

HOMELESSNESS IN LONGMONT

Presented by:

Department of Public Safety

OUR Center

H.O.P.E.

Agape Family Services

SVVSD Homeless Education

HOMELESSNESS DEFINED:

- ▶ An individual who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence;
- ▶ An individual who has a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or camping ground;
- ▶ An individual or family living in a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangements (including hotels and motels paid for by Federal, State or local government programs for low-income individuals or by charitable organizations, congregate shelters, and transitional housing);
- ▶ An individual who resided in a shelter or place not meant for human habitation and who is exiting an institution where he or she temporarily resided;
- ▶ An individual or family who will imminently (within 14 days) lose their housing.

Source: Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

FACTS ABOUT HOMELESSNESS

- ▶ **One quarter of homeless people are children**
 - ▶ HUD reports that on any given night over 138,000 of the homeless in the US are children under the age of 18. Thousands of these homeless children are unaccompanied according to HUD.
- ▶ **Tens of thousands of veterans are homeless**
 - ▶ Over 57,000 veterans are homeless each night. Sixty percent of them were in shelters, the rest unsheltered. Nearly 5000 are female.
- ▶ **Domestic violence is a leading cause of homelessness in women**
 - ▶ More than 90% of homeless women are victims of severe physical or sexual abuse and escaping that abuse is a leading cause of their homelessness.
- ▶ **Many people are homeless because they cannot afford rent**
 - ▶ The lack of affordable housing is a primary cause of homelessness according to the National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty. HUD has seen its budget slashed by over 50% in recent decades resulting in the loss of 10,000 units of subsidized low income housing each and every year.

Source: Dept. of Housing and Urban Development and the National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty

REASONS FOR HOMELESSNESS IN LONGMONT IN 2014

- ▶ 41% Lost a job or can't find work
- ▶ 35% Housing costs too high
- ▶ 26% Relationship or family breakup
- ▶ 21% Abuse or violence in the home
- ▶ 18% Disability or serious illness
- ▶ 10% Natural disaster

Source: 2014 Point in Time Survey

BASIC OVERVIEW OF HOMELESS SERVICES AVAILABLE IN LONGMONT

- ▶ OUR Center
 - ▶ Homeless Outreach Providing Encouragement (H.O.P.E.)
 - ▶ St. Vrain Valley School District
 - ▶ Agape Family Services
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OUR CENTER

Services Include:

- ▶ Daily Hot Meals
 - ▶ Breakfast and lunch
- ▶ Transportation
 - ▶ Bus passes can be provided for job interviews, medical appointments, etc.
- ▶ Emergency Shelter for Families
- ▶ Starting Place Day Services
- ▶ Case Management
- ▶ Rent & Utilities Assistance
- ▶ Clothing Bank & Food Pantry
- ▶ Referrals to the Inn Between and Atwood Shelter (EFAA)
- ▶ Self-Sufficiency Skills Classes



H.O.P.E.



Services Include:

- ▶ Nightly Street Outreach Services 6:00-9:00pm
 - ▶ Food, water, clothing, hygiene supplies, blankets, etc.
- ▶ Transportation to Available Shelter 6:00-8:00pm
- ▶ Evening Drop-In Center
 - ▶ 3-6pm Mondays & Thursdays: October - April
 - ▶ 6-9pm Mondays & Thursdays: April - October
 - ▶ Showers, laundry, computer access
- ▶ Direct Client Support
 - ▶ Field-based case management, coordination of services and referrals, follow-up care
- ▶ Emergency Assistance
 - ▶ Motel vouchers, gas for vehicles, bridge rent, etc.

ST. VRAIN VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT



500+ Families Currently Experiencing Homelessness

Services Include:

- ▶ Free & Reduced Lunch
- ▶ Transportation to Designated Neighborhood School
- ▶ Enrollment Assistance & Program Fee Waivers

AGAPE FAMILY SERVICES

Services Include:

- ▶ Emergency Shelter for Homeless Individuals
 - ▶ Warming Centers Open Between October 15 - April 15
 - ▶ Below 20 degrees and dry or below 32 and wet
 - ▶ 6:30pm – 7:00am
 - ▶ Warming Centers Rotate:
 - ▶ Front Range Christian Fellowship, Central Longmont, The Journey
- ▶ Additional Services:
 - ▶ Emergency supplies (underwear, socks, OTC medicine)
 - ▶ Breakfast
 - ▶ Transportation
 - ▶ Employment opportunities & referrals to partner agencies



WHAT IS CURRENTLY BEING DONE TO MANAGE HOMELESS ISSUES?

- ▶ Longmont Housing Opportunities Team (L.H.O.T.)
 - ▶ 30+ Agencies from community working to end homelessness.
 - ▶ Coordinating efforts to assist the homeless in finding housing.
 - ▶ Educating the public on homelessness.
 - ▶ Developed a 10 year plan to end homelessness in Boulder County.
 - ▶ Developing a “Housing First” program in conjunction with Boulder County.
- ▶ L.H.O.T. First Response Group
 - ▶ Coordinating efforts of feeding, sheltering, and outreach.
 - ▶ Discussing and coordinating efforts to safeguard at risk homeless people.
 - ▶ Developed a shared Rules of Conduct for participating agencies.

WHAT ARE THE LAWS?

It is not illegal to be homeless.

It is not illegal to be intoxicated in public or on private property.

It is not illegal to panhandle on public property.

Trespassing on private property is illegal.

Trespassing when previously warned is illegal.

Harassment (grabbing or persistent annoying behavior) may be illegal.

Urinating, Defecating, or Exposing oneself is illegal.

Drinking an open container of alcohol in public is illegal.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- ▶ Treat the homeless person with dignity and respect.
- ▶ When necessary be forceful and set expectations for behavior.
- ▶ Provide the homeless person with directions to get services.
- ▶ Direct the homeless person to public transportation.
- ▶ Give the homeless person a pre-purchased voucher for food and services, but never give them money.
- ▶ Politely but assertively, enforce your building's code of behavior.
- ▶ Ask those unwilling to follow the rules to leave and if they don't, contact the Police.
- ▶ Make sure that all of your staff is consistent in setting boundaries and enforcing the rules.

WHAT YOU CAN DO – LARGER SCALE

- ▶ Get involved with organizations working with the homeless population:
 - ▶ Donate (in-kind goods or financial donations are welcomed)
 - ▶ Volunteer (contact individual organizations for volunteer opportunities)
- ▶ Contact your elected officials to advocate for more affordable housing in Longmont and Boulder County.
- ▶ Organize a donation drive of needed supplies for the homeless – food, cold weather gear, etc. – and donate it to an agency.
- ▶ Help increase awareness about homelessness – start a discussion in your church, neighborhood, or other group and invite an agency representative to speak.
- ▶ Sign up for our newsletters to stay up-to-date on homelessness issues.

QUESTIONS?