2-2021

A Community's Responsibility to Help Unaccompanied Homeless Teens, Spokane Valley

Calvin Bruce Coblentz

GEORGE FOX UNIVERSITY

A COMMUNITY'S RESPONSIBILITY TO HELP

UNACCOMPANIED HOMELESS TEENS, SPOKANE VALLEY

A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO

THE FACULTY OF PORTLAND SEMINARY

IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

BY

CALVIN BRUCE COBLENTZ

PORTLAND, OREGON

FEBRUARY 2021

Portland Seminary
George Fox University
Portland, Oregon

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

_____

DMin Dissertation

_____

This is to certify that the DMin Dissertation of

Calvin Coblentz

has been approved by
the Dissertation Committee on February 24, 2021
for the degree of Doctor of Ministry in Leadership & Spiritual Formation

Dissertation Committee:

      Primary Advisor: Deborah Loyd, DMin

      Secondary Advisor: Valerie Crumpton, DMin

      Lead Mentor: MaryKate Morse, PhD

DEDICATION

This body of work is dedicated to Lucy, the young woman who changed my life forever. You continue to be wonderfully made by God and you are such an inspiration to me and to our family. I am incredibly grateful that we were divinely brought together, through which I gained so much more than you. Lucy, you were made to do great things. You will lead many to know their worth and potential. You have changed my stars.

To all of the wandering teens who have been abandoned or pushed out by family, who feel alone and marginalized, who want to know that there are people who care whether you make it in life or not, we are here. I am here. We are here to help you. We care. You were made in the image of God and the Creator loves you. My prayer is that you discover and experience that love.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

EPIGRAPH

Teen Wildebeest
by Calvin B. Coblentz

I am not the same as you
I don't know where I'll sleep
I might sleep on a couch
Or the back of my pimp's Jeep

I have no fridge to open
No pots or pans or sheets
I scrounge behind your restaurant
While sleeping in the streets

I find myself all alone
And I do not know why
When others turn to family
I just shrug and cry

I am not stupid
But you make me feel like dirt
When I'm not prepared for class
And I'm wearing the same shirt

Sometimes I have a friend
Some find they can relate
But most do not understand
They stare at me with hate

You think that I'm a nuisance
I'll drive your customers away
You think that I'm just lazy
That I choose to be this way

What you might discover
If you took the time to look
Are the 13 years of beatings
And abuse that I took

As soon as I was able
I left all that behind
Was scooped up by the streets
And learned to blow my mind

You look and see a failure
You judge, say I am a waste
But I think I'm brave, a survivor
I think you judge in haste

Put yourself in my shoes
Think what it takes to last
With a baby on your hip
And the trauma of your past

Rules are for people with fences
Not for a teen wildebeest
Compliance is for the protected
Not for the prey of the streets

I do what I must to survive now
I don't give a damn what you think
Cause I've only myself to depend on
To decide if I rise or I sink

You disapprove of my choices
Round me up, break me down, cuff my hands
You give me only citations
Never help with ambitions or plans

Your kid can run to your bosom
Snuggle, feel warm, and feel safe
My comfort comes from a bottle
Or a needle, a blow line, or a rave

My greatest wish is to be loved
To be cared for, held, and praised
I wonder how it feels to be wanted
To be covered, sheltered, embraced

I wish you would take my hand
And show me that I can ascend
See the potential within me
Stand close, protect, and defend

Inside I scream and cry out for help
Look past my outward resistance
Take the time to befriend me, to see me
Walk with me and give me assistance

If you earn my trust, I can take the first step
I can learn what community should be
Surrounded by those who want the best
Who believe in the wonder of me

What if a city would focus its power
With wraparound relational resources
Join and lift up our castaway youth
And help them discover their voices

You can be sure that we'll pay it
The cost of our young behind bars
The cost of unending programs
Or the cost of changing their stars

Table of Contents

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Bible Translations:

ASV	American Standard Version
ESV	English Standard Version
KJV	King James Version
NIV	New International Version
RSV-CE	Revised Standard Version Catholic Edition
TPT	The Passion Translation

Additional Abbreviations:

PTSD	Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
UHY	Unaccompanied Homeless Youth
GED	General Education Development (High School Equivalency Exam)
PK-12	Pre-Kindergarten through 12th Grade
LGTBQ	Lesbian, Gay, Transexual, Bi-Sexual, Queer
COVID-19	2019 Corona Virus Disease

ABSTRACT

Homelessness is ubiquitous in communities across America. There are 1.5 million homeless school children annually. Over 125,000 are unaccompanied homeless youth detached from family. Many factors contribute to their homelessness, such as poverty, physical and sexual abuse, neglect, family conflict, addictions, mental illness, and sexual orientation. As difficult as it is in an abusive home, life does not usually improve when they depart. Homeless teens experience high rates of violence, sexual assault and exploitation, substance abuse, pregnancy, disease, leaving school, incarceration, unemployment, suicide, and dependency as adults.

This study explored the problem of unaccompanied teen homelessness in Eastern Spokane County, Washington. Specifically, what resources and relationships the Spokane Valley community could offer to homeless teens to improve stability and their adult success rates. As a result, a solutions model is recommended to the leaders of the Spokane Valley community that outlines proven programs that operate within a healthy interpersonal environment. It is my hope that this model will result in higher high school graduation rates for unaccompanied homeless teens, fulfilling vocations, and an exit from poverty.

The first four chapters outline the factors involved in unaccompanied teen homelessness by explaining the current problem, exploring the history of adolescent orphans, compiling the biblical and theological influence on solutions, and summarizing the field research conducted in Spokane County. Chapter 5 explores current solutions that communities around the country are applying to the problem. The final chapter presents recommendations for community leaders in Spokane Valley. The model offered

recommends the establishment of a drop-in emergency shelter with wraparound services, a variety of transitional housing (including host family homes), a street outreach program, and a Communities in Schools coordinator to facilitate integrated student support at all high schools and middle schools in the Spokane Valley. The key to this model is the establishment of meaningful healthy adult relationships with the teens.

CHAPTER 1:

DESCRIPTION OF THE PROBLEM

Introduction

God brought Lucy to upset my neat little world.[1] He used her like an artist's chisel
to renovate my old wooden heart. It sounded like I was in an echo chamber as I listened
to the words of her story for the first time. I felt myself cringe and flinch in reaction to
each turn of the plot. Surely this cannot be real. These unthinkable things surely do not
happen to a defenseless little sixteen-year-old girl just blocks from where I am sitting . . .
do they? I felt my face pale and my hands clinch and warm salty tears roll down my
cheeks. I sensed something spiritual was happening that would change my life forever. It
was certainly an unprofessional display of emotion in a business meeting talking about a
routine summer program for homeless teens, but this was not just another teen; this was
Lucy.

Lucy had been homeless and detached from her family for about three years. She
grew up in abject poverty and set out on her own when she was only thirteen. At times
she would receive a place to stay and some support with someone from school.
Sometimes she would stay with relatives, but most of the men in her family had
physically and sexually abused her, so it was only desperation that led her to stay with
them. She had been using alcohol as a coping mechanism since she was eleven or twelve
years old. One cold dark night, sixteen-year-old Lucy had become drunk to the point of

---

[1] All names of the teens interviewed either firsthand or secondhand for this research have been
changed for their protection and anonymity.

near unconsciousness. She was supposed to be staying with a friend, and they both got onto a bus to travel to where she lived. However, when Lucy woke up from her intoxicated state, she was not at her friend's house but outside on the street and had no idea where she was. Her backpack, clothing, and all of her possessions were gone, and she was wearing a man's extra-large shirt that smelled nauseating. She had no memory of what had happened to her, but her underwear was torn nearly off of her. She had bruises and cuts all over her back and legs, and it became clear that she had been raped.

It was very cold that night and Lucy was wearing nothing but that disgusting oversized men's shirt and torn boxer shorts. She walked and walked for what seemed like forever trying to figure out where she was. Later she identified that she had walked for nearly fifty blocks before stumbling upon a group of teenage boys. She was freezing, in shock, and terrified, but she was also desperate. Lucy cried out for help to this group of teens. One of the boys threw her over his shoulder and began to carry her to where they were going, but when they realized that she had been attacked, they called 911 and Lucy was taken to the hospital. She was finally safe, at least for a few hours, but her personal horror show would continue for another two years before she finally found the help that would stabilize her.[2]

In another city, Maria was removed from her mother's home at age six after her mother's boyfriend was caught sexually assaulting her, and her mother was beaten unconscious. She went to live with an aunt and uncle along with two brothers and three cousins. Her mother died a few years later and Maria was treated the worst of all the

---

[2] This part of Lucy's story initially came from an interview I had on April 17, 2019 with Lynn Marquez, the social worker involved in this case. Later Lucy told me the story firsthand while we drove through the area where the event had taken place.

children with regular beatings and inappropriate sexual advances from her uncle. As a child she was very insecure and timid yet grew to become a bold thief and a bully. Life with her aunt was extremely dysfunctional and the arrangement finally broke down when she was sixteen. From then on, she was on her own trying to survive.

In her autobiography, Maria reflected back at a time when she was camping in a condemned abandoned building, "I remember the hunger. The apartment was cold because there was no heat. It was dark because there was no power. But all I could think about was how hungry I was. All I heard in my system was 'hungry . . . hungry . . . hungry . . . I need to eat.' I didn't have any money. I didn't have any family. I was by myself. I was alone. I was a senior in high school. I remember being angry. Anger helped make the hunger go away for a while. I was angry at my family for leaving me. I was angry for the beatings I took from the time I was six years old to when I was sixteen. Some nights I was angry at the whole world for where I was and how I was living."[3]

The story of these two young teens is not uncommon. Thousands of others just like them are experiencing the life of hidden homelessness. Spokane and Spokane Valley have an epidemic problem of teens detached from their families and trying to navigate life with less support than they need. My friend Lynn has helped me understand this crisis and was the social worker who first found Lucy and provided support after her tragic rape event. For a couple months Lynn walked Lucy through processes that would help stabilize her life, including emancipation, federal assistance programs, housing

---

[3] Maria Fabian and Fred Smith, *Invisible Innocence: My Story as a Homeless Youth* (CreateSpace Independent Publishing, 2013), 14.

applications, and enrollment back into a high school graduation track. (Unfortunately, after a short period of stability, she fell back into the streets and into more tragedy).[4]

My initial reaction to hearing Lucy's story was an impulse to adopt and protect her. I went as far as talking with my wife about whether it was possible. When I discussed it with Lynn, she laughed, and taught me another lesson about street kids. She said, "It wouldn't work; she would run away. She would never stay with you out in the country away from everything she knows."[5] Though I did not adopt Lucy that spring, I have embraced her as the fuel to find real solutions to an unthinkable problem faced by far too many children.

Considering a large homeless teen population in Spokane Valley, there is an opportunity to examine how community effects their success. Therefore, I am studying how the Spokane Valley community can offer resources and relationships that help provide stability and healthy independence for homeless teenagers who are detached from their families. It is my hope that as a result of this research project more unaccompanied homeless teens will graduate high school, discover fulfilling vocation, and elevate out of poverty. Additionally, it is my hope that our community will rise up to acknowledge the problem, embrace these marginalized teens just as they are, and create solutions that are wrapped in compassionate relationship.

---

[4] More of Lucy's story is told in chapter 4.

[5] Lynn Marquez, interview with author, April 17, 2019.

Geographic Scope of this Research

One Spokane Valley school social worker stated, "Youth homelessness is hidden, therefore it is 'out of sight, out of mind.' This lulls us into a falsehood that there is no teen homelessness issue."[6] Therefore, this study hopes to bring light to a pervasive problem in the Spokane region. My research investigated the problem of unaccompanied teen homelessness through a specific examination of Spokane County, a broader look at the current and historical context within the U.S. (Chapter 2), and with a narrow application footprint for the eastern portion of Spokane County, commonly referred to as the Spokane Valley.

Spokane Valley is defined as that eastern portion of Spokane County Washington east of the city limits of the City of Spokane to the state border with Idaho. This area includes the incorporated cities of Spokane Valley, Millwood, and Liberty Lake, and all of the rural unincorporated communities that fall within that eastern portion of Spokane County. Therefore, the use of the term Spokane Valley should be understood as this broader, eastern portion of the county.[7] Any reference to the "City of Spokane Valley," refers only to that incorporated municipality.

Public School Statistics

The following public-school information captures a majority of data necessary to assess the statistics of school aged children as related to student homelessness. It is

---

[6] Leslie Camden-Goold, Teen Homelessness Questionnaire for Advocates, conducted by author.

[7] The term "Spokane Valley" is part of the local vernacular referring to the Eastern portion of the county separate from the City of Spokane.

acknowledged that the statistics presented in this section only include information from public schools. It excludes private schools and children not enrolled in school. For instance, for every 100,000 children enrolled in public school, Kindergarten-12th Grade (K-12) nationally, there are 10,000 additional children enrolled in private school.[8] Determining the numbers of school age children not enrolled is difficult, but as an example, in 2017, approximately 2.1 million, or 5.4 percent of youth sixteen years or older, dropped out of public school in the U.S. and did not earn high school credential (diploma or GED).[9] Therefore, for statistical analysis, this section relied upon public school information and will not capture most data identifying homeless children and teens not enrolled in public schools.

Definitions

Public educational agencies identify homeless students based upon definitions that have been established by the McKinney-Vento Education of Homeless Children and Youth Assistance Act, a federal law which provides grant funding to the states to mitigate the effects of student homelessness. The Act defines homeless children and youths as "individuals who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence." It provides the following examples:

- children and youths who are sharing the housing of other persons due to loss of housing, economic hardship, or a similar reason
- children or youths living in motels, hotels, trailer parks, or camping grounds due to the lack of alternative adequate accommodations
- children or youths living in emergency or transitional shelters

---

[8] National Center for Education Statistics, accessed June 5, 2020, https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator_cgc.asp.

[9] National Center for Education Statistics, accessed June 5, 2020, https://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=16.

- children or youths abandoned in hospitals
- children and youths who have a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings
- children and youths living in cars, parks, public spaces, abandoned buildings, substandard housing, bus or train stations, or similar settings
- migratory children and youths living in circumstances described above[10]

It is important to understand this federal definition because of how housing instability challenges a student's educational success. Not every student numbered in the statistics is living unsheltered. Yet, they are all experiencing a tremendous disadvantage.[11] The negative effects also extend to children who are changing their living environment frequently or sharing a congested space. The McKinney-Vento legislation was enacted to ensure that students with this instability have the resources to overcome their educational barriers. However, even with this government support it is difficult for schools alone to sufficiently offset these student deficits.[12] The McKinney-Vento term "Unaccompanied Homeless Youth" (UHY) includes "a homeless child or youth not in the physical custody

---

[10] McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act of 1987, US Code 42 (2015) Chapter 119-Homeless Assistance, Subchapter VI-Education and Training, Part B: Education for Homeless Children and Youths, §11434a.

[11] National Center for Homeless Education, "McKinney-Vento Law into Practice Brief Series: Supporting the Education of Unaccompanied Students Experiencing Homelessness," August 2017, accessed June 16, 2020, https://nche.ed.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/youth.pdf.

[12] Communities In Schools is an example of a nonprofit that places site coordinators within individual schools to connect students and educators to community resources. This concept will be developed in later chapters.

of a parent or guardian."[13] UHY may represent younger children, but the majority

referenced by the term are teens.[14]

Table 1.

Public Schools: Enrollment / Homelessness Comparison among Pre-Kindergarten-12th Grade

	Total Population	PK-12 Enrollment	PK-12 Homeless	PK-12 % Homeless	Unaccompanied Homeless Youth
United States	327,167,439	51,089,863	1,504,544	2.94 %	129,370
WA State	7,535,591	1,134,871	32,370	2.85 %	5,786
Spokane County	522,798	80,004	2,987	3.73 %	708
Spokane Valley	121,444	23,514	691	2.93 %	168

Notes: Populations were obtained from the latest available U.S. Census information.[15] Spokane Valley population is approximated using a combination of information for cities and zip codes for the unincorporated portions of eastern Spokane County. U.S. student data obtained from U.S. Dept. of Education SY 2017-2018.[16] All WA State student data obtained from OSPI, School Year 2018-2019.[17]

---

[13] McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act of 1987, US Code 42 (2015) Chapter 119-Homeless Assistance, Subchapter VI-Education and Training, Part B: Education for Homeless Children and Youths, §11434a.

[14] According to Central Valley School District Homeless Liaison Leslie Camden-Goold most students classified as unaccompanied homeless youth (UHY) are teenagers between 8th -12th grades. In May 2020, her records reflected 67 UHY were enrolled in Central Valley School District. 52 of them were 8th-12th grades, which is 77.6 percent. Leslie sent a request to the Office of Superintendent of Public Schools for Washington to pull a report to determine exact numbers of UHY by grade level so we could compile exactly how many of those were teens, but they were unable to generate a report with that specificity. Therefore, as a general rule, when using the term Unacommapnied Homeless Youth throughout this dissertation, the assumption is that approximately three fourths of the reported numbers will represent teens between 8th -12th grades. This information was received by emails May 7-8, 2020.

[15] U.S. Census Bureau, accessed June 5, 2020, https://www.census.gov/data.html.

[16] U.S. Department of Education, accessed June 5, 2020, https://www2.ed.gov/rschstat/landing.jhtml?src=pn.

[17] Washington Office of the Superintendant of Public Instruction, accessed June 5, 2020, https://www.k12.wa.us/data-reporting/data-portal.

U.S. and Statewide

Using the latest published U.S. Census Bureau statistics, the total population of the United States as of July 1, 2018 was over 327 million. Out of 51 million K-12 public school children, 1.5 million were identified as homeless by the McKinney-Vento definitions. Therefore, in 2018, about one out of thirty-four students who walked the halls of our public schools in America had to navigate their educational experience with the added pressure of an unstable housing situation. Of those 1.5 million homeless students, nearly 130,000 across the U.S. were identified as unaccompanied homeless youth. Similar proportions of homelessness have been experienced in Washington State. The 2018 population was just over 7.5 million, with 2.85 percent of the 1.13 million public school children identified as homeless. Statewide there were 5,786 unaccompanied homeless youth enrolled in public schools in 2018.

Spokane County

Spokane County showed a slightly higher ratio of homeless students than the Statewide and National counts, nearly 1 percent higher at 3.73 percent of the student body. The total population of Spokane County in 2018 was 514,631.[18] During the same school year (2018-19), the Washington Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction listed the total number of Pre-Kindergarten through 12th grade students for all of Spokane County public schools as 80,004 and the total number of homeless students were 2,987.[19]

---

[18] U.S. Census Bureau, Accessed December 17, 2019, https://data.census.gov/cedsci/?q =spo&g=.

[19] Washington Office of the Superintendant of Public Instruction, accessed June 5, 2020, https://www.k12.wa.us/data-reporting/data-portal.

Thus, in 2018 county wide, roughly 4 percent of all PK-12 public school students were designated as homeless, and 708 of those students, one out of every 113 students who walked the halls of Spokane County public schools, were unaccompanied homeless youth.

Spokane Valley

The U.S. Census population of the research focal area in 2018 was 121,444.[20] Four school districts serve that region. Central Valley School District is the largest, which had a 2018 total enrollment of 14,583 students. East Valley School District had 4,236 students; West Valley School District had 3,791 students; and Freeman School District had 904 total students. In the 2018-2019 school year the combined total of public-school students in all four districts was 23,514.[21] That same year the Spokane Valley experienced a ratio of homeless students that was virtually the same as the national average, at 2.93 percent. Homeless PK-12 students totaled 691 of the 23,514 students enrolled. Remarkably, one out of every 34 students were homeless. Of the 691 homeless students in 2018, the Spokane Valley public schools identified 168 that were classified as unaccompanied homeless youth, or one out of every 140 students.[22] Put faces to those 168 and it quickly becomes a crisis for such a small community.

---

[20] United States Census Bureau, accessed December 17, 2019, https://data.census.gov/cedsci/?q =spo&g=.

[21] Washington Office of the Superintendant of Public Instruction, accessed June 5, 2020, https:// www.k12.wa.us/data-reporting/data-portal.

[22] Washington Office of the Superintendant of Public Instruction, accessed June 5, 2020, https:// www.k12.wa.us/data-reporting/data-portal.

Table 2.

Spokane Valley Public Schools: Primary Nighttime Residence of Homeless Students[23]

Students Unsheltered	Students in Motels	Students in Shelters	Students Doubled Up	Total Homeless Students
35	33	116	507	691

To put these numbers into perspective, one out of every 176 residents of the Spokane Valley is a homeless PK-12 student, and one out of every 723 residents is a homeless youth stumbling through school and life alone without a parent or guardian. This statistical reality would be further exacerbated if the high school dropout rate of those sixteen years or older (5.4 percent) were added for school aged homeless teens.[24]

Poverty is a major factor that will be explored in detail throughout this research, but it is a useful starting point to identify the household income context within Spokane Valley school districts. Low-income statistics are maintained by public schools in order to receive federal reimbursement funding for qualifying students under the National School Lunch Program.[25] All students enrolled by income for free or reduced meals are recorded as low income. Free lunches are available for students in households with income up to 130 percent of the Federal Poverty Guidelines, and reduced-price lunches are available for families with income up to 185 percent.[26] For example, the 2018 Federal Poverty Guideline for a family with four persons was $25,100. Therefore, at 185 percent,

---

[23] Washington Office of the Superintendant of Public Instruction, accessed June 5, 2020, https://www.k12.wa.us/data-reporting/data-portal.

[24] National Center for Education Statistics, accessed June 5, 2020 https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator_cgc.asp.

[25] National School Lunch Program, accessed October 2, 2020, https://www.fns.usda.gov/nslp.

[26] National School Lunch Program, accessed October 2, 2020, https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/resource-files/NSLPFactSheet.pdf.

all families with incomes at or under $46,435 qualified as low income. In 2018, over

45percent of the children enrolled in the four Spokane Valley school districts were

classified as low income.[27]

Determinants of Unaccompanied Adolescent and Teen Homelessness

Teens become detached from families and the security of home for many reasons

and it is not always a single reason. The 2013 National Incidence Studies of Missing,

Abducted, Runaway, and Thrownaway Children (NISMART-3), released in 2017 by the

U.S. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, estimated "413,000 children

ran away or were thrown away in 2013, at a rate of 5.3 per 1,000 children."[28] In 2020, the

American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) claimed that annually it is estimated between 5

percent and 8 percent of adolescents run away from their families or foster homes.

Table 3.

U.S. Runaway or Thrownaway Children Estimates: 2013 & 2020

2013 NISMART Est. of Total Runaway or Thrownaway	2013 NISMART Est. of % of Runaway/Thrownaway Children	2020 AAP Est. of % of Runaway/Thrownaway Children
413,000	.53 %	5-8 %

---

[27] Washington Office of the Superintendant of Public Instruction, accessed June 5, 2020, https://www.k12.wa.us/data-reporting/data-portal.

[28] The term "thrownaway" refers to "A child whom an adult household member tells to leave or prevents from returning home, and does not arrange for adequate alternative care, and the child is gone overnight." Andrea J. Sedlak, David Finkelhor, and J. Michael Brick, "National Estimates of Missing Children: Updated Finding From a Survey of Parents and Other Primary Caretakers, *Juvenile Justice Bulletin* June 2017, 3, 9.

The numbers may actually be larger considering that some children fall into the category

of abandonment and are not reported missing by their parents or guardians.[29] Not all teens

runaway because of extreme conditions or violence; they might just age out of the foster

care system. Or it is sometimes a result of parental-youth tensions for a variety of

reasons, including teen substance abuse, lifestyle choices, or conflicting values.[30]

However, there are many risk factors for teen homelessness that can be identified.

Poverty

  In 2020, Madrick summarized the scope of childhood poverty, "Children

comprise roughly one-quarter of the population but one-third of the official poor. More

than one out of three American children live in official poverty for at least one year."[31]

Poverty correlates to general homelessness. A family that experiences extreme poverty is

at risk of becoming a homeless family. Additionally, household poverty is a likely

platform from which adolescents leave or are forced from the home to seek stability

outside of their family unit. According to the National Coalition for the Homeless, "Some

youth may become homeless when their families suffer financial crises resulting from

lack of affordable housing, limited employment opportunities, insufficient wages, no

medical insurance, or inadequate welfare benefits. Youth may become homeless while

still with their families but may be separated from their families by the shelter,

---

[29] Thresia B. Gambon and Janna R. Gewirtz O'Brien, "Runaway Youth: Caring for the Nation's Largest Segment of Mission Children," *American Academy of Pediatrics* 145, no. 2 (2020): 2.

[30] National Coalition for the Homeless, "Causes of Youth Homelessness," accessed June 11, 2020, http://nationalhomeless.org/issues/youth/.

[31] Jeff Madrick, *Invisible Americans: The Tragic Cost of Child Poverty* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2020), 10.

transitional housing, or child welfare policies." [32] It was a family financial crisis that

caused Lucy to become detached and homeless. Her family was evicted when she was

thirteen, the family broke apart and went separate ways.[33] One university study published

for the Family and Youth Services Bureau interviewed 656 homeless youth ages fourteen

to twenty-one. The number one reason given by those interviewed for becoming

homeless for the first time was being asked to leave by a parent or caregiver, 51.2 percent

of the respondents.[34] The poverty of the household was not the only reason they were

asked to leave, but poverty is a general risk factor for family instability. Numerous

studies document the overrepresentation of domestic violence in poverty households

relative to non-poverty households.[35]

Domestic Violence and Maltreatment

Liz Murray is a well-known New York Times Bestseller author, Oprah Winfrey

guest, and motivational speaker. Her book[36] tells of a journey from homelessness to

Harvard and puts a face and story to the plight of countless children who grow up in toxic

home environments. It also inspires hope in the midst of a seemingly hopeless crisis.

---

[32] National Coalition for the Homeless, "Causes of Youth Homelessness," accessed June 11, 2020, http://nationalhomeless.org/issues/youth/.

[33] Lynn Marquez, interview with the social worker involved in Lucy's case, April 17, 2019.

[34] Les Whitbeck, Melissa Welch Lazoritz, Devan Crawford, and Dane Hautala, "Street Outreach Program: Data Collection Project Executive Summary," *Family and Youth Services Bureau* (October 2014): 2.

[35] Andrea Hetling and Haiyan Zhang, "Domestic Violence, Poverty, and Social Services: Does Location Matter?," *Social Science Quarterly* 91, no. 5 (2010): 1144.

[36] Liz Murray, *Breaking Night: A Memoir of Forgiveness, Survival, and My Journey from Homeless to Harvard* (New York: Hachette Books, 2010).

Unhealthy family relationships contribute overwhelmingly to teen homelessness. It has been well posited historically that the primary reason adolescents and teens leave their homes prematurely is because of family conflict, abuse, or neglect. Many only leave after they have been subjected to years of physical and sexual abuse or neglect.[37] In one report, 13 percent of U.S. women admitted they experienced at least one forcible rape during their lifetime.[38] Studies show childhood sexual abuse among the general public could be as high as 32 percent for females and 16 percent for males. As many as 22 percent of males and 20 percent of females reported childhood physical abuse.[39] Mistreatment and family violence as a child translates to an increase in instability as an adult. Studies of homeless women show that, "Women who have been sexually victimized as children report later problems relating to both women and men, estrangement from parents or other family members, difficulty in parenting, and responding to their own children."[40]

People of faith may believe that domestic violence or intimate partner violence is a problem that exist only outside the church. Unfortunately, this is not true. The religious construct of a person's faith may create a barrier against leaving a dangerous spouse.[41] "They may fear the church will support the perpetrator of the violence and abuse because

---

[37] National Coalition for the Homeless, Causes of Youth Homelessness, accessed June 11, 2020, https://nationalhomeless.org/issues/youth/.

[38] Angela Browne, "Family Violence and Homelessness: The Relevance of Trauma Histories in the Lives of Homeless Women," *American Orthopsychiatric Association* 63, no. 3 (July 1993): 370.

