Psychology: Mental Health and Homelessness

What is the Connection between Homelessness and Mental Health?

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| Main symptoms (specific feelings, experiences, behaviors, etc.) | Symptoms for homeless people with mental health issues:  These are only 3 examples of mental health issues related to homelessness there are many more such as Schizophrenia, bipolar disorder and multiple personality disorder.  **Anxiety:** symptoms may include constantly worrying, rapid heartbeat, avoidance behavior, difficult when breathing and an inability to concentrate (“Anxiety disorders.”, 2013).  **Depression:** symptoms of depression can be loss of interest in activities that used to be enjoyable, sleep insomnia, feelings of worthlessness, feelings of hopelessness, suicidal thoughts and outbursts of rage.(“Depression”,2017)    **Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder** (PTSD): Symptoms of PTSD include recurring memories or dreams of a traumatic event, attempting to avoid anything that has any connection to that traumatic event including places, objects and people, negative thoughts and losing the ability to form close relationships (“Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)”, 2017). |
| Causes of Mental Illness from Homelessness or Causes of Homelessness from Mental Illness | Many victims of homelessness are there because they have experienced some sort of trauma, this trauma can cause anxiety and chronic stress. (“When Trauma Affects Learning.” , 2017).  “People with severe mental illness are likewise more likely to become homeless”(Polgar M. & Watson S. N., 2012)  Income insecurity is a major cause of stress and self-doubt for homeless people which can increase the severity of symptoms in mental illnesses such as bipolar disorder, anxiety and depression.  Being homeless has a stigma attached to it so those who are homeless have a significantly lower rate of social interaction because people do not wish to associate with people viewed as lesser than them.(“Improving the health of Canadians”,2007-2008) |
| Effective treatments and success rates | These mental illnesses often go untreated because the person does not have access or does not know about getting treatment for their mental health.  According to Canadian Mental Health Association stable housing is important to maintaining physical and mental health, by providing stable housing patients have had reduced symptoms of mental illnesses (“Homelessness”, 2008).  Providing social support is very important, homeless people will often have a lack of support from family, social support has been linked to a reduction in symptoms so creating better social connections for homeless people may result in better overall mental health because they have more self-worth, less stressed about making more social connections, less worried about what other people think. .(“Improving the health of Canadians”,2007-2008)    A change must be created in modern society, people must view those who are mentally ill and/or homeless as human beings rather than the issues they suffer from. These people must be viewed as equal, by viewing them as helpless it establishes them as lesser is very demeaning and can result in those who are mentally ill to have an increase in symptoms. |
| Famous people with the disorder(if any) | Jim Carrey lived out of his VW bus when he was 12 years old due to financial troubles (Morris, 2013). In an interview Jim Carrey admitted to using Prozac to overcome his depression.(Leung 2004)  Lionel Aldridge was an NFL player when he retired he became a sports analyst and was diagnosed with paranoid schizophrenia, he then became homeless partly due to his diagnosis of schizophrenia.(Eskenazi 1998) |
| General incidence (% of general population affected)   * Who is more likely to have this disorder | Many people tend to be temporarily homeless and will find shelter in the near future. However people who suffer from substance abuse and mental illness tend to be in a permanent state of homelessness, a state where it is extremely difficult to find a home due to their conditions. ”(Polgar M. & Watson S. N., 2012)  “20 to 25% of the homeless population in the United States suffers from some form of severe mental illness. In comparison, only 6% of Americans are severely mentally ill”(“Mental Illness and Homelessness”,2009) |
| Usual age of onset ( at what age does the disorder usually develop?) | Many people are born with mental illness and symptoms only become apparent when traumatic events happen.  The total average age for homeless people is 24 with the average age for single adults being 45 and the average age for people in families is 19.(Lee,2008) |

**References**

Anxiety disorders. (2013, December). Australian Nursing & Midwifery Journal, 21(6), 26+.

