

Some recommended resources related to homelessness and housing

From Julie Ann Winkelstein

There are so many great organizations and resources related to this topic. These are some I recommend.

Note: You can subscribe to the newsletters from many of the organizations listed here and that is a great way to stay informed and current on the topic of homelessness.

Library Resources

Hunger, Homelessness and Poverty Task Force (HHPTF) (ALA)

<http://www.ala.org/rt/srrt/hunger-homelessness-and-poverty-task-force-hhptf>

<http://hhptf.org/>

A task force of the ALA Social Responsibilities Round Table.

Charge: "Fosters greater awareness of the dimensions, causes, and ways to end hunger, homelessness, and poverty."

Includes resources and the opportunity for library staff to be involved in addressing homelessness and poverty, through online and face-to-face conversations.

"Veterans Connect @ the Library"

<https://calibrariesforveterans.org/>

California library program for veterans.

"Community-Led Libraries Toolkit" from the "Working Together Project"

https://www.vpl.ca/resources/Community-Led_Libraries_Toolkit.pdf

Highly recommended for gaining insight into how to serve all community members well.

IFLA Guidelines for Library Services to People Experiencing Homelessness

www.ifla.org/publications/node/12642

This thorough international guide covers a range of topics, including adults, families with children, unaccompanied youth, refugees and more. It also includes an Executive Summary, as well as a checklist.

National Organizations

National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH)

<https://endhomelessness.org/>

Excellent organization with extensive resources, including webinars, videos, publications. Can subscribe for email updates.

National Homelessness Law Center

www.nlchp.org/news

Includes a range of articles related to laws and homelessness. Extensive insight into various topics, such as tent communities, McKinney-Vento awards, the criminalization of sleeping in public, anti-panhandling laws, and more.

Homeless Hub

<https://www.homelesshub.ca/>

Outstanding Canadian organization that addresses homelessness in its many forms. Includes extensive resources and research for homelessness among all ages. Although Canadian, resources are applicable for the US. Highly recommended.

United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH)

<https://www.usich.gov/>

“The U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness leads the national effort to prevent and end homelessness in America. We drive action among our 19 federal member agencies and foster partnerships at every level of government and with the private sector.”

Website includes tools, webinars, resources and information.

Western Regional Advocacy Project (WRAP)

<https://wraphome.org/>

Advocacy organization centered in the western US. Very action-oriented and passionate about their work.

The National Coalition for the Homeless

<https://nationalhomeless.org/>

*“The National Coalition for the Homeless is a national network of people who are currently experiencing or who have experienced homelessness, activists and advocates, community-based and faith-based service providers, and others committed to a single mission: **To end and prevent homelessness while ensuring the immediate needs of those experiencing homelessness are met and their civil rights are respected and protected.**”*

Provides passionate, informed information, resources, suggestions, ideas for addressing homelessness in the US.

lava maeX

<https://lavamaex.org/>

“LavamaeX is a nonprofit accelerator changing the way the world sees and serves our unhoused neighbors.”

Outstanding organization, dedicated to providing mobile shower services, but also extending their reach to provide “real-world training while expanding local access.” The tone of their website and vision is a great model for libraries.

Justice in Aging: Fighting Senior Poverty Through Law

<https://justiceinaging.org/>

“We focus our advocacy, training, and litigation on the two areas where we can have the most impact on the lives of low-income seniors – Health Care and Economic Security.”

Excellent organization that provides resources and information addressing multiple aspects of aging, including homelessness. One publication, called “How to Prevent and End Homelessness Among Older Adults,” offers outstanding insights and suggestions and a moving video about Bill: <https://vimeo.com/162403308>

Social Work/Related Topics

“Supporting autonomy while setting clear boundaries” by Elissa Hardy and Jean Badalamenti.

<http://publiclibrariesonline.org/2019/02/supporting-autonomy-while-setting-clear-boundaries/>

Excellent article by two social workers in libraries.

“Implementing a Trauma-Informed Care Approach” by Rhiannon B. Eades

<http://publiclibrariesonline.org/2020/04/implementing-a-trauma-informed-approach/>

Inspiring article about the Athens-Clarke County (GA) Library’s commitment to providing a trauma-informed approach at the library.