[39] Kristin M. Ferguson, "Exploring the Psychosocial and Behavorial Adjustment Outcomes of Multi-Type Abuse among Homeless Young Adults," *Social Work Research* 33, no. 4 (December 2009): 219.

[40] Angela Browne, "Family Violence and Homelessness: The Relevance of Trauma Histories in the Lives of Homeless Women," *American Orthopsychiatric Association* 63, no. 3 (July 1993): 375.

[41] When I was a pastor a woman I counseled experienced this dangerous phenomenon.

the perpetrator refuses to divorce." They may fear that a choice for divorce will lead to them being excommunicated either physically or emotionally.[42] Regardless of the reason, domestic violence is blind of religion, class, or race.

Bent-Goodley, St. Vil, and Hubbert bear witness to the tendency of church to either not admit that family violence exists within its memberships or to fail in response to it. In addition to physical abuse, they state reports of women experiencing "forms of spiritual abuse when they are denied being able to attend church services, when Scripture is specifically utilized to disable and disempower them, and when they are punished by an abusive partner for participating in church activities." They exhort the church to use its unique platform to respond to domestic violence with a commitment to "advancing gender equality, creating strategic partnerships, enhancing training and knowledge of domestic violence, and breaking the silence and stigma associated with domestic violence."[43]

As stated, domestic abuse and religious abuse are not restricted to any particular ethnicity or level of religiosity. Domestic violence spans all of Christendom and some evidence suggests family violence is just as high among religious families as non-religious homes.[44] In fact, one study of 600 battered women stated that 85 percent were

---

[42] John Michal McAllister and Amelia Roberts-Lewis, "Social Worker's Role in Helping the Church Address Intimate Partner Violence: An Invisible Problem," *Social Work and Christianity* 37, no. 2 (2010): 166.

[43] Tricia Bent-Goodley, Noelle St. Vil, and Paulette Hubbert, "A Spirit Unbroken: The Black Church's Evolving Response to Domestic Violence," *Social Work and Christianity* 39, no. 1 (2012): 53, 63.

[44] Christopher G. Ellison and Kristin L. Anderson, "Religious Involvement and Domestic Violence Among U.S. Couples," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 40, no. 2 (2001): 270.

Christians, 57 percent attended church regularly, and 7 percent did not feel they could confide in church leadership.[45]

Spousal domestic violence has an effect on the children. Youth with histories of trauma exposure, maltreatment, or neglect often suffer from severe emotional and behavioral problems. In many of these cases the resulting behavioral problems are too severe to be treated in-home and are better conducted in residential treatment programs. Trends observed for these programs revealed that youth usually enter residential treatment from protective services or non-biological family settings and are from families who engage in several risk behaviors such as substance abuse, criminal activities, domestic violence, parental marital/relationship problems, inappropriate discipline, parental abandonment or neglect, parental unemployment, family isolation and experience psychiatric problems.[46]

Mental Health

Mental health is an important topic for service providers working with homeless populations. It is estimated that as high as 89 percent of street or homeless youth in the U.S. have a psychiatric disorder, which is four times higher than housed youth.[47] Common disorders among homeless youth are Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), substance abuse, and depression. A study of 146 homeless youth across four major U.S.

---

[45] Steven R. Tracy, "Patriarchy and Domestic Violence: Challenging Common Misconceptions," *Journal of Evangelical Theological Society* 50, no. 3 (2007): 573.

[46] Amanda D. Zelechoski et. al, "Traumatized Youth in Residential Treatment Settings: Prevalence, Clinical Presentation, Treatment, and Policy Implications," *Journal of Family Violence* 28, no. 7 (2013): 640-641.

[47] Nicole Kozloff et. al., "Factors Influencing Service Use Among Homeless Youths With Co-Occuring Disorders," *Psychiatric Services* 64, no. 9 (2013): 925.

cities revealed that 57 percent had experienced childhood trauma, and 24 percent met the criteria to be diagnosed with PTSD. Additionally, "most homeless youth have experienced multiple traumatic events both before becoming homeless and once on the street. Young people who have been exposed to trauma may have symptoms such as anxiety, irritability, anger, trouble controlling emotions, and difficulty concentrating or thinking clearly."[48]

Does mental illness precede and contribute to youth homelessness, or are psychological disorders a consequence of youth homelessness? Both questions can be supported as true by researchers. Psychologists pose two models to study this question, the "symptom-driven model" and the "experience-driven model." Evidence for the symptom-driven model supports that psychological symptoms, PTSD, depression, and others, predict an increase in alcohol use, substance abuse, and risk for homelessness.[49] Researchers conducted a first ever longitudinal study of teens who are not exclusively homeless in order to establish the temporal order of events. They found,

> PTSD symptomology to be a key mechanism leading to both homelessness and substance use following treatment (symptom-driven models). Further, we found that, while experiences of homelessness did not emerge as an important mechanism during the post-treatment phase, early experiences of homelessness (at baseline) were a catalyst that triggered a cascade of heightened PTSD symptomology and greater levels of substance use that eventually led to more days of homelessness.[50]

---

[48] Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Family and Youth Services Bureau, "Report to Congress on Runaway and Homeless Youth Program for Fiscal Years 2014 and 2015," 24, accessed June 13, 2020, https://www.acf.hhs.gov/fysb/resource/report-to-congress-on-rhy-program-fy2014-2015.

[49] Jordan P. Davis et. al., "Understanding Pathways Between PTSD, Homelessness, and Substance Use Among Adolescents," *Psychology of Addictive Behaviors* 33, no. 5 (2019): 472.

[50] Jordan P. Davis et. al., "Understanding Pathways," 472.

This research establishes the cycle of repeated homelessness and substance abuse triggered by PTSD.

Marginalized LGBTQ Lifestyles

Research estimates that 20 percent to 40 percent of homeless teenagers identify as LGBTQ, and yet only 4 percent to 10 percent of non-homeless teens share that identity.[51] With these disproportionate ratios, does the LGBTQ lifestyle correlate with an increase in family conflict and does that contribute to teen homelessness? Studies indicate that most homeless youth have family conflict in common, but LGTBQ youth most often reported their reason for experiencing homelessness was because of running away or being ejected from their homes because of their sexual orientation.[52] It is possible that a higher proportion of youth from Christian families are pushed out of their home for non-heterosexual orientation than in non-Christian homes.[53]

LGTBQ youth in the child welfare system are also less likely to achieve placement permanency. They generally experience multiple placements, and congregate care settings are less safe for these youth. LGTBQ teens in group settings are more susceptible to victimization. All of these factors contribute to them running away from

---

[51] Thresia B. Gambon and Janna R. Gewirtz O'Brien, "Runaway Youth: Caring for the Nation's Largest Segment of Mission Children," *American Academy of Pediatrics* 145 no. 2 (2020): 3.

[52] Nicholas Forge, Robin Hartinger-Saunders, Eric Wright, and Erin Ruel, "Out of the System and onto the Streets: LGBTQ-Identified Youth Experiencing Homelessness with Past Child Welfare System involvement," *Child Welfare* 96, no.2 (2018): 51.

[53] Interview with the author, according to Dr. Deborah Loyd, this disproportional anomaly was identified among LGBTQ youth connected to the Bridge Church in Portland Oregon. The Bridge Church served the street community in Portland in the early 2000s.

the child welfare system or them not being able to find a place to stay once they age out

of foster care.[54]

Deviant and Aggressive Behavior

One study comparing homeless youth with foster care backgrounds and non-foster

care backgrounds had interesting results regarding delinquency. Youth with a history of

physical abuse and neglect were correlates of depressive symptoms. Neglect had a

stronger connection to more delinquency and physical victimization. Sexual abuse,

specifically, negatively associated with later delinquency and physical victimization,

meaning that the less sexual abuse results in lower future delinquency and physical

victimization.[55] Therefore, it can be expected that adolescents who experience neglect and

sexual abuse are more likely to express themselves in delinquent behaviors and fall prey

to physical victimization. A typical social stigma of a delinquent youth is the assignment

of blame for poor choices and actions.[56] However, when underlying histories of childhood

abuse and neglect are present, I believe these factors are to be considered causal to youth

delinquency.

A thirty-five-year study compiled early antecedents for a community population

of 1,050 African Americans; it looked at the relationship between homelessness and prior

"structural, family, school, and behavioral influences." In this population nearly 22

---

[54] Brandon Andrew Robinson, "Child Welfare Systems and LGBTQ Youth Homelessness: Gender Segregation, Instability, and Intersectionality," *Child Welfare* 96, no. 2 (March 1, 2018): 30-31.

[55] Kimberly A. Tyler and Lisa A. Melander, "Foster Care Placement, Poor Parenting, and Negative Outcomes Among Homeless Young Adults," *Journal of Child and Family Studies* 19, no. 6 (December 1, 2010): 792.

[56] I have witnessed this opinion expressed by many community leaders in Spokane Valley.

percent of males and 16 percent of females reported homelessness between ages fifteen and forty-two.[57] Those who reported homelessness had experienced higher rates of "aggressive behavior, poor first grade conduct, low school bonds, angry mood, depressed mood, substance abuse, violence, teen parenting, and running away. . . . Males were significantly more likely than females to have been aggressive or exhibit poor classroom conduct in first grade. Homeless adult males also had significantly higher levels of adolescent substance use and violence, while homeless adult females had significantly higher prevalence of teen parenting."[58] The study goes on to say, "For females, multivariate analyses showed that teen parenting was a primary predictor of homelessness, underscoring the strong impact of teen parenting relative to other known risk factors among female teens."[59] The high homelessness risk factor for teens becoming pregnant emphasizes the importance of youth maternity support programs.[60]

It is interesting to note, some studies indicate that criminal behavior among youth was more likely to follow homelessness than precede it.[61] However, reasons for youth to

---

[57] Kate E. Fothergill et al, "A Prospective Study of Childhood and Adolescent Antecedents of Homelessness among a Community Population of African Americans," *Journal of Urban Health: Bulletin of the New York Academy of Medicine* 89 no. 3 (2012): 432.

[58] Kate E. Fothergill et al, "A Prospective Study of Childhood and Adolescent Antecedents of Homelessness," 437.

[59] Kate E. Fothergill et al, "A Prospective Study of Childhood and Adolescent Antecedents of Homelessness," 442.

[60] Youth maternity transitional programs is discussed in future chapters.

[61] Katherine H. Shelton, Pamela J. Taylor, Adrian Bonner, and Marianne van den Bree, "Risk Factors for Homelessness: Evidence From a Population-Based Study," *Psychiatric Services* 60, no. 4 (2009): 471.

leave or be asked to leave their homes vary and criminal activity or aggressive behavior is sometimes the reason.[62]

Foster Care

Most children in the U.S. foster care system are reunited with family or they are adopted. Typically, about 10 to11 percent of teens annually remain in the system until they age out at eighteen years old, and that ratio has remained consistent across many years.[63]

Table 4.

2017 U.S. Foster Care: Outcomes for Children Exiting System[64]

Reunited w Parents/Caregivers	Adopted	Released to Another Relative/Caregiver	Emancipated or Other Outcomes
49 %	24 %	17 %	10 %

Unfortunately, the outcomes for youth aging out of foster care are not encouraging. The U.S. Administration for Children and Families reports, "Within two to three years after aging out of foster care at age 18, approximately 51% of youth will lack employment, about 25% will become homeless and incarcerated, and most of them will be at higher

---

[62] Thresia B. Gambon and Janna R. Gewirtz O'Brien, "Runaway Youth: Caring for the Nation's Largest Segment of Mission Children," *American Academy of Pediatrics* 145, no. 2 (2020): 4.

[63] Brandon L. Crawford, et. al., "Factors Influencing Risk of Homelessness among Youth in Transition from Foster Care in Oklahoma: Implications for Reforming Independent Living Services and Opportunities," *Child Welfare* 94, no. 1 (2015): 20-21.

[64] U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Children's Bureau, "Foster Care Statistics 2017," *Numbers and Trends,* March 2019, accessed June 13, 2020, https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/foster.pdf#page=3&view=Children%20in,%20entering,%20and%20exiting%20care.

risk to become a single parent."[65] Whether children remain in foster care until they age

out, or they runaway, or are placed with a guardian, the trauma of a child being removed

from parents can have implications to future homelessness.[66]

Availability of Affordable Housing

The Quigley and Raphael study reported on the economics of homelessness.

Some theories regarding the rise of homelessness in general across the past few decades

cite the deinstitutionalization of the mentally ill, the crack cocaine epidemic that started

in the mid-1980s, and the high cost of low-quality housing. Some evidence supports these

factors. Housing is often downplayed in light of the research showing one-third of the

homeless suffering from mental illness and one-half abusing drugs or alcohol. However,

as the mental hospital populations declined from the 1970s through the 1990s, the jail and

prison populations increased concurrently. Furthermore, mental illness among prisoners

and inmates is considerably higher than the general public. A suggested hypothesis is that

the deinstitutionalized mentally ill were partially re-institutionalized in prisons and jails.[67]

Subsequently, Quigley and Raphael's research demonstrates, "Tighter housing

markets are positively associated with higher levels of homelessness. In each of the

models estimated, the rental vacancy rate exerts a negative and statistically significant

effect on homelessness. . . . The quantitative analysis suggests that relatively small

---

[65] Elizabeth Trejos-Castillo, Gayle Davis, and Terri Hipps, "Economic Well-Being and Independent Living in Foster Youth: Paving the Road to Effective Transitioning out of Care," *Child Welfare* 94, no. 1 (2015): 54.

[66] Kimberly A. Tyler and Lisa A. Melander, "Foster Care Placement, Poor Parenting, and Negative Outcomes Among Homelss Young Adults," *Journal of Child and Family Studies* 19 (2010): 788.

[67] John M. Quigley and Steven Raphael, "The Economics of Homelessness: The Evidence from North America," *European Journal of Housing Policy* 1, no. 3 (2001): 324-326.

changes in housing market conditions can have substantial effects upon rates of homelessness." For example, from the housing markets studied, their results suggest that a 25 percent reduction in homelessness could be accomplished with only a 1 percent increase in the vacancy rate and 0.7 percent reduction in median rent-to-income ratios.[68]

The Spokane regional residential housing market is said to have a very tight vacancy rate. A 5 percent vacancy rate is considered healthy according the City of Spokane's 2020 market analysis.[69] The Spokane Journal reported that the apartment market is beginning to find a healthier balance. "After years of historically low vacancy rates in the multifamily housing sector, some observers of the Spokane apartment market claim it's on the brink of stabilization." It reported that in Spokane County, overall apartment vacancies were only 2.9 percent in 2017, and rose to 5.6 percent by the fall of 2018. However, they also reported that in some of the more economically depressed neighborhoods, vacancy rates are as low as 1.1 percent.[70] The low vacancy rates along with rising rent costs is driving many low-income families out of housing.

The Spokesman-Review, Spokane's leading newspaper, provided a detailed report in June 2020 that headlined "Climbing rents in Spokane County a burden for many."[71]

---

[68] John M. Quigley and Steven Raphael, "The Economics of Homelessness," 333-334..

[69] Leland Consulting Group, "Draft Market Analysis: Spokane Grand Boulevard," March 2020, accessed June 12, 2020, https://static.spokanecity.org/documents/projects/grand-boulevard-transportation-and-zoning-analysis/grand-blvd-study-market-analysis-final-draft-march-2020.pdf.

[70] Natasha Nellis, "Is Spokane's Apartment Market on the Brink of Stability?" *Journal of Business, Spokane and Kootenai Counties,* May 19, 2019, accessed June 12, 2020, https://www.spokanejournal.com/local-news/is-spokanes-apartment-market-on-the-brink-of-stability/.

[71] Amy Edelen, "Climbing rents in Spokane County a burden for many," *The Spokesman-Review,* June 12, 2020, accessed June 12, 2020, https://www.spokesman.com/stories/2017/dec/11/climbing-rents-in-spokane-county-a-burden-for-many/#:~:text=Low%20vacancy%2C%20high%20demand&text=Spokane%20has%20a%202.9%20percent,rate%20hovered%20around%201.4%20percent.

The article quotes landlords, the Spokane Tenants Union, and renters, all saying similar things, rents are up and vacancies are down. Landlords state that they receive several phone calls with prospective renters just minutes after posting a new listing. This competition continues to drive rental prices up, making it more difficult for a low-income person to acquire housing, in particular, an unaccompanied teen with no rental history or adequate income. In addition, minors under the age of eighteen cannot sign a lease unless they are legally emancipated from their parent or guardian. In the fall of 2020, there continued to be a moratorium on tenant evictions because of the COVID-19 pandemic. An anticipated wave of increase in evictions is expected after the governmental freeze on evictions is lifted. Local Spokane experts anticipate the increase in evictions and thus homelessness to increase by as much as 40 percent in the winter of 2020-2021.[72]

The Effects of Homelessness on Unaccompanied Teens

Covenant House is an international nonprofit that provides street outreach, short-term crisis shelters, and long-term transitional housing programs. It has locations in thirty-one cities across six countries. Though, like the teens it serves, the agency has a checkered past including ethics scandals,[73] yet continues to serve and provide a bridge for kids who have very few options. Covenant House's president, Kevin Ryan's statement sums up the plight of the unaccompanied homeless teen, "Based on decades of research, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Kaiser Permanente's Health

---

[72] These projections come from testimony and discussions within the Spokane Homeless Coalition, of which I am a member.

[73] Nikita Stewart, "New York City Investigates Youth Shelter Accused of Fraud," *New York Times* May 17, 2016, accessed October 18, 2020, https://www.nytimes.com/2016/05/18/nyregion/city-investigates -covenant-house-youth-homeless-shelter-for-fraud.html.

Appraisal Clinic in San Diego describe nine adverse childhood experiences that harm

young people's long-term health and well-being, including emotional or physical neglect;

losing a parent; physical, sexual, or emotional abuse; witnessing violence against their

mother; and having a family member who is incarcerated, mentally ill, or an addict.

Young people who have had such experiences have greater chances of becoming teen

parents, being hospitalized for a mental disorder, and suffering from a broad variety of

physical problems later in life, including miscarriage, stroke, and heart disease. The

damage caused by such childhood experiences is cumulative, with the risk of health

problems and heartache in adulthood increasing with each additional childhood

hardship."[74] Most of the teens I interviewed for this research experienced neglect, various

forms of abuse, violence, mental health problems, and addiction within the family.[75]

Education and Income

The National Center for Homeless Education lists the educational barriers that

unaccompanied youth experience when trying to enroll, attend, and succeed in school:

- lack of safe and stable housing
- lack of support from a caring adult
- lack of basic needs, including food and medical care, resulting in hunger, fatigue, and poor health
- lack of consistent access to bathing and laundry facilities
- emotional crisis/mental health issues due to experiences of trauma that can interfere with school engagement
- lack of access to school records and other paperwork
- lack of school supplies and clothing
- employment that may interfere with school attendance and homework completion

---

[74] Kevin Ryan and Tina Kelley, *Almost Home: Helping Kids Move from Homelessness to Hope* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2012), 4.

[75] See Chapter 4, Field Research.

- irregular school attendance
- difficulty accumulating credits due to school mobility
- lack of reliable transportation
- concerns about being reported to child welfare and/or law enforcement agencies[76]

This is an alarming list of barriers for a teen to navigate and experience any level of success. Unfortunately, these challenges are often too much to overcome and some students drop out of school. A study of risk factors in the classroom showed a connection between homelessness and negative educational success. "Results suggest that the instability associated with homelessness and maltreatment translated into a disruptive school environment for classmates and threatened their reading achievement and attendance rates."[77]

In a longitudinal study of youth that aged out of foster care, 92 percent of teens emancipated out of foster care at age eighteen without a high school diploma or GED. Thirty-four percent of the aged-out foster youth were still non-graduates at age nineteen. The following table shows their education levels and employment rate at age 26 compared to peers who were never in foster care.

---

[76] National Center for Homeless Education, "McKinney-Vento Law into Practice Brief Series: Supporting the Education of Unaccompanied Students Experiencing Homelessness," August 2017, accessed May 12, 2020, https://nche.ed.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/youth.pdf.

[77] John W. Fantuzzo, Whitney A. LeBoeuf, and Heather L. Rouse, "An Investigation of the Relations Between School Concentrations of Student Risk Factors and Student Educational Well-Being," *Educational Researcher* 43, no. 1 (2014): 34.

Table 5.

Education/Employment Comparison: Aged Out Foster Youth and Non-Foster Peers at Age 26[78]

	High School or GED Grad	Associate's Degree Earned	Bachelor's Degree Earned	Attended Graduate School	Employed
Aged Out Youth	80 %	4 %	3 %	1 %	< 50 %
Non-Foster Peers	94 %	10 %	24 %	13 %	80 %

Fewer than half of the twenty-six-year-old study participants were employed, compared to 80 percent of comparison twenty-six-year-old adults. "Previously fostered adults earned a median of $18,000 less annually than their counterparts, had fewer assets, and incurred more debt. Approximately three fourths of females and half of males had received government financial assistance, such as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, food stamps, Supplementary Security Income, WIC, or housing assistance."[79]

Crime and Incarceration

Research suggests that homeless and runaway teens are disproportionally involved in delinquency and criminal behaviors.[80] Common criminal activities include theft, drug related crimes, assault, trespassing, and prostitution. Homeless people in general have few options for self-support. Homeless adolescents are even more vulnerable, lacking employment and economic sustainment. The conditional deprivation experienced by homeless youth often results in this criminal behavior as a survival

---

[78] Tracey G. Scherr, "Preparing Students in Foster Care for Emancipation, Employment, and Postsecondary Education," *School Psychology Forum* 9, no. 1 (2015): 60.

[79] Tracey G. Scherr, "Preparing Students in Foster Care for Emancipation," 60-61.

[80] Xiaojin Chin, Lisa Thrane, Les B. Whitbeck, and Kurt Johnson, "Mental Disorders, Comorbidity, and Postrunaway Arrests Among Homeless and Runaway Adolescents," *Journal of Research on Adolescence* 16, no. 3 (2006): 380.

mechanism. Teens are most likely to participate in criminal deviant behavior when they have been socialized within a context of an abusive family and among deviant peers.[81]

Prostitution

Even though the Federal Trafficking Victims Protection Act passed in 2000, Washington State still did not fully have an exclusion for minors arrested for prostitution until 2020. The state passed the Safe Harbor bill giving law enforcement the ability to divert minors from the courts to programs specializing in housing and comprehensive services. Though the bill recognized trafficked youth as victims, it also defined them as criminals. In 2018 Washington finally passed two bills to exempt minors from arrest for and charge of prostitution. It established two centers to provide therapeutic services for trafficked victims, however, both bills ultimately died for lack of funding.[82] The bill was reintroduced in 2020 and was finally signed into law June 11, 2020.[83] The legislation was fifty years in the making and is a strong step forward to decriminalize minors caught in sex trafficking. The next step is to develop positive alternatives to arrest.

---

[81] Les B. Whitbeck, Danny R. Hoyt, and Kevin A. Ackley, "Abusive Family Backgrounds and Later Victimization Among Runaway and Homeless Adolescents," *Journal of Research on Adolescence* 7, no. 4 (October 1, 1997): 378.

[82] Shoshana Wineburg, "Washington State Must Help, Not Arrest Sex Trafficked, Homeless Minors," September 10, 2019, accessed June 13, 2020, https://youthtoday.org/2019/09/washington-state-must-help-not-arrest-sex-trafficked-minors-such-as-homeless/.

[83] Safe Harbor Bill, HB 1775/SB 5744 (2020), accessed November 10, 2020, https://app.leg. wa.gov/billsummary?BillNumber=1775&Initiative=false&Year=2019.

Sexual Assault, Exploitation, Trafficking, and Pregnancy

The Federal Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000 defines severe forms of trafficking in people as "a commercial sex act induced by force, fraud, or coercion, or when the person induced to perform such act has not attained 18 years of age." Multiple replicated studies of youth and young adults who presented at drop-in centers, crisis shelters and outreach services, from ages twelve to twenty-five quantified the percentages of youth that had engaged in domestic sex trafficking. Of the 1,683 youth between twelve and twenty-five years of age interviewed across five studies, 23.4 percent, 394 youths reported they were sex trafficked. 18.5 percent of the youth interviewed (311) reported they had been sex trafficked or had traded sex for something of value while under the age of eighteen.[84]

Homeless teens are extremely vulnerable to sexual exploitation, which contributes to many other problems. Interviews were conducted with 108 young people, forty-four men and sixty-four women, in the streets and in shelters within five states. Thirty-one percent of female teens reported they had been forced to engage in sex with an adult caregiver prior to being homeless and 21 percent reported having been sexually assaulted after running away from home. Eleven percent of male teens reported being forced to have sex with an adult caregiver prior to homelessness and 18 percent were sexually assaulted after running away from home.[85]

---

[84] Johanna K. P. Greeson, Daniel Traglia, Debra Schilling Wolfe, and Sarah Wasch, "Prevelance and Correlates of Sex Trafficking among Homeless and Runaway Youths Presenting for Shelter Services," *Social Work Research* 43, no. 2 (2019): 91.

[85] Les B. Whitbeck, Danny R. Hoyt, and Kevin A. Ackley, "Abusive Family Backgrounds and Later Victimization Among Runaway and Homeless Adolescents," *Journal of Research on Adolescence* 7, no. 4 (1997): 382.

A study of 628 homeless youth across eight U.S. cities identified several risk patterns. "Homeless youth with histories of physical and sexual abuse have odds of attempting suicide that are 1.9-4.3 times that of non-abused homeless youth." Further, the research shows a link between street youth who participate in "survival sex" in exchange for shelter, money, drugs, or food and suicidal behavior. Survival sex is also "associated with a number of other risk factors including victimization, criminal behavior, substance abuse, sexually transmitted infections, and pregnancy."[86] This information correlates with Lucy. She experienced sexual abuse from caregivers and from sexual predators after becoming homeless. She had suicide ideation and engaged in the self-mutilation act of "cutting"[87] throughout a seven-year period of abuse.[88]

In another study, 20 percent of homeless young women become pregnant. "Compared with non-homeless youth, homeless/runaway adolescents report elevated rates of sexual risk behaviors. They tend to initiate sexual intercourse at a much earlier age, have a greater likelihood of multiple sex partners, report inconsistent condom or other contraceptive use, have sex while intoxicated, and may trade sex for money, shelter, or drugs."[89]

---

[86] N. Eugene Walls, Cathryn Potter, and James Van Leeuwen, "Where Risks and Protective Factors Operate Differently: Homeless Sexual Minority Youth and Suicide Attempts," *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal* 26, no. 3 (June 1, 2009): 240-241.

[87] Many people suffering with borderline personality disorder engage in self-mutilation or self-injurous behaviors such as cutting or burning themselves or banging their heads . They often report that these physical acts of discomfort help relieve their emotional suffering. Ronald J. Comer, *Fundamentals of Abnormal Psychology* 5th ed. (New York: Worth Publishers, 2008), 386.

[88] Conversations with Lucy, September-November, 2020.

[89] Sanna J. Thompson et al, "Runaway and Pregnant: Risk Factors Associated with Pregnancy in National Sample of Runaway/Homeless Female Adolescents," *Journal of Adolescent Health* 43 no. 2 (2008): 126.

If they choose to keep their baby and the state does not take the child, they are likely to receive inadequate health care and have an increased risk for low-birth-weight babies and high infant mortality. Additionally, adolescent mothers are more likely to drop out of school, remain unmarried, and experience poverty than mothers over the age of twenty. Therefore, their children are more likely to live in "impoverished single-parent households, and to enter the child welfare system."[90] This is the epitome of the cycle of poverty, and homeless teen women have a one-in-five chance of perpetuating it.

Mental and Physical Health

"Adolescence and early childhood are periods of marked social, psychological, and physical development."[91] The early developmental period is a time of rapid brain development, increases in myelination to facilitate greater connectivity across brain regions, cognitive speed, and efficiency. It is also a time when the prefrontal cortex matures, necessary for executive functioning. Executive functioning includes strategy, identification, inhibition, decision making, working memory, reasoning, planning, organization, and emotional regulation.[92] Unfortunately, all of this necessary growth, development, and maturation is taking place at the same time that vulnerable children, adolescents, and youth are being subjected to diverse trauma and deprivation experiences.

