

Before:

Discuss the project you will be doing and talk about the positive effect it will have. What are the expectations for the project? How would you feel if you had to rely on your community?

During:

Take note of any encounters or important discussions had during the project. Remember that the issue of homelessness is very broad and by doing a small part in your community, you are helping many people.

After:

Talk about what happened with your child. Discuss expectations vs. what actually happened. Reflect on the experience. List other projects that could be done to help the homeless community.

Resources:

- *The Lady in the Box* By Anne McGovern
Good for grades 1-5 but can be good for all ages. This story educates people on how homelessness can be in an ordinary community and addresses the issue with a powerful message.
- *December* By Eve Bunting
Recommended for grades 1-4. This story is about how a Christmas miracle can change a person's life.