



Western Regional Advocacy Project

Without Housing: Decades of Federal Housing Cutbacks, Massive Homelessness and Policy Failures

**A Supplemental
Workbook for High School Students**



To All Teachers and Students:

Welcome and thank you for taking the opportunity to participate in this workbook! It is a wonderful way for students to learn more about poverty and homelessness, not only here in Oregon, but nation-wide. We hope that by utilizing this workbook you will gain a new awareness of some of the issues that affect us all!

Sisters Of The Road is a non-profit organization that is dedicated to working with people experiencing homelessness and poverty. Sisters is also a member of a coalition of social justice based homelessness organizations on the West Coast known as the Western Regional Advocacy Project (WRAP), which is committed to making ending homelessness a national priority. In November 2006, WRAP released a report on the lack of federal funding for affordable housing over the last 25 years entitled, "Without Housing: Decades of Federal Housing Cutbacks, Massive Homelessness and Poverty Failures". This workbook is based on that report.

This workbook can be used alone or in conjunction with our traveling PhotoVoice Exhibit. If you would like to have the PhotoVoice exhibit come to your school, please contact Sisters' Volunteer Coordinator at (503) 222-5694 ext. 17.

This workbook is designed in a way that allows you to pick individual chapters to use for reflection and/or class discussion. At the least, we suggest that you read through the Executive Summary and complete the questions that follow this section. All chapters from the report can be downloaded from the WRAP home page, which can be found at www.wrAPHOME.org. The WRAP report can also be downloaded from Sisters' website at www.sistersoftheroad.org, along with this workbook and supplemental activities. There is also a curriculum evaluation form on our website and we ask that you fill it out upon completion of this workbook.

Students will be using the skills needed to meet the standards of the Certificate of Initial Mastery (CIM), which are set by the Oregon Department of Education. Those skills include:

- using contextual and structural clues to determine the meaning of unfamiliar vocabulary within the report;
- gaining a general understanding of the text by determining the main ideas explicitly stated in the report and the details supporting the report;
- the ability to find information in the report and synthesize that information across the various diagrams and charts to reach logical conclusions; and
- the ability to develop an interpretation by making predictions about future outcomes based on information in the report.

Again, thank you for your interest in learning more about poverty and homelessness! Enjoy!

Sincerely,

Sisters Of The Road

Homelessness in Portland

◆ During the week of January 22-26th, 2007, the City of Portland's Bureau of Housing and Community Development (BHCD) led a county-wide count of families and individuals in our community who were experiencing homelessness and slept outside on **Wednesday night January 24, 2007**. The numbers and statistics are from that Street Count. The total number of persons counted was 1,600; **1,438 were unduplicated**.

◆ It should be noted that the Street Count only represents an **approximation** of people sleeping outside. These numbers are likely to be higher since the report does not include information about people who were in shelter or transitional housing on that night or people who sleep in their cars, people who couch surf at their friends and/or family's house, or other people who were not found or did not want to participate in the count.

◆ **Of that 1,438 there were...**

- 28 families with children
- 71 couples
- 4 unaccompanied youth under 18 years of age
- 1,235 individuals (adults)

◆ **Gender:**

- 1,065 men
- 360 women

◆ **Youth:**

- 42 youth counted; 4 were identified as unaccompanied youth

◆ **Veterans:**

- there were 108 veterans total
- 103 of the veterans were men and 5 of the veterans were women

◆ **Race/Ethnicity:**

- 67% White/Caucasian
- 5.1% Black/African American
- 4.9% American Indian/Native American
- < 1% Asian
- 3.5 % Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
- 9% Hispanic
- 5.8% Other Multi-racial

Information gathered from the Bureau of Housing and Community Development's report: "Home Again: A 10-year plan to end homelessness in Portland and Multnomah County; Report on the 2007 Street Count. Retrieved from <http://www.portlandonline.com/shared/cfm/image.cfm?id=152049>.

