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YouthBuild Providence Introduction

An unfortunate reality in America is that we have become accustomed to seeing people living on the street. According to the National Alliance to End Homelessness, there are about 600,000 homeless people on a given night in the United States. About **15** percent of the homeless population is considered "chronically homeless" individuals, and 2% are chronically homeless families.

Chronic homelessness is defined as either long-term and/or repeated instances of homelessness paired with some physical or mental disability. People and families experiencing chronic homelessness often end up living in shelters or on the streets.

Many people become homeless because they are working minimum wage and cannot keep up with their bills, they have substance abuse or health. As a result, they find themselves needing hospital care, in jail, or in shelters, all of which cost money to provide.

According to a study conducted by Housing Works Rhode Island, it costs about \$31,000 to provide these service for each homeless person. Therefore, homelessness is not only a social issue, but an economic issue as well. Cities and states use money that could be spent on schools, road repairs, or other community programs caring for the homeless.

Homelessness is too massive an issue to be solved by any one organization, and although many organizations are expending countless hours and resources, many homeless people still manage to fall through the cracks, remaining on the streets and not getting the help they need or deserve.

Is there a cost-effective solution to the problem of homelessness?

Can all homeless people in a community be provided with a place of their own?

What resources does YouthBuild have that can contribute to solving this problem?