



Drawing by Jackie,
age 11 - former
Elim Transitional
Housing resident

Bring Minnesota Home!

- call to action - call to action - call to action - call to action -

We call on you to join the most intensive effort yet to end homelessness in Minnesota! It will take commitment, collaboration, and courage. Ending homelessness is a goal well within the capacity of Minnesotans to accomplish.

We should, we can,
and we will
Bring Minnesota Home!

Q. Should we end homelessness in Minnesota?

Every day thousands of Minnesota school children catch their bus at a shelter's door, hundreds of full-time workers use mats on a floor to get their night's rest, and many of our most vulnerable community members who suffer with severe and persistent mental illness fend for themselves on the street.

- More than 8,600 people are homeless on any given night in Minnesota.¹
- An additional 12,700 are at risk of losing their housing in the immediate future.²
- Approximately 50% of persons experiencing homelessness are children and youth.³ 41% of homeless children attend two or more schools in one year; 75% of homeless children test below grade level in reading.⁴
- Of homeless adults, 41% are working.⁵ The hourly wage required to afford fair market rents in Minnesota is \$13.97 per hour.⁶

A. Yes, we should end homelessness in Minnesota!

By **Bringing Minnesota Home**, we will stabilize the lives of individuals, families, and communities. We will strengthen the economic vitality of our state when we provide housing affordable to all of our workers and people on fixed incomes. We will build a strong foundation for our future by ensuring that the needs of our children and youth are met in their formative years. Working together, we will **Bring Minnesota Home!**

Bring Minnesota

Q. Can we end homelessness in Minnesota?

Certainly we cannot stop tornadoes, floods, and house fires from causing people to become homeless temporarily; we can, however, minimize the impact of this situational homelessness and eliminate systemic homelessness from our way of life.

Minnesota has a long tradition of innovative programs that have provided us the intellect and experience needed to build long-term solutions. We were among the first to design and implement:

- Transitional housing;
- Family homeless prevention programs;
- Host-home programs for gay youth;
- AIDS transitional housing;
- A housing trust fund.

Minnesota has well-established government agencies that have proven track records on the issues of homelessness and affordable housing:

- The Minnesota Housing Finance Agency has demonstrated national leadership in its creative approach to providing affordable housing.
- The Interagency Task Force on Homelessness promotes coordination and efficient programming across agencies.

Minnesota cannot afford to NOT end homelessness.

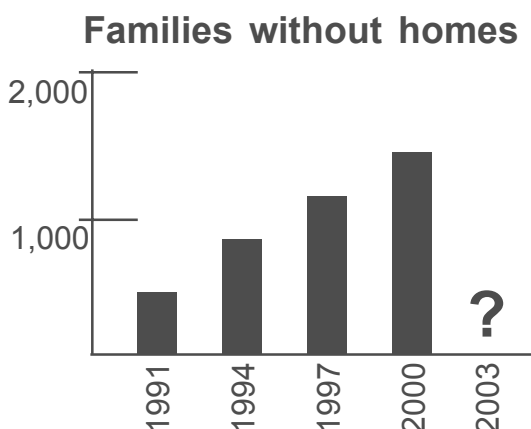
- A recent Minnesota study found that the public costs associated with housing a chronically homeless family were less than half of the cost of not providing housing.⁷
- In Hennepin County, family transitional housing services are 93% effective in keeping families out of shelter for 12 months at an average cost of \$4,124 (the cost of sheltering the same size family for a year is approximately \$33,200).⁸
- Dakota County estimates that a typical episode of homelessness for a family of three costs \$12,000; whereas preventing the episode of homelessness costs only \$1,600.⁹
- Bemidji's YouthBuild program has a 60% non-recidivism rate in working with at-risk youth at a cost of \$20,000 per student per year versus the cost of incarcerating these youth at a cost of \$36,000 per year.¹⁰

A. Yes, we can end homelessness in Minnesota!

We have the most extensive research in the country on the population experiencing homelessness.¹¹ Collaborative efforts between service providers, persons experiencing homelessness, and faith-based communities have led to the creation of innovative programs. Elected officials have been instrumental in implementing and funding these programs. We have the resources, the intellect, the compassion, and the leadership necessary to end homelessness in Minnesota. Working together, we can **Bring Minnesota Home!**

"It's time to dedicate ourselves to the next 'great new American enterprise.' It's time to commit the multitudes of talents and resources that bless this nation to the task of providing appropriate support, and finding homes - permanent homes - for the homeless."

