

AMERICANS IN ACTION



Working Homeless Families Face Challenges

(NAPSA)—A recent study provides valuable insight into the causes of homelessness. The study, conducted at homeless shelters in four states, concluded the strong American economy of the past decade has helped create a new category of homeless people: working homeless families.

Working homeless families are families with one member who has a job, but does not generate a sufficient income to provide housing for the family.

According to Charles Gould, president of Volunteers of America, a nonprofit human service organization, the study confirms the experience of the organization. “The problem of homelessness is growing nationwide, particularly for working poor families.”

The median income for homeless families in the survey was about \$250 a week. The families would need to spend 20 percent more than the total of what they earn just to provide for basic needs such as food, according to the study. As a result, many become homeless even though they have jobs.

Experts say the growing trend of homeless families may have the most devastating effect on children. The educational barriers, emotional distress and untreated health problems faced by homeless kids can leave a permanent scar on a child’s future.



A national group is calling for government programs geared toward stopping a disturbing new trend: working homeless families.

Volunteers of America is urging Congress to recognize the devastating national effects of homelessness, as well as urging full funding for programs meant to help end homelessness.

“This trend of working poor families becoming homeless needs the attention of government at all levels,” said Gould. “Affordable housing, a living wage, childcare subsidies, food stamps and programs that help families rebuild their lives will not only help families living in poverty, but will help build stronger communities and a better future for all Americans.”

For more information, visit www.volunteersofamerica.org.