

HOMELESS POPULATION



Table Of Content

3

Homeless Population

8

Future plans to improve the issue

4

History of Homelessness

9

Call to action

5

Homeless population in Canada

10

Works Cited

7

How to make a difference?

Homeless Population

Homelessness is a global crisis that impacts countless individuals worldwide. Its effects are significant, causing widespread repercussions on many lives.

It is a grave issue where individuals or families lack a regular and suitable place to spend the night. Often, these individuals seek refuge in shelters or institutions designated for homeless populations.

The primary causes of this social issue are poverty and a shortage of reasonably priced homes. Additionally, the homeless demographic is exposed to challenges related to poor physical health and severe mental health issues.

History of Homelessness

It is fair to say that homelessness has been a major problem since the beginning of small communities, and it is possible to elaborate the term "Homelessness" within specific regions.

For instance, in the United States, the terminology associated with homelessness included phrases like "Wandering poor" or "Vagrants" for males and "transients" for females, dating back to the 1600s.

Later, the term "homeless" earned a reputation and came into use around 1830.



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Homeless population in Canada

Although the term "homelessness" has existed in Canada, the situation itself was not considered a significant concern until the early 1980s. During this period, a significant increase in homelessness emerged following government cutbacks in housing-related programs.

Available data regarding the homeless population in Canada revealed high numbers. In 2014, over 235,000 Canadians were reported as homeless, with a majority seeking refuge in emergency shelters.

Recent statistics suggest that as many as 50,000 individuals are currently homeless in Canada in 2023, with 62% being males and 30% belonging to the indigenous community.



Furthermore, in Canada, certain specific groups are at a high risk of experiencing homelessness.

It was revealed that individuals who experience recurring homelessness experience low quality of life and higher rates of physical problems.

It was also found that drug problems are common among the Canadian homeless population, especially among single, less educated, homeless males.

The issue of the homeless population in Canada also shows another difficulty. The governing system in Canada contributes to worsening the challenge of resolving homelessness due to its tripartite system, consisting of federal, provincial, and municipal levels.

Primarily, the federal level controls the entire country, formulating policies and allocating funds to address the most prevailing groups among the homeless population.

Secondly, the provincial level manages available funds within its territorial jurisdiction, considering various concerns such as mental illness, addiction, and child protection, among others.

Thirdly, the municipal level practices in the execution and assistance of the proposed policies within the allocated funds. Thus, if the policies developed at the federal level lack suitability and development, the other tiers of governance are deeply affected. This is especially concerning considering when it comes to lack of coordination among these three levels.



How to make a Difference?

It was suggested that a group of factors, such as poverty, unaffordable housing, physical and mental health challenges, social exclusion, family breakdown, histories of abuse, experiences in foster care, prior imprisonment, and even suicide attempts, are associated with the risk of homelessness. When it comes to making a change, economic issues like poverty and the challenge of costly housing could be reduced by implementing governmental assistance programs.

Such support could be directed towards individuals struggling with poverty due to mental health issues, assisting them in affording rent or housing expenses. Secondly, healthrelated concerns might be targeted at earlier stages. The development of preventive health promotion policies could significantly contribute to this goal. Additionally, social issues could also be addressed by providing coaching and support at earlier stages, aiming to reduce the risk factors that might contribute to homelessness.

Lastly, efforts from the scientific community might help to explore the issue of homelessness more carefully. Such efforts might help to provide comprehensive data and insightful recommendations for resolving this crisis effectively.

Future plans to improve the issue



In Canada, it has been known that the homeless population faces numerous challenges, mainly in accessing proper healthcare services and support. Their experiences in healthcare facilities are obstructed by limited professional assistance and financial support.

Therefore, strategies addressing these issues should prioritize ensuring easy and sufficient access to healthcare systems for the homeless population.

Also, citizens and government should contribute to reducing exposure to risk factors and increase opportunities to improve the conditions of homeless individuals, which can be achieved through creating policies and procedures aimed at enhancing housing, healthcare, and social aspects of the homeless population.

Call to action

Considering the risk of developing mental health issues among the homeless population, I would offer a proposal aimed at enhancing the mental well-being of homeless individuals. In today's world, many coaching and training methods exist to assist people in managing stressful life events and various mental health problems. Therefore, I would like to offer a proposal for establishing a mental health center specifically for homeless individuals. Through crowdfunding campaigns, funds can be raised to employ specialists, coaches, and consultants dedicated to formulating practical strategies and action plans for the good of the homeless community.

The purpose would be to develop strategies that promote mental health, relieving some of the distress and stress experienced by this vulnerable group of people. People's participation in this effort can significantly contribute to making a positive difference in the lives of homeless individuals.



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THANK
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