“What is Trauma-Informed Care?”

<http://socialwork.buffalo.edu/social-research/institutes-centers/institute-on-trauma-and-trauma-informed-care/what-is-trauma-informed-care.html>

Good basic information about trauma-informed care.

PLA Social Work Interest Group/PLA Social Work Interest Group Virtual Forum Series

<https://connect.ala.org/pla/communities/community-home?CommunityKey=5c2df085-e960-4608-87e7-fc132b3a43d9>

“This community is for anyone interested in learning more about social work in public libraries. The PLA Social Worker Task Force will use this space to discuss issues facing public libraries, provide a space to connect with others, generate and share best practices and resources.”

Whole Person Librarianship (WPL) Listserv

<https://groups.google.com/g/wpl-cop/about>

Excellent place to hear from social workers in libraries and ask questions. This is a Google group that can be subscribed to.

PACEs (Positive and Adverse Childhood Experiences) Connection

<https://www.pacesconnection.com/>

“PACEs Connection, an ever-growing social network, connects those who are implementing trauma-informed and resilience-building practices based on ACEs science. The network’s 40,000+ members share their best practices, while inspiring each other to grow the PACEs movement.”

An abundance of articles and information about addressing Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). Worth subscribing to their listserv.

“Vulnerable to Hate: A Survey of Bias-Motivated Violence Against People Experiencing Homelessness.” From the National Alliance to End Homelessness

<https://nationalhomeless.org/vulnerable-to-hate-2016-2017/>

Disturbing and important report on violence against people experiencing homelessness. Highly recommended.

Housing

FAHE: “Summary of Issues Facing Rural Housing”

<https://fahe.org/wp-content/uploads/Summary-of-Issues-Facing-Rural-Housing-V1.2.pdf>

As the title indicates, this is an excellent overview of housing issues in rural areas.

Homebase

<https://www.homebaseccc.org/>

A great example of an organization dedicated to “building community capacity to prevent and end homelessness.”

National Low Income Housing Coalition

<https://nlihc.org/>

“The National Low Income Housing Coalition is dedicated solely to achieving socially just public policy that ensures people with the lowest incomes in the United States have affordable and decent homes.”

Excellent organization that provides information, recorded webinars, resources, policy information. Well worth subscribing to their listserv.

Children/Youth/Student Homelessness

National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth (NAEHCY)

<https://naehcy.org/>

“The National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth (NAEHCY) is a national membership association dedicated to ensuring educational equity and excellence for children and youth experiencing homelessness.”

Excellent and dedicated organization that provides support, resources, an annual conference and more.

SchoolHouse Connection

<https://schoolhouseconnection.org/>

“SchoolHouse Connection is the nation’s leading expert on the early care and education of children and youth experiencing homelessness.”

Outstanding organization with a range of excellent materials, including resources and webinars.

Point Source Youth

<https://www.pointsourceyouth.org/>

Outstanding organization addressing youth homelessness, with extensive resources and youth videos. Highly recommended.

“Voices of Youth Count”

<https://voicesofyouthcount.org/>

“Voices of Youth Count (VoYC) is a national initiative designed to fill gaps in the nation’s knowledge about the scope and scale of youth homelessness, as well as the life circumstances and experiences of runaway, unaccompanied homeless and unstably housed youth between the ages of 13 and 25 years old.”

Humboldt State University: “Homeless students’ photography to show life and strength.”

<http://now.humboldt.edu/news/homeless-students-photography-to-show-life-and-strength/>

Brief and excellent article about photographs taken by unstably housed college students. Great model for libraries!

“The Hope Center for College, Community and Justice”

<https://hope4college.com/>

Dedicated to making sure all students have their basic needs met, so they can attend and graduate from college.

“What Do Asthma, Heart Disease and Cancer Have in Common? Maybe Childhood Trauma.”

www.npr.org/sections/ed/2018/01/23/578280721/what-do-asthma-heart-disease-and-cancer-have-in-common-maybe-childhood-trauma

Excellent article/audio on the health effects of trauma, with a great explanation of toxic stress.

