

HOMEWALK

The Walk to End Homelessness

Homelessness in L.A. County

Los Angeles is the homeless capital of the nation. More individuals and families live without a place to call home here than any other city in the nation. In this time of economic crisis, when a growing number of families are facing serious financial hardships and many are becoming homeless, it is more important than ever to focus on permanent solutions to put an end to this unacceptable situation.

Ending Homelessness

Homelessness in our region is a huge challenge and because we are focusing on permanent solutions, we are on the path to ending it. We can end homelessness by ensuring homeless individuals and families have access to housing that's permanent and affordable, with other supports available that they may need, like health care, job training, and child care.

This focus on long-term solutions has proven to be very successful in significantly reducing homelessness in other cities, i.e. New York, Seattle and Portland.

In 2008, over 4,000 walkers came together from across Southern California to participate in our annual HomeWalk. This made it possible for over 2,000 homeless families and individuals to move into permanent housing over the course of the year.

Through funds raised at HomeWalk, we support programs throughout the county that focus on permanent solutions utilizing the following two proven models of ending homelessness:

- **Rapid Rehousing for Families**
United Way partners with a network of organizations that specialize in providing homeless families with the support they need to regain a stable foundation. These partners move homeless families into permanent housing, and provide short-term rental subsidies and additional support services (access to medical care, job training, and child care) to help ensure a successful transition back to permanent housing.
- **Permanent Supportive Housing**
Permanent supportive housing is a model in which homeless individuals and families live in subsidized apartments with on-site supportive services available to them, such as health care, mental health and case management services. This model focuses on serving chronically homeless individuals and families - those who have been without a home for over a year and face one or more disabilities, making it difficult for them to secure and maintain housing.

Permanent supporting housing is the **most effective and cost efficient** way to end homelessness. In Los Angeles, a night in supportive housing costs approximately \$30, compared with:

- \$37 in a shelter
- \$64 in jail
- \$85 in prison
- \$607 in a mental hospital
- \$1,474 in a general hospital

Did you know?

In Los Angeles County:

- Women and children make up almost 40% of our homeless population.
- About a quarter of homeless people have received some college education.
- One third of homeless people are at least 50 years old.
- Veterans are twice as likely to become homeless as the general population.
- More than 25% of families face extreme rent burden - spending more than 50% of their income on housing, putting them at great risk of homelessness.