

Homeless children left behind

Currently in the United States there are around 1.35 million children that are homeless and this does not even include families living on the edge of foreclosure and eviction.

Homelessness is an issue that our country isn't devoting enough time, money, or attention to in order to address a possible solution for. A homeless child is not only constantly worrying about their living situation, but they are also trying to maintain good standing in their academic careers, as well as learning social skills. However, all of that can be disrupted in their development when they lack in certain areas because they are focusing on hunger, shabby clothing, or worrying about not having school supplies.

Therefore schools are now more than ever responsible for identifying these children in their classroom struggling with homelessness and connecting them to resources as well as providing additional help. Many are not even aware that there is a law called, The McKinney-Vento Act which mandates schools to allow automatic enrollment without requirements. Schools must provide a homeless liaison to help gather immunization records from hospitals or previous schools, in addition to providing transportation to school, and tutoring or arrangements for homework completion. While all of this sounds great and it seems like the right steps are being taken to help this issue, it is actually extremely underfunded with only 65.4 million allocated to the whole country which realistically only serves 9% of the districts in the country. As legislation has changed over time to protect homeless children, it takes a lot of time to propose more adjustments, and not enough is being done to make sure we are providing the help these children deserve. Ultimately, we must all be more proactive in addressing this issue considering the increase in dropout rates for homeless children which currently is at 40% of children that identify as being homeless. The growing number of homeless families who don't have anyone advocating for them is also another reason why we have to step up and help those who need it the most. Helping them is helping our society, and in the long run only many positive attributes can come from ensuring a better future for the less fortunate.