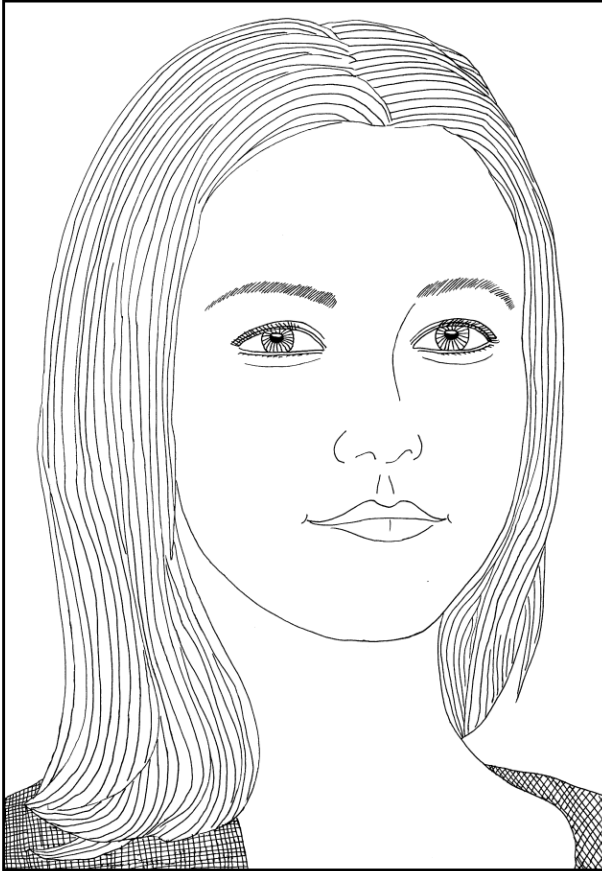


END HOMELESSNESS DAY - DECEMBER 21



"We must all work together
to end youth homelessness..."
-- Jewel

At any given time in America, there are about half a million people who are "homeless" -- they don't have a "permanent, safe, decent, affordable place to live." Around the world there are about 100 million homeless people, and many of them are women and children.

Homelessness is one of the world's most serious problems. There are many reasons why people become homeless, including mental illness, drugs and domestic violence, but most are homeless simply because they can't afford a decent place to live. One third of the homeless in America are families!

Homeless shelters, operated by nonprofit organizations, religious institutions, and local municipalities, can only provide shelter for some of the homeless families. Many are forced to live out of their cars, or in garages, or move from place to place, staying with friends and relatives. Even short periods of homelessness can result in depression and child neglect, but many families are homeless for months or even years.

To end homelessness, we have to help the homeless find immediate shelter, and affordable long-term housing. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which was adopted by the UN in 1948, declares that shelter is a basic human right. Our economic system needs to change in order to do a better job of ensuring that everyone has a chance to find affordable, decent and stable housing.

Every year the National Coalition for the Homeless sponsors National Homeless Persons' Memorial Day around December 21 -- the longest night of the year -- to raise awareness about the growing problem of homelessness. This day is an opportunity for you to speak to your family and friends about ending homelessness. It's a time to hold a food or clothing drive or volunteer in a soup kitchen or homeless shelter. It's a chance to write to local, state and national leaders to advocate for policies and programs that serve the homeless and create more affordable housing.

Be A Hero For A Better World!

1. Find out more
2. Hold a food drive
3. Volunteer in a soup kitchen
4. Write to elected officials about homelessness and affordable housing
5. Support organizations helping the homeless

End Homelessness Links

- Beyond Shelter (beyondshelter.org)
- Help USA (helpusa.org)
- Homeless International (homeless-international.org)
- National Alliance to End Homelessness (naeh.org)
- National Coalition for the Homeless (nationalhomeless.org)
- UN HABITAT (unhabitat.org)

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