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1.6 Million Children Homeless in America

Child Homelessness Increased By 38% During Recession Era

More than 1.6 million children or one in 45 are homeless annually in America—according to a new report released today by The National Center on Family Homelessness. This represents an increase of 38% during the years impacted by the economic recession (2007 to 2010). The 124-page report, *America's Youngest Outcasts 2010* (see www.HomelessChildrenAmerica.org), ranks the 50 states from best (1) to worst (50) and offers specific policy solutions.

The report, which updates a previous study by The National Center, looks at trends in child homelessness from 2006 to 2010 using data and research on the extent of child homelessness, child well-being, risk for homelessness, and state policy and planning efforts. Data from the original report showed that more than one in 50 children were homeless annually in America. That dropped to one in 63 in the recovery from Hurricanes Rita and Katrina and has increased since.

“The Recession has been a man-made disaster for vulnerable children,” said Ellen L. Bassuk, MD, President and Founder of The National Center on Family Homelessness and Associate Professor of Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School. “There are more homeless children today than after the natural disasters of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, which caused historic levels of homelessness in 2006. The Recession’s economic devastation has left one in 45 children homeless in a year—an increase of 38% from 2007 to 2010.”

The report finds that children experiencing homelessness in America suffer from hunger and poor physical and emotional health as well as limited academic proficiency in reading and math. The constant barrage of stressful and traumatic experiences has profound effects on their development and ability to learn.

According to *America's Youngest Outcasts 2010*:

- 1.6 million American children, or one in 45, are homeless in a year.
- This equates to more than 30,000 children each week, and more than 4,400 each day.
- Children experiencing homelessness suffer from hunger, poor physical and emotional health, and missed educational opportunities
- A majority of these children have limited proficiency in math and reading.
- The risks for child homelessness—such as extreme poverty and worst case housing needs—have worsened with the economic recession, even though the total housing capacity for families increased by more than 15,000 units in the past four years, primarily due to the federal Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing Program (HPRP).

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- Planning and policy activities to support these vulnerable children remain limited. Sixteen states have done no planning related to child homelessness, and only seven states have extensive plans.

“In the face of this man-made disaster, there must be no further cuts in federal and state programs that help homeless children and families. Deeper cuts will only create more homelessness that will cost us more to fix in the long run,” Bassuk concluded. “We can take specific action now in areas of housing, child care, education, domestic violence, and employment and training to stabilize vulnerable families and prevent child homelessness.”

The top and bottom ranked states are as follows:

<u>Top Ranked</u>	<u>Bottom Ranked</u>
1. Vermont	41. Georgia
2. Minnesota	42. Florida
3. Nebraska	43. Nevada
4. North Dakota	44. Louisiana
5. Maine	45. New Mexico
6. New Hampshire	46. California
7. New Jersey	47. Arizona
8. Massachusetts	48. Arkansas
9. Montana	49. Mississippi
10. Iowa	50. Alabama

Campaign to End Child Homelessness

The Campaign to End Child Homelessness was launched by The National Center on Family Homelessness to increase public awareness, inform policy solutions, share tools and best practices with community caregivers, and lead state and national advocacy efforts. For more information, visit www.HomelessChildrenAmerica.org.

The National Center on Family Homelessness

The National Center on Family Homelessness, founded in 1988, is the leading organization focused solely on ending homelessness for children and families in America. With the power of knowledge and the will to act, we can give every child a chance. For more information, visit www.familyhomelessness.org. Find us on Facebook and Twitter.

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