---

[90] Sanna J. Thompson et al, "Runaway and Pregnant," 125.

[91] Jennifer P. Edidin, Zoe Ganim, Scott J. Hunter, and Niranjan S. Karnik, "The Mental and Physical Health of Homeless Youth: A Literature Review," *Child Psychiatry and Human Development* 43, no. 3 (2012): 357.

[92] Jennifer P. Edidin, "The Mental and Physical Health of Homeless Youth," 357.

Early instabilities make success through adulthood much more negatively predictable. Results from an American Medical Association longitudinal study[93] showed a strong correlation between episodes of childhood hunger and vulnerability for long-term poor health outcomes, with asthma being common among older adolescents. "Repeated exposure to food insecurity appears to be particularly toxic . . . with older girls appearing to be particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of food insecurity."[94] This is uniquely alarming considering the population of teen women experiencing hunger associated with homelessness, coupled with the possibility of unplanned pregnancy.

A school of psychology conducted a systematic search of three electronic databases for articles published between 1995 and 2015 on the cognitive functioning of youth fifteen-twenty-four years of age who have experienced homelessness, foster care, or poverty. The objective was to determine if these groups of youth have different cognitive abilities from their non-disadvantaged peers and whether cognitive profiles differ among the three research groups. After reviewing thirty-one independent studies the research found that compared to non-disadvantaged youth or published norms, the cognitive function of the homeless, foster, and poverty groups were impaired. All three groups suffered difficulty with working memory. Youth from the homeless and poverty groups also showed deficit in general cognitive functions, attention, and executive function. Additionally, 64 percent of homeless youth with one or more psychiatric disorders showed impaired cognitive functioning against the norms, especially in the

---

[93] Sharon I. Kirkpatrick, Lynn McIntyre, and Melissa I. Potestio, "Child Hunger and Long-term Adverse Consequences for Health," *Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine* 164, no. 8 (2010): 755-756.

[94] Sharon I. Kirkpatrick, "Child Hunger and Long-term Adverse Consequences," 760.

areas of verbal and working memory. However, two cognitive strengths also surfaced: creativity surfaced among homeless youth and selective attention among youth from the poverty group.[95] Homelessness affects the general emotional well-being. "Older youths may be more affected by homelessness than younger children, because of cognitive development, involvement with peer rejection.[96]

Homeless youth are subjected to abuse, unstable and unsafe living conditions, limited resources, substance usage, high risk sexual activities, insufficient and irregular sleeping and eating patterns. All of these conditions contribute to the general poor mental and physical health of homeless teens. They have more occurrences of advanced illnesses from a lack of prevention and early intervention, which leads to exacerbated illnesses and an increased cost of treatment. Homeless youth are at high risk for infectious diseases, hepatitis, influenza, sexually transmitted diseases, diabetes, dental issues, skin disease, asthma, and pneumonia. These risks increase from crowded living conditions on the streets and in emergency shelters.[97]

Access to health care is another complicating factor. One study recorded that 65 percent of homeless youth did not have health insurance. Even though free healthcare and health insurance are available, sufficient barriers exist to access it. A lack of transportation, identity and legal documents, permanent address, photo identification, and

---

[95] Charlotte E. Fry, Kate Langley, and Katherine H. Shelton, "A Systematic Review of Congnitive Functioning among Young People Who Have Experienced Homelessness, Foster Care, or Poverty," *Child Neuropsychology* 23, no. 8 (2017): 907, 927.

[96] John C. Buckner, Ellen L. Bassuk, Linda F. Weinreb, and Margaret G. Brooks, "Homelessness and Its Relationship to the Mental Health and Behavior of Low-Income School-Age Children," *Developmental Psychology* 35, no. 1 (1999): 247.

[97] Jennifer P. Edidin, "The Mental and Physical Health of Homeless Youth," 360.

the complicated structure of enrolling and navigating the system often prevent timely treatment, and preventive treatments. Homeless teens may also be embarrassed, or lack confidence or knowledge to seek professional help, instead seeking advice of other homeless youth and conducting self-treatment. Street teens may also fear discrimination, judgement, or further marginalization from healthcare professionals.[98]

Substance Abuse

Whitbeck and colleagues studied depressive symptoms, con-occurring depressive symptoms, substance abuse, and conduct among homeless adolescents. The importance of understanding depression indicators is emphasized by the strong body of evidence pointing to the comorbidity of depressive symptoms and other disorders, such as substance abuse and conduct problems. Results indicate that early family stressors associate with street victimization in both male and female youth. Street victimization was the most powerful predictor of not only depressive symptoms, but co-occurring depressive symptoms, substance abuse, and conduct problems. Therefore, early intervention of victimization is recommended by providing safe housing and transitional living programming.[99]

A study of 285 homeless teens between the ages of thirteen and nineteen investigated how substance use, illegal drugs and alcohol, was associated with their health and safety. A significant relationship was noted between psychological distress

---

[98] Jennifer P. Edidin, "The Mental and Physical Health of Homeless Youth," 364.

[99] Les B. Whitbeck, Danny R. Hoyt, and Wa-Ning Bao, "Depressive Symptoms and Co-occuring Depressive Symptoms, Substance Abuse, and Conduct Problems among Runaway and Homeless Adolescents," *Child Development* 71, no. 3 (2000): 726-730.

and the use of alcohol, cocaine, and amphetamines. A significant relationship also was shown between heroin and housing risk. Teens using injection drugs, like heroin, stayed in fewer places but were more likely to stay in high-risk situations, on the street, in squats, and non-abandoned vehicles, rather than safer situations like shelters, or a friend's house. Thus, injection drug users were exposed to more dangerous and chronic living conditions and non-injection users stayed in safer environments, even if the setting changed night by night, such as couch surfing. Marijuana appeared unrelated to health and safety outcomes.[100] If the objective is to help transition homeless youth into stable housing and support systems this information could help prioritize drug treatment strategies.

Economic Impact on Society

The Federal government spends billions of dollars combating homelessness annually. Even local communities like Spokane allocate millions of dollars each year toward the crisis. Funding is allocated for emergency shelters, transition programs, and homelessness prevention strategies. Nonprofits develop expensive programs that require funding from philanthropic wings of corporations, small business owners, churches, and charitable households. In addition to the costs of shelters, transition programs, food banks, clothing banks, diaper banks, and so many other assistance programs, there is a massive expense to provide medical and mental healthcare. It is extremely expensive for a community to provide all aspects of basic necessities for an entire segment of residents

---

[100] Dana M. Rhule-Louie, Sarah Bowen, John S. Baer, and Peggy L. Peterson, "Substance Use and Health and Safety among Homeless Youth," *Journal of Child and Family Studies* 17, no. 3 (2008): 315.

who are not economically self-sustaining.[101] The cost of homeless populations affects the budgets of businesses, municipalities, schools, nonprofits, hospitals, and certainly the taxpayers.

One Australian study assessed the costs incurred by the healthcare system for homeless individuals. That survey showed the highest costs were associated with homeless mental health care needs and long-term physical health conditions.[102] Homeless individuals tend to use the emergency department (ED) of hospitals with a disproportionately high frequency. Frequent ED users incur twice the costs of non-ED users. Also, findings show that homeless frequent ED users are also using non-ED services incurring yet more costs. Heavy cost drivers are behavioral health conditions, especially co-occurring mental illness, and substance use disorders. All of these expensive conditions are proven to be associated to homelessness.[103]

Conclusion

A thorough review of the problem of unaccompanied teen homelessness can become lost in statistics. One out of every thirty-four public school students in Spokane Valley are homeless and 1 out of every 140 are homeless youth detached from family. When statistics are presented it is easy to think in terms of housing. But this problem is not simply about shelter, it is about trauma. Homeless children and youth are products of

---

[101] My agency alone (Spokane Valley Partners) provides $4-5 million annually in basic necessity resources to homeless and low income residents of Spokane Valley.

[102] Kaylene Zaretzky, et. al, "What Drives the High Health Care Costs of the Homeless?" *Housing Studies* 32, no. 7 (2017): 939.

[103] Matthew S. Mitchell, et. al., "Cost of Health Care Utilization Among Homeless Frequent Emergency Department Users," *Psychological Services* 14, no. 2 (2017): 198.

adverse poverty, domestic violence, sexual assault, physical assault, rejection, mental illness, substance abuse, neglect, and abandonment.[104] And once they become homeless the trauma and trouble continue. Homeless youth are more likely to become pregnant, incarcerated, addicted to substance, sexually exploited, or trafficked, to drop out of school, to become severely mentally ill, and to experience a decline in physical health. Ultimately, the cost of allowing youth to become homeless and remain homeless is felt by the budget of a community and within the soul of its citizens. The plight of homeless and vulnerable children is not a new phenomenon. Every generation has had orphans, and each era and culture has had to determine what to do about it.

---

[104] National Coalition for the Homeless, "Causes of Youth Homelessness," accessed June 11, 2020, https://nationalhomeless.org/issues/youth/.

CHAPTER 2:

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE OF ADOLESCENT ORPHANS

Introduction

What moral social obligation does a community have toward the wellbeing of

teen orphans, or orphans in general? The response to that question is influenced by both

era and culture, hence by the context of the orphan. To understand America's attitudes

and value systems that influence its current response toward this issue, it helps to look

back. American governmental, societal, and cultural systems, though diverse, are

primarily rooted in Western historical constructs that were established through centuries

of European development, the Greco-Roman era, and morally from Judea-Christian law

and culture. This chapter will explore these connections by examining the social position

of orphans in historical societies and the governmental and community responsibilities

that were demonstrated or ignored. Understanding the social status of orphaned teens is a

major building block for developing our community's effective plan to help them.

In many parts of the world, orphans and unaccompanied teens continue to be

ignored or exploited, and even within the U.S. to some extent. Since teen homelessness is

more contemporary terminology, looking back through antiquity requires the use of the

term orphan. The word orphan actually correlates accurately, because as will be

discussed, in many ancient settings provisions for orphans were considered for minors

who were without fathers. As substantiated elsewhere in this paper, the erosion of a

healthy family unit today in America is a primary catalyst for teens becoming detached

from nurturing parental supervision, whether they are runaway or are thrown away, making them essentially orphans.

Therefore, I believe it is a valid assumption to classify unaccompanied homeless teens as orphans, whether or not their biological parents are deceased. I consider these teens to be situationally orphaned because of the similar vulnerabilities, disadvantages, and the psychological, physiological, and sociological effects they experience, which is developed within this text. Thus, this chapter probes America's ancestral history to discover how we arrived here and also explores the economic and societal issues surrounding teen homelessness. Additionally, it summarizes the primary laws and advancements made in the U.S. to advocate for teens who are homeless and situationally or actually orphaned.

As an example of Western consciousness toward orphans, at the beginning of the 20th century and earlier, traditional consensus among the Eskimo (Inuit) culture in Greenland, Canada, Alaska, and elsewhere, was to kill unwanted children, especially orphans. Peter Freuchen, the famous Danish polar explorer, and the co-founder of Thule Greenland wrote prolifically about the early Eskimo culture that he was immersed in.[1] His first wife was a young orphaned Eskimo girl, Mequ. During a "hunger period" her widowed mother hung Mequ's younger brother and cast her out into the arctic to fend for herself. Somehow, she survived and later drew the attention of the great Danish explorer. He noticed her as a "little girl", and they struck a friendly relationship over the course of

---

[1] These books compile his writing on the subject, edited by his second wife. Dagmar Freuchen, ed., *Peter Freuchen's Adventures in the Arctic* (New York: Julian Messner, Inc., 1960); Dagmar Freuchen, ed., *Peter Freuchen's Book of the Eskimos* (New York: Fawcett Premier, 1961).

a year. She was about thirteen when she married Peter Freuchen. Writing of their

wedding, Freuchen said,

> Suddenly, in that romantic half-dark, I was possessed by a power stronger than myself. I threw my skin covers aside, reached over and grabbed the young girl, and swung her over to me on my bunk. She didn't say a word, and neither did Arnanquaq. Thus, I was married and, to the extent possible for an explorer, settled down. Mequ was so small and fine of build. Her hands were soft, as if she had been manicuring them all her life. But the night of our marriage she had had to do a lot of dirty work, and her entire body was filthy, her clothes too miserable for description. My remembrance of the night is somewhat misty, but in the morning I told her that I didn't intend to let her go home, that I wished to keep her with me.[2]

Mequ died of the Spanish Influenza epidemic ten years later, but not before her

reputation for intelligence and charm were known all over Greenland.[3] In cultural

context, her story could be viewed as a Cinderella or as a version of Ruth and Boaz.

However, if judged by contemporary First World standards, it would be considered child

abuse and exploitation of a vulnerable orphaned teen. It is interesting to note that Peter

Freuchen had also been raped by a post menopause aristocrat woman when he was a

minor teenager.[4]

---

[2] Dagmar Freuchen, ed., *Peter Freuchen's Book of the Eskimos* (New York: Fawcett Premier, 1961), 73.

[3] Dagmar Freuchen, ed., *Peter Freuchen's Book of the Eskimos* (New York: Fawcett Premier, 1961), 78-80.

[4] Dagmar Freuchen, ed., *Peter Freuchen's Adventures in the Arctic* (New York: Julian Messner, Inc., 1960), 14-16.

Historical Survey of the Exploitation, Commodification, and Protection of Orphans:

Antiquity through the Medieval Eras

Classic Antiquity

In many of antiquity's societies, to be an orphan often meant a fate of either death or slavery. Throughout history, exploitation of the weak has been a discretionary decision of the powerful. Those with power to act are faced with a choice. They can defend the vulnerable, prey upon them, or do nothing. This point of decision continues to make news today. Some humans have always been a commodity of others and slavery remains.

Fitzgerald stated, "The social fact that orphans were an especially vulnerable group was already recognized in the ancient Mediterranean world, and they were viewed in this way because they often had no protection and no power."[5] Every society has rules and normative behaviors. As I narrated earlier, some primitive communities, such as early Inuit tribes, relied heavily upon cultural traditions rather than laws that protected the equality of human value.

One of the oldest Apocryphal books, 1 Esdras, established on which extreme spectrum of power the orphan was placed during the period of Classic Antiquity, "Gentlemen, how is wine the strongest? It leads astray the minds of all who drink it. It makes equal the mind of the king and the orphan, of the slave and the free, of the poor and the rich."[6] According to the ancient book, as extreme was the power of the king, equally extreme was the powerlessness of the orphan. It was precisely because of this

[5] J.T. Fitzgerald, "Orphans of the Mediterranean Antiquity and Early Christianity," *Acta Theologica* Supplementum 23 (2016): 34.

[6] 1 Esdras 3:18-19, NRSV

extreme vulnerability that civilized societies were compelled to make laws that established warnings to and consequences for those who would exploit them.

The Code of Hammurabi is one of the oldest deciphered written texts and collection of laws known. It was established by the sixth king of the first Babylonian Dynasty, Hammurabi, who reigned 1792-1750 BCE.[7] By common accounts, this predates Mosaic Law by 200-500 years.[8] Within this period of the Babylonian Empire, the Code established both the plight of the orphan and the protection offered by the King. The Prologue states, "Anu and Bel called me, Hammurabi, the exalted prince, the worshiper of the gods, to cause justice to prevail in the land, to destroy the wicked and the evil, to prevent the strong from oppressing the weak."[9] This pretext to the 282 summarized legal cases in the Code defines the basic role of government, to protect its citizens, especially the oppression of the weak.

In the Epilogue to the Code, the King states more specifically, "The great gods proclaimed me, and I am the guardian governor, whose scepter is righteous and whose beneficent protection is spread over my city. In my bosom I carried the people of the land of Sumer and Akkad; under my protection I brought their brethren into security; in my wisdom I restrained them; that the strong might not oppose the weak, and that they should give justice to the orphan and the widow, in Babylon, the city whose turrets Anu

---

[7] Andrew A. Pyrcz, "Set in Stone: The Ancient Babylonian Law Code of King Hammurabi," *Agora* 50, no. 1 (2019): 11.

[8] The Torah is believed by most scholars to have been written by Moses with dating attributed to the identification of the Pharaohs of the Exodus, either of the 18th or 19th Dynasties, thus between 1580-1205 BCE. Kenneth L. Barker and John Kohlenberger III, eds., *Zondervan NIV Bible Commentary: Volume 1: Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), 64.

[9] Robert Francis Harper, ed., *The Code of Hammurabi King of Babylon, about 2250 B.C.* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1904), accessed April 12, 2020, https://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/hammurabi-the-code-of-hammurabi.

and Bel raised."[10] This statement at the end of the Code established the responsibility of government to protect and possibly vindicate orphans and widows. The Mosaic Law echoes this sentiment, "You shall not mistreat any widow or fatherless child. If you do mistreat them, and they cry out to me, I will surely hear their cry, and my wrath will burn, and I will kill you with the sword, and your wives shall become widows and your children fatherless."[11]

These ancient precedents clearly expressed a mandate of both God and king to protect the widow and the orphan. However, in the hands of human government, this protection was often only extended when advantageous. Ironically, at the same time and place that these laws were supposed to protect the weak, it was an acceptable practice for children to be orphaned into slavery. In Babylonia and elsewhere, "Some parents who could or would not raise their children exposed their young by placing them into a pit on the street. Many of the infants died from exposure. But the pit was in a public location known to town's peoples as the place where infants were left. People who wanted a slave picked up the abandoned children and raised them as slaves."[12] An abundance of evidence shows that in Greece before and after the Roman Empire, the practice of "exposure" of infants and abortion was present. Population control in order to reduce those in poverty was a common concern, which may have led to these atrocities against children. Though there is less evidence of infant exposure in Rome, Roman law did permit the father right

---

[10] Robert Francis Harper, ed., *The Code of Hammurabi King of Babylon, about 2250 B.C.* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1904), accessed April 12, 2020, https://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/hammurabi-the-code-of-hammurabi.

[11] Exodus 22:22-24, ESV.

[12] M. Wayne Alexander and William Violet, "The Marketing of People: Slave Trade in the Ancient Near East," *Journal of Business and Behavioral Sciences* 26, no. 2 (2014): 143.

to exercise *patria potestas*, in Latin "power of the father." *Patria potestas* gave fathers

legal authority over all of his decedents, biological or adopted up to and including capital

punishment.[13]

Orphans of soldiers who died in combat were afforded some accommodations in

Greek city-states. Boy orphans were to be given "greaves, a cuirass, a dagger, a helmet, a

shield, a spear, worth not less than three minas at the Heracleia, and they must proclaim

their names. But if they are daughters, for the dowry whenever they became fourteen

years old."[14] Provisions for orphans of the soldiers were similarly documented in the city

states of Rhodes, Thasos, and Athens. However, it is also clear that this assistance was

not purely humanitarian, but rather served the interest of the state. Boys were needed to

provide an ongoing supply of soldiers and girls were needed for childbearing. Taking

care of the families of soldiers was an incentive for commitment toward the war

machine.[15] Therefore, regardless of any provisions made by government, there was also

an allowance for those with power to determine the value and usefulness of orphans.

Medieval Age

Fast forward to fourteenth century Europe and it would be expected that

advancement had been made for the protection of vulnerable orphans. Of course, this was

a century filled with famine and the deadliest plague in history. It was an altogether

hierarchal and patriarchal society that was communal and inclusive but not without a

---

[13] A. R. Hands, *Charities and Social Aid in Greece and Rome* (London: Camelot Press, 1968), 69-71.

[14] J. T. Fitzgerald, "Orphans of the Mediterranean Antiquity," 37.

[15] J. T. Fitzgerald, "Orphans of the Mediterranean Antiquity," 38.

maintenance of status and class distinctions. In the English countryside there was a distinct order of community; if a vulnerable member needed help, the familial support extended to the local community or help did not exist at all. Clark writes:

> Throughout the countryside hardship and want tested the bonds of community and threatened disorder. There were no state agencies, no public funds or programs of relief administered by the government to assist peasants in need. For them, the true problem, the endless challenge, was to find solutions 'from within.' Social welfare was a local problem, and what came to matter was whether the help that villagers offered "soft-spoken" neighbors, "the weak and the helpless," was also offered defiant beggars and "loudmouthed" men, people whose very behavior annoyed and disturbed public life.[16]

The implication is that for the poor helpless person, such as an orphan, neighbors were inclined to offer assistance and little to none would come from government. At this time in rural Europe, land ownership was the basis of wealth. Those in the position of ownership, though sometimes even peasants themselves, formed the structure of society and government within villages.[17] Fourteenth century village society could be defined with communal ties. The values that mattered to these folks had to do with what they held in common, being part of a group, each person having a clear role within community, and sharing group goals.[18]

How does this contrast with today's communities? The U.S. encourages individualism and self-sufficiency. Teens disassociated from their families may not feel they belong to the community at large but instead are lost in the crowd. It was generally not that way in the Medieval village. Behavior was the pseudo "litmus test" for belonging

---

[16] Elaine Clark, "Social Welfare and Mutual Aid in the Medieval Countryside," *Journal of British Studies* 33, no. 4 (1994): 387-388.

[17] Elaine Clark, "Social Welfare and Mutual Aid in the Medieval Countryside," 384.

[18] Elaine Clark, "Social Welfare and Mutual Aid in the Medieval Countryside," 385.

within the village. "Inclusion required conformity and obliged the many to observe a code of conduct that honored the demands of justice and rewarded each according to his works."[19] Therefore, if an orphan conformed to community standards, inclusion was probably available.

A different level of official interest was present if an orphan was heir to land. Lords and manorial officials paid close attention to these minors and discussed their situations and problems openly in their courts. Lords were concerned with the efficiency of their agrarian society, which meant that lands without competent heirs could disrupt the profitability of the region and sow general discord. For that reason, court officials were mindful to assign guardians and execute justice for orphaned minors who were taken advantage of because of their future inheritance. Guardianship was sometimes extended to the community at large, but usually started with relatives or would be assigned to court jurors. In summary, "Wards became part of an extensive network of relationships initially formed within families but regulated and linked to the wider world by custodial law. This law provided the procedures for participation and collaboration that drew a community of tenants together and made the welfare of minors not a question of private charity but a matter of manorial policy."[20]

In the Medieval countryside, as has been developed, an orphan was most likely to gain the attention of the village whether or not she or he was left land and possession by deceased parents. Villages had a communal attitude. However, in the cities of Medieval England, there was not as much charity available unless there was property to be

---

[19] Elaine Clark, "Social Welfare and Mutual Aid in the Medieval Countryside," 386.

[20] Elaine Clark, "Social Welfare and Mutual Aid in the Medieval Countryside," 394.

disputed. Admittedly, there remains little historical evidence of the treatment of Medieval orphans outside of court records that have survived. Yet, enough documentation does exist to express that support for city orphans mostly relied upon households of family and friends. Courts intervened in cases that involved property disputes and transitional custodial appointments for minor heirs. Clark notes, "Neither London nor Bristol protected the orphans of the poor and the propertyless. Instead, city officials agreed to supervise the sons and daughters of householders who had chattels, land, and cash to bequeath."[21] So even though there were courts and laws that provided some oversight and protection for orphans, if a homeless teen was destitute without family property, they were very likely to be exploited or unsupported by the societal structures.

Late Modern and Contemporary Eras

In the Late Modern and Contemporary eras, the complexity of the causes and effects of homelessness is represented by the interconnectedness of governmental policies, income inequality and other economic factors, healthcare systems, school systems, housing construction, labor trends, family and marital trends, domestic violence, and so many other variables. In order to understand the root system of the teen homelessness crisis currently being experienced, it is necessary to look at the economic and socio-political atmosphere today's teens were born into.

How many of today's homeless teens were in families adversely impacted by the great recession of 2007-2009? An eighteen-year-old in 2020 would have been five years

---

[21] Elaine Clark, "City Orphans and Custody Laws in Medieval England," *The American Journal of Legal History* 34, no. 2 (1990): 170.

old in 2007 as that recession began. A thirteen-year-old in 2020 would have been two

years old when the recession was recorded as finished in 2009, even though many

families would continue for years to recover from unemployment or underemployment.[22]

In his book on the economic gap in education, Gorski wrote, "This barrier—the scarcity

of living-wage jobs and jobs with benefits—has such a deep and broad impact on families

experiencing poverty and their school-age children that we might think of it as the trouble

that underlies all troubles . . . since the economic recession, a majority of newly created

jobs pay below a living wage and include few or no benefits."[23] Low wages and the

scarcity of affordable housing increasingly drives more families and teens out of stable

housing.

Homelessness in general, among families, individuals, and teens, has been on the

rise for decades. The American Journal of Public Health stated:

> Simultaneously with the rise of family homelessness was an increase in the
> number of homeless and street-involved youths who lived unattached from their
> families or guardians. Quantifying this number has been consistently difficult.
> Estimates vary widely, in part because of differing age ranges used to define the
> population. Nonetheless, a steady increase has been notable, from an estimated
> 250,000 in 1983 to 500,000 in 1988 and as many as 2 million in 1990. The
> Government Accountability Office (GAO) cited data from 2001 that showed an
> estimated 5 million "disconnected youths" in the United States.[24]

As stated, in the two decades of the 1980's and 1990's, homelessness among

teens that were unaccompanied or "unattached from their families," rose from an

---

[22] Andrew Sum and Ishwar Khatiwada, "The Nation's Underemployed in the 'Great Recession' of 2007-2009," *Monthly Labor Review* (November, 2010).

[23] Paul C. Gorsky, *Reaching and Teaching Students in Poverty: Strategies for Erasing the Opportunity Gap* (New York: Teachers College Press, 2018), 88.

[24] Roy Grant et al., "Twenty-Five Years of Child and Family Homelessness: Where Are We Now?" *American Journal of Public Health* 103, no. S2 (Supplement 2, 2013): e2.

estimated 250,000 to over 5,000,000, a remarkable 2,000 percent increase. My research has attempted to connect the historical developments of orphan homelessness with the modern underlying elements that have led to widespread teen homelessness and detachment unilaterally across the communities of America. Millennia of precedent attitudes from society and government toward orphans set up America for both a sense of responsibility and justification for apathy. Even after the U.S. created laws specifically to protect and provide for orphans, which will be discussed later, there has still always been the necessity of the citizenry to follow it up with moral actions.

Laws alone are not enough to protect and provide; they are simply the structural scaffolding by which citizens of communities can build networks of love and support. Yet, governmental policy is extremely influential in creating or relieving many of the factors that contribute to teen homelessness, poverty probably being one of the most devastating. Not every teen in this situation is there because of family poverty. However, poverty in general contributes to limiting opportunities for children, teens, and young adults. Examining the scope and history of teen homelessness would be inaccurate without spending some effort to understand its connection to poverty and how that has unfolded historically in America. Additional contributing historical factors explored in this section include changes in the availability of affordable housing options, the family unit, the role of domestic violence, the foster care system, and homelessness.

Poverty

Rural America. Outside of major metropolitan areas in the U.S., regions like Spokane were historically rural areas where many families supported themselves through

small farms and related businesses.[25] Through the later part of the nineteenth and early

part of the twentieth centuries, land was generally available for families to subsist upon.

As land became less available in the east more families migrated west into areas like

northern Idaho and eastern Washington.[26] It became increasingly more difficult to be

successful on these small homesteads and poverty ratios elevated. By 1938 one report

stated, "It is a conservative estimate that one-third of the farm families of the nation are

living on standards of living so low as to make them slum families."[27] The Great

Depression was a landmark era that would influence an entire generation's attitude and

behaviors regarding security.

> Because most of those thrown out of work had families to support, the
> unemployment figures must be multiplied several times over to reflect the
> magnitude of the distress. Similarly, the epidemic of bank closings not only
> worsened the liquidity crisis but deprived millions of small depositors and their
> families of savings they could ill afford to lose. . . . Heartrending scenes were
> played out across rural America as thousands of farm families lost their homes. In
> 1933 alone over 5 percent of the nation's farms underwent mortgage
> foreclosures.[28]

In 1968, the President's National Advisory Commission on Rural Poverty

reported, "Rural poverty is not limited to Negroes. It permeates all races and ethnic

groups. Nor is poverty limited to the farm. Our farm population has declined until it is

only a small fraction of our total population. Most of the rural poor do not live on farms.