Retrieved from

<http://go.galegroup.com/ps/i.do?p=GPS&sw=w&u=peel_dsb&v=2.1&it=r&id=GALE%7CA353517460&asid=f7038d54ca6ae549f8e7afb4c1898211>

This article discusses the topic of anxiety and how the condition functions. The first part of the article is about the extent and symptoms of Anxiety including the methods in which Anxiety is diagnosed. The next part of the article is about the different classifications and sub types of Anxiety as defined using official resources such as the DSM-5. Than the article continues and is about the treatments for Anxiety and the pros and cons for each treatment. The author concludes that people and professional require a greater understanding of people that suffer from anxiety disorders because it is so prevalent in today’s society and so they can understand how to work with people with anxiety. This resource was a great compilation of all the necessary information for Anxiety and summarized much of the information to emphasize important points.

This article provides the information necessary for me to write about the symptoms, causes and classifications of anxiety. Using this information I can show how anxiety can connect to homelessness from its symptoms and how to treat it. This article is unbiased, it comes from a PDSB database and it is published in a credible journal from an official organization. The author is only stating the facts there is no apparent manipulation or goal rather than to provide information to the reader. The unbiased and scientific nature of this source provides my project with added credibility and guarantees correct information going to the audience. An unbiased source is also very important because giving incorrect information may be harmful or offensive to certain people.

Depression (major depressive disorder). (2017, August 16). Retrieved October 22, 2017, from

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/depression/symptoms-causes/syc-20356007>

This article provides a lot of information about the mood disorder Depression and communicates it in an easy to read, summarized manner. The first section Overview just gives a quick introduction to Depression and summarize much of the rest of the website. The second section Symptoms gives many of the possible symptoms to Depression in a point form list as well as informing the reader that these symptoms are normal for people and that it requires a specified frequency and severity to be Depression. The website than informs the reader that they should contact, people they know or medical professionals if they feel that they may be suffering so they can get proper treatment. Next it talks about the causes and the factors that can increase the risk of developing Depression. Finally the last section is about prevention and it discusses how to best treat and help someone with depression.

This source provides all the information that could be required for discussing depression. Through this source I can connect depression to homelessness and use these topics to discuss what a homeless person with depression goes through and how they are related. This source is one of superb credibility, it is from the mayo clinic one of the most renowned research group and medical clinic in the world. The author’s goal is not for personal gain but rather to provide information to readers. This lack of bias is very important when dealing with topics such as depression, giving incorrect or biased information may be damaging to others and offensive to people who suffer from such conditions.

Eskenazi, G. (1998, February 13). Lionel Aldridge, 56, Stalwart On Defense for Packer Teams.

Retrieved November 02, 2017, from <http://www.nytimes.com/1998/02/14/sports/lionel-aldridge-56-stalwart-on-defense-for-packer-teams.html>

The source begins by describing the career and football skills of Lionel Aldridge. Lionel Aldridge played for the Green Bay Packers in the 1960’s. In 1998 Lionel Aldridge was found dead in his apartment. Aldridge was close to become a super bowl broadcaster before his death but could not fulfill that career path. Aldridge suffered from bouts of depression and homelessness which may have caused him to take his life in 1998. In the 1970’s Lionel was hospitalized after experiencing hallucinations and his symptoms aligned with that of depression and schizophrenia. He would later divorce his wife and live in his car for a period of time. Eventually Lionel Aldridge became a spokesperson for mental health issues and discussing homelessness with mental health organizations according to the New York Times.

This source can provide me with information to fulfill the organizer section about celebrities as well as further give evidence that homelessness and mental health issues are correlated. The New York Times is a very credible newspaper and has a good reputation. There appears to be very little bias from the author, the author does not antagonize nor glorify Aldridge but rather treats him as a normal flawed human being. The author attempts to describe the life of Lionel Aldridge in a balanced and fair way, they want to make people aware of the life of Lionel Aldridge and be aware of the tragedy that has occurred.

Homelessness. (2008, November 3). Retrieved October 22, 2017, from

<https://cmha.ca/public-policy/subject/homelessness/>

This source begins with describing the connection between homelessness and mental health. The source mentions that “People with serious mental illness are disproportionately affected by homelessness” and how those with severe mental illness will remain homeless for longer periods of time. After the connection is established the sources goes on to describe the treatment, mentioning that “Housing with support can generate positive outcomes” and that those who have stable housing may suffer from less of their symptoms.