Poverty in Oregon

- At Oregon's minimum wage of \$7.80/hr, a worker would have to work 72 hours each week in order to afford a two bedroom apartment? (1)
- Over half of renters in Oregon are paying more than they can afford in rent? (1)
- Over 13,000 of our K-12 students were homeless during the 2005-2006 school year. Nearly half of the homeless students were in grades K-5? (1)
- In Clackamas, Multnomah and Washington Counties, 32% of all families do not have affordable housing, and for low income families, the problem is much greater? (2)

Poverty in the United States

Demographics of Poverty in the United States as of 2005 (US Census Bureau, August 2006)

- 8.3% White/Non-Hispanic
- 11.1% Asian/Pacific Islander
- 24.9% African American
- 21.8% Hispanic
- 25.9% Native American/Alaskan Natives

Official Poverty Rate in the United States as of 2005 (US Census Bureau, August 2006)

- 37,000,000 (12.6% of the total population)

Official Poverty Rate for Children Under the Age of 18 in the United States as of 2005 (US Census Bureau, August 2006)

- 13,000,000 (17.6% of the population of children)

Number of People Without Health Insurance Coverage in the United States as of 2005 (US Census Bureau, August 2006)

- 46,600,000 (15.9% of the total population)

(1) Housing Alliance. www.oregonhousingalliance.org

(2) 2000 Census

Taken from the US Census Bureau, August 2006: <http://www.census.gov/prod/2006pubs/p60-231.pdf>

Overall Workbook Instructions

As mentioned earlier, this workbook is designed for you to pick individual chapters for reflection and/or class discussion. You also have the option of choosing other activities from Sisters' website to enhance students' learning. While you are welcome to pick and choose chapters along with the "Executive Summary", we encourage you to complete the whole workbook!

▪ So, your steps would include:

- 1) Choose whether you would like to assign one or more chapters, in addition to the Executive Summary, from the workbook.
- 2) Have your students read the Executive Summary, along with the chapters you chose.
- 3) Once everyone has completed the reading, use the questions from the workbook that follow each section of the WRAP report, for reflection and/or class discussion.
- 4) Feel free to use the activities also located on Sisters' website to compliment this workbook.

You're done...with the workbook that is! Now the work continues with further education and action! See Sisters Of The Road's website for ways you can get involved! ☺

Executive Summary (pgs. i-iv)

(After reading the Executive Summary from the WRAP report, answer the following questions)

Executive Summary Questions:

- 1) According to the section titled “Executive Summary”, what are some of the root causes to homelessness and poverty in America?
- 2) What is the Housing First Model?
- 3) What is Supportive Housing?
- 4) Why are these programs not working for ending homelessness and poverty?

Critical Thinking Question(s) for Executive Summary:

- 1) Over the last 25 years, funding for affordable housing has dramatically decreased and continues to do so. Explain, in your own words, why this severe lack of funding has caused an increase in homelessness nationwide, given that there have been many programs designed to decrease homelessness and poverty in America.

Chapter 1
An Overview of Contemporary Homelessness and Federal Policy Failures
(pgs. 5-10)

(After reading Chapter 1 from the WRAP report, answer the following questions)

Chapter 1 Questions:

- 1) According to this chapter, how many people are experiencing homelessness in a given year? Which group has been the fastest growing population of people experiencing homelessness?
- 2) What is the connection between the Great Depression, New Deal Policies and The Regan administration?
- 3) Why don't policies and programs like temporary shelters, emergency food and housing, etc. really work when it comes to addressing homelessness?
- 4) What are some of the negative stereotypes of people who experience homelessness?

Critical Thinking Question(s) for Chapter 1:

- 1) Inadequate health care, education, employment and housing systems all contribute homelessness. How does negative stereotyping, in addition to the things mentioned, hurt people who experience homelessness? Give an example.
- 2) Why are negative stereotypes of individuals who experience homelessness so persistent in the United States in the face of overwhelming structural causes of homelessness?