---

[25] Dorothy R. Powers, *Heritage From Heroes: Spokane's Dreamers and Builders* (Spokane: Fairmount Memorial Association, 1993), 51-55.

[26] Ralph E. Dyer, *News for an Empire: The Story of the Spokesman-Review* (Spokane: Cowles Publishing, 1952), 116-138.

[27] Ann R. Tickamyer, Jennifer Sherman, and Jennifer Warlick, eds., *Rural Poverty in the Unitied States* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2017), 31.

[28] Paul S. Boyer et al., *The Enduring Vision: A History of the American People*, 2nd ed. (Toronto: D.C. Heath and Co., 1993), 839.

They live in the open country, in rural villages, and in small towns."[29] Through the

second half of the twentieth century, agriculture became commercialized and most of the

population moved away from self-sustaining farm lifestyles toward employment, working

for a wage. Vincent Miller skillfully explains this transition when families left the

homesteads and turned away from generations of developing skills for self-sustainment.

The "consumption-centered lifestyle" was experienced by working for a wage to

purchase what they needed rather than using homestead skills to build things that

resolved their needs. At that point, families were completely dependent upon the

economy of their communities and the stability of their employers rather than their own

ingenuity.[30]

If parents were able to earn enough through wages, they could provide security

for their children. However, if parents were unable to sustain adequate income, the

expense of transitioning from adolescence into young adulthood became the

responsibility of the teen. The family unit and domestic violence will be discussed later,

but some families become unstable and older children are forced out of the household.

Regardless of whether people lived on farms or in towns, poverty was always in

high numbers within rural areas. As of 2017, "The official poverty rate in rural

(nonmetropolitan) America has been higher than the urban (metropolitan) poverty rate in

every year since 1959 when the statistical series begins."[31] However, poverty in rural

---

[29] Paul S. Boyer et al., *The Enduring Vision*, 31.

[30] Vincent J. Miller, *Consuming Religion: Christian Faith and Practice in a Consumer Culture* (New York, Continuum, 2005), 46.

[31] Ann R. Tickamyer, *Rural Poverty,* 33-34.

areas is often dispersed and out of sight, unlike in cities where you see concentrations of homeless of all ages in the streets.

Urban America. When discussing urban poverty there needs to be a distinction made between the containment of major city boundaries and the metropolitan regions surrounding these cities, which includes both a central large city and its outlying suburban communities or cities. Metropolitan areas contain both high-income "commuter" suburbs and poor central cities. According to Hegerty's recent study of poverty in large U.S. cities a "growing economic inequality in the U.S. has led to increasing segregation of the poor from the wealthy and has resulted in metropolitan areas that contain both areas of high income and pockets of poverty."[32]

Spokane has a large metropolitan area spilling into three counties. The farther people migrate from the central city of Spokane the less dense is the concentration of services for the poor. Accordingly, most services for homeless teens, and all wrap-around service sites, are located in the downtown Spokane corridor.[33] These services are often located within the "pockets of poverty" defined by Hegerty. The sole full-service support site for homeless teens in the Spokane region is located in a depressed part of the city where drugs, prostitution, and other criminal activity lay right outside its doors.[34] Regardless of the reason a Spokane area youth becomes homeless or which area within the metropolis the teen originated, seeking services often places her in the most dangerous neighborhoods.

---

[32] Scott W. Hegerty, "The Rust Belt, the Sunbelt, and the Concentration of Poverty Within Large U.S. Cities," *The Review of Regional Studies* 49 no. 3 (2019): 491.

[33] See Chapter 4.

[34] Crosswalk Teen Shelter, discussed in Chapter 5.

Why is it important to differentiate between rural and urban poverty and its effects upon teen homelessness? The American Journal of Drug and Alcohol Abuse produced a study of the twenty-four largest cities in America to determine where the most violent crime was perpetrated and its relationship to other social factors. It concluded that in urban areas with concentrated poverty, frequent alcohol use was more associated with aggressive crime than illegal drug use. More importantly the myriad of social issues converging in these areas of concentrated poverty elevated the likelihood of violent criminal activity. The study reported,

> The constellation of these characteristics in low-income urban communities produces what they identify as 'concentrated effects.' These communities are characterized by poverty, joblessness, welfare dependency, female-headed families, declining marriage, illegitimate births, and crime that result in multiple, interlocking social problems. The violence-substance use nexus as indicated by this study can be traced, in part, to the social disorganization that is associated with community-level factors of these cities.[35]

Some of the other specific social elements from the study will be discussed later in this paper. However, the negative effects of living at the lowest social level, homeless and in the streets, within a poverty concentrated urban area, like downtown Spokane, make it more likely that a homeless teen will be the victim of aggressive crime. I believe this reality makes developing a wrap-around teen center in the Spokane Valley, away from the area of concentrated poverty, even more attractive.[36]

Areas of concentrated urban poverty continue to increase. For example, in the decade from 2000-2010 the percentage of U.S. residents that lived in "high poverty"

---

[35] Avelardo Valdez, Charles D. Kaplan, and Russell L. Curtis, Jr., "Agreesive Crime, Alcohol and Drug Use, and Concentrated Povery in 24 U.S. Urban Areas," *The American Journal of Drug and Alcohol Abuse* 33 (2007): 600-602.

[36] This idea is fully developed in Chapters 5-6.

neighborhoods rose from 7.2 percent to 12 percent, nearly 30 million people in all.[37]

Note, that period concluded with the Great Recession. A direct connection exists between

the overall U.S. poverty rate and the concentrated poverty rate in urban cities. "Rising

poverty appears to create outsized increases in concentrated poverty. Between 2000 and

2005-2009, on average, a 1 percent point gain in a metropolitan area poverty rate

associated with a 1.8 percentage point gain in the percentage of residents living in high-

poverty neighborhoods."[38] This study points to a nearly two-to-one ratio. When poverty

rates increase in general, poverty in these concentrated poverty neighborhoods increase

almost double the amount. Therefore, minor negative changes in the economic climate of

a metropolitan area can potentially have an even greater negative impact upon the poor in

these poverty dense neighborhoods.

Research published in the Urban Affairs Review supports this by saying,

"Consistent with this external-influence thesis, urban scholars have largely agreed that

the booming national economy was one important driving force, if not the most important

one, behind the economic upgrading in the most impoverished U.S. urban neighborhoods

during the 1990s."[39] Further it explains, "The poverty reduction in the most impoverished

urban neighborhoods was mostly attributed to the overall economic boom that not only

created jobs but boosted levels of wages for the working poor."[40] This tie between

general economic trends and local effects upon the poor who are attempting to elevate,

---

[37] Rolf Pendall, Brett Theodos, and Kaitlin Hildner, "Why High Poverty Neighborhoods Persist: The Role of Precarious Housing," *Urban Affairs Review* 52, no. 1 (2016): 35.

[38] Rolf Pendall, "Why High Poverty Neighborhoods Persist," 35.

[39] Rolf Pendall, "Why High Poverty Neighborhoods Persist," 117.

[40] Rolf Pendall, "Why High Poverty Neighborhoods Persist," 117.

might indicate that programs designed to assist people in poverty may need to adjust their levels of support based upon the health of the economy. More stabilizing funding would appear to be needed during downturns to compensate for unemployment or underemployment.

Nevertheless, people hit the hardest in high poverty concentrated areas or during down trends in the economy are those without safeguards. Teens without a stable family or support system are extremely vulnerable to changes in poverty climate, especially in these urban areas of concentrated poverty.

Availability of Affordable Housing

"Evictions are dramatic, but routine, events in low-income neighborhoods throughout the country, upturning the lives of what is estimated to be millions annually. Unlike the recent rash of homeowner foreclosures . . . tenant evictions tend to be carried out invisibly and deemed the exclusive result of individual failure."[41] It may be difficult to assign blame regarding housing instability, whether to blame on individual failure or on a societal system that may perpetuate instability among the poor. But the crux of homelessness is people who either lose their housing, for many reasons, cannot afford housing even if employed, or can afford housing but it is not available.

In the past several years, Spokane County has had a vacancy rate of less than 1 percent and sometimes as low as 0.5 percent.[42] It is extremely difficult to compete for the

---

[41] Gretchen Purser, "The Circle of Dispossession: Evicting the Urban Poor in Baltimore," *Critical Sociology* 42, no. 3 (2016): 394.

[42] Leland Consulting Group, "Draft Market Analysis: Spokane Grand Boulevard," March 2020, accessed June 12, 2020, https://static.spokanecity.org/documents/projects/grand-boulevard-transportation-and-zoning-analysis/grand-blvd-study-market-analysis-final-draft-march-2020.pdf.

1 percent vacant residencies if you are a person with low wages, a negative or absent

rental history, or poor credit. Housing case managers have difficulty placing families into

housing even when approved for subsidies. Some government funding is even used to

incentivize landlords to rent to homeless tenants, by giving landlords signing bonuses

equivalent of several months' rent.[43]

One historical study of New York City housing efforts for the homeless in the

1980s captured the struggle between the need, the political climate, and the will of the

community. It states:

> Family homelessness in New York had for years been limited to those who lost
> their homes to fire or code violations that created unsafe living conditions. But the
> number of homeless families jumped suddenly in the early 1980s—doubling in
> 1983 to two thousand families and then continuing to rise, due to inadequate
> income, unemployment, the lack of affordable housing, and state policies that
> provided insufficient rental allowances for those on public assistance.[44]

The study goes on to say that the homeless were placed into hotels because the

city lacked sufficient shelters and because the city paid a smaller percentage of the cost if

they utilized hotels over shelters, even though hotels cost more overall. The city paid one

quarter, the state paid one quarter, and the federal government paid one half. However,

these hotels became slums, despite the high costs associated. "Children living in hotels

experienced daily 'instability, squalor, violence, and hunger. . . . The majority of children

we saw were more than malnourished. They were weak, underweight, apathetic, diseased

and suffering from serious and possibly irreversible physical and mental infirmities."[45]

---

[43] Author interviews with case managers, February 2020.

[44] Benjamin Holtzman, "Shelter is Only a First Step: Housing the Homeless in 1980s New York City," *Journal of Social History* 52, no. 3 (2019): 894.

[45] Benjamin Holtzman, "Shelter is Only a First Step," 894-895.

Local governments and communities are often divided on the best course of action to initiate housing for the homeless. Shelters are expensive but sometimes the only temporary option when affordable housing is not immediately available. Even when a person is approved for government housing support, they usually are on a waiting list, sometimes for up to a year. Teens have the additional barrier of navigating a rental contract. If they are not emancipated and are under the age of eighteen, they cannot legally sign a lease, even if they have the financial means.[46]

The State of the Family

The following table shows the change in parental household structure between 1960 and 2016.[47]

Table 6.

U.S. State of the Family Comparison: Household Guardians for Children under Age 18

	Both Parents	Mother Only	Father Only	Other Relatives
1960	88 %	8 %	1 %	3 %
2016	69 %	23 %	4 %	4 %

This dramatic increase in single parent households is primarily the result of two things: increase in divorce rates and unmarried women giving birth. Unmarried women giving

---

[46] All of these barriers have been discussed in many public forums that I participate in.

[47] Lisa D. Pearce et al., "The Increasing Diversity and Complexity of Family Structures for Adolescents," *Journal of Research on Adolescence* 28, no. 3 (2018): 592-594.

birth elevated from 4 percent in 1940 to 41 percent in 2013. As of 2016 only 55 percent of births to unmarried mothers occur to cohabiting parents.[48]

Therefore, increasingly one parent does not live in the home and if there are two parents they often are not married. Another developing factor is the legalization of same sex marriage and the increasing numbers of same sex parents adopting or having children through fertilization assistance. All of these family structure variances have the risk of stigma and developmental issues for children and adolescents.[49]

In 2015, 172,000 adolescents ages ten to twenty were living in foster care, 92,000 entered foster care, and 99,000 exited foster care either reuniting with biological parents or through adoption.[50] In 2013 there were 400,540 youth in foster care; that year 26,286 emancipated, aged out of the system, and began life on their own at age eighteen. According to the U.S. Administration for Children and Families, within three years of aging out of foster care 51 percent will be unemployed, 25 percent will become homeless or incarcerated, and most of them will be at high risk of becoming a single parent. Aged out foster youth are considered to be "among the most vulnerable populations for homeless and financial hardship, placing them at greater risk for economic instability as well as poor physical, emotional, and mental health outcomes."[51] Homeless teens and aged out foster youth carry tremendous stress and risk, one of the most impactful being pregnancy.

---

[48] Lisa D. Pearce et al., "The Increasing Diversity and Complexity of Family Structures," 592-594.

[49] Lisa D. Pearce et al., "The Increasing Diversity and Complexity of Family Structures," 592-594.

[50] Lisa D. Pearce et al., "The Increasing Diversity and Complexity of Family Structures," 596.

[51] Elizabeth Trejos-Castillo, Gayle Davis, and Terri Hipps, "Economic Well-Being and Independent Living in Foster Youth: Paving the Road to Effective Transitioning out of Care," *Child Welfare* 94, no. 1 (January 2015): 54.

Stressors during pregnancy can have immediate and long-term consequences on both mother and child. A population-based survey across twenty states examined postpartum data to identify income and hardships, such as divorce/separation, domestic violence, homelessness, financial difficulties, job loss, incarceration, and food insecurity (California only). It stated,

> Poverty and near poverty have been strongly associated with diverse indicators of poor health at different life stages. In industrialized countries, hypothesized pathways between low income and poor health include inadequate nutrition, housing, or other health-related material conditions, as well as exposure to stressful conditions with fewer resources to cope. Stressful experiences have been linked repeatedly with many adverse health outcomes across life course.[52]

Alarming percentages of women experience multiple stressors during pregnancy. Many homeless teens become pregnant and the outcomes are dangerous. Most low-income women in this study experienced at least one of the listed hardships. Ten to forty percent of low-income women had trouble paying bills, experienced job loss, or divorce or separation. Seven to ten percent of women in the poor category experienced homelessness during pregnancy. One in five of the women in California experience food insecurity during pregnancy. Applied across the U.S. that correlates to 150,000 pregnant women annually experiencing homelessness and 800,000 who are food insecure.[53] These are alarming statistics, yet that would be normal for a pregnant homeless teenager.

---

[52] Paula Braveman et. al, "Poverty, Near-Poverty, and Hardship Around the Time of Pregnancy," *Maternal and Child Health Journal* 14 (2010): 21.

[53] Paula Braveman et. al, "Poverty, Near-Poverty," 29.

Homelessness

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development defines homelessness as "persons lacking adequate, regular night-time residence or whose primary sleeping accommodations are in places not meant for human habitation," which is merely a technical definition. Homelessness is much more than the absence of suitable habitation. It is a "global phenomenon that deprives individuals of the necessities of daily life: food, water, shelter, clothing, health care and social inclusion."[54] It is not simply the lack of essential critical protection; there is a stigma that attaches to the word homeless and the people who experience it. As of 2016, on any given night over 550,000 individuals in the U.S. and up to 300,000 in Canada are experiencing homelessness.[55]

The American Academy of Pediatrics states, "The largest segment of missing children in the United States includes runaways, children who run away from home, and thrownaways, children who are told to leave or stay away from home by a household adult."[56] It is estimated that each year between 500,000 and 2.8 million youth in the U.S. are homeless at some point.[57] Most of these youth are leaving home within the context of "family distress, driven by poverty and characterized by parental/guardian incarceration,

---

[54] Erin Roark Murphy and Brittany H. Eghaneyan, "Understanding the Phenomenon of Older Adult Homelessness in North America: A Qualitative Interpretive Meta-Synthesis," *British Journal of Social Work* 48 (December 2018): 2362.

[55] Erin Roark Murphy, "Understanding the Phenomenon of Older Adult Homelessness," 2362.

[56] Thresia B. Gambon and Janna R. Gewirtz O'Brien, "Runaway Youth: Caring for the Nation's Largest Segment of Missing Children," *American Academy of Pediatrics* 145, no. 2 (February 2020): 1.

[57] Marya Gwadz et al., "Understanding Organizations Serving Runaway and Homeless Youth: A Multi-setting, Multi-perspective Qualitative Exploration," *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal* 36 (April 2019): 202.

substance use problems, and mental health concerns."[58] Young people with these

traumatic family experience need all the essentials, clothing, food, shelter, but they also

need mental health services, health care, educational support, vocational opportunities,

life skills training, and healthy adult relationships.

U. S. Government Actions

The role of the federal government in the affairs of vulnerable children and teens

became amplified along with many other social justice situations around the beginning of

the twentieth century.[59] As previously mentioned, prior to that, the welfare of children

and youth was mostly a function of the extended family systems and not government. At

the turn of the twentieth century in America millions of children spent their days working

rather than in school. The commodification of children and youth was still a normal and

accepted activity.[60] Orphanages established from the results of the Civil War were

beginning to decline at this time. A reformation movement was beginning to seek better

institutions for orphans or placement into middle class homes. Over 1,100 facilities

existed by 1910 that housed 150,000 children. The mortality rate of children in general

was dreadful. In 1900, one out of four children did not survive to age six. Two million

[58] Marya Gwadz et al., "Understanding Organizations," 202.

[59] Abe Bortz, "Mother's Aid," *Social Welfare History Project,* accessed September 5, 2020, https://socialwelfare.library.vcu.edu/programs/mothers-aid/#:~:text=This%20Mothers'%20Pension%20Movement%20%E2%80%94%20cash,in%20its%20awareness%20of%20the.

[60] U.S. Children's Bureau, History, accessed September 2, 2020, https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/about/history.

adolescents ten to fifteen years of age, one-fifth of that age population, worked in factories, on farms, and in urban streets.[61]

A growing concern developed during this Progressive Era over the wellbeing of children, especially surrounding infant mortality.[62] This child welfare movement led to the U. S. founding in 1912 of the first federal agency in the world that focused on the problems of children: The U. S. Children's Bureau.[63] It was initially extremely underfunded compared to other federal efforts and limited its focus on investigation and reporting. The first endeavor was to quantify infant mortality rates and report it to the public. In 1914 the Children's Bureau reported that of 2.5 million babies born in the U. S. each year, one out of eight would die prior to their first birthday. Additionally, they projected that many permanent disabilities could be prevented with better infant health care.[64] Though the beginning of this governmental involvement was humble, it opened the door to an understanding that the federal government should play a significant role of protection, support, and advocacy for vulnerable minors. Child labor laws began to develop alongside an increased emphasis on education to prepare teens for the workforce.

---

[61] Andrew L. Yarrow, "History of U.S. Children's Policy, 1900-Present," 2, https://firstfocus.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/Childrens-Policy-History.pdf.

[62] Catherine A. Paul, "The Progressive Era," *Social Welfare History Project,* accessed September 5, 2020, https://socialwelfare.library.vcu.edu/eras/progressive-era/.

[63] U.S. Children's Bureau, Timeline, accessed September 2, 2020, https://www.childwelfare.gov/more-tools-resources/resources-from-childrens-bureau/timeline1/.

[64] Kriste Lindenmeyer, "The U. S. Children's Bureau and Infant Mortality in the Progressive Era," *Journal of Education* 177, no. 3 (1995): 57-60.

However, removing adolescents from work also highlighted the vulnerability of teens disconnected or orphaned from family.[65]

The twentieth century was an era that witnessed the birth of many social justice reforms. A progression of events, reforms, and acts by the federal government laid the foundation for today's vast resources. In order to see how much progress was made in one century, here is a sequential list of some of the major advancements. Not all of these are specifically for homeless teens or orphans, but they contribute as a whole toward an entire system of support that the federal government provides for actions that states, communities, agencies, churches and others take on behalf of this vulnerable population.

The Children's Bureau brought light to some major concerns; its research had a direct impact on the passage of the Sheppard and Towner Act (1921), which created new programs for maternal education and infant health.[66] The "Mother's Pension" movement spread across the States in the first few decades making provisions for mothers in poverty and for widows. The Mother's Pension movement is considered bedrock for the contemporary welfare system.[67] Child labor was confronted for nearly sixty years leading up to Congress passing the Fair Labor Standards Act in 1938, which was upheld by the Supreme Court.[68] It regulated employment of children under the age of eighteen. Prior to that, actions were taken, such as the Keating-Owen Act (1916) that prohibited interstate

---

[65] U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Children's Bureau, *The Children's Bureau Legacy: Ensuring the Right to Childhood* (Washington DC: U.S. Children's Bureau, 2013), https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/cb_ebook.pdf.

[66] Sheppard-Towner Act of 1921, Public Law 67-97 (November 23, 1921).

[67] Abe Bortz, "Mother's Aid," *Social Welfare History Project,* accessed September 5, 2020, https://socialwelfare.library.vcu.edu/programs/mothers-aid/#:~:text=This%20Mothers'%20Pension%20Movement%20%E2%80%94%20cash,in%20its%20awareness%20of%20the.

[68] Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, US Code 29, §203.

commerce of manufactured goods made by children. However, it was ruled unconstitutional by the Supreme Court.[69] The next year, the Smith-Hughes Act (1917) provided funding for programs that taught youth vocational skills for employment. Oddly, children were still being tried as adults in court without distinction for age.[70] By the 1910s, most states had established juvenile courts that recognized the emotional and intellectual difference between adults and youth. It was President Wilson who declared 1919 as the "Children's Year" to bring attention to the need for federal funding for educational and health programs.[71]

The watershed event of that era was Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal, which targeting relief and recovery for millions of Americans suffering during the Great Depression. Of that, the most significant action still foundational to our social assistance system was the Social Security Act of 1935.[72] Much debate and contention has followed since its establishment, but the intent was to alleviate poverty and increase security not only for senior citizens, but for those in need, including children in poverty. Throughout the decades of the twentieth century there were numerous White House Conferences centered on children's issues.[73]

---

[69] U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Children's Bureau, *The Children's Bureau Legacy,* ebook.pdf.

[70] David Carleton, *Student's Guide to Landmark Congressional Laws* (London, Greenwood Press, 2002), 63-67.

[71] Andrew L. Yarrow, "History of U.S. Children's Policy," pdf.

[72] Social Security Act of 1935, US Code 42, §301-1305, Suppliment 4 (1934).

[73] U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Children's Bureau, *The Children's Bureau Legacy,* ebook.pdf.

During this period there was a consistent movement toward understanding and improvement. The National School Lunch Act was one such improvement established in 1946. It continues to provide a basis for nutrition and health in public schools, later adding the Child Nutrition Act in 1966, which made provisions to include breakfast for children in poverty.[74] Also happening was Brown vs. the Board of Education, a precedential case regarding desegregation of schools, the National Defense Education Act (1958),[75] the Comprehensive Community Mental Health Centers Act (1963), the Civil Rights Act (1964), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) (1964), the Child Health Act (1967), the Summer Food Service Program (1969), and the Supplemental Food Program for Woman Infants and Children (WIC) (1972), amended from the Child Nutrition Act. All of these federal actions over about a sixty-year period drastically changed the landscape concerning children.[76] The country identified childhood problems, prioritized calls to action, and established federal support, which meant funding that flowed through states to communities to provide elevating services at the extreme local level.

Two landmark legislative events remain the basis of support at the local level for homeless children and teens. The first is the Adoption Assistance Child Welfare Act (1980), which empowers the foster care system.[77] The second is the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (1987).[78] McKinney-Vento has been amended several times

---

[74] Andrew L. Yarrow, "History of U.S. Children's Policy," pdf.

[75] Andrew L. Yarrow, "History of U.S. Children's Policy," pdf.

[76] Andrew L. Yarrow, "History of U.S. Children's Policy," pdf.

[77] Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act of 1980, Public Law 96-272, (June 17, 1980).

[78] McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act of 1987, US Code 42 (2015), §11434a.

since but continues to establish the right of all children to access education even when disadvantaged by homelessness. McKinney-Vento also defines what acceptable housing is and identifies the barriers that inadequate housing presents to education. Public schools are required to make accommodations for transportation, preschool, special education, English language services, vocational educational opportunities, and referrals to needed social services such as health care, dental services, mental health counseling, and other providers. School districts are funded for special social workers who work on behalf of homeless students. They become the key liaisons for outside agencies wanting to connect additional programs to children in need.[79]

Conclusion

This brief historical review highlights the fact that until the past 100 years federal governments had not been heavily involved in creating systemic protection for orphaned minors. Children's problems really just began to become important to our nation as we entered the twentieth century. Our country, and others, began to take human rights seriously. One after another civil injustices began to come to light and government responded to inch society toward equality and care for every human life, especially those without power and provision. We are now poised for some of our greatest demonstrations of human kindness and elevating practices, with the support of federal, state, and local government precedents. Now is the best time to make advances in programs that protect and advance homeless teens.

---

[79] U.S. Department of Education, "Education for Homeless Children and Youths Program: A Brief History of the McKinney-Vento Act," accessed November 4, 2020, https://nche.ed.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/ehcy_profile.pdf.

In light of all of these historical and contextual examples of how humanity arrived at this place of disadvantage for orphan adolescents, it is imperative that we devise a plan to embrace and protect these young vulnerable citizens. For faith communities, this begins with a rooted understanding of our obligation to extend compassion and support. The next chapter will explore a Judeo-Christian heritage that is rooted in mandates and instruction to care for the orphan as unto God.

CHAPTER 3:

BIBLICAL AND THEOLOGICAL INFLUENCES

> God cannot be related to without continually digesting the uneasiness and pain
> that are experienced by looking, squarely and honestly, at how the weakest
> members in our society are faring and how our own lifestyle is contributing to
> that.
> —Ronald Rolheiser, *The Holy Longing: The Search for a Christian Spirituality*

Introduction

I hope that even in a small way this project inspires some form of new or
rekindled desire to help an orphan, simply one human to another, one responsible
compassionate citizen to another. No level of faith, theological belief, or religious
mandate is required to have your heart pricked by the suffering of an orphaned teen who
might be your neighbor. However, for people of faith, extending a hand to help another,
especially the poor, is part of our own spiritual development. It is also a requirement
based in a healthy and honest relational encounter with God.

Moses was a natural person like us but was called to the top of a mountain to meet
with his Creator to discuss the boundaries of their relationship. According to the author of
Exodus, God handed to Moses two tablets of stone with commandments that were scribed
by his supernatural finger. One of those basic tenants given to Moses spoke to the
integrity of their relationship. "You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain,
for the Lord will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain" (Exodus 20:7, ESV).

This statement goes much deeper than a charge not to casually throw around
God's name. It speaks to the misuse of a relational position with the Creator. "The name
of God stands for so much more than the mere pronouncement of his title of address. It

includes his nature, being, and very person, his teaching or doctrine, and his moral and

ethical teaching."[1] "The Sacred Name, called the shuddering name, only pronounced

once annually by the High Priest on the Great Day of Atonement. . . . We too may never

perjure ourselves, or speak profanely, yet the tenor of our whole life may bring God's

name into contempt."[2] This unintended misuse of our covenant with God can find us

enjoying the benefits of the relationship without demonstrating a commitment to his

missional priorities. In this chapter I hope to go beyond our responsibility as a member of

our community to look after the powerless. My intent is to reflect the scriptural, moral,

and covenantal obligation that exists for a member of the Judeo-Christian family.

Consequentially, embracing God results in us embracing his heart and his actions.

> And the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him.
> He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written,
> "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
> because he has anointed me
> to proclaim good news to the poor.
> He has sent me to proclaim liberty to the captives
> and recovering of sight to the blind,
> to set at liberty those who are oppressed,
> to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."
> And he rolled up the scroll and gave it back to the attendant and sat down.
> And the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. And he began to say
> to them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."[3]

---

[1] Kenneth L. Barker and John Kohlenberger III, eds., *NIV Bible Commentary Volume 1: Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994), 100.

[2] The Pulpit Commentary: Volume 1: Genesis-Numbers 20, (no author, n.p, n.d.), 156.

[3] Luke 4:17-21, ESV, Jesus entered the temple at Nazareth and launched his official ministry with this divinely timed reading, outlining the scope of his earthly service.