This source establishes the connection between homelessness and mental health, the central point of the project. It provides me with evidence that not only does mental illness contribute to prolonged homelessness but that stable housing can help those who suffer from mental illnesses. This source is unbiased and comes from a credible institution. The Canadian Mental Health Association is an organization which focuses on treatment for those who suffer from mental health issues across Canada. Though it should be noted this is an older article so some information may be outdated but most likely the information is still correct. The author’s goal is to advertise methods to provide better treatment for those who are mentally ill and homeless.

Improving the health of Canadians, 2007-2008: mental health and homelessness. (2007).

Retrieved October 22, 2017, from <http://www.cpa.ca/cpasite/UserFiles/Documents/Practice_Page/mental_health_homelessness_en.pdf>

This source is about the connection between homelessness and mental health. The first part of this document is about the definitions and scope of homelessness, it provides an introduction to the topic of homelessness and mental health. It then gets to the main point of the document, it talks about the different connections between homelessness and mental health. Then on page 12 it determines possible factors which can lead to and cause these issues. The source mentions five different ways that homelessness and mental health are related by stress, coping, social support, self-esteem and suicidal behaviours. It also provides information on the relationship between mental illness and homelessness, including Schizophrenia, Substance abuse and Depression. After discussing these relationships, the document progresses to the second part in which it discusses current and possible solutions to these issues. The pages 26 and 27 are about how Canada has previously and currently treated those who are homeless and those who suffer from mental health issues. Pages 29-33 then proceeds to discuss future solutions for dealing with these problems and how best to treat those who suffer from them. It mentions programs to be implemented such as providing stable housing to those who have mental illnesses. Finally the source concludes itself by summarizing its arguments and providing references.

This source is very extensive and provides a significant amount of information. This source provides me with multiple points about the connection between homelessness and mental health, the central theme of the project. This source also provides me with treatments and causes for these issues which is critical information for this project. This source is credible and provides factual information. The source is the Canadian Psychological Association which is a government owned institution that aims to suggest policy changes, publish articles related to psychology and to raise awareness for mental health issues. There is no clear bias in this source, the source is government owned however it has full autonomy and sometimes even critiques government policy decisions. The goal of this journal article is to suggest changes to government policy and compiles different sources to provide a concise academic document about the connection between homelessness and mental health issues.

Lee, J. (2008, June 25). To Be Young (Like 9, on Average?) and Homeless. Retrieved October

22, 2017, from <https://cityroom.blogs.nytimes.com/2008/06/25/to-be-young-like-9-on-average-and-homeless/>

An organization called the Coalition for the Homeless made a video that attempts to raise awareness about homelessness. In the video it mentions that the average homeless person is 9 years old. This article calls this assertion into question and criticizes the credibility of the Coalition for the Homeless. The article cites New York City’s Department of Homeless Service’s spokeswoman Heather Janik who says “the department data showed that the average age across the whole system was 24; the average age of single adults was 45, and the average age of people in families, with children and without, was 19”. It mentions that there is no evidence to support the idea that the average age of homeless people in New York City is 9 years old. Even though the article criticizes the organization it does mention there is a problem where significant amount of children are homeless.

This article provides statistics and information about the ages of people who are homeless. This provides information for my project about when people tend to become homeless and can indicate the causes for homelessness. This article comes from a credible source, the New York Times one of the most popular newspapers in the world. The New York Times specializes in news rather than scientific information, however that does not mean this is a bad source. The article quotes many specialists and official sources who can provide a more informed, scientific opinion. In theory newspapers are supposed to be unbiased however in practice many newspaper articles contain bias from their author. This article is clearly biased against the Coalition for the Homeless, the article thoroughly criticizes this organization and the point of the article is to disprove the statistics of that the average age for the homeless is age 9. The information in this article is not incorrect though, the article can be useful if the bias is taken into account. The author’s motive is to harm the Coalition for the Homeless and disprove the statistics they have provided.