Chapter 2
The Epicenter of Homelessness: Cutbacks in Federal Funding of Affordable Housing (pgs. 11-15)

(After reading Chapter 2 from the WRAP report, answer the following questions)

Chapter 2 Questions:

- 1) What happens to people when there is little or no affordable housing?
- 2) Please define the following terms: deindustrialization, urban renewal, gentrification, and ghettoization.
- 3) How have such as gentrification and urban renewal effect poverty and homelessness in the United States?

Critical Thinking Question(s) for Chapter 2:

- 1) A copy of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) can be found in the Appendix. Please read this document; pay special attention to the Preamble, Article 23 and Article 25. What is the significance of this document in regards to poverty and homelessness?

Chapter 3
Band-aids and Illusions: The Consistent Failure of 25 years of Homeless Policy (pgs. 17-22)

(After reading Chapter 3 from the WRAP report, answer the following questions)

Chapter 3 Questions:

- 1) What was the Stewart B. McKinney Act of 1987? What was the significance of this act in addressing homelessness and poverty?
- 2) Look at Chart 3 provided to you in Chapter 3 of the WRAP report. Please explain, in your own words, what this chart depicts.
- 3) What is supportive housing? What were the flaws of supportive housing?
- 4) What does it mean to criminalize the homeless?
- 5) What was the HOPE VI program? What were the flaws of the HOPE VI program?

Critical Thinking Question(s) for Chapter 3:

- 1) In your own words, describe what you believe the “collective deception about homelessness in the United States” is about.

Chapter 4

Lethal Trade Offs: Funding Destroyers, Tax Subsidies, and Corporate Greed Instead of Affordable Housing Production (pgs. 23-27)

(After reading Chapter 4 from the WRAP report, answer the following questions)

Chapter 4 Questions:

- 1) What is a “lethal trade-off”?
- 2) Look at Chart 6 in Chapter 4 of the WRAP report. Choose one of the lethal trade-offs and explain how it affects the lack of affordable housing and poverty and homelessness in the United States.
- 3) How does government subsidization of homeownership add to the lack of affordable housing in the United States?

Critical Thinking Question(s) for Chapter 4:

- 1) Explain what the phrase, “the rich get richer and the poor get poorer” means in your own words.

Conclusion

Working Together for Human Rights in the United States (pgs. 29-33)

(After reading the Conclusion from the WRAP report, answer the following questions)

Conclusion Questions:

- 1) Given that there was early knowledge of the need for affordable housing, what are some reasons the government did not listen to this need?
- 2) What are some ideas the report gives to begin to end homelessness?

Critical Thinking Question(s) for Conclusion:

- 1) What are some things *you* can do work to end homelessness? Write down at least one thing you will do in the next month to help end homelessness and share it with one other person.

Appendix

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Preamble

Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world,

Whereas disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind, and the advent of a world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people,

Whereas it is essential, if man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rule of law,

Whereas it is essential to promote the development of friendly relations between nations,

Whereas the peoples of the United Nations have in the Charter reaffirmed their faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women and have determined to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom,

Whereas Member States have pledged themselves to achieve, in cooperation with the United Nations, the promotion of universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms,

Whereas a common understanding of these rights and freedoms is of the greatest importance for the full realization of this pledge.

Now, therefore,

The General Assembly,

Proclaims this Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations, to the end that every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms and by

progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance, both among the peoples of Member States themselves and among the peoples of territories under their jurisdiction.

Article 1

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

Article 2

Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status.

Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty.

Article 3

Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.

Article 4

No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.

Article 5

No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Article 6

Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law.

Article 7

All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law. All are entitled to equal protection against any discrimination in violation of this Declaration and against any incitement to such discrimination.

Article 8

Everyone has the right to an effective remedy by the competent national tribunals for acts violating the fundamental rights granted him by the constitution or by law.