Scriptural Basis for Action

Covenantal Debates

How does God feel about the poor, about poverty? So far, the discussion has been about our response to poverty. The assumption made has been that poverty is something to be corrected, an injustice to be placed back into balance. Scripture supports the concept that injustice is a cause or root problem leading to poverty. However, if poverty is an injustice, then why have many righteous people taken a vow of poverty as though it is a higher position? Why does it seem to be commended in scripture in some places? Conversely, scripture infers that wealth follows blessing, suggesting that the poor did not work hard enough and therefore deserve their lower status. Here are some examples of this tension across the spectrum of justice, reward, and moral piety.

"And Isaac sowed in that land and reaped in the same year a hundredfold. The Lord blessed him, and the man became rich, and gained more and more until he became very wealthy. He had possessions of flocks and herds and many servants, so that the Philistines envied him" (Gen. 26:12-14, ESV). God blessing the patriarchs of the Jewish nation is referenced often (Gen. 24:1, 35; 30:30). It could be debated whether this is a universal opportunity or situational to his plan of raising a nation, but it is clear that this wealth was divinely enabled. Another example of God making a conditional distinction of blessing people based upon their efforts or actions is how he elevated families that housed the Ark of the Covenant.

> And the ark of the Lord remained in the house of Obed-edom the Gittite three months, and the Lord blessed Obed-edom and all his household. And it was told King David, "The Lord has blessed the household of Obed-edom and all that

belongs to him, because of the ark of God." So David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-edom to the city of David with rejoicing.[4]

Couple this passage with the predestination authority of God. Scripture indicates some level of predestination. For example, "The Lord makes poor and makes rich; he brings low and he exalts. He raises up the poor from the dust; he lifts the needy from the ash heap to make them sit with princes and inherit a seat of honor. For the pillars of the earth are the Lord's, and on them he has set the world" (1 Sam. 2:7-8, ESV). "The rich and the poor meet together; the Lord is the Maker of them all (Prov. 22:2, ESV).[5] These references indicate that God can decide to elevate or debase per his will and no other factor.

However, just two verses later Proverbs 22 seems to pivot from premeditation to condition, "The reward for humility and fear of the Lord is riches and honor and life (Prov. 22:4, ESV). Further, scripture indicates that poverty comes from laziness or negligence, as in Proverbs 6:6-11, ESV.

> Go to the ant, O sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise.
> Without having any chief, officer, or ruler,
> she prepares her bread in summer and gathers her food in harvest.
> How long will you lie there, O sluggard? When will you arise from your sleep?
> A little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to rest,
> and poverty will come upon you like a robber, and want like an armed man.[6]

---

[4] 2 Samuel 6:11-12, ESV, see also 1 Chronicles 13:14.

[5] Poetry in scripture helps reflect the honesty and emotion of humanity, even negative emotions and realities. These verses are examples of "contrastive" poetry, a type of "parallelism" that depicts opposites together to show contrast. J. Scott Duvall and J. Daniel Hays, *Grasping God's Word: A Hands-On Approach to Reading, Interpreting, and Applying the Bible* 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), 346-351.

[6] I recognize that the Proverbs present probable truth, not absolute truth. These statements about the poor are not absolute promises but point out patterns of human tendency and life circumstances. William W. Klein, et. al., *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2004), 389.

And yet, in spite of all of this evidence that poverty is either a negative status that results from our own shortcoming or God's arbitrary doing for some reason, according to Levin it is still often a "religious ideal" among both Jews and Christians. He notes, "One of the most striking features of both the Jewish and the Christian faith is the positive religious attitude to poverty. 'Blessed are you poor, for yours is the kingdom of God' (Luke 6:20). By Jews and Christians, poverty is held to be a sign of nearness to God. Poverty is therefore a deliberate choice taken by the devout. It is a religious ideal."[7] The seemingly inconsistent circumstances of poverty may be connected to our view of covenantal blessings related to our position with God.

Grudem defines covenants between God and humankind in this way, "A covenant is an unchangeable, divinely imposed legal agreement between God and man that stipulates the conditions of their relationship."[8] Conditional and unconditional categories of covenantal relationships have been discussed and defined through centuries of debate.[9] However, some recent studies question the general consensus regarding both the eternal nature of the unconditional covenant and the conditional nature of the blessing and cursing of Deuteronomic law.

For instance, regarding the eternal covenant, in her review of Mason's model, Cushman states, "Mason argues that a close exegetical study of the six Pentateuchal texts in which the phrase occurs will instead demonstrate that the *berit olam* is a conditional,

---

[7] Christoph Levin, "The Poor in the Old Testament: Some Observations," *Religion and Theology* 8, no. 3-4 (2001): 253.

[8] Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan), 515.

[9] Marvin A. Sweeney, "EGLBS Plenary Address Berit Olam, the Eternal Covenant: Is the Conditional Covenant Really Conditional?" *Conversations with the Biblical World* 38 (2018): 2.

bilateral, and breakable covenant, which involves both divine and human obligations."[10] And the study of the blessings and cursings of the Deuteronomic text by Jack Schechter claims, according to Sweeney, to indicate that those covenants labeled conditional, may very well not be, but rather be "an unconditional covenant that may be disrupted for a period of time, but is ultimately restored when the people return to G-d."[11]

This paper does not contend to offer opinion or scholarship in this debate of whether God's favor or blessing is conditional or not, or whether being poor is a more pious position to be held, but rather to reveal that the debates exist, and to move the dialogue past the absolutes of legal doctrine. I contend that God does not expect a disciple to understand scholarship in these areas in order to respond correctly to the needs of the poor, regardless of how the poor arrived in that state. If there is a broken or missing covenant relationship that leads to a life of suffering or whether there is a measure of predestination for the purpose of glorifying God, the choice still remains, how is a disciple of Christ supposed to respond? Are we obligated to extend a hand of hope?

Orphans, ὀρφανοὺς

"Religion that is pure and undefiled before God, the Father, is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction, and to keep oneself unstained from the world." (James 1:26, ESV) In this verse the Greek word ὀρφανοὺς is most often translated

---

[10] Beverly W. Cushman, Review of Steven D. Mason, "Eternal Covenant in the Pentateuch: The Contours of an Elusive Phrase," *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 72, no. 1 (2010): 118; Emmanuel G. M. Kollie, "The Divine Plan of Redemption from a Point of View of Covenant Theology," *Valley View University Journal of Theology* 5 (2018): 61-70.

[11] Marvin A. Sweeney, "Berit Olam, the Eternal Covenant," 3; Donald C. Polaski, "Reflections on a Mosaic Covenant: The Eternal Covenant (Isaiah 24.5) and Intertextuality," *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 77 (1998): 60-61.

orphans, but *fatherless* in some other translations. ὀρφανοὺς is an accusative plural noun

meaning "bereaved of parents, orphans, or simply bereaved or desolate."[12] Elsewhere,

such as in John 14:18, "I will not leave you *desolate*: I come unto you," (ASV)

ὀρφανοὺς is translated as *desolate* (ASV, RSVCE) or even as *comfortless* or *helpless*

(KJV, TPT). Using this broader application, children and teens that have been cut off

from family, desolate, and helpless fit the description of "pure religion."

In fact, scripture states plainly with negative connotations that we are condemned

for not acting on behalf of helpless populations.

> Woe to those who decree iniquitous decrees, and the writers who keep writing oppression, to turn aside the needy from justice and to rob the poor of my people of their right, that widows may be their spoil, and that they may make the fatherless their prey! What will you do on the day of punishment, in the ruin that will come from afar? To whom will you flee for help, and where will you leave your wealth? Nothing remains but to crouch among the prisoners or fall among the slain. For all this his anger has not turned away, and his hand is stretched out still. (Isa 10:1-4, ESV)

This verse implies that God requires those in power to especially consider the inclusion

of the widow and the fatherless when making plans to build wealth. Exploitation of the

powerless seems to be particularly despised by God.

> For wicked men are found among my people; they lurk like fowlers lying in wait. They set a trap; they catch men. Like a cage full of birds, their houses are full of deceit; therefore, they have become great and rich; they have grown fat and sleek. They know no bounds in deeds of evil; they judge not with justice the cause of the fatherless, to make it prosper, and they do not defend the rights of the needy. Shall I not punish them for these things? declares the Lord, and shall I not avenge myself on a nation such as this? (Jer. 5: 26-29, ESV).

---

[12] Wesley J. Perschbacher, ed., *The New Analytical Greek Lexicon* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1990), 297.

In fact, the Lord identifies himself in scripture with the cause of the marginalized and powerless. "I know that the Lord will maintain the cause of the afflicted and will execute justice for the needy" (Ps. 140:12, ESV). And he encourages us to do the same. "Open your mouth, judge righteously, defend the rights of the poor and needy" (Prov. 31:9, ESV). Therefore, it is my conclusion that our personal expressed Christian faith is congruent with scripture when we extend justice to the widow, the fatherless, the desolate, the helpless . . . the homeless teen.

The Hospitality Factor

My wife is the most skilled hospitality expert that I know; it seems to be her gift and what brings her the most joy. She said, "Hospitality feels like warmth and worth. I like to create special moments for people in the midst of everyday life that make them feel especially loved."[13] Guests in our home always comment about the warmth of the space and the attention to detail that Teri orchestrates to ensure that their stay is welcoming, and that they feel special. Christine Pohl has made extensive contributions to heighten understanding of the importance of hospitality in Christendom. She wrote, "Hospitality is at the heart of Christian life, drawing from God's grace and reflecting God's graciousness. In hospitality, we respond to the welcome that God has offered and replicate that welcome in the world."[14] She goes on to say:

> Strangers are people without a place, disconnected from life-giving relationships and networks. Sometimes that's a literal condition—as in the case of refugees or homeless people. In other cases, as with alienated teens or people with disabilities, persons may have a place to live, but they do not necessarily have a

---

[13] Interview with Teri Coblentz, September 12, 2020.

[14] Christine D. Pohl, *Living Into Community: Cultivating Practices That Sustain Us* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing, 2012), 159.

place where they can contribute something, or where they are valued. Because hospitality is part of what it means to be human, every human being flourishes in the context of welcome.[15]

During one of my interviews with homeless teens, sixteen-year-old Paige shared that the place where she felt the most peace was with her sister. To Paige, her sister offered the space that she called "belonging." Her sister was the one place she felt Pohl's "welcome."[16]

One of the things that keeps us from extending real transformational help to someone who is different than us, be it homeless, orphan, disabled, etc., is fear. Real change blossoms in the garden of relationship and that translates to real commitment. Opening up our life to relate to another person honestly and genuinely, especially a stranger, requires a willingness to be transparent and vulnerable. Can we trust this person? If I open up and extend myself, will they take advantage of me or hurt me? These are legitimate questions. Hospitality is an activity that operates within the context of these fears and vulnerabilities. It requires risk. And yet, as stated by Pohl, hospitality is central to our Christian identity, because hospitality rises up from a spiritual place deeply rooted in the nature of God, it becomes a natural extension of his love through us as we grow spiritually.[17]

And yet, the risk remains. My wife and I accepted the risk of hospitality by inviting a homeless teen into our home. The inspiration to extend a familial welcome to Lucy can only be described as divine. The Spirit of Christ provided enough grace for us

---

[15] Christine D. Pohl, *Living Into Community,* 164.

[16] Interview with Paige, a Spokane Valley homeless youth, September 18, 2020.

[17] Christine D. Pohl, *Living Into Community*, 159-160.

to say yes to the prompt, however, we still have to walk through the fear of how much this extension of hospitality will cost us.[18]

Jesus modeled this kind of raw risk when he opened up and poured his life out. Extending and receiving hospitality was central to his ministry. In fact, he combated the cultural and stratification barriers by sharing both space and time with the most alienated segments of society. Pohl explained:

> The early church struggled to embody the belief that rich and poor believers were equals in the community of faith, and that Jews and Gentiles were one in Christ. By God's grace and power, and because of sacrificial welcome they had experienced in Christ, they learned to sit down at a table and share their homes and lives with people they had previously viewed as dirty or less than human. They sorted out this new way of living and valuing in the context of offering one another hospitality.[19]

The discriminatory barriers that the early church had to overcome in order to commune with people who were different from themselves still exist. We feel the same urges to allow questionable people to remain alienated from us. Keeping them at double arm's length eliminates any possibility of risk, but it also eliminates any chance that we might replicate to them the grace that God has shown to us.

Can we show hospitality to orphaned teens? It may seem they are difficult to connect with. Our experiences are so different, how will they be able to relate to my sheltered existence? Fear will try to keep us apart. But then there is hospitality; and it beckons us to extend a safe space for the relationship to even be possible, and to do it

---

[18] More of Lucy's story will be told in Chapters 4, 5, and 6.

[19] Christine Pohl, *Living Into Community*, 161-162.

without expectations. Hospitality to the alienated teen only needs to be founded in love, not perfection. What happens in that space? God is responsible for the results.

Influence of Spiritual Formation on Outreach

I believe that extending our hand to those in need is a leverage the Holy Spirit uses in the process of forming us spiritually. This spiritual growth experience is God's proprietary procedure. Although we are participatorily aware of this motion within us and we benefit from the Spirit's *pneuma,* we are not the only beneficiaries.[20] In fact, spiritual growth never takes place within the vacuum of one person's individual existence, but instead it is a chain of events that occur within complicated community contexts. To understand how this applies to altruism, we begin with some definitions.

Morse defines spiritual formation as "the process of being conformed to the image of Christ for the glory of God and for the sake of others."[21] Her definition is appreciated as a very succinct and memorable tool. It identifies the process as conformity to the *imago Dei* and lists the two main purposes as glorifying God and helping others.[22] For a more robust definition of spiritual formation, Greenman states it as, "our continuing response to the reality of God's grace shaping us into the likeness of Jesus Christ, through the work of the Holy Spirit, in the community of faith, for the sake of the world."[23]

---

[20] Translated: wind, breath, spirit, inner life, spirit (being), Spirit wind. Warren C. Trenchard, *Complete Vocabulary Guide to Greek New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998), 92.

[21] MaryKate Morse, "What is Spiritual Formation" PowerPoint lesson, LSF4 Cohort Retreat Cannon Beach, OR, Portland Seminary, February 27, 2019.

[22] Latin, *Imago Dei* translated: image of God. In reference to Gen. 1:27, "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him, male and female he created them." (ESV).

[23] Jeffrey P. Greenman and George Kalantzis, eds., *Life in the Spirit: Spiritual Formation in Theological Perspective* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2010), 24.

Greenman adds a couple of key components that Morse would agree with, in fact she teaches and facilitates those elements within her seminary cohorts. He describes it as a "continuing response." Spiritual formation is a journey of a lifetime. The Holy Spirit uses circumstances and events throughout our lives and within all of the categories of our personal experiences. The key is our response to these cues. Greenman also adds that the process takes place within "the community of faith." God uses our interactions to prompt us toward growth, by our response toward each other, the affirmation, and the push back that we receive from a genuinely conscientious faith community.

Perhaps one of the more detailed written explanations of spiritual formation comes from Diane Chandler. In her book, Chandler outlines the complexity of this formation and defines it as, "an interactive process by which God the Father fashions believers into the image of his Son, Jesus, through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit by fostering development of seven primary life dimensions (spirit, emotions, relationships, intellect, vocation, physical health, and resource stewardship)."[24] All of these seven life dimensions are interconnected symphonically, with God conducting the changes. Is there a personal goal to Christian living? Certainly, according to the realm of spiritual formation it is about personal growth and change that moves us into a state of development that more closely resembles the incarnate Christ. In that regard then, it is logical to imagine our seven life dimensions being influenced by the Spirit for the benefit of others as well as our own growth and maturity.

---

[24] Diane Chandler, *Christian Spiritual Formation: An Integrated Approach for Personal and Relational Wholeness* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2014), 19.

Many Christians experience vocational movement as a result of the spiritual formation process. I certainly did when I transitioned from pastoring into nonprofit management. As a pastor, I saw tangible injustice and gaps in both protection and provision for aged out foster children. Vocationally, I was on a fixed, successful trajectory as a pastor, but through the spiritual formation process and a series of changes, God directed me toward my life passion—working with the poor and advocating for teen orphans. The formation process can be very subtle at times. It can be small shifts in the priorities of our relationships or our responsibilities toward others. Even though it might not be a complete career transition like mine, the Holy Spirit will form a person's spirit, emotions, and intellect to look for small opportunities to make a difference in the life of someone who needs to see the *imago Dei*. I am hoping that God will spiritually form Christians to be more conscientious about suffering teen orphans. Homeless teens need advocates, especially ones who have been crafted, groomed, and prompted by the Spirit of God to provide relational intervention.

The process of spiritual formation, as these examples suggest, requires structure and intentionality. It requires the purposeful coordination of life cycles and rhythms that allow space and time for spiritual work. As already stated, dedication to this type of spiritual growth will help guide the believer toward appropriate areas of action, some of which will be an attempt to mitigate injustices. If the spiritual growth process does not lead the disciple into forms of outreach, then growth and maturity is in question.

Rule of Life

Any serious student of church history probably has some knowledge that Western monasticism's founder was the Italian St. Benedict of Nursia, from whom came "the

Rule," written in AD 516. Benedict removed himself from society at age 20 and lived in a cave to pursue holiness, to find purity and victory over temptations of the flesh. Benedict's local reputation grew as he attracted followers. He and his followers ultimately built a monastery where he gave to them the Rule. This document outlined a structure of life that was to be adhered to in order to maintain community. Two main tenants were permanency and obedience. Permanency meant the monks were to commit to their monastery for life. Also, obedience to the Rule was required, as well as to the abbot. Although the design of the community was hierarchal, the abbot also was subject to God and to the Rule.[25]

I would suggest that modern Christians could benefit from a vow of permanence toward community, family, and calling. And certainly, we can benefit from obedience to God and obedience to the changes offered by the Holy Spirit through the spiritual formation process. It is possible to decline the promptings of formation, or we can be willing to change.

One of the precepts in Benedict's Rule under hospitality to guests states, "Great care and concern are to be shown in receiving poor people and pilgrims, because in them more particularly Christ is received; our very awe of the rich guarantees them special respect."[26] Of this precept Chittister says, "We cannot be too busy, too professional, too

---

[25] Justo L. Gonzalez, *The Story of Christianity Volume 1: The Early Church to the Dawn of the Reformation* (New York: HarperCollins, 1984), 238-239.

[26] Joan Chittister, *The Rule of Benedict: Insights for the Ages* (New York: Crossroad Publishing, 1992), 142.

removed from the world of the poor to receive the poor and sustain the poor. Anything else, Benedict warns in a society that is by nature class structured, is not hospitality."[27]

In the footsteps of Benedict, those involved in contemporary spiritual formation often suggest a rule of life exercise, which patterns after the ancient monastic life. Shigematsu described the monastic rule of life as, "a life patterned on proven practices that helped them cultivate their character and contribute to the world." He also provided a contemporary definition, "A rule of life is simply a rhythm of practices that empowers us to live well and grow more like Jesus by helping us experience God in everything."[28] Shigematsu's "God in everything" concept brings consciousness to the fact that this formation process is present throughout our day, in all that we do, and we should remain vigilant and aware to recognize it. Our spiritual processes are not siloed into special segments of our lives that happen only in church or prayer closet and not at work or play. Spiritual processes are an integration of spirit and flesh, prayer and work, and divine inspiration and human relation.

Shigematsu suggests we consider the spiritual formation process to be like a trellis system. The rule of life "trellis" supports our growth and cultivates a spiritual garden that produces fruit. Of course, the rule of life is unique to the individual, crafted by the Spirit to be the perfect fit for each person according to their own exclusive personality and created way of being. Yet, that does not mean it is without our effort and work. Dallas

---

[27] Joan Chittister, *The Rule of Benedict*, 142.

[28] Ken Shigematsu, *God in My Everything: How an Ancient Rhythm Helps Busy People Enjoy God* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2013), 18.

Willard said, "Grace is not opposed to effort but to earning."[29] Therefore, it is the grace of

God that allows this structured trellis rule to produce the fruit of the Spirit with

participation from our effort and discipline. Shigematsu's trellis has four layers.

The "root" layer is made of the practices that deepen our rootedness, our stability,

which are things like prayer, sacred reading, and creating sabbath space. The upper three

layers contain the day-to-day parts of our lives. The layers are common to all, but each

individual identifies the unique practices that fills her cup or fits his person. The second

layer is about "relating." Perhaps things like family, honorable sexuality, and spiritual

friendships. The third layer is for "restoring." The restoring level is space for things that

return nourishment to your soul, like playfulness, self-care for the body, and financial

practices that work for you. The last layer is the "reach out" space. Practices that connect

what is happening in your inner world with the community are valued in this layer,

including things like work, social justice issues such as care for the poor, and your

Christian witness.[30] Thus, the rule of life is something organized, generally in writing,

which captures the daily, weekly, and periodic activities that are necessary for the

individual to flourish and grow in the Lord.

Believers are drawn to this Christlike, Christian, process intrinsically. A wooing

takes place spiritually, something Gene Edwards called the "divine romance."[31] And as

summed from all of these spiritual formation definitions, explanations, and equations, our

spiritual maturity and fulfillment is not fully actualized until we reach out toward the

---

[29] Dallas Willard, *The Great Omission: Reclaiming Jesus' Essential Teachings on Discipleship* (San Francisco: Harper, 2006), 80.

[30] Ken Shigematsu, *God in My Everything*, 31-33.

[31] Gene Edwards, *The Divine Romance* (Gardiner, ME: Christian Books Publishing, 1984).

hurting and the wounded of our world. Rolheiser described it, "The mark of a deeply mature man or woman, the mark of a very mature disciple of Jesus, and the mark of someone truly giving his or her life away is this: he or she is a person who blesses others and blesses the world."[32] So, does our relationship with Christ obligate us to care for the poor? Many agree with Rolheiser that it is one of the four non-negotiable essential pillars of healthy Christian living.

> The call to become involved in helping the poor to find justice is a nonnegotiable pillar within Christian spirituality. Much of our culture today, and conservative Christianity in particular, struggles with this, protesting that this is really a question of politics and not something that lies at the very heart of religion itself. But, as Jesus himself makes clear, there can be no real relationship with him when the poor are neglected, and injustice abounds.[33]

I have often wondered if this reluctance on the part of U. S. conservative Christianity has to do with a worldview that promotes rugged individualism over social responsibilities. Regardless of political persuasion, the Christian will benefit from understanding how both sides politicize the poor.

Christian Politicization of the Poor

Because Christians are often motivated by moral issues that they identify as running either congruent or contradictory to their own faith convictions, they typically hold political alignments that support those convictions. It would be easy if Scripture simply pointed believers in a single political direction, however, that is not the case.

---

[32] Ronald Rolheiser, *Sacred Fire: A Vision for a Deeper Human and Christian Maturity* (New York: Crown Publishing, 2014), 212.

[33] Ronald Rolheiser, *The Holy Longing: The Search for a Christian Spirituality* (New York: Crown Publishing, 2014), 65-66.

Some Christians strongly align with liberal ideology and others align strongly with

conservative ideology. How can this dualistic reality be valid? James D. Hunter provided

clarity to these seemingly polarizing political faith positions. I believe his comments are

helpful in understanding how both ideologies view the poor and how Christians across

the political spectrum can dismantle their own barriers to humanitarian solutions. These

summaries of his observations are generalizations to be considered within broad context

and certainly are not reflective of every individual within either ideological grouping.

The Christian Right

The alarming concern of politically conservative Christians is a country moving

in the wrong direction, away from what they perceive to be the Judeo-Christian principles

that the country was founded upon. These principles are often touted as "family, faith,

and freedom." Conservatives look at society through the filter of their highest moral

ideals. And of course, the reality they experience does not measure against those ideals.

Ultimately, they want a country that reflects their values, or as close as they can get to

that without pursuing a theocracy. Conquest terminology is a common rally cry of the

right, such as take back, dominion, battle over culture, reclaim, drive out, enemy, attack,

advance the kingdom, etc.[34] In general, the Christian right is "animated by a mythical

ideal of the right ordering of society."[35]

The Christian right identify a hijacking by the secular liberals and humanist. They

express a felt attack upon religious freedoms and two and a half centuries of Christian

---

[34] James Davison Hunter, *To Change the World: The Irony, Tragedy, and Possibility of Christianity in the Late Modern World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 111-131.

[35] James Davison Hunter, *To Change the World*, 132.

tradition that had been undergirded by government. The fear of many on the right is the takeover of the court system, Supreme Court appointments, and the so called seven mountains of culture: government, education, media, arts, religion, family, and business. Losing control of these cultural "mountains" will swing general societal morality away from Christian values. In the eyes of conservative Christians, these strongholds have already been mostly lost. Conservatives fear the stripping away of individual freedoms and constitutional rights. Because of this clashing of values between right and left, conservative Christians are called to action, to vote and the stem the assault by progressives to fundamentally change the worldview of their nation.[36] A common theme is to return America to its Christian roots, which makes the campaign slogan "Make American Great Again" resonate according to their worldview.

The Christian Left

Christian progressives also have a noble history and values they proudly draw upon. According to Hunter, "Among Christian progressives, it is the future vision of the *eschaton* itself—the realization of the kingdom of heaven, where justice, peace, equality, and community exist in their ultimate state of perfection—that is the abiding ideal. It is the vision of the *eschaton* that Christian progressives see themselves working hard to realize."[37] These pursuits thread all the way back to influences such as St. Augustine's

---

[36] James Davison Hunter, *To Change the World*, 111-122.

[37] James Davison Hunter, *To Change the World*, 134.

City of God and St. Thomas More's *Utopia*, of the fifth century and sixteenth century respectively, and other similar Christian writings.[38]

A key word for progressive Christians is justice. Specifically, this often refers to injustices against the poor and marginalized of society at the hands of the wealthy. Economic equity across communities is a rally cry of the left. Liberty also means an individual freedom to choose lifestyle. Controversial examples are sexual identity and same sex marriage, which would typically be championed by the left as a right of liberty. Two primary "wings" of the left are the communitarian camp and the social libertarian wing. Hunter would say that most liberal Christians fall into the communitarian side because of their interest in securing individual and community level liberty for the poor that was caused by the domination and exploitation of the wealthy.[39] God issued many warnings about those who exploit the weak and blessing for those who advocate for them. An example from Isaiah, "Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer; you shall cry, and he will say, 'Here I am.' If you take away the yoke from your midst, the pointing of the finger, and speaking wickedness, if you pour yourself out for the hungry and satisfy the desire of the afflicted,

then shall your light rise in the darkness and your gloom be as the noonday."[40]

In summary, the poor are subjugated to the results of this power struggle between political ideologies. Christians on the right are focused on restoring America to ideals and principles that will create an atmosphere where citizens can flourish. Christians on the

---

[38] James Davison Hunter, *To Change the World*, 132.

[39] James Davison Hunter, *To Change the World*, 148-149.

[40] Isaiah 58:9-10, ESV.

left are focused on righting the wrongs perpetrated by the rich on the weak, social justice being the king. It seems the Christian right's approach to poverty is an ideal of creating economic opportunity for people to elevate and gain independence. And it seems the Christian left feels the need to rescue the poor from the exploitation of the rich. Both of these themes have merit, and it is unfortunate for the poor, that Christians are fighting over methodology. I deduct that it would be much more productive if Christians could lay aside their political affiliation in order to unite around a legitimate need, such as ministry to the poor.

Theology of the Poor: Other World Religions

According to the Pew Research Center, the top five world religions by population are Christianity (2.38 billion), Islam (1.9 billion), Unaffiliated (1.19 billion), Hinduism (1.16 billion), and Buddhism (507 million).[41] These five categories account for more than 93 percent of the world's population. Removing the "unaffiliated" category, the top four world religions comprise nearly 78 percent of the earth's population. Therefore, it seems useful to compare and contrast some of the general doctrines on poverty and orphans that are promoted by the religions that influence over three-fourths of the world's citizens. This very brief summary of those other three world religions, Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism does not claim to capture the broad possibilities or complexities within their specific faith group but attempts to show a generally universal cross-culture moral code in regard to the poor and the orphan.

