

research snapshot

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How Does Diversity Affect Homelessness?

What is this research about?

This research examines the interaction between diversity and homelessness. Diversity in this study refers to having a mental illness and being part of a visible minority group. These individuals have needs and concerns that are not met by the services that are available for the homeless.

What did the researchers do?

The researchers analyzed interviews with 300 individuals that were collected over one year. More than 25% of the interviews were conducted in homeless shelters. They also analyzed policies related to diversity issues such as refugee status, immigration and aboriginal issues.

What did the researchers find?

The researchers found that serious vision and learning problems make it difficult to find employment and secure housing. According to the interviews, feelings of being different come from income level, rather than race, religion, age or gender. Social class was the most frequent issue in terms of diversity that increases the risk

What you need to know:

Diversities such as social class, culture, sexual orientation, disabilities and psychiatric conditions impact poverty and homelessness.

of homelessness. More families and children are becoming homeless. Families feel that services for the homeless are not helpful. The current care system does not meet children's health and education needs. They also found that many of the challenges that individuals in the study faced are caused by having to live in temporary homes, family disruption and disconnections.

How can you use this research?

This research may be used by policymakers to analyze issues related to mental illness, housing, homelessness, income support and diversity issues. Families with children are increasing in the homeless population. Policies to end homelessness may include jobs that pay livable wages. To work, families need access to affordable childcare. Policies can also be revised to ensure that the homeless have access to education.

About the Researchers

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Knowledge Mobilization at York

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