Leung, R. (2004, November 22). Carrey: 'Life Is Too Beautiful'. Retrieved November 01, 2017,

from <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/carrey-life-is-too-beautiful/>

In this interview Jim Carrey discusses his depression and the struggle he has been forced through. The article begins by describing Jim Carrey claiming that he is a famous, funny and rich comedian. Jim Carrey then discusses his philosophy stating that people should focus on what’s important and live in the moment. Jim Carrey then talks about the stress he suffered at a young age including when he was in poverty, he had to work at a young age and he had a lot of pressure to bring home money to provide for himself and his family. Later Carrey mentions that he was on Prozac for a period of time to help with his depression, he mentioned that many people get addicted and cannot quit but he could. Finally Jim Carrey talks about how he does not use any form of drug not even coffee and says that religion is not matter to him he just wishes to live in a loving place.

This source is useful because it can provide my project with information regarding celebrities with mental illness and possibly with concurrent mental health issues since Jim Carrey was on Prozac. CBS news and 60 minutes are trustworthy and credible sources, they get the information from the primary source which is Jim Carrey. There is very little bias evident in this interview because much of it is spent with Jim Carrey talking rather than him being asked questions. CBS however does have an incentive to sensationalize this interview. The company’s aim is to get juicy information from Jim Carrey to exploit it. The interviewer wants to show the difficulty Jim Carrey has faced however they also want to get possibly interesting information.

Malzone, M. G., MS, & Oberleitner, M. G., DNS, RN. (2016). Health Needs of Vulnerable

Populations. In D. S. Blanchfield (Ed.), The Gale Encyclopedia of Children's Health: Infancy through Adolescence (3rd ed., Vol. 2, pp. 1216-1220). Farmington Hills, MI: Gale. Retrieved from [http://go.galegroup.com/ps/i.do?p=HWRC&sw=w& u=peel\_dsb&v=2.1&it=r&id=GALE%7CCX3630900364&asid=8f411d32bc4f176ed7a88af0df3bc7f7](http://go.galegroup.com/ps/i.do?p=HWRC&sw=w&%20u=peel_dsb&v=2.1&it=r&id=GALE%7CCX3630900364&asid=8f411d32bc4f176ed7a88af0df3bc7f7)

The source begins by defining and describing the problems that those who are vulnerable specifically children and families suffer from. It mentions that these vulnerable youth have a higher risk of having mental or physical issues. Also noting that these vulnerable youth receive less health care due to inability to access it so these risks of health problems are increased even more. Those who are homeless are often in situations that can cause more issues such as dust triggering asthma and a lack of nutritional food causing possible vitamin deficiencies. The source then discusses the troubles faced by homeless youth without a guardian. Those without a reliable adult mentor may face immense peer pressure to commit risky acts. Many teenagers who are left without a mentor may become pregnant due to the lack of access to affordable contraception, addicted to drugs and possibly exploited sexually due to a lack of oversight and protection. These events can be physically and mentally scarring especially to youth who have no family to rely on. The article continues to list possible prevention and treatment strategies to prevent this dangerous situation.

This source provides information that aligns with my thesis that homelessness and mental health issues are correlated. It gives information about the ways homelessness can cause mental health issues and ways to protect homeless youth from these issues. This source was retrieved by using the PDSB approved database Gale Powersearch. The source is credible and provides reliable, factual information to the reader. The author has very little bias and attempts to communicate information in an unbiased, scientific manner. The only clear bias is that the author is actively pushing their agenda that these homeless youth must be properly treated and given resources to protect them. The author emphasizes the struggle these homeless youth must suffer through to create sympathy for the homeless youth from the reader. This bias is not very harmful and it is rather noble because it is used to help those in need and protect those who are vulnerable. The author’s purpose for writing this article was to raise awareness for what the homeless youth must suffer through and advertise solutions to help these people.

Mental Illness and Homelessness. (2009, July). Retrieved October 22, 2017, from

<http://www.nationalhomeless.org/factsheets/Mental_Illness.pdf>

The article begins by stating statistics which show the prevalence of mental illness in the homeless in the United States of America. The source compares the prevalence of mental illness in all of the country to the prevalence of mental illness in the homeless population which shows that homeless people are disproportionately affected by mental illness compared to the rest of the country. The source next discusses the possible connections between mental illness and homelessness. Examples are given to show possible connections including that people who have mental health issues may lack social skills causing them to be homeless and that they may not be able to support themselves so become homeless due to their mental health issues. The article then transitions to the topic of policy where it suggests solutions and critiques modern strategies to combat this issue. It is suggested that providing better funding and application of mental health services would lower the homelessness rate because those who suffer will learn to cope and be treated for their issues which may have caused them to not be able to live in a home. It also suggests that providing homes for those with mental health issues is not the perfect solution because these people require social support, they must live in an environment which provides employment opportunities, mental health treatment and a community which accepts them rather than excludes them.