---

[41] Pew Research Center, "Religious Composition by Country, 2010-2050," accessed August 10, 2020, https://www.pewforum.org/2015/04/02/religious-projection-table/2020/number/all/.

Islam

The Muslim faith has developed many sects and cultural differences worldwide. And as with many religions there is potential for individual deviation between doctrine and practices. Islam seems to get bad publicity in American with the ongoing war on terrorism. It is worthwhile noting that many wars have been fought and people slain in the name of Christ as well. Setting aside the potential for a Western mind to hold prejudice, the Qur'an has much to say about appropriate care for the orphan and the stranger. "[Prophet], have you considered the person who denies the Judgement? It is he who pushes aside the orphan and does not urge others to feed the needy. So, woe to those who pray but are heedless of their prayer; those who are all show and forbid common kindness" (Qur'an 107.1-7)[42]. In references to the faithful in afterlife the Qur'an states,

> We have prepared chains, iron collars, and blazing Fire for the disbelievers, but the righteous will have a drink mixed with *kafur*, a spring from which God's servants drink, making it flow plentifully: they fulfil their vows; they fear a day of widespread woes; they give food to the poor, the orphan, and the captive, though they love it themselves, saying, 'We feed you for the sake of God alone. We seek neither recompense nor thanks from you. We fear the Day of our Lord —a woefully grim Day'" (Qur'an 76.4-10).

The dutiful language from the Qur'an arouses a fear of punishment, albeit it instructs the believer to care for the poor, the orphan, and the captive.

In response to the question of giving charity, "No indeed! You [people] do not honour orphans, you do not urge one another to feed the poor, you consume inheritance greedily, and you love wealth with a passion" (Qur'an 89.17-20). The weight of the

---

[42] All Qur'an quotes are from: M.A.S. Abdel Haleem, trans., *Oxford World's Classics: The Qur'an* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

Qur'an is in the favor or the individual worshiper's responsibility to care for and provide

for the orphan, the poor, the sojourner, but it does not stop with the individual's act of

benevolence. It requires each Muslim to persuade their fellow believers to extend that

same kindness to the poor.

Hinduism

Over one billion people are associated with Hinduism. Many Hindus live in

poverty-stricken regions of the world, which makes a discussion on the religion's

response to poverty interesting.[43] Thomas contends that in general terms Hinduism is not

very compatible with the idea of human rights and the equal and inalienable human rights

of all people.[44] However, he also shows that there is documentation in sacred texts

promoting the responsibility of government to care for those most vulnerable in society,

> The king's particular responsibility towards the poor and vulnerable is repeatedly
> emphasized: he should 'wipe away the tears of the poor, the helpless, and the old'
> (92.34); 'bend down to the wretched' (137.101); 'have compassion for all beings,
> deliver and protect the dejected and broken' (64.26). The practical manifestations
> of this should take the form of jobs and subsistence for the poor, as well as
> provision for widows, unmarried women and girls.[45]

Because of Hinduism's pluralistic nature of religious inclusivity, it can be

confusing to make general statements about what a Hindu might believe. However, there

are some common agreements, as listed by the World Hindu Council of America. They

state, "There is a 'law of cause and effect by which each individual creates his own

---

[43] In 2014, 1 in 5 people in India lived on $2 or less per day. Pew Research Center, "What it Means to be Poor by Global Standards," accessed August 10, 2020, https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/ 07/22/what-it-means-to-be-poor-by-global-standards/.

[44] Lynn Thomas, "Negotiating the Spaces: Exploring Issues of Human Rights in an Indian Text," *Religion* 48, no. 1 (2018): 105-106.

[45] Lynn Thomas, "Negotiating the Spaces," 113.

destiny by his thoughts, words, and deeds' (Karma)."[46] This statement speaks to a

motivation of the individual toward moral conduct, for personal advancement, which is a

key objective. Another listed agreement is "All life is sacred, and Hindus must practice

ahimsa, non-injury, in thought, word, and deed."[47] A premise of the sacredness of life is a

foundation for good works and acts of charity toward the least among society.

Buddhism

Speaking for Thai Buddhists, Sivaraksa said, "It is fundamentally wrong for a

Buddhist to be hedonistic or indifferent if there is a big gap between the rich and the

poor, the powerful and the powerless, especially in the land where basic human rights are

denied to the majority, and over 60% of the young people suffer malnutrition as in the

case of my country and many parts of Asia."[48] The four noble truths of Shakyamuni

Buddha were ill-being (dukkha), its cause, its end, and its cure. People experiencing

poverty are generally in a state of duress, which would be dukkha, and the Buddhist way

would be to move toward health and well-being. That said, there is a recognition of the

benefit of a materially minimalized lifestyle. Renouncing worldly possessions is

considered noble to the Buddhist, but that is expected to bring harmony and general well-

being, the opposite of poverty.[49]

---

[46] Frank R. Chappell, "Negotiating Contemporary Hindu Beliefs and Practices in the United States," *Religions of South Asia* 12, no. 1 (2018): 83.

[47] Frank R. Chappell, "Negotiating Contemporary Hindu Beliefs," 83.

[48] Sulak Sivaraksa, "Buddhism and Development – A Thai Perspective," *Ching Feng* 26, no. 2-3 (1983): 126.

[49] David R. Loy, "Buddhism and Poverty," *Contemporary Buddhism* 2, no. 1 (2001): 55-56.

Conclusion

We can use what power or leverage we possess to lift the powerless out of their pit. Christians, Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, or simply moral citizens have a responsibility to act. As shown, all of the main world religions promote care for the poor and especially for the orphan. Not only is it a mandate by God, but it is also for our own good. Our own spiritual formation and progression relies partly on how we respond to this issue. People of faith are not to be hedonistic, and yet part of our pursuit is to experience a personal advancement in our faith, our spirituality, and the pleasure of a life in Christ. Helping orphans is good for the orphan, but it is also good for the helper.

Lucy told me that she had cried out to God at the lowest point in her life. It was a moment when her family and friends had deserted her, and an enemy mob threatened to kill her and tried to persuade her to take her own life by jumping off a bridge. She had no theological premise for approaching God, as she had never been exposed to a Christian witness or example. She simply cried out to a God who she hoped really existed. She later explained to me that she believed that God answered her cry for help by leading her to me and my wife. Even in her infantile spiritual understanding, she recognized that good, godly people need to be involved in the process of executing justice for the defenseless on behalf of the Creator.[50] Chandler eloquently summed:

> When treating people with dignity, regardless of who they are, we acknowledge that they have been created in the imago Dei. By upholding others' highest good and fostering altruism and benevolence, we extend the unconditional love of God. Interestingly, altruism has been shown to contribute to the giver's life satisfaction, a sense of life purpose, and better overall physical and mental health over a

---

[50] Text message conversation with Lucy, September 21, 2020.

lifetime. Ultimately, the secret to a deeper and more flourishing life is self-giving love.[51]

---

[51] Diane Chandler, *Christian Spiritual Formation: An Integrated Approach for Personal and Relational Wholeness* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2014), 265-266.

CHAPTER 4:

FIELD RESEARCH

Overview of Research Goals and Methodology

It was my decision use qualitative research methodology to take this field project

deep rather than broad. Qualitative research is conducted to better understand a query's

beliefs, experiences, attitudes, behaviors, and interactions. It serves best to give a voice to

those being studied and compliments the numerical data that is gathered by quantitative

research methods. It also enables a less formal and more relational interaction between

researcher and the participant.[1]

Therefore, instead of offering shallow information from a large subject group, I

wanted to present a deep and thorough understanding of their situation by developing

relationships with a smaller number of subjects. It was challenging because these

relationships were being developed during the COVID-19 pandemic, however, I was able

to create a meaningful connection with five teens. Because of the narrow and deep

approach, I believe I was able to tell their story in a way that will help us understand their

plight. All of the teens interviewed have my direct cell phone number and email and

know that I will help them in real and meaningful ways whenever they need it. This

relational approach is a key development that will be explored at length in later chapters.

The field research conducted for this project helped put faces to the issues of teen

homelessness that I have developed and expounded upon elsewhere. The goal of this

---

[1] Vibha Pathak, Bijayini Jena, and Sanjay Kalra, "Qualitative Research," *Perspectives in Clinical Research* 4, no. 3 (2013): 192; https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3757586/.

research was to identify within the Spokane region, and Spokane Valley specifically, the causes and effects of teen homelessness, the resources available to mitigate those effects, and gaps in service that might indicate a direction to explore for recommended solutions.[2] My intention was to probe deeply within our community and hear directly from the teens themselves and those who work closely with them to mitigate their distress. Additionally, it was important to understand the resources that are currently available and to identify where those gaps in service exist. Methods used to obtain this information included questionnaires that were completed by both teen advocates and homeless teens, interviews with both teen advocates and homeless teens, an online and physical search for relevant existing resources, and interviews with staff members who work at or with entities providing services. The field research reported here was conducted over a thirteen-month period from September 2019 through October 2020. Therefore, some resources may have changed by the time this dissertation is published.

Eleven homeless teens were surveyed through two questionnaire tools, and five homeless teens were interviewed face to face. Four of the five interviews were conducted in the presence of a social worker known to the teen during lunch meetings that lasted about two hours each. An audio recording was made of each interview and destroyed after written notes were compiled. One of the represented teens interviewed, Tommy, was a compilation of conversations I have had with him over several years of friendship. Another teen interviewed, Lucy, was a compilation of conversations I have had with her over a period of four months. Through questionnaires, I surveyed a representation of 6.5

---

[2] The term "Spokane Valley" is part of the local vernacular referring to the Eastern portion of Spokane County separate from the City of Spokane.

percent of the homeless teens in Spokane Valley and further conducted personal

interviews with 3 percent of that target group, based upon the statistic of 168

unaccompanied homeless students identified in 2019 within the Spokane Valley.[3] These

percentages may be higher considering that some of the 168 students may not be teens.[4]

Additionally, fifteen teen advocates, case managers, counselors, and social workers,

provided information via questionnaires and more thorough information was obtained

from six key teen advocates through extensive interviews and conversations. I

investigated the availability of social services resources through interviews and

conversations with staff and volunteers who represented agencies that provide those

resources to homeless teens.

Survey of Resources: Spokane and Spokane Valley

The intent of this segment was to provide a baseline of resources available within

the geographic area of the dissertation research. Prior to determining solutions to the

problem, I felt it was critical to become an expert of what teens can realistically rely upon

if they find themselves in a homeless scenario. This search consisted mostly of structured

programs that exist to support distressed teens. The intent was to learn the full wrap-

---

[3] Washington Office of the Superintendant of Public Instruction, accessed June 5, 2020, https://www.k12.wa.us/data-reporting/data-portal.

[4] According to Central Valley School District Homeless Liaison Leslie Camden-Goold most students classified as unaccompanied homeless youth (UHY) are teenagers between 8th -12th grades. In May 2020, her records reflected 67 UHY were enrolled in Central Valley School District. 52 of them were 8th-12th grades, which is 77.6 percent. Leslie sent a request to the Office of Superintendent of Public Schools for Washington to pull a report to determine exact numbers of UHY by grade level so we could compile exactly how many of those were teens, but they were unable to generate a report with that specificity. Therefore, as a general rule, when using the term Unacommapnied Homeless Youth throughout this dissertation, the assumption is that approximately three fourths of the reported numbers will represent teens between 8th -12th grades. This information was received by emails May 7-8, 2020.

around scope of services that might benefit a homeless teen, including but beyond the

obvious housing support. In general, there is a wide array of services available

throughout the Spokane/Northern Idaho region. Less services are available to teens in

Spokane Valley, meaning they would have to travel across the county for some services.

No single services hub exists in the Valley for teens like there is in other regions.

I catalogued every resource I could find that is currently available for teens

experiencing homelessness. The method began simply by searching for agencies,

ministries, and government programs that provided applicable services. Then phone calls,

emails, and personal meetings were conducted with staff working in those programs. I

took advantage of some of my regularly scheduled interagency meetings to talk with

program experts and educate myself about their programs. With the list assembled and

programs vetted through direct contact I built a spreadsheet of services in order to

compare types of services available at each agency.[5] I was then able to determine

percentages of each type of service available and discover the gaps. The scope of search

was first broad, Spokane County and the adjacent communities into the panhandle of

Idaho. Then I narrowed the scope to just Spokane Valley, the eastern half of Spokane

County, to see how the Valley resources compared to the broader community.

Critical Analysis

The survey of available programs and services for distressed teens confirmed a

large variety and scope. I identified forty-two primary service agencies across the

nonprofit and governmental sectors. The zip code or service area for each provider was

---

[5] See spreadsheet of services in Appendix A.

documented and whether or not they served in Spokane Valley. The following categories were then identified for every provider: ages served, gender served, and whether service was restricted to teen mothers with child. I also determined if the following services were provided: emergency shelter, transitional housing, housing capacity, mental health service, medical care, substance abuse program, family reconciliation services, legal counseling, groceries or meals, clothing, diapers, school supplies, transportation or bus passes, showers, laundry service, job training, life skills training, parenting training, recreational opportunities, high school or GED program, tutoring, college scholarships, mentoring, and connection to other resources.[6]

Of the forty-two service providers, only 40 percent provided services inside the boundaries of the research area, the Spokane Valley.[7] Regarding sheltering or housing for homeless teens, there is only one program in Spokane Valley, and that program is restricted to women exiting sex traffic or prostitution. Compare that to the county/region, which has four emergency shelters specifically for teens or youth. The lack of emergency shelter means that teens would have to travel outside of their school district at night in order to be sheltered. This barrier has the potential to cause teens to choose between school or shelter. Transportation is available through the school districts to get teens to school from distant shelters, but the process is burdensome.[8]

---

[6] See spreadsheet of services in Appendix A.

[7] See spreadsheet of services in Appendix A.

[8] Leslie Camden-Goold, CVSD Homeless Liaison, Students are most often required to use the STA bus system, which has limited service to all areas of the Spokane Valley. Cab services are sometimes used to provide transportation between school and shelters.

Limited mental health counseling is available; four of the nine providers operate in the Valley and most of that service is limited to one agency, which is not located in the Valley but has some mobile resources. Legal services are not located in the Valley for teens. Only four of fifteen providers offering job training or life skills training are located in the Valley. Sadly, only five out of twenty programs offering education, tutoring or scholarship opportunities reside in the Spokane Valley. A review of programs offering mentorship or case management guidance that direct teens to all regional services revealed that only fourteen out of thirty-four programs were represented in the Valley. Food and clothing are widely available in all areas of the county for at risk teens but basic accommodation for things like showering or laundry are absent in the Valley.[9]

The downtown corridor of the City of Spokane contains all of the walk-in teen shelter opportunities that include full service holistic wrap-around service. This study revealed that resources are scattered around the Valley, but wrap-around service is only available outside the Valley. An opportunity exists to create a site in the Spokane Valley where all of the resources needed to support and elevate homeless teens are located under one roof, from shelter to mental health, education, and training resources.

In summary, the Spokane Valley has a representation of most every resource needed by homeless teens other than shelter and transitional housing. Those resources are scattered around geographically, which makes it challenging, according to teens surveyed. It also became apparent how important the role of case manager/social worker is to these teens. In the absence of one center with wrap-around services, case managers are needed to walk beside teens to help them find those scattered resources. Ultimately, I

---

[9] See spreadsheet of services in Appendix A.

would like to influence our community to build a wrap-around service site for teens. At the time of this writing the mayor and city counsel of the City of Spokane Valley are beginning to discuss and explore establishing a youth shelter. However, initial discussions seem to indicate a preference to shelter older single adults ages eighteen to twenty-five. Also, Spokane Valley Partners and Family Promise are exploring a joint venture to establish a shelter for families with infants.[10] However, neither of these efforts target the unaccompanied teen who may be as young as thirteen years old.

Advocates for Homeless Teens: Questionnaires and Interviews

To understand these effects and ultimately how our community can reduce those barriers, insight is needed from stakeholders. Stakeholders include homeless teens, their friends, their families, case managers, social workers, counselors, medical personnel, teachers, other school employees, government officials, business owners, nonprofit homeless teen program staff members, and funders. Field research conducted here engaged advocates who are case managers, social workers, teachers, school employees, government employees, and nonprofit program managers.

A questionnaire was written to gain access to stakeholder's opinions regarding the issues surrounding teen homelessness.[11] Instructions asked the participants to answer questions based upon experiences, observations, and conversations with homeless teens. They were to consider failures in school, instabilities, barriers, and limitations to their aid. The questionnaire was sent out to twelve stakeholders and they in turn were asked to

---

[10] Information regarding these shelter developments came from first hand conversations and interactions that I have had with various community leaders.

[11] See questionnaire in Appendix B.

forward it to other stakeholders they thought would have insight. Fifteen questionnaires were returned. Additionally, in-depth interviews were conducted with six advocates: three high school social workers, homeless student liaisons, two case managers with agencies that conducted street teen outreach, and one retired county social services employee with expertise in the homeless population.

Outline of Methodology & Objectives

The objective of this field research was to begin the inquiry into teen homelessness. These exploratory activities helped to establish narrower parameters for further research. I was willing to let the research take me wherever it led. In this first phase I hoped to obtain insight into the reasons that teens experience homelessness and the barriers that prevent them from the stability they need. Interviews were conducted with six advocates.

The questionnaires provided some basic insight into causes and complicating factors surrounding the problem. The interviews provided more in-depth data and was conducted in a conversational format rather than with a standardized set of questions, which allowed interviewees to provide uncompartmentalized feedback without coaching. Participants were from three sectors: education, government, and nonprofit. Some participants represented more than one sector.

Critical Analysis

I expected to find that the reasons for teen homelessness in Spokane Valley are no different from what is being experienced across the country. However, all those who provided input to this segment of the project, work, and advocate for youth within the

Spokane Valley. After receiving the questionnaires from stakeholders, I realized that a differentiation needs to be made between unaccompanied homeless teens and homeless families that include teens. Both categories are relevant for this research, however, reasons for homelessness and solutions may differ. The most common reason stated for homelessness among unaccompanied teens was family conflict. Examples given were violence, substance abuse or addiction, and mental health issues. Substance abuse and mental illness were sometimes identified in both the parents or guardians and in the teens themselves.

A logical progression in questioning was to determine their support network. Most of those questioned acknowledge the multitude of supportive resources that are available in the community: affordable family counseling, housing built specifically for unaccompanied teens, shelters, the schools etc. However, it seems questionable that these teens are able to navigate through the systems to access those resources. Instead, the consensus is that they rely upon whoever they feel they can trust. Support might come from an adult such as a school staff member, mental health worker, or responsible relative, but it may also be a peer or someone who does not provide a healthy positive relationship. During one interview the case manager revealed that two of the teens she works with periodically rely upon pimps to provide housing in exchange for prostitution.

What are the biggest challenges and greatest fears facing Spokane's homeless teens, according to the advocates in this research? One of the most concerning fear stated was them not being able to finish school, or not having the motivation to persevere. Without a family safety net and adult role models, they lack life skills such as budgeting, bill paying, shopping etc. Their greatest fear is that they will not succeed in life, they will

carry the stigma of being marginalized, invisible. Their deepest wish is to be loved and cared for. Statistics for unaccompanied homeless teens seem to support their fears. Other challenges and concerns are not connecting to mental health service, meeting basic needs like food and clothing, lack of transportation, maintaining normal health, poor diet, and a lack of exercise.

What are the greatest disappointments advocates have; what are the greatest sins they feel the community has committed concerning these homeless teens? Homeless teens spend more time and energy to survive or working, which makes school attendance challenging. They experience a higher rate of criminal charges, pregnancy, and high school dropout rates. One advocate said, "It's disappointing when you see a clear path for a teen to get out of their situation, but instead watch them throw in the towel and give up. These are moments when you recognize the influence of parental encouragement." Regarding the greatest community sins or failures, it was noted that resource systems fail to communicate across platforms, and rules and laws make success prohibitive. Also, teens experienced judgement being regarded as troublemakers and being marginalized for their struggles with mental illness, PTSD, addiction, poverty, sexual identity, racial or cultural differences. Kindness, compassion, and a willingness to listen seemed to be lacking. Another underlying community challenge presented was, "If a student is not eighteen, not emancipated, or pregnant, there is nowhere in this community for them to go. I have talked with kids who refuse to return to foster care, as that can be an option for some. They would rather be homeless."

These challenges are very troubling. Community resources appear to be available, however, there are so many roadblocks that prevent the teen for connecting to those

resources. The undercurrent that I discovered when interviewing these advocates was even more concerning. Every child they can think of in this situation suffers from Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE).[12] The common denominator is they do not have hope that their life will get better. They move from one crisis to another. Many teens have stated to these advocates that they have never had anyone care about them or ever felt loved. They long to just belong within a safe familial community. Advocates said this is why they believe the teens turn to unsafe communities in order to combat their isolation and abandonment.

Homeless Teens: Questionnaires and Interviews

Education is a major key to create upward opportunity for homeless teens. Success in school is vital. Leslie Camden-Goold developed and administrated a questionnaire to be included in my research. Leslie is the homeless student liaison for the largest school district in the Spokane Valley and also serves on several statewide boards for homeless student issues. She surveyed six homeless students with questions regarding their experiences in association with school services for the homeless.[13] She asked three questions: (1) What is something you would like schools to know about being in a homeless situation? (2) How are the schools supporting you through your homeless

---

[12] ACEs are "traumatic events occurring before age eighteen. ACEs include all types of abuse and neglect as well as parental mental illness, substance use, divorce, incarceration, and domestic violence." U.S. Children's Bureau, Child Welfare Information Gateway, accessed July 12, 2020, https://www. childwelfare.gov/topics/preventing/preventionmonth/resources/ace/.

[13] The Institutional Review Board (Human Subjects Research Committee) process was completed through GFU and the research methods to be used with vulnerable teens was approved on 3/9/2020, reference #2192072.

situation? (3) What could schools do to support students and families better when they are experiencing homelessness?[14]

Several students spoke of how difficult it is to focus on school when their mind is on survival. One said, "I just wake up each morning and this weight is the first thing on my chest. My first task of each day for a long time has been rationalizing my deep-rooted fear and convincing myself that I am going to make it, despite the stakes seeming so high."[15] Several students added sentiment regarding the relationships with school staff and counselors, calling it like "family." When they really needed something, these school representatives searched for resources or connections to them. Most students reflected on the importance of the social workers within the schools to help them walk as an adult with confidence and self-advocacy. Therefore, since the school link is a critical familial component for many of these teens, it is vital to ensure that resources at the individual school level are available and students know how to access them. The homeless liaison position at each school district serves to focus attention on these particular students but there is only one per district. Additional mentors, volunteers, or outside agency support could help relieve these gaps.

I developed a preliminary questionnaire that was completed by each teen that I interviewed.[16] These questionnaires included nine simple questions to identify their living arrangements and the permanency of those arrangements. Questions also included sleeping in shelters or vehicles and how many nights they stayed in those conditions over

---

[14] Leslie Camden-Goold, homeless student survey conducted in Central Valley School District, February 2020. See "CVSD Questionnaire" in Appendix B.

[15] Leslie Camden-Goold, See "CVSD Questionnaire" in Appendix B.

[16] See Homeless Teen Questionnaire in Appendix B.

the course of their homeless scenario. Among the five homeless teens that completed

these questionnaires and were interviewed, the severity of their sleeping arrangements

varied considerably. One out of five teens had been in the foster care system. Only one

had never had to sleep in a shelter, car, or outside. However, the other four teens had

lived in shelters 65, 185, 240, and 912 days over the course of their homeless episode.

Those four teens had also spent 2, 7, 10, and 45 days living outside or in vehicles.[17] All

five interviewees worried about not having a permanent home and about where to keep

their possessions. The concern over trying to keep vital records and possessions in those

chaotic circumstances was expressed.

Individual interviews were conducted with these five teenagers who were either

homeless at the time of the interview or had been homeless sometime in the past few

years. All teenagers were detached and unaccompanied from their families at the time of

their homeless experience. Four of the five teens were interviewed over lunch,

accompanied by either a counselor or case manager that they had relationship with.

Information from the fifth teen was gathered through personal relationship that I have had

with him over the period of several years. Information gathered from these interviews

with teens and further discussions with their social worker/case manager was used to

compile their stories in the next section.

Five Spokane Valley Teens: Their Stories

The following stories are real children who have suffered significant ACE, abuse,

and abandonment. Their stories help to highlight all of the research that has been

---

[17] See Homeless Teen Questionnaire in Appendix B.

compiled throughout this dissertation. I hope that looking into these five lives will help leaders in Spokane Valley better understand how difficult it is to succeed when detached from family too early and with the complicating factor of homelessness. Seeing the struggle of these specific cases living within our community might help humanize the problem and provide more motivation to make the necessary sacrifices and changes as a society to ensure that others like them have a better opportunity than they had. Their names are fictitious to protect their identity. Here are their stories.

Paige

Paige's mother wanders the streets in downtown Spokane looking for heroin and prostitutes herself or manipulates others to get what she wants. She would threaten suicide often when she felt she was losing control over her daughter. If Paige earned money or had things of value, her mom would steal it to consume upon her own self-destruction. Paige grew up in this perverse poverty with her mom and her sister. Dad was more or less present during her pre-school years but went to prison on drug charges and never again really entered back into the picture.

According to Paige, her mom was fairly normal until she had gastric bypass surgery and became addicted to hydrocodone pills. She then began selling them and using other drugs. I interviewed sixteen-year-old Paige over lunch and let her navigate through her story at her own pace and flow. Throughout my time with her there was rarely a laugh or smile, other than in sarcasm. When she did giggle, it was discrete and guarded. She spoke of a desire to finish high school and move far away from Spokane, perhaps to Italy. Within the same sentence she expressed that she hated her mom and also that she worried about her. She phrased it, "I hate her for putting me through so many things; but at the

same time, I have to respect her because she's my mom. It's a love hate relationship."

Paige exuded a resolve to not be like the woman who caused her so much pain through the entirety of her life. When I asked what her hope for the future was, she simply stated, "I have to be better than my mom."

In her sixteen years, Paige has spent a total of 912 nights in various shelters throughout Spokane, which constitutes 15 percent of her life. Most of her middle school years were a blur; she was exposed to little formal learning during that period. From age ten to fourteen, she was mostly in the streets with her mom. Many times, as early as ten years old, Paige would drive the car because her mother was too high or intoxicated. Her mom did not like the structure of being in shelters, so many times she would solicit a random guy to take them to his place for a while, maybe a few nights or for a few weeks.

During this period, Paige slept in places all around the Spokane area and she was on the truancy board's roster for three years. It was rare that she had to sleep outside, but when that was necessary there was a convenience store that she slept behind. She was "kidnapped" for four months when she was fourteen and taken to Montana by who she called "a crazy lady and her family." Apparently, they were trying to improve on the life she had with her mom, but she was more or less held captive. Paige was able to escape that weird experience and make her way back to Spokane and find somewhat stable and safe shelter from a relative.

When I asked her when she felt most safe during the homeless years, she said it was at St. Margaret's Shelter, a Catholic Charities facility. She stayed in a transitional apartment there for about a year with her mom. However, there were many nights when her mom never came home, and she would be there alone. A woman in the room next

door became a quasi-mom to her during that time and watched over her when her own mother was absent. Paige listed the things she liked about St. Margaret's: private rooms, 24-hour security, resources and staffing in the building, study hall with tutors, laundry and kitchen, and secure storage. She even was okay with the curfew but expressed that she does not like a shelter to feel like a "prison." She and her mom also spent significant time in both the Salvation Army and Union Gospel Mission shelters.

Some key takeaways from Paige's story help reinforce this research. First, children and teens are resilient and able to overcome if they can find help at the right times. Paige's life reflects many of the factors of homelessness already explored in this dissertation. She was subjected to abject poverty throughout her childhood. Violence, criminal activity, substance abuse, and neglect were common themes throughout her life. It was extremely challenging to succeed in school while also living a survival lifestyle.

