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Introduction:

Housing insecurity is a prevalent public health issue that affects millions of individuals worldwide. In this social analysis, we will focus on the housing insecurity challenges faced by low-income families in New York City (NYC), a densely populated urban area known for its high housing costs and stark income inequality (Kutty, 2017). NYC is a diverse and vibrant city with a population of over 8 million people, yet it is also a place where a significant number of residents struggle to secure adequate housing (NYC Department of City Planning, 2021). The purpose of this social analysis is to examine the social determinants linked to housing insecurity, the broader social, cultural, and political consequences, and the current responses by the community, government, and other agencies to address this issue in the priority population of low-income families in New York City.

Public Health Issue: Housing Insecurity

Housing insecurity refers to a lack of stable, safe, and affordable housing for individuals and families. It is a pressing issue in New York City, where the increasing cost of living, coupled with a growing gap between income and housing prices, has led to a significant number of low-income families struggling to secure adequate housing (Been et al., 2019). In New York City, housing insecurity disproportionately affects families living below the poverty line, single-parent households, and racial/ethnic minority groups (Joint Center for Housing Studies, 2019). The social distribution of housing insecurity in New York City is characterized by a concentration of low-income neighborhoods, such as those in the Bronx and Central Brooklyn, with limited access to affordable housing options, resulting in overcrowded living conditions and high eviction rates (NYC Department of City Planning, 2021; Desmond, 2016).

Moreover, the scarcity of affordable housing in NYC is exacerbated by factors such as gentrification, which displaces lower-income residents and contributes to homelessness (Newman & Wyly, 2006). The challenges faced by low-income families in NYC are further compounded by the city's aging housing stock, which leads to inadequate living conditions and health hazards, such as exposure to lead paint, mold, and pests (NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, 2018). Additionally, the city's complex regulations and zoning laws can create barriers to the development of affordable housing, hindering efforts to address housing insecurity (Angotti, 2016).