This source provides my project with important information regarding possible solutions to the mental health and homelessness connection. It also provides my project with important statistics which can be incredibly valuable when attempting to prove something to another person. This source has a fair amount of credibility, it is published on a website which provides support for those who are homeless across the United States of America. The source also has many references which is a good indicator to the credibility of the source since it proves that the information is backed up by other reports. There is still though a fair amount of bias in this article, the goal for this organization is to create a systemic change in the way people treat the homeless. It is clear that the author is attempting to emphasize the suffering these homeless people go through to push their agenda that these people must be helped. It also has bias because their goal as an organization is to create change to the system and the way people treat the homeless, so the author is obviously going to criticize the current model for dealing with homelessness. The author’s goal with publishing this article is to raise awareness for the issue of homelessness and advocate certain methods to deal with homelessness.

Morris, S. (2013, July 11). Stars Who Were Once Homeless. Retrieved November 01, 2017,

from <http://newsfeed.time.com/2013/07/11/stars-who-were-once-homeless/slide/jim-carrey/>

This is a very short article about how Jim Carrey was homeless. When Jim Carrey was 12 years old his father lost his job, this meant that he had to live in a van and it was traumatic to him. Jim Carrey is a former stand-up comedian and is now a Hollywood actor.

This can be used for when I do the project to show celebrities who have been homeless. Time magazine is a very credible source a well-respected news magazine Even though the source if published in a credible magazine the unbiased nature is questionable, the writing attempts to sensationalize Jim Carrey’s experiences and tries to show him as a person who overcame obstacles to become famous. It is true Jim Carrey suffered however the writing appears to exaggerate the circumstances. The author’s goal is to create a sensational headline which will cause people to read their article, they are attempting to exploit someone’s experiences for profit.

Polgar, M., & Watson, S. N. (2012). Homelessness. In K. Key (Ed.), The Gale Encyclopedia of

Mental Health (3rd ed., Vol. 1, pp. 766-770). Detroit: Gale. Retrieved from <http://go.galegroup.com/ps/i.do?p=HWRC&sw=w&u=peel_dsb&v=2.1&it=r&id=GALE%7CCX4013200229&asid=e9bf487b55ab8b243d75111d0ed57ce1>

The article is split into seven different sections: Definition, Demographics, Description, Causes and consequences, Treatment, Prognosis and Prevention. In the definition section it defines someone who is homeless “as any individual who lacks housing” and proceeds to discuss the meaning of someone who is homeless. In Demographics the author attempts to identify how many homeless people exist in the United States of America and where they choose to seek shelter. The author points out many possible statistics but concludes that “’By its very nature, homelessness is impossible to measure with 100% accuracy’”. In Causes and consequences the author attempts to analyze what causes homelessness and what are the consequences of it. The author states that “As deinstitutionalization occurred, for example, the number of mentally ill people without homes increased”. The author states that the consequences of homelessness include a lack of access to social support and basic needs which are essential to survival. Under treatment the author suggests that to cure homelessness one must be guaranteed employment and housing, one method to do this is by educating these people and training them for the workplace so they can support themselves. The prognosis says that homelessness is not caused by one thing, the homeless are a diverse community but we must consider homelessness to be a national issue and make the steps to fix it. Finally there is the section of prevention which discusses different strategies that governments and people can do to prevent chronic homelessness. The suggestions were to support efforts to provide services to the homeless, educate people about the struggle that the homeless face and to stop considering those who are homeless or mentally ill as defined by their circumstances rather view them as individuals.