When I asked about solutions that the community could provide, she pointed to the structured transition housing model where she felt the safest and most supported. I asked her what she thought about living in a "host home" or "adopted family" situation, whether she would be open to that. She said it would depend on the family and if she felt comfortable with them. When I talked about a screening process that offered time to meet with or just hang out with a few families and that she would have a choice in the process, she thought that would work well if there were no other options. Paige also likened her current living situation with a relative that has become her new mom as being like this "host family" model. She said it is working really well and she is on track to finish high school on time. Paige has been in stable housing with this relative for the past two years.[18]

---

[18] Interview with Paige and social worker Leslie Camden-Goold, September 15, 2020.

Bruce

Bruce became abruptly homeless on his eighteenth birthday. He is a good kid, very well mannered, he is a good communicator, a good student, and an accomplished athlete. His parents were never married, and they split up when he was about five years old. From that time forward they fought custody battles and placed him in the middle as an inappropriate mediator and piece of leverage. He never knew which parent to trust. Bruce moved back and forth between parents until the eighth grade when his dad gained full custody. Parental conflict and battle continued until he was in high school, at which point he felt less manipulated, which corresponded with him being able to stand up for himself and push back against their manipulation.

When he was about nine years old his father started living with another woman who he eventually married when Bruce was about eleven. His new stepmom had two other children and a nephew in that household. Bruce's mom had a couple other children as well who were older than him. His stepmom never accepted him and there was fighting, conflict, and rejection. Tension grew between his dad and stepmom, almost to the point of divorce. Bruce and his dad fought both verbally and physically during this period of household turmoil. He thought the biggest problem was his stepmom's rejection of him.

On his eighteenth birthday, Bruce returned home about 10:00 pm to find all of his belongings in garbage bags on the front lawn. Ultimately, his stepmom just did not trust him or want him living with them and his dad sided with her. At that time Bruce was about to begin his senior year of high school. Neither parent responded to the school registration requirements and he was forced to take over all of the responsibilities for his

life at that point without any preparation or savings. He was facing his last year of high school completely detached from his family with no permanent place to live.

Bruce described his initial emotions once his dad kicked him out. At first it was exciting to feel independence and be free from the constant family conflict. He moved in with a friend's family for a couple weeks until another friend had a room vacancy in the apartment he was renting. When he moved into the apartment, it was the first time in his life that he had his own room and was not sharing it with a stepsibling. But very soon he realized that he had to take care of things that he never had to do before. He was able to gain employment for the summer, but he lost his job, could not pay his friend, and school was about to start.

At the time of our interview he had little money, no job, and his friend's lease was up in a few weeks. He was looking for work in order to save up for getting into an apartment. He is exploring options of living with other friends, or a last resort of trying to reunite with his mother who lives at Loon Lake. However, living with his mom would place him an hour from school and he has had no real relationship with her for the past three years.

When I asked him his biggest fear, he stated, "becoming homeless so fast and going into my senior year with no support of family. I just want to make it through this year and have a place to stay until I can finish school and join the Navy." I asked him what aspirations he had for his future. The Navy became a goal because his uncle and grandfather served there, and he thought it would make his family proud. He also mentioned a desire to be a firefighter or a counselor. Bruce said, "It's tough seeing all of my friends living with their families, sitting down at a table together to eat dinner, and

I'm heating up my meal in a microwave." He blames himself for the family conflict that he experienced, that perhaps if he would have been a better kid his family would have wanted him.

Some might deduce that Bruce had the least extreme situation of the five teens interviewed. Yet, he has experience utter abandonment, a classic case of a "thrownaway" teen. In spite of it, he is a responsible bright young man who only needs a little support to bridge the gap toward an independent life. Housing is his main concern, which is tied to an adequate monthly income through his senior year of school. I was able to leverage the owner of a staffing agency to get him into a job that would work with his school schedule. My agency also pledged to help with a deposit on an apartment if needed. Even though he appears fairly well adjusted compared to others he would benefit from mental health resources.[19]

Jaja

Jaja is a feisty eighteen-year-old woman with wit and directness that will command the room. Yet, she has gentleness and a soft chuckle that makes you feel warm and welcome. How does she emanate such charm and positivity considering all that she has been through? "One morning I walked out of the door with my boyfriend and there is my mother curled up sleeping on our porch. I had dropped her off at a shelter the night before. No matter where I would go trying to lose her, she would find me." Jaja's mom is a drug addict and seems to be hopelessly lost in a perpetual downward life spiral. She said, "There isn't a moment with my mom that isn't aggressive." She mentioned the time

---

[19] Interview with Bruce and social worker Leslie Camden-Goold, September 16, 2020.

her aunt called her, and she had to leave her high school class to go downtown and pick up her mom from jail. Her mother begged to stay with her for a couple nights, but Jaja said, "No!" She was dropped off at a shelter. According to Jaja, no one else can tell her mom no, but she told me, "I'm done with mom. I need to get on with my life. It's sad to say, because she's my mom."

During our interview, Jaja recounted all the different places she has lived over the past eighteen years and wrote it all down on paper for the first time in her life. In the past twelve years she has lived in thirteen different houses or shelters around the Spokane area, mostly in Spokane Valley. Besides her mother, she has lived with her grandma, her aunt, family friends, families of friends from school, her older sister, her boyfriend, and in shelters. She has spent 185 nights in homeless shelters. "Most of the times I could find someone who would let me stay with them for a night or two. But sometimes I would have to find someone to rent a motel for me. That happened a few times when I was thirteen. And a couple times I just stayed up all night or slept outside somewhere." In spite of all of this housing instability, she graduated on time from Mica Peak High School spring of 2020 and is trying to start college.

She has a younger sibling who she sometimes lived with and at other times they were separated. Her father left for prison when she was about eight, but she was reacquainted with him about a year ago. When I asked her why she never went through the emancipation process, she said, she was afraid it would prevent her dad from someday finding her. The best male role models she knew were drug dealers. In fact, when I asked her when she felt the safest, she said it was with a particular drug dealer. She shared, "He took care of me when my mom was abusing me. He would protect me

and buy me what I needed, clothes, food, or even give me money after mom stole from me." She stated that to this day she would trust him with her life. At the same time, Jaja admitted that he was considered a bad man on the streets; he hurt people. I asked her why she thought he could be so bad and still protect her. She said, "He has kids and I think he just drew a line there."

Her older half sister and her sister's dad ran a meth lab together when Jaja was younger. Jaja has always been around the illegal drug industry and admits that she has struggled with drug and alcohol abuse using opioids, marijuana, alcohol, and tobacco. She is now clean but drinks alcohol moderately. She despises her mother and the lifestyle that she represents. When I asked her what her goal in life was, she simply stated, "To not become my mother." Jaja watched her mom smoke heroin while she was in the car. She watched her mom sell drugs from whatever home they were living in and laid awake at night scared because of all the people that would come in and out of the house. In one house she stayed for a while, her room had a lock, which made her feel safer from the barrage of different men who would come and go. When Jaja tried to enroll in college she discovered that her mom had stolen her social security number and ruined her credit. She has been through so much for being just eighteen. In fact, she told me she feels eighty years old. Patches of her hair are falling out, which her doctor said is stress related.

The lessons learned from Jaja's experiences are numerous. Again, her homelessness can be linked to poverty, family drug abuse, criminal activity, and neglect. She told me many valuable things that provided insight into the life of a homeless teen. She found the traditional high school experience was difficult. She was an outcast for being homeless. She specified that school staff were not always discrete regarding her

situation and other students would make fun of her. She also said that when other kids do not understand homelessness, they make too big of a deal out of it. "Sometimes I didn't want people to bring attention to it." However, her experience at Mica Peak, an alternate style high school, was incredibly positive. She attributes it to an atmosphere of inclusiveness, acceptance, and extracurricular activities such as learning life skills and practical lessons. The non-traditional academic style worked very well for her.

When I asked Jaja about what suggestions she had for our community establishing resources for teens like her, she had much to say. "There are no resources in the Valley. About the only place for us to sleep is Crosswalk, which is in downtown Spokane. It's hard to get there and if you catch a late bus sometimes there aren't enough beds for all the kids. Then you have to catch a bus to get back to the Valley for school. It's nearly impossible to live that way. I just wanted a safe place to stay in the Valley." She thought an apartment complex for teens that had other resources in the building would be great for kids who are pretty independent. When I asked about a "host family" opportunity, Jaja emphasized that she would want to be in control of that decision and not at the mercy of some social worker. She liked the idea of being able to meet in advance and interview potential host families.[20]

Tommy

Tommy was born a fetal alcohol baby. His mother was an alcoholic and drug addict who would beat him and lock him in a closet, even as a toddler. Tommy lived in

---

[20] Interview with Jaja and social worker Leslie Camden-Goold, September 17, 2020.

several foster homes as a child until being assigned to his last foster parent who he now calls "mom." She formally adopted him when he was a young teen. His mom is a hoarder, and her home is very dirty and chaotic. Tommy says he has "mother issues," although at twenty-two he seems like a nice well-adjusted young man. In this adopted home there were three other non-blood related foster children that he considers his brothers and sister. Constant aggression, fighting, and arguing were present in the home. Tommy's mom had him arrested when he was fourteen and sent briefly to juvenile detention. She obtained a restraining order against him at one point. Later, that juvenile criminal record would prevent him from entering the military, which greatly discouraged him.

Although he never grew up with any father figure, fortunately for Tommy, a few healthy men came into his life at critical points. Two were pastors and they each played somewhat of a father or favorite uncle role during his teen years. I was introduced to him when he was seventeen and have helped Tommy in many ways when he needed it. He developed a short-fuse temper when he felt controlled or helpless. I asked him once what his biggest concern was during the times when he was homeless or rejected by his mom. I thought his answer was interesting, he said, "I wanted to know why it was happening to me; what did I do to deserve this kind of life and rejection from my mother figures?" He had the feeling that he was always doing something wrong or that things never seemed to turn positive for him and it continued for many years.

When he was a junior in high school his mother expelled him from the house, and he floated around to a few friends' homes. He was struggling in school at this point and one of his pastor friends coordinated to get him into a private academy for boys near

Walla Walla, WA. This academy had a diverse assortment of boys, many of them from troubled situations. After about one semester he was in trouble again and I drove down to talk with the administrators. Though I tried to plead his case, they expelled him from the academy. Tommy wanted to stay in the area, so I coordinated with a youth shelter program in Kennewick, WA that had a structured environment and a GED track program.

The shelter worked for a while but eventually he was not satisfied with the restrictions. It was a night shelter only program, so he always had to go to the library to do schoolwork. He found a few part time jobs and eventually left the shelter, slept outside sometimes, or stayed with families from the church he was attending. His adopted mother did not want him back and there was no other family willing to give him permanent shelter and help. He was eighteen years old with an incomplete education, no money, and no driver's license.

At that point, it was nearly impossible for him to advance educationally or situationally, which is when it was suggested that he apply for a Job Corp program. Tommy spent two years in an isolated Job Corp site in the mountains of northern Oregon where he finished high school and studied office administrative subjects. These were significant milestone achievements, which seemed to turn the tide for him. He also made good friends and learned to cope with his anger. At twenty he moved between Seattle and Spokane with a few different decent jobs, got his driver's license, and even his first car. He is now twenty-one, has rented his first apartment with two roommates, has a satisfying full-time job, and is feeling more confident and optimistic about his future. When I talk with him there is still evidence of his trauma and abandonment pain, but he is building a circle of friends and families that he can lean on. He is building community.

Whenever he is feeling lonely, he will text me and come over to hang out with our family. Our door is always open for him. He has stayed with us a few times for short periods of time, but we never brought him in permanently. I am not sure exactly why we were not able to make that commitment, but hosting a homeless teen needs to be a mutually agreeable arrangement and we did not feel capable at the time to do it. We were not aware of any support mechanisms to help our family take on this responsibility.

Tommy's situation is classic childhood physical and psychological trauma and multiple experiences with abandonment and rejection. Even though he has an adopted mom, she uses him and offers little support or encouragement. Poverty was always his experience, and he felt ostracized among his school peers who came from "normal" families. He is a large guy who found aggression and physical altercation the great equalizer for his emotional distress. If not for the entrance of a few key male mentors, it is hard to say if this story would have had a happy ending.

Tommy has told me that he wants to be a counselor someday. I have noticed it is common for victimized teens to have ideation of vocation in the "helping" fields. Speaking of her own purpose, Loyd an expert in vocation said, "I finally realized that this was the gift that God had hidden for me in my pain and loss."[21] Perhaps these traumatized teens can also unearth their life purpose somewhere hidden within their pain. However, to this point Tommy just seems to be in survival mode and has not taken steps toward that educational goal.[22]

---

[21] Deborah Koehn Loyd, *Your Vocational Credo: Practical Steps to Discover Your Unique Purpose* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2015), 47.

[22] I was first introduced to Tommy when he was seventeen by a mutual pastor friend. We have developed a lifelong friendship and he has become a normal presence at many of our family gatherings. Information for Tommy's story is compiled from many discussions with him between 2016 and 2020.

Lucy

Lucy was born into and raised in poverty. Her family of five lived in a two-bedroom third floor apartment in the Spokane Valley for the first thirteen years of her life. She is the youngest of three with a sister one year older and a brother three years older. Her brother appears to be on the autism spectrum but is undiagnosed. All three siblings shared one bedroom. Lucy's father was agoraphobic and preferred the safety of the apartment to outside. Her mom and dad worked low paying fast food jobs to pay the bills. Her dad would often make the kids stay locked in their bedroom all day or after school because he found it hard to handle the stress of the kids. When her mom came home from work, dad would tell them to stay in their room for another hour so he could have time with "his wife." When mom would finally come to see them, it was time for them to go to bed. That cycle repeated itself many times. Inside that shared bedroom is where Lucy said, "bad things happened."

Lucy had scattered memories of her father playing with her either inside or outside the apartment. When she was scared at night the only comfort she would get was with her sister. Her mother did not usually like to be touched by anyone except her husband, so climbing in bed with her was seldom allowed. Lucy thinks she is a mistake; her father told her that the pregnancy was not wanted. In fact, her mom was on the bus to have an abortion, but she changed her mind at the clinic. Lucy has felt like an outsider in her family and always felt like she was not wanted. When her father and siblings would be talking and Lucy tried to join them, the conversation would end, and they would be sent back to their room. She just wanted to belong and be loved but never really felt it.

Lucy started harming herself by cutting when she was eleven or twelve years old, which was about the same time she began drinking alcohol to escape. Lucy and her sister cut together and shared in suicide ideation. Unmistakable scars still display on her arms, legs, and body. Age twelve was also when she had a miscarriage in the bathtub from a pregnancy caused by older teenage boys. They took advantage of her while she was living temporarily with some family friends. As long as she could remember, she had not thought positively about herself, and had thoughts of killing herself. She has made a few unsuccessful suicide attempts, has been checked into the suicide ward at Sacred Heart Hospital and has just kept moving along in quiet suffering.

Lucy was thirteen years old when what she called her "normal family life" ended and they were evicted from her childhood apartment. At that point of crisis everyone went separate ways. Her parents separated; mom went to a car initially. Lucy struck out on her own and went from couch to couch for a while. Later she moved in with an uncle in the Spokane Valley where her living quarters were sometimes in a detached garage that appeared to be collapsing. She also spent some time with her father's parents on the South Hill. She experienced physical, sexual abuse, and sexual harassment from relatives in many of those places. She lived half of a year in a women's transitional shelter, which was one of her best experiences. In this transitional living house Lucy had structure, a peer group, and on-site mentors. She also was able to continue her education. However, she had not broken her alcohol addiction and relapses caused her to exit this program.

From age thirteen there has never been a time that she did not worry about where she would live next, who would betray her, and whether she would be safe. Lucy's hardest time of that five-year period came when she was seventeen and living in a tent

encampment in Peaceful Valley near downtown Spokane. That summer culminated with a street gang surrounding her to either force her to commit suicide by jumping from a bridge or they said they were going to murder her. Lucy identified that moment as the instance when God gave her the hope to live. Somehow, she survived that night and within a few days found shelter in the dank basement of an elderly hoarder woman's house. She stayed there in filth, creating beautiful paintings, in order to fight the voices in her head.

It was ten weeks after her life-or-death experience that I first met Lucy and conducted my initial interview. That meeting was mostly her telling our mutual friend Lynn, a social worker, and me about her horrific summer. A week later she agreed to come to our home for a dinner. Our hearts burst with so much compassion for her, but also anger as she told us more about her life. Standing in our kitchen, in a moment of shocking transparency, she said to me, "You're the first man that hasn't made me feel scared or guarded. Almost every man in my life has harassed me sexually or tried to take advantage of me, my brother, my uncle, and even my grandfather." She said, "A grandfather shouldn't act sexually with his son's daughter, that is just gross. I have just felt like a piece of meat with men. In the street, they told me I was a nobody, just something to fuck. Still, I was okay giving guys what they wanted, because I just wanted to be loved by someone."

When we met her, she was malnourished, was recovering from a MRSA staph infection, could not sleep because of the PTSD voices in her head, had been diagnosed with schizophrenia, had been utterly rejected by her blood family, had long since dropped out of school, and had never known what genuine love was. And yet somehow, she was

optimistic. She was not mad at God; in fact, she saw his hand at work. She is a true inspiration to me and my family, the bravest person I have ever met. Somehow Lucy was defying the odds; she was not a drug addict and she was not pregnant. She had begun a basic level of counseling through Frontier Behavioral Health.

Lucy taught us many things about teen homelessness. She had all of the typical predictors of teen homelessness. She came from an unstable family, abject poverty, neglect, abandonment, physical abuse, and sexual abuse. When I asked her what she dreams about, she said, "I've always hoped that someone would take me into their family, like an adoption." At one point she thought a lady was going to adopt her, but after eight months she came home to find her possessions outside in garbage bags. Once again, she was back in the streets. She emancipated at age sixteen so that she could try to gain some independence, but it has been a brutal five years. Lucy is a very smart and beautiful young lady with a bubbly personality that lights up any room. They say that the streets eat up girls like her, and she is a testimony to the truth of that statement. She suffers tremendous mental anxiety and mental health issues and her living arrangements have been everything from outright dangerous to unhealthy.

For a brief while there were two teen outreach advocates in the Spokane Valley and Lucy had contact with both of them. They were able to help her initially connect to some resources, but those positions were both discontinued. All homeless teen shelters and major programs are now in downtown Spokane, which drew Lucy to that corridor. And within that street culture is where she received her most traumatic treatment. Lucy is an extreme example of why the Spokane Valley needs resources to prevent isolated kids from migrating to the more dangerous inner-city streets. Lucy shared many horrific

stories of homeless kids as young as thirteen being brutally attacked and exploited by the street criminals. She told those stories in a "matter of fact" cadence as if talking about the weather.[23]

Conclusion

These five stories paint a picture of young lives suffering silently in our midst. The dangers and risks have been more severe for some and less for others, but they all have lived in a vulnerable state that could have been mitigated. The commonalities are apparent. Every teen expressed they had trauma and violence from and within their immediate family. Tommy was abused from the time he was in the womb. Bruce was used as a bargaining chip by parental wars his entire life. Jaja had an abusive drug addicted mom that brought a multitude of dangerous men in and out of the home. Paige's mom was a heroin addict and dragged her along to stand on street corners with a cardboard sign. Lucy bounced around to different households of extended family and was sexually exploited in every situation. All of these kids were subjected to horrendous trauma, neglect, and abandonment.

The Spokane Valley is woefully lacking shelter solutions for homeless teens who are detached from family. Housing options do exist regionally, but they have a program density in downtown Spokane. Uprooting a teen from their known community, especially the school environment, for the sole purpose of providing adequate shelter is problematic.

---

[23] An initial interview was conducted by the author with Lucy's social worker, Lynn Marquez on April 17, 2019. I conducted the first interview with Lucy on September 14, 2020 with the help of Lynn Marquez. My family and I had additional discussions with Lucy over several weeks as we began to develop relationship with her, helping her with prescription medications, and taking care of some of her basic needs. My wife Teri and I met and spent an hour with her mother and brother on October 2, 2020.

A full selection of support services is required to properly replace what is lost when family detachment takes place. The Spokane Valley does not have a breadth of services for advocates or teens to access when looking for these solutions.

Based on all of this field research, it is my opinion that the depth and scope of necessary programming is commensurate to the level of dysfunction experienced within the family unit and how early the adolescent becomes detached from family. Other communities have addressed the challenge of teen homelessness successfully; it is necessary to identify which solutions may work in the Spokane Valley. The next chapter will investigate current solutions at length to ascertain resolutions that can be confidently recommended to decision makers within the Spokane Valley community.

CHAPTER 5:

SOLUTIONS IN OTHER COMMUNITIES

Introduction

Unaccompanied homeless teens, emancipated youth, and aged out foster children

have an extreme disadvantage compared to children who lean on their family support

system through their teen and young adult years. Normal healthy families provide a

safety net for young people until they are able to navigate through their initial times of

"need and scarcity."[1] Families that are unhealthy, violent, and traumatic produce

abandoned unhealthy traumatized teens.[2] Two primary challenges present when a

community approaches the issue of detached homeless teens.

First, there is an immediate need to stabilize the environment surrounding the

child to remove them from the risk of exploitation and violence. It is unlikely that more

advantageous steps can be taken by at-risk youth until they have been removed from this

survival situation. Stabilization requires safe and adequate housing, but it also includes

many other social services.[3] Second, there is a need to provide transitional support that

will help them move into healthy independence as a young adult even after they finish

---

[1] Elizabeth Trejos-Castillo, Gayle Davis, and Terri Hipps, "Economic Well-Being and Independent Living in Foster Youth: Paving the Road to Effective Transitioning out of Care," *Child Welfare* 94, no. 1 (January 2015): 54.

[2] National Coalition for the Homeless, "Causes of Youth Homelessness," accessed June 11, 2020, https://nationalhomeless.org/issues/youth/.

[3] Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Family and Youth Services Bureau, "Report to Congress on Runaway and Homeless Youth Program for Fiscal Years 2014 and 2015," 8, accessed June 13, 2020, https://www.acf.hhs.gov/fysb/resource/report-to-congress-on-rhy-program-fy2014-2015.

high school.[4] Fail to accomplish these two tasks and in many cases the community will be

required to pay for a lifetime of sustainment programs such as the prison system, the

shelter system, and the welfare system.[5] Succeed in these two tasks and an abandoned

child can build family-like relationships through healthy community and become an

adjusted adult that takes care of herself and contributes to the good order of society.

Either way, each community will pay for and deal with the issue of orphaned

youth. They will embrace the challenge and ensure that homeless teens are undergirded

as necessary, or they will use community resources to pay for the consequences of not

taking preemptive actions to change the outcomes when there is the greatest likelihood

for success.[6] This section of research was dedicated to finding answers that have worked

within communities. What are the programs and support systems that have produced the

greatest positive outcomes for homeless detached teens? I have sought to find answers

that will be applicable for the Spokane Valley community. The following material brings

in voices from around the country that can speak directly into a local model that will

address this challenge. I believe a successful model will be flexible, offering the

community and the teen choices based upon the uniqueness of the individual being

served.

---

[4] U.S. Family and Youth Services Bureau, "Runaway and Homeless Youth Program," accessed September 11, 2020, https://www.acf.hhs.gov/fysb/programs/runaway-homeless-youth/programs/transitional-living.

[5] U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Family and Youth Services Bureau, "Report to Congress on Runaway and Homeless Youth," 2-5.

[6] Leah Rabinowitz, "The Early Bird Gets the Worm: A Proposal to Develop Early Intervention Shelters Throughout Massachusetts," *Boston College Third World Law Journal* 30, no. 145 (2010): 178.

The Federal Governmental Model

Though homelessness is a local problem, it is a national concern. Solutions to the homeless teen problem might include federal influence and assistance. I have chosen to lead off with the government's model for homeless teens because most communities that establish resources for this vulnerable population incorporate at least some of their three-tiered trellis system. The federal model includes street outreach, drop-in emergency shelters, and long-term transitional programs.[7] Whether the programs are funded by the federal government or not, these are logical steps for any community attempting to address the problem.

The U.S. Government has embraced this model developed over the past forty-six years to help homeless teens. Funds are allocated by law to support local communities as they establish sustainable programs; this funding can be requested by municipalities and private organizations. The federal solution is commonly referred to as the Runaway and Homeless Youth Program.[8] It includes three general components: The Basic Center Program (BCP), the Transitional Living Program (TLP)/Maternity Group Home (MGH) program, and the Street Outreach Program (SOP).[9] These programs operate under the governance of the Families and Youth Services Bureau (FYSB), which is a program office of the Federal Administration for Children and Families (ACF). The ACF is an

---

[7] U.S. Family and Youth Services Bureau, "Runaway and Homeless Youth Program Fact Sheet," accessed September 11, 2020, https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/fysb/rhy_factsheet_043018_508.pdf.

[8] U.S. Family and Youth Services Bureau, "Runaway and Homeless Youth Program," accessed September 11, 2020, https://www.acf.hhs.gov/fysb/programs/runaway-homeless-youth.

[9] U.S. Family and Youth Services Bureau, "Runaway and Homeless Youth Program Fact Sheet," accessed September 11, 2020, https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/fysb/rhy_factsheet_043018_508.pdf.

agency division of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).[10] The levels of

oversight that exist for this programming indicate how extensive the engagement has

been from the U.S. Government. The nation as a whole has brought the issue of

children's welfare into every level of discussion and problem solving.[11]

Legislative History

The federal model has been refined through a series of legislative actions taken

over the course of five decades.

- 1974: Title III of the Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Act of 1974. This
  legislation provided for the first line of defense for homeless youth through the
  creation of community shelters (Basic Centers) to administer basic care for youth
  not already being served through the justice system.
- 1988: The Transitional Living Program was created by Congress to help older
  homeless youth prepare for adulthood (Reinforced by the Anti-Drug Abuse Act of
  1998).
- 1994: The Street Outreach Program was established, formally titled the Education
  and Prevention Services to Reduce Sexual Abuse of Runaway, Homeless, and
  Street Youth Program.
- 2009: The Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing Act
  was passed; a national strategic plan to end homelessness was mandated and
  presented in 2010 to provide a roadmap for action to combat homelessness,
  including the plight of unaccompanied youth.
- 2015: The Street Outreach Program was expanded to respond to youth trafficked
  for sex and labor via the Justice for Victims of Trafficking Act.[12]

---

[10] The hierarchy of the Department of Health and Human Services is explained at
https://www.hhs. gov/, accessed September 12, 2020.

[11] Refer to the information in Chapter 2 regarding child welfare reform actions.

[12] Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Family
and Youth Services Bureau, "Report to Congress on Runaway and Homeless Youth Program for Fiscal
Years 2014 and 2015," 2-7, accessed June 13, 2020, https://www.acf.hhs.gov/fysb/resource/report-to-
congress-on-rhy-program-fy2014-2015.

Basic Center Program (BCP)

The Federal Family and Youth Services Bureau oversees the Basic Center Program. The BCP undergirds community programs that meet the needs of runaway and homeless youth and their families. Youth up to age eighteen can receive emergency shelter for up to twenty-one days and shelter capacity is capped at twenty teens.[13] BCP approved shelters are required to provide food, clothing, medical care, counseling, recreation programs, education and employment assistance, outreach to youth who may need assistance, networking with other agencies, and aftercare services for youth exiting the shelter. Preventive services are also part of this program allowing agencies to develop out-of-shelter services such as home-based support for youth at risk of detaching from family.[14]

Additionally, BCP programs are to develop an adequate plan that demonstrates an ability to respond to trauma related stress and mental health consequences. This response is referred to as "trauma informed care," which is used across mental health and medical care fields. Trauma informed care changes the caregiver's approach from thinking about what is wrong with this teen to what has happened to this teen. Training is required to equip shelter staff to respond properly to teens who view their surroundings and form their behaviors based on past trauma.[15] A primary goal for the BCP is reunification with

---

[13] Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Family and Youth Services Bureau, "Report to Congress on Runaway and Homeless Youth Program for Fiscal Years 2014 and 2015," 8-14, accessed June 13, 2020, https://www.acf.hhs.gov/fysb/resource/report-to-congress-on-rhy-program-fy2014-2015.