Mel Martinez, Secretary of Housing and Urban Development (July 20, 2001)



Minnesota Home!

Q. How will we end homelessness in Minnesota?

By building on years of research, experience, and ingenuity, we can block the paths that lead people into homelessness. We need to move the state's effective homeless response programs into large-scale homelessness prevention. By blocking the path to homelessness (e.g. reshaping welfare reform, discharge planning, preventing nursing home closings, and preparing for economic slow-downs), we will stop individuals and families from becoming homeless.

A. By working together, we will end homelessness in Minnesota!

Ending homelessness will take a firm commitment of public, private, and religious resources. It will take the involvement of persons experiencing homelessness and decision makers. It will take building on existing collaborative efforts and reorienting the existing service network. Together we will:

- Promote enough production and preservation of housing affordable to all members of the community, highlighting that the greatest need exists for people whose incomes are below 30% of Area Median Income.
- Advocate for livable wage jobs which pay sufficiently to afford housing in the community.
- Fund homelessness prevention efforts at a level adequate to meet the need statewide.
- Advance welfare policies that promote livable-income supports with benefits for people as they transition into work, provide livable-income supports for those who cannot obtain employment, and promote educational advancement.
- Engage mainstream institutions (e.g. hospitals, prisons, foster care, treatment centers) to advocate for affordable housing so that their discharge and release plans ensure that people exiting their programs are placed into housing and receive appropriate services.
- Ensure that no individuals or families are turned away from services and that their basic needs are met.

“Affordable housing is about all of us - teachers, police officers, nursing home workers, our children and our parents. If we are going to have strong job growth, high student achievement and a good future for all Minnesotans, we must have more affordable housing.”

Governor Jesse Ventura
(May 19, 2000)

**Working together, we will
Bring Minnesota Home!**

It will take commitment, collaboration, and courage to

BRING MINNESOTA HOME!



The Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless is a seventeen-year-old statewide coalition of persons who have experienced homelessness, service providers, faith-based communities, and advocates for individuals and families experiencing homelessness. The Coalition is committed to ending homelessness and developing flexible resources so that each community can design a housing and homelessness response system to meet its needs.

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Together, we have the solutions.
You can help **Bring Minnesota Home:**

- Advocate for significant increases in resources and policies that will prevent homelessness and create permanent affordable housing solutions.
- Actively participate in the development of your community's homeless prevention planning processes (e.g. Comprehensive Plans, Consolidated Plans, Continuum of Care Plans).
- Educate friends, family, elected officials, and the general public and raise community awareness of the impact of homelessness and of the need to **Bring Minnesota Home**.
- Contribute your insight, wisdom, and experience into developing and implementing the Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless' comprehensive Plan to End Homelessness.

Working together, we will bring Minnesota home!

¹ Wilder Research Center. *Minnesota Statewide Survey of People Without Permanent Shelter: Homeless Adults and Children*. August, 2001.

² *ibid.*

³ Office of Economic Opportunity, Minnesota Department of Children, Families, & Learning, *Quarterly Shelter Survey*. May 2000.

⁴ Family Housing Fund. *Children Pay the Price for Homelessness*. December 1999.

⁵ Wilder Research Center. *Minnesota Statewide Survey of People Without Permanent Shelter: Homeless Adults and Children*. 2001.

⁶ National Low Income Housing Coalition. *Out of Reach*. September 2001.

⁷ Hart-Shegos, E., Majestic, S., & Jacox, C. (2000). *Financial Implications of Public Interventions on Behalf of a Chronically Homeless Family*. Minneapolis, MN. Family Housing Fund.

⁸ Hennepin County's FHPAP Report, 1999-2000.

⁹ Dakota County's FHPAP Report, 1999-2000.

¹⁰ Based on BICAP's YouthBuild outcome data.

¹¹ Wilder Research Center and the State of Minnesota's Department of Children, Families, and Learning both conduct regular research.

The St. Stephen's Photography Project contributed the photos included in this document. Fourteen residents of St. Stephen's shelter and housing programs were provided cameras and film to document their lives. The Project has been displayed at the Intermedia Arts Gallery and the Minneapolis Mayor's Office.