***New York State Technical & Education Assistance Center for Homeless Students**

www.nysteachs.org/afc/?number=1

Simulation of how to interact with parents/children who are experiencing homelessness and enrolling in school. Excellent model for librarians! Try making all the choices for responses so you can see how the conversation is affected by different responses.

Advocates for Youth

<https://advocatesforyouth.org/>

Has excellent resources. Use for resources and also for organizational ideas.

“The ‘Hidden Crisis’ of Rural Homelessness.”

<https://www.thenation.com/article/archive/rural-homelessness-housing/>

Jake Bittle (2019). *The Nation*.

This excellent article provides much-needed insights into ongoing challenges of rural homelessness.

“Public Library Support of Families Experiencing Homelessness”

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/10796126.2016.1209166>

Vikki C. Terrile (2016). *Journal of Children and Poverty*, 22:2, 133-146.

Excellent article on libraries and family homelessness. Includes insights into the causes of homelessness, as well as examples of what one library has done.

LGBTGQ+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Gender-Expansive, Queer/Questioning)

Resources

Note: There are many, many excellent LGBTGQ+ organizations – these are just a few.

Transgender Law Center

<https://transgenderlawcenter.org/>

“Largest national trans-led organization advocating self-determination for all people.”

National LGBTQ Task Force

<https://www.thetaskforce.org/>

“The National LGBTQ Task Force advances full freedom, justice and equality for LGBTQ people.”

Human Rights Campaign

<https://www.hrc.org/>

“As the largest national lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer civil rights organization, HRC envisions a world where LGBTQ people are ensured of their basic equal rights, and can be open, honest and safe at home, at work and in the community.” Provides extensive, thorough and up-to-date resources. Highly recommended.

PFLAG

<https://pflag.org/>

“PFLAG is the first and largest organization for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) people, their parents and families, and allies.”

True Colors United

<https://truecolorsunited.org/>

“True Colors United implements innovative solutions to youth homelessness that focus on the unique experiences of LGBTQ young people.” Website includes excellent research and reports, including “The State Index on Youth Homelessness” (<https://truecolorsunited.org/index/>).

“Centering the Marginalized: Symphony and Triptych”

https://medium.com/@jpc_cb/centering-the-marginalized-symphony-and-triptych-9dabc93cd461

By CB Beal.

Beautifully written, personal and informative posting written in response to an article about trans people. Highly recommended!

“Serving Our Youth 2015: The Needs and Experiences of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning Youth Experiencing Homelessness”

escholarship.org/uc/item/1pd9886n#page-1

Outstanding and thorough report from surveys done with 126 agencies that offer services to LGBTQ+ youth experiencing homelessness.

Voting Resources

Politico Magazine: “The Income Gap at the Polls.”

<https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2015/01/income-gap-at-the-polls-113997>

Interesting article about the economic divide and voting.

TurboVote

<https://turbovote.org/>

National organization dedicated to making voting easy for everyone.

VoteRiders

<https://www.voteriders.org/>

Answers questions and provides free services related to obtaining necessary documents for being able to vote.

GODORT (ALA) Voting and Election Toolkits

<https://godort.libguides.com/votingtoolkit/>

Provides general and specific voting information “for librarians, by librarians.”

Rigged: The Voter Suppression Playbook

<https://www.riggedthefilm.com/>

Film and website about the history of voter suppression in the US. The website also includes information about checking your voter registration status. Outstanding and powerful film. Some libraries have hosted screenings and panels.

NonprofitVOTE

<https://www.nonprofitvote.org/>

“We help non-profits engage the people they serve in voting and elections.”

Includes webinars, articles, resources. A great resource for libraries that want to address voting inequities.

Restore Your Vote: I have a felony conviction. Can I vote?

<https://campaignlegal.org/restoreyourvote>

Provides an anonymous questionnaire that helps people with a felony conviction find out if they are allowed to vote.

Miscellaneous

“15 Examples of ‘anti-homeless’ hostile architecture that you probably never noticed before.”