[14] U.S. Family and Youth Services Bureau, "Basic Center Program," accessed November 6, 2020, https://www.acf.hhs.gov/fysb/resource/bcp-fact-sheet.

[15] Katrina Milaney, et. al., "Recongnizing and Responding to Women Experiencing Homelessness with Gendered and Trauma-Informed Care," *BMC Public Health* 20, no. 397 (2020): 2.

family. Reunification is not always a safe option for teens, which is why a long-range solution is also needed, such as transitional programs.

Transitional Living Program (TLP)/Maternity Group Home (MGH) Program

Whereas Basic Center Programs provide drop-in emergency shelter with wrap around resources for youth up to eighteen years of age, the Transitional Living Program provides service up to age twenty-two and continues services long-term. The goal is to help homeless teens transition to self-sufficient living. The normal duration of stay for youth admitted into a TLP is up to 540 days, however, longer stays are possible for teens who turn eighteen while they are in TLP housing. This program makes allowance for shelter space within group homes, supervised apartments, and host-family homes. The TLP must offer or have referral connections for:

- safe, stable living accommodations
- basic life skills building[16]
- educational opportunities[17]
- job attainment services
- mental health care and physical health care[18]

A Transition Living Plan is developed that schedules the transition from supervision to independent living or other constructive arrangements. Money management skills to include budgeting, consumer education, and the use of credit are an

---

[16] Life skills building includes: consumer education, budgeting, housekeeping, food preparation, and parenting skills.

[17] Educational opportunities include: GED preparation, post-secondary training, and vocational education.

[18] U.S. Family and Youth Services Bureau, "Transitional Living Program," accessed September 11, 2020, https://www.acf.hhs.gov/fysb/programs/runaway-homeless-youth/programs/transitional-living.

essential component. Interpersonal skill-building is another important feature for teens who have not had consistent relational models.[19]

The Maternity Group Home Program is a specific type of TLP that supports homeless pregnant or parenting youth ages sixteen to twenty-two. In these homes the same transitional support is offered as in a traditional TLP, but it also includes comprehensive parenting training such as parenting skills, child development, family budgeting, and health and nutrition. MGH programs can provide housing in the form of group homes, maternity homes, host family homes, and supervised apartments.[20]

Street Outreach Program (SOP)

The fundamental mission of the Street Outreach Program is to establish trusting relationships between outreach workers and young people. Many of these teens who are homeless, runaway, or living in the streets have lost caring connections to adults and this program's first goal is to reestablish them. Outreach workers steer youth toward emergency shelters in order to improve their safety and connection to other resources. Workers bring resources to the streets by helping teens connect to treatment, counseling, survival aid, and crisis intervention. A primary goal at this level of service is to prevent sexual exploitation and abuse of youth living on the streets.[21] Outreach services target youth under the age of twenty-two. They are the first step in the process of moving

---

[19] U.S. Family and Youth Services Bureau, "Transitional Living Program Fact Sheet," accessed November 6, 2020, https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/fysb/tlp_fact_sheet_september_2020pdf.pdf.

[20] U.S. Family and Youth Services Bureau, "Fact Sheet: Maternity Group Home Program," accessed November 5, 2020, https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/fysb/mgh_fact_sheet_september_2020.pdf.

[21] U.S. Family and Youth Services Bureau, "Street Outreach Program Fact Sheet," accessed November 1, 2020, https://www.acf.hhs.gov/fysb/resource/sop-fact-sheet.

vulnerable teens away from the savage of the streets and into a support network of appropriate services. The end goal is always connecting them to support systems that will help them transition into healthy and independent adult living.[22]

FYSB Grants

Local agencies can apply for Federal Government grant funding from the Family and Youth Services Bureau for all three of these programs. In FY2020 there was $56 million to award to applicant agencies for BCP through three-year grants.[23] An additional $44 million was extended for TLP/MGH[24] and $16 million was available for SOP.[25] Agencies are required to comply with the mandatory program and reporting requirements, but in return the funding helps launch and sustain real solutions. Spokane Valley does not have a drop-in center, any transitional living programs, and has lost its outreach components.[26] Although an agency need not apply for federal funding in order to create and maintain program solutions, the programs outlined by FYSB might provide the basic scaffolding and funding support to create meaningful change solutions for Spokane Valley.

---

[22] U.S. Family and Youth Services Bureau, "Street Outreach Program Fact Sheet," accessed November 5, 2020, https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/fysb/sop_fact_sheet_september_2020 pdf.pdf.

[23] U.S. Family and Youth Services Bureau, "Basic Center Program Fact Sheet," accessed November 5, 2020, https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/fysb/bcp_fact_sheet_september _2020.pdf.

[24] U.S. Family and Youth Services Bureau, "Transitional Living Program Fact Sheet," accessed November 5, 2020, https://www.acf.hhs.gov/fysb/resource/tlp-fact-sheet.

[25] U.S. Family and Youth Services Bureau, "Street Outreach Program Fact Sheet," accessed November 5, 2020, https://www.acf.hhs.gov/fysb/resource/sop-fact-sheet.

[26] Refer to Chapter 4 regarding resources for homeless teens in Spokane Valley.

Consolidation of Resources

As demonstrated earlier in Chapter 4, resources for homeless teens are dispersed among independent agencies and programs and often separated by many miles. A lack of consolidated resources is especially true in Spokane Valley, making it extremely difficult for homeless teens to access the holistic services that they need. Scattered resources is further exacerbated by a lack of public transportation options for some teens, depending upon which part of Spokane County they are in. The fragmentation of resources causes an access barrier.[27]

Nonprofit agencies usually fill a niche and address particular service gaps according to their mission directives. It is unrealistic to expect one agency or entity to provide all social service resources. In my experience, successful communities encourage robust interagency collaborations that complement each organization's services across agency boundaries in order to present a more holistic service. It is therefore important that nonprofits continue to evaluate the potential for strategic alliances that value mission success over autonomy. I have found that it is less expensive for the community to have interagency collaboration around objectives than for each agency to offer redundancy of programming for the sake of territorial protection. The agency that I manage has developed into a "one-stop-shopping" type nonprofit over the past three decades. Our facility not only houses our breadth of services such as food, clothing, diapers, critical needs items, emergency assistance, and life skills classes, it also pulls in other agencies to

---

[27] Both Jaja and Lucy (Chapter 4) told me that a lack of consolidated resources in Spokane Valley forced them to relocate to the downtown Spokane corridore. Lucy specifically told me that this led to her most dangerous trauma over the past year.

add services that we do not have, such as housing specialists, domestic violence counseling, new mother training, Sudden Infant Death Syndrome programs, medical and dental screenings, medical insurance outreach, etc. Our clients are able to access holistic social services with a single visit to Spokane Valley Partners. Working together adds strength to strength. Agencies that value autonomy over collaboration do so at the expense of those in need.[28] A more drastic form of consolidated resources is the merging of agencies. Merging is resisted because of the loss of autonomy and control. My agency has experienced two mergers in the past three years when we absorbed other nonprofits. The mergers resulted in lower overall program expenses for the community.

A good example of this is the merging of the Nexus Youth and Families agency with the YMCA in South King County, Washington. Nexus had a few residential houses that they used for many years to serve 2,500 young adults and teens annually. Their services included a drop-in Basic Center Program emergency shelter and a Transitional Living Program for long-term services. They were able to merge with the YMCA of Greater Seattle and "the partnership between the two organizations has resulted in a stronger core to serve the young people of South King County."[29]

As a result of this union, a brand new combined multi-functioning facility was built and dedicated to the community summer 2020, with a fifteen-bed transitional home and a twelve-bed emergency shelter. The Arcadia Young Adult Shelter also provides wrap-around services such as food, laundry, showering, hygiene items, case management, and life skills training. A new administrative facility has been built next door providing a

---

[28] Assertions based on my experience as CEO of Spokane Valley Partners.

[29] YMCA of Greater Seattle, "Arcadia Young Adult Shelter Grand Opening in Auburn," accessed November 8, 2020, https://www.seattleymca.org/blog/arcadia-young-adult-shelter-grand-opening-auburn.

medical clinic, behavioral health services, and referrals to other resources offsite. Teens

also have full access to the wide breadth of YMCA programs. Prior to the merger Nexus

operated for years in less than adequate facilities. After the merger they were able to

dedicate a new state of the art wrap-around services facility.[30]

An example of consolidating resources in order to lower access barriers is the

government-induced One Stop Career Centers (One Stops). The U. S. Department of

Labor funds communities to establish centers that offer a full array of training, education,

and employment programs in one location. One Stops eliminate the need for employment

seekers to go from place to place in order to find all the resources they need.

Consolidation is especially important for the disabled and for youth transitioning into the

workforce, who have transportation or mobility barriers.[31] Not only does this model

reduce barriers for clients, but it also increases the efficiency of staff resources. Because

job seekers are assembled into one location career center staff can more quickly

categorize the clients based upon the level of intervention needed. Those who can benefit

from self-help services can be directed to those systems and those needing more

individualized case management can be given more time. This consolidation of

resourcing makes the process much more efficient.[32]

---

[30] YMCA of Greater Seattle, promotional video "Arcadia Grand Opening," accessed November 8, 2020, https://www.seattleymca.org/blog/arcadia-young-adult-shelter-grand-opening-auburn.

[31] Pam Targett, et. al, "Customized Employment in the One Stop Career Centers," *Teaching Exceptional Children* 40, no. 2 (2007): 6-11.

[32] James P. Sampson, Jr. and Robert C. Reardon, "Maximizing Staff Resources in Meeting the Needs of Job Seekers in One-Stop Centers," *Journal of Employment Counseling* 35, no. 2 (1998): 53-54.

Integrated Student Support

Nowhere is it more important to consolidate resources than within schools. Early intervention is a key to preventing homelessness and in dampening the long-term effects upon the children who experience it.[33] "These teens are in desperate need of early intervention to prevent the downward spiral that characterizes acclimation to homelessness."[34] The schools are the likely environment to intervene before teens acquiesce to sustained homelessness. Boston College and the Center for Promise worked together to produce a policy brief for local and state leaders. Their recommended intervention is systems of integrated student support. Integrated student support is "a strategy for 'promoting students' academic success by securing and coordinating supports that target academic and nonacademic barriers to achievement' in order to improve student outcomes."[35]

Integrated student support positive outcomes include improved attendance, higher academic achievement, reduced high school dropout rates, and better social and emotional outcomes.[36] Organizations such as City Connects, Communities in Schools, and Building Assets, Reducing Risks (BARR) offer such models that can help provide this integration. Communities in Schools has a presence in Spokane, but a lack of funding

[33] Joan Wasser Gish, "Building Systems of Integrated Student Support: A Policy Brief for Local and State Leaders," *America's Promise Alliance* (2019): 2, accessed November 11, 2020, https://www.americaspromise.org/resource/building-systems-integrated-student-support.

[34] Laura R. Bronstein, "Intervening with Homeless Youths: Direct Practice without Blaming the Victim," *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal* 13, no. 2 (1996): 127.

[35] Joan Wasser Gish, "Building Systems."

[36] Joan Wasser Gish, "Building Systems."

has prevented a widespread engagement with many schools that have high populations of at-risk students.

Boston College and the Center for Promise research revealed that successful communities and programs use three strategies to improve students' access to holistic services such as after school and art programs, health and dental care, food, clothing, mentors, etc. These services can improve a child's development and engagement in school.[37] In order for these resources to be maximized for each student, communities take these three actions: resource alignment, resource concentration, and resource coordination. Resource alignment brings together stakeholders to align systems, offerings, and outcome goals. Resource concentration seeks to bring cross-sector resources into a common location. Resource coordination utilizes a case manager or site coordinator to help students and families connect to available services.[38]

To accomplish this, communities "articulate the vision" that the intent is to use "whole child" concepts to develop academic environments. Building widespread support for an integrated student approach is necessary. Stakeholders convene to leverage municipal structures that embrace the vision. Educational and municipal leaders work together to develop strategies and funding constructs that will support a community wide integrated student support system.[39]

---

[37] Joan Wasser Gish, "Building Systems."

[38] Joan Wasser Gish, "Building Systems."

[39] Joan Wasser Gish, "Building Systems."

Program Samples

Community agencies and municipalities have been taking action to mitigate teen

homelessness for several decades and innovative programming examples are abundant.

This section provides a few examples of programs from the Pacific Northwest that have

been providing opportunities for youth that can be replicated in Spokane County.

Downtown Spokane, Volunteers of America

It has already been argued previously that teen homelessness resources are

inadequate in the Spokane Valley. Valley youth seeking resources such as a drop-in

center, emergency shelter, street outreach social workers, transitional housing, mental

health treatment, job programs, etc., are expected to travel to downtown Spokane. For

reasons already explained, having outlying Valley teens travel back and forth from high

school to resources is burdensome and ineffective.[40] Even though access for Valley teens

to Spokane resources is burdensome, it is due diligence to review local resources prior to

looking at other parts of the state and country. Therefore, the following is a brief

summary of the primary services available for teens in the downtown Spokane corridor.

Volunteers of America (VOA) debuted their youth shelter in 1985, which is called

Crosswalk; it receives federal funding as a Basic Center Program. In addition to shelter

beds for teens, the center offers essentials such as food, clothing, showers, and hygiene.

Crosswalk also provides or connects teens to a breadth of services to transition them

---

[40] More fully explained in Chapter 4; Leslie Camden-Goold, CVSD Homeless Liaison, Students are most often required to use the STA bus system, which has limited service to all areas of the Spokane Valley. Cab services are sometimes used to provide transportation between school and shelters.

toward stability including family reconciliation services, employment assistance, life skills training, tutoring and drop-out prevention services, young mother classes, medical and mental health care, substance abuse treatment and prevention, transportation, and access to transitional housing programs.[41]

Crosswalk is a tremendous resource for the City of Spokane, but it is the only emergency shelter for runaway and homeless youth in Eastern Washington. In 2018, it served 520 teens and sheltered 225 with an overall expense budget of $769,303. Its GED high school equivalency program enrolled sixty-four students and graduated nine in 2018. Of the 225 teens who were sheltered, 71 exited into "stable and safe" housing solutions. Four of those teens went into program transitional housing, twelve went into permanent housing, and fifty-five were reconciled to their families.[42]

I shudder to think what would happen to all of these teens if Crosswalk did not provide these services. However, VOA has been attempting to relocate their shelter because of negative influences and crime that surround their inner-city location. As a national sex trafficking bulletin states, "Pimps and other exploiters may hang out near homeless youth shelters and group homes, aiming to recruit new victims."[43] VOA is seeking a safer neighborhood that still affords access to transportation and other

---

[41] Volunteers of America, "Crosswalk Youth Shelter," accessed November 15, 2020, https://www.voaspokane.org/crosswalk. I have also personally interviewed employees of Crosswalk and discussed the effectiveness and challenges of their Basic Center Program.

[42] Volunteers of America, "2017-2018 Annual Report," accessed November 15, 2020, https://www. voaspokane.org/our-financials. This was the latest annual report made public.

[43] U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth, and Families, Family and Youth Services Bureau, "Bought and Sold: Recognizing and Assisting Youth Victims of Domestic Sex Trafficking," revised May 2016, accessed November 15, 2020, https://rhyclearinghouse.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/Bought%20and%20Sold%2C %20May%202016%20Revision_0.pdf.

community resources while reducing the threat of crime and exploitation that is present directly outside the shelter doors.[44] The tension between access and safety is a consideration when choosing the location of youth shelters.

VOA's other runaway and homeless youth programs include Alexandria's House, a transitional home for pregnant or parenting teens and their babies, Youth Transitional Housing that provides housing and training for young adults who have aged out of Crosswalk Youth Shelter, Foster Youth Services that are independent living services for teens leaving foster care, and a college scholarship program for homeless youth.[45]

Alexandria's House serves six mothers and their babies at a time. In 2018, it served fifteen young women and eleven babies. They have an 87 percent success rate of exiting participants into stable and safe housing. The program costs for 2018 were $246,449.[46] The Youth Transitional Housing is a complementary program that assists youth who are exiting other programs to find safe and stable housing. Those services carried a program cost of $176,470 in 2018.[47] VOA's total program costs for the services they provide to runaway and homeless youth were about $1.2 million in 2018.[48] With all of this resource spent to address the problem, it sheltered one third of the 708

---

[44] This acknowledgement of the risks associated with the location of Crosswalk, and the effort to relocate is ongoing. I have been present at several discussions surrounding this topic at interagency network meetings and city council meetings. I also discussed this topic with a prior employee of Crosswalk, Lynn Marquez.

[45] Volunteers of America, "2017-2018 Annual Report," accessed November 15, 2020, https://www. voaspokane.org/our-financials.

[46] Volunteers of America, "2017-2018 Annual Report."

[47] Volunteers of America, "2017-2018 Annual Report."

[48] Volunteers of America, "2017-2018 Annual Report."

unaccompanied homeless teens in Spokane County in 2018.[49] Additional resources are needed.

Bend Oregon, J Bar J Youth Services, Cascade Youth and Family Center

Bend is a community of similar size to the Spokane Valley with a projected 2019 population of 100,430, compared to the Spokane Valley area at 121,444.[50] The J Bar J Youth Services organization was founded in 1968 as a residential treatment program for adjudicated teen boys. Out of that effort grew many other youth programs including the Cascade Youth and Family Center, launched in 1989, which serves as a federally funded Basic Center Program and Transitional Living Program.

In spring 2020, four students graduated from high school while also being residents of the LOFT transitional home, a program of the Cascade Youth and Family Center. Five high school graduates were teens whose first home was Grandma's House, a J Bar J teen maternity home. Seven teen boys graduated high school while residents of the J Bar J Boys Ranch, for youth exiting the juvenile justice system. In all, a total of sixteen seniors who were beneficiaries of J Bar J programs graduated high school and defeated the statistical odds.[51] One of the graduates, Annalea, who was one of the babies who started life at the teen maternity home, Grandma's House, earned a 4.0+ in high school with college level and AP classes. Her goal is to be a pediatrician and she began

---

[49] See Table 1, "Public Schools: Enrollement / Homelessness Comparison Among Pre-Kindergarten – 12th Grade," Chapter 1, page 8.

[50] U.S. Census Bureau, "Explore Data portal," accessed November 15, 2020, https://data.census.gov /cedsci/all?q=bend,%20oregon.

[51] J Bar J Youth Services, "Good News Letter: Summer 2020," accessed November 15, 2020, https://www.jbarj.org/events-and-news/newsletter-6-20/.

college at the same time that her mother, that teen mom, returned to complete a master's

degree.[52]

In 2020, sixteen high school seniors graduated and are moving on toward an

independent adult life because of the J Bar J programs for runaway and homeless youth

in Bend. These graduation numbers reflect the success of their youth programs. And yet,

it is worth noting that these programs have developed over decades of community

support and network building. Bend's Basic Center Program has been in operation for

thirty-one years.[53] The work of helping at-risk homeless teens is completed at a slow and

steady pace. Individual teens need motivated and healthy adults that are willing to

maintain relationship with them for months and even years in order to break the cycle of

poverty and effects of trauma. That work cannot begin without these basic program

building blocks in place within each community.

It starts with street outreach, which is a program that operates out of the Cascade

Youth and Family Center. Outreach staff and volunteers meet the teens out on the streets,

right where they live. Rapport is built and then assistance is offered once the youth

express a desire to be helped. Outreach workers access the individual situation of each

teen and offer resources based upon their unique needs. The goal is to direct them to the

drop-in center where they can access immediate resources like showers, food, laundry,

clothing, and a bed. Long-term connections can turn into permanent solutions, but the

---

[52] J Bar J Youth Services, "Good News Letter: Summer 2020," accessed November 15, 2020, https://www.jbarj.org/events-and-news/newsletter-6-20/.

[53] J Bar J Youth Services, "Cascade Youth and Family Center, Shelter and Programs for Runaway and Homeless Youth," accessed November 15, 2020, https://cascadeyouthandfamilycenter.org/.

initial relationship begins in the streets. The Cascade Center does not wait for the kids to come to them, they take their message to the teens right where they are.[54]

Twin Falls County, Idaho, Safe House

Until this point, all of the programs discussed have been founded and managed by nonprofit agencies in cooperation with their local municipalities. In Twin Falls that is a role that the County government has taken. The Twin Falls Basic Center Program is called Safe House.[55] The program itself is a registered nonprofit agency but its management is performed by county staff. Twin Falls is an extreme example of nonprofit and government cooperation and partnership. Since the physical assets lie within the City of Twin Falls, that creates an even broader governmental partnership. The social services program receives grants from the Federal Family and Youth Services Bureau, but is also funded by donations, local municipal revenues, and in-kind donations.[56]

The Safe House was founded in 1996 as a state licensed group home for youth ages eleven to seventeen who have been abused, neglected, abandoned, runaway, homeless, or disadvantaged through substance abuse. Some of the children come to the Safe House through referral from the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare as overflow from the foster care system and as a result of child abuse actions. The program provides case management, independent living skills training, anger management,

---

[54] J Bar J Youth Services, "Cascade Youth and Family Center, Street Outreach," accessed November 15, 2020, https://cascadeyouthandfamilycenter.org/our-programs/street-outreach/.

[55] Twin Falls County, Idaho, "Safe House," accessed November 15, 2020, https://twinfallscounty. org /safe_house/.

[56] Twin Falls County, Idaho, "Safe House."

counseling services, prevention services, trauma informed care, recreation services, nutrition and hygiene training, education services, employment services, substance abuse referrals, medical and dental care, and basic needs such as food, clothing, and transportation. In 2007 the need to accommodate more youth led to opening a second home. The county had received several houses from the sale of a local hospital. It selected one of them to remodel in preparation of expanding the Safe House program.[57]

By the end of 2008, the county had opened that second Safe House home, but by Spring of 2009 the old home sat vacant. The realistic needs of the community eventually rested with only needing one home that would house up to fourteen teens at a time.[58] However, Twin Falls identified a need for teens who were aging out of foster care system at age eighteen. In 2012, the community opened a transitional housing model through the Optimist Club of Twin Falls, called Optimist Youth House, specifically to house and provide transitional resources to aged out foster youth.[59] The Optimist shelter is the next step for teens who age out of the Twin Falls Safe House. The youth programs at Twin Falls are great examples of a small community working together across private and government sectors to identify the needs for homeless teens and establishing the resources necessary to ensure that the most vulnerable members of their community have a chance to succeed in life.

---

[57] Jared S. Hopkins, "Seeking Safety: County Tries to Find Second Home for Safe House Kids," *Times-News,* April 17, 2007, accessed November 15, 2020, https://magicvalley.com/news/local/seeking-safety/article_04ae42d8-1766-58b2-85fe-b2d1a037cc8b.html.

[58] Jared S. Hopkins, "Twin Falls County Has New Safe House but Old One Sits Vacant," *Times-News,* May 24, 2009, accessed November 15, 2020, https://magicvalley.com/news/local/twin-falls-county-has-new-safe-house-but-old-one/article_987e2211-ffaa-5339-aebd-c0ca6afadfc4.html.

[59] Twin Falls Optimist Youth House, "The Aged-Out Foster Care Youth Home the Community Built," accessed November 15, 2020, https://optimistyouthhouse.com/about-us/the-house/.

Youth Maternity Homes: Extra Motivation?

Several transitional living teen maternity home programs are described in this chapter and therefore will not be further developed in this segment. However, is there a positive side to pregnancy among homeless teens? If there is, perhaps youth maternity homes can leverage it as additional motivation to succeed in the program. A study of the Uncertainty Reduction Theory among homeless teen mothers living in eight temporary shelters found some hope.

> Leaving one's home behind and staying on the streets could not only be a problem, but also a solution for the difficult family life conditions previously mentioned. Among these conditions, the following stand out: lack of support, violence, maltreatment, and sexual abuse. Maternity develops through the need of support, and shelters offer some measure of support. The shelter/teen ratio is not free from conflicts, with the ambivalence between autonomy vs. dependence, loss of privacy, and fear of theft of children standing out as the most important elements. Maternity organizes and disciplines the young mother's life and also gives support to the uncertainty reduction theory.[60]

Their findings indicated that having to care for a child brought a sense of certainty and purpose, something for them to focus their actions around. Motherhood provided hope that with the proper support and encouragement the homeless teens could find the structure, motivation, and confidence to stabilize their lives.

This finding is supported by another study conducted in Hawaii regarding pregnancy ambivalence, "Homeless youth with pregnancy ambivalence describe that they might experience pregnancy as 'a good shock' and report that a pregnancy would 'help me in my focus.'"[61] This study was looking for pathways to increase contraceptive use

---

[60] Anne Lise Silveira Scappaticci and Sergio Luis Blay, "Homeless Teen Mothers: Social and Psychological Aspects." *Journal of Public Health* 17 (2009): 25.

[61] Olivia N. Kachingwe et al, "She Was There Through the Whole Process: Exploring How Homeless Youth Access and Select Birth Control." *Children and Youth Services Review* 101 (2019): 278.

among homeless teens and found that their apathy toward sexual health could be abated through relationship building. These unhealthy practices and lifestyles were abandoned through four phases: becoming acclimated to a support network, becoming close to peers and staff to build trust, addressing fear related to street living, and making a choice for their future.[62]

Homelessness is surrounded by uncertainty. Teens are subjected to this unsupported lifestyle, though it may appear to be by choice. Indicators of their homelessness are often family conflict, abandonment, neglect, violence, and abuse.[63] Though pregnancy for a homeless teen is not a sought outcome, it does present an opportunity. A Youth Maternity Home would provide the safe structure necessary to help a teen mom use what might seem to be misfortune as the motivation to accept the help they need.

Host Family Homes

Homeless teens are unique individuals, and a single housing solution would not fit every circumstance or individual. Some youth say they would prefer to be offered an apartment so they can maintain a more private and independent lifestyle.[64] A group home is suitable to some individuals and situations because of the presence of peers and wrap-around resources. However, some circumstances make a host family home environment more of a practical solution. Some teens, such as Lucy, embrace the opportunity to

---

[62] Olivia N. Kachingwe et al, "She Was There Through the Whole Process," 281-283.

[63] National Coalition for the Homeless, "Causes of Youth Homelessness," accessed June 11, 2020, http://nationalhomeless.org/issues/youth/.

[64] See stories of Jaja and Lucy in Chapter 4.

experience a healthy family environment; their own family was so dysfunctional that a live healthy family model provides the grounding they need to rebuild their life. When I was discussing housing options with a high school homeless student liaison social worker, she recommended a host family model similar to what is used for foreign exchange students for homeless students from dysfunctional families.[65] Another example is a pregnant teen or teen parent. A loving family presents a nurturing environment and a sense of belonging.[66] The following paragraphs are just a few examples of host family home programs currently operating in America.

The Arizona Youth Partnership organization uses host family homes as a Transitional Living Program solution for pregnant and mothering youth. They receive grant funding from FYSB to help sustain the program. Teens in the host homes are ages sixteen to twenty-one, had previously been homeless or near homeless, and are either pregnant or parenting. The program seeks host home caregivers that are safe and stable. A case manager is assigned to each family to support the teen-to-family relationship and provides seamless supportive services. Case managers make regular visits to the home and are actively engaged throughout the host period.[67] Each host family receives an initial $500 stipend and $200 per month to defray expenses of hosting a teen and child. The case manager arranges to provide many necessary items like baby furniture, car seats, and highchairs. This wrap-around support is crucial in reducing the fear and instill confidence

---

[65] Interview with Leslie Camden-Goold, social worker for Central Valley School District, September 18, 2020.

[66] Anne Lise Silveira Scappaticci and Sergio Luis Blay, "Homeless Teen Mothers," 25.

[67] Arizona Youth Partnership, "Starting Out Right for Homeless Parenting Youth Program," accessed November 7, 2020, https://azyp.org/program/hpyp/.

in compassionate families that might otherwise think they could not do it. However, even with these assurances, there is a challenge finding willing and capable host family homes. The Arizona Youth Partnership only added one new host family home