

Homelessness and Poverty Definitions and Key Questions

Look up the meaning of these words and write your own definitions. Follow your interests and reputable sources to learn more about community needs and resources related to poverty.

Affordable housing includes apartments or houses that an individual or family has enough money to live in, while still having enough money for food and other essential items.

Homelessness is lacking stable and appropriate housing.

Income is the amount of money an individual or family is bringing in through work or other means.

Living wage is an income level that is high enough for the earner (and their family) to maintain shelter, food, and necessities.

Mutual aid vs charity: mutual aid equips a community with the tools and opportunity to make decisions that allow them to live a dignified life, while charity usually involves an outsider dictating their own agenda.

poverty: the state of being extremely poor

shelter: temporary housing run by a city or other organization

unemployment rate: the percentage of people who could be working but who do not have jobs

Key Questions

- Where in your community have you noticed that people are experiencing poverty or homelessness?
- What are some resources or privileges you have or don't have that make it easier to live above the poverty line?
- What community resources, such as a thrift store or food pantry, are available to support people to meet basic needs? How do these resources help the community as a whole?
- What are some things people do with their time, ties, and words to advocate for improving living wages and improving conditions for families and individuals who are homeless?
- What is a food desert, and what do some nonprofits and community groups do to improve the food options in these areas?
- When speaking about and with people who live differently than you or in ways you may not know or understand, what are some ways to be respectful and inclusive?