Article 9

No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.

Article 10

Everyone is entitled in full equality to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal, in the determination of his rights and obligations and of any criminal charge against him.

Article 11

1. Everyone charged with a penal offence has the right to be presumed innocent until proved guilty according to law in a public trial at which he has had all the guarantees necessary for his defense.
2. No one shall be held guilty of any penal offence on account of any act or omission which did not constitute a penal offence, under national or international law, at the time when it was committed. Nor shall a heavier penalty be imposed than the one that was applicable at the time the penal offence was committed.

Article 12

No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence, or to attacks upon his honor and reputation. Everyone has the right to the protection of the law against such interference or attacks.

Article 13

1. Everyone has the right to freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each State.
2. Everyone has the right to leave any country, including his own, and to return to his country.

Article 14

1. Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution.
2. This right may not be invoked in the case of prosecutions genuinely arising from non-political crimes or from acts contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Article 15

1. Everyone has the right to a nationality.
2. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his nationality nor denied the right to change his nationality.

Article 16

1. Men and women of full age, without any limitation due to race, nationality or religion, have the right to marry and to found a family. They are entitled to equal rights as to marriage, during marriage and at its dissolution.
2. Marriage shall be entered into only with the free and full consent of the intending spouses.
3. The family is the natural and fundamental group unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State.

Article 17

1. Everyone has the right to own property alone as well as in association with others.
2. No one shall be arbitrarily deprived of his property.

Article 18

Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in

community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance.

Article 19

Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.

Article 20

1. Everyone has the right to freedom of peaceful assembly and association.
2. No one may be compelled to belong to an association.

Article 21

1. Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives.
2. Everyone has the right to equal access to public service in his country.
3. The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures.

Article 22

Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realization, through national effort and international co-operation and in accordance with the organization and resources of each State, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity and the free development of his personality.

Article 23

1. Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favorable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment.
2. Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work.
3. Everyone who works has the right to just and favorable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human dignity, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection.

4. Everyone has the right to form and to join trade unions for the protection of his interests.

Article 24

Everyone has the right to rest and leisure, including reasonable limitation of working hours and periodic holidays with pay.

Article 25

1. Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.
2. Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance. All children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy the same social protection.

Article 26

1. Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.
2. Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.
3. Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children.

Article 27

1. Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.

2. Everyone has the right to the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which he is the author.

Article 28

Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration can be fully realized.

Article 29

1. Everyone has duties to the community in which alone the free and full development of his personality is possible.
2. In the exercise of his rights and freedoms, everyone shall be subject only to such limitations as are determined by law solely for the purpose of securing due recognition and respect for the rights and freedoms of others and of meeting the just requirements of morality, public order and the general welfare in a democratic society.
3. These rights and freedoms may in no case be exercised contrary to the purposes and principles of the United Nations.

Article 30

Nothing in this Declaration may be interpreted as implying for any State, group or person any right to engage in any activity or to perform any act aimed at the destruction of any of the rights and freedoms set forth herein.

Resource List

Bureau of Housing and Community Development.
<http://www.portlandonline.com/bhcd/>

Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. Website found at
<http://www.unhchr.ch/undr/lang/eg.htm>. (2005)

Oregon Housing Alliance. <http://www.oregonhousingalliance.org>

Oregon State Board of Education. “Achievement Level Descriptors for Knowledge & Skills Assessments, Mathematics, Reading/Literature and Science”. Accessed from
http://www.ode.state.or.us/teachlearn/standards/contentperformance/achleveldesc_03152007.pdf

United States Census Bureau. “Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2005.” Retrieved from
<http://www.census.gov/prod/2006pubs/p60-231.pdf> on April 12, 2007 (Online Report).

Western Regional Advocacy Project. “Without Housing: Decades of Federal Housing Cutbacks, Massive Homelessness and Policy Failures. Accessed from
http://www.wraphome.org/wh_press_kit/Without_Housing_20061114.pdf