This is a very lengthy document which compiles a lot of important information. It can provide my project with countless statistics about the demographics of the homeless, the programs that have been attempted by different organizations, the causes of homelessness and the best solutions for solving the issue of Homelessness. All the information is displayed in an accurate and detailed way. This article is a very scientific and professionally written one, it provides facts in an unbiased manner. There are no clear signs of bias, when the author criticizes practices they do not emphasize it, they suggest improvements, the author does not attempt to establish an opinion in the reader. This source was found through the PDSB approved database Gale Powersearch which gather data only from credible and trusted sources. The authors’ credentials are unknown however they most likely contain doctorates due to the professional nature of the article and the high standards of the publisher. The author’s goal in this article is to solve this issue of homelessness and develop strategies to prevent chronic homelessness

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). (2017, February 18). Retrieved October 22, 2017, from

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/post-traumatic-stress->

disorder/symptoms-causes/syc-20355967

The article starts by giving an overview of what Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is and summarizes what will happen further in the article. The next section discusses the symptoms of PTSD which includes intrusive memories, avoidance, negative thoughts and changes in reactions to events. After the symptoms it describes what to do if you or someone you know may suffer from PTSD which includes seeing a doctor or contacting close friends or family members. Then it describes the causes of PTSD, PTSD happens when someone undergoes physical or mental trauma which causes permanent damage, psychologists are not sure why some people get PTSD and others do not but it may be due to genetics, brain chemistry and the severity of such trauma. Finally the website describes ways to prevent PTSD, it is mentioned that the symptoms for PTSD are common among those who have experienced traumatic events but often disappears if they have experienced social support from close members of their family and community.

This article provides me with much of the information that I require to properly discuss PTSD. It explains the symptoms, causes and possible treatments all the things that I require for my organizer and presentation. This article comes from the most prestigious medical company in the world, the mayo clinic. The mayo clinic is one of the biggest non-profit medical research group in the world. The mayo clinic is a very credible and trustworthy source. The author has no apparent bias, the article is a simple statement of facts there is no opinion or unworthy emphasis placed on anything. The author’s goal is to advertise the facts listed and provide greater awareness for the mental illness of PTSD.

When Trauma Affects Learning. (2017, May). Officer.com. Retrieved from

[http://go.galegroup.com/ps/i.do?p=GPS&sw=w&u=peel\_dsb&v=2.1&it=r&id=GALE%](http://go.galegroup.com/ps/i.do?p=GPS&sw=w&u=peel_dsb&v=2.1&it=r&id=GALE%25)7CA490963175&asid=130b1d2bd3fd0f3da2d180a0d08b7ebb

The article begins by describing the importance of dealing with trauma when students are developing. The article first mentions a study called the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) study where it was found that negative experiences as a child have a profound effect on a person’s health and that it is a lot more prevalent in society than previously thought. Due to the ACE study schools wanted to develop programs to help better deal with children who have experienced trauma, the solution was to create a book called “The Heart of Learning and Teaching: Compassion, Resiliency and Academic Success” which teaches teachers how to deal with students affected by trauma. After the ACE study the article talks about how trauma affects learning. The author then talks about how those who suffer from trauma and chronic stress cannot focus which causes them to drop out or to do very poorly in academic situations. Many of the children who have experienced this trauma will experience anxiety which is very difficult to deal with since students suffer from stress. The author then concludes the article by mentioning that teachers need to be knowledgeable about how to deal with students who suffer from trauma and that we must change the way we view these students since many of them are suffering greatly.

This article gives me evidence and supports my thesis that homelessness is connected to mental illness. It is mentioned that trauma can cause people to suffer from anxiety and chronic stress, such trauma may be the one that caused these people to be homeless. This article supports my idea that those who become homeless are at a greater risk for having severe mental health issues. The source in this case is obtained through a PDSB approved database called the Gale Powersearch. The sources in the database are scanned to guarantee their credibility and factual nature. There is some bias to this article and from this author but it does not affect the material very much. The author in this article clearly favours the technique of compassionate schools, the author emphasizes the importance of giving teachers lessons about dealing with students who suffer from trauma and does not mention any possible negatives. This bias does not affect the material too much because much of it is about the effect trauma has on students but the bias should be taken into account when treatments for trauma is discussed. The goal of this article is to raise awareness about students who suffer from trauma and the symptoms they face as well as advertising a method to treat this in the form of compassionate schools.