<https://interestingengineering.com/15-examples-anti-homeless-hostile-architecture-that-you-probably-never-noticed-before>

Examples of hostile architecture.

ACLU: “Know Your Rights”

<https://www.aclu.org/know-your-rights/>

In-depth information about legal rights. The ACLU offers wallet cards that can be ordered from them and given out at the library. They also offer them for free at their events. Inviting them to present at the library about people’s rights on the streets would be a good program to offer at your library, in partnership with a local shelter or agency.

Books

Whole Person Librarianship by Sara K. Zettervall and Mary Nienow

A personal, in-depth and highly useful guide to social workers in libraries.

The Homelessness Industry: A Critique of US Social Policy by Elizabeth Beck and Pamela C. Twiss.

An outstanding look at the history of homelessness in the United States.

Biased: Uncovering the Hidden Prejudice That Shapes What We See, Think, and Do

By Jennifer L. Eberhardt, PhD

Outstanding look at prejudice in its many forms. Highly recommended.

Videos/Audio

[Finding Solutions to Homelessness at Hennepin County Library](#) (3 minutes)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=Trzg53UIIGU

Excellent three-minute video on the program at Hennepin County Library (MN). Includes comments from people who participated in the program.

“In Their Own Words: Homeless Youth” (3 minutes)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BQ14I89WEEQ>

Video of personal stories told by unhoused youth in Hennepin County.

“Duluth Homeless Youth: Walking in Their Shoes” (7.5 minutes)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IM95uk4hRl0>

Video of personal stories of unhoused youth in Duluth.

Homestretch trailer (4 minutes)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5rN85XwaZwQ>

Trailer for outstanding film about youth homelessness.

Homestretch full film (90 minutes)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hSdYIAuXUK0>

Outstanding film about youth homelessness.

“Organization iDignity promises to help homeless people in Central Florida.” (2.5 minutes)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Msvhs0qnrFU>

Short video about iDignity, which provides various forms of IDs, on the spot. A great model for libraries and partners.

“Non-Profit Provides Care for People's Pets” (6 minutes)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=sCHH_VmpgyM

Moving video about a non-profit that works with volunteer veterinarians across the country to provide pet health services for the pets of people experiencing homelessness.

American University Radio: “After Being Homeless, Former Government Worker Struggles to Maintain Identity.” (4:48 minutes)

wamu.org/programs/metro_connection/15/02/20/after_years_of_homelessness_former_government_worker_struggles_to_maintain_identity

A government worker talks about losing first his job and then his home. He makes some great points. For example, he didn't know how to be homeless—where to go, who to contact; he feels like a different person being on the streets. Interviewer met him at the public library. Very moving.

TED Talk: Nadine Burke Harris. “How childhood trauma affects health across a lifetime.” (15 minutes)

https://www.ted.com/talks/nadine_burke_harris_how_childhood_trauma_affects_health_across_a_lifetime#t-187426

Outstanding talk about the lifetime impact of toxic stress on children.

“Homeless Campground in San Diego Providing Lifeline for 40 Children”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gFavGiHNUro>

This moving video offers insights and comments from parents and children about homelessness and their lives at the campground.

“Employed but homeless in the US: The ‘working poor’ who can’t afford to rent”

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B_UZyT0nShI

This short video tells the story of people who are employed, some full-time, but who live in their vehicles. It offers meaningful insights into the challenges of being unhoused.

Homeless at the End (57 minutes)

www.pbs.org/video/homeless-at-the-end-o4vvd

Emotional documentary about a hospice facility for people experiencing homelessness. Highly recommended as a film to show at a library, followed by a panel and conversation.

“Brenda.” From Invisible People.

<https://invisiblepeople.tv/videos/brenda-homeless-woman-new-york-city/>

Moving video about Brenda, who was living on the streets of Manhattan. Highly recommended – Brenda is blunt and honest and offers insights into her daily life. This video is part of the series of videos called “Invisible People.” An update in October 2019 noted that Brenda eventually found housing.

"Jim Crow Juvenile Justice" (8 minutes)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7hgXWK7-1ZM>

Sobering and important look at the history of the juvenile carceral system. Excellent!