FamilyPromise

Child & Family Homelessness in the United States

Child and family homelessness is increasing in the United States.

- Over 1.5 million school-age children in the United States experienced homelessness in the 2023-2024 school year, the highest number on record.
- There has been a 136% increase in the number of school-age children experiencing homelessness in the past 20 years.
- Over 500,000 infants and toddlers aged 0-3 experienced homelessness from 2023 to 2024.
- The number of families with children experiencing homelessness in shelters or on the street increased by nearly 40% in 2024 and only decreased slightly in 2025.

Many families are experiencing housing instability.

- Over 30% of children live in families struggling to afford housing.
- Young children are most at risk of experiencing an eviction. Each year, 1.5 million children are evicted from their homes.
- Rents nationwide have increased by 30% over the last 5 years, rising much faster than wages in many places.
- Only 35 available and affordable homes exist for every 100 extremely low-income renter households.

Early intervention is key to end homelessness.

- The earlier and longer a child experiences homelessness, the more dangerous it is to their healthy development.
- Ignoring child homelessness is short-sighted, as most homeless adults first experienced homelessness as children.
- Family homelessness and housing instability result in billions of dollars in avoidable health care and education costs each year.

What is not seen doesn't get solved.

- Family homelessness is often hidden in communities. Parents will do anything to keep their kids off the street, and most communities do not have enough family shelters to meet the growing need.
- Families go wherever they can, often to precarious situations such as living in their cars, temporarily staying with others, or spending their last dime on an overcrowded motel room.
- These less visible situations allow them to fall through the gaps for assistance intended to help families stabilize and find stable housing.

Child and family homelessness is solvable.

- Strengthen early interventions to address family homelessness and limit trauma for children.
- Improve the quality and efficiency of homelessness assistance.
- Increase access to rental assistance and the supply of affordable housing for families
- Make the investments needed for all children and families to thrive.

Please visit Family Promise's Policy Platform for specific policies to prevent and end child and family homelessness in the United States.

Family Promise has been working to prevent and end homelessness for almost 40 years. We operate nearly 180 sites across the country and serve over 30,000 families annually, delivering innovative solutions to address family homelessness, including eviction prevention, shelter diversion, emergency shelter, stabilization assistance, and housing programs. Over 80% of the families that Family Promise serves secure or maintain long-term housing because we understand that ending family homelessness requires more than simply providing a roof. It demands a holistic, service-enriched approach that addresses the root causes of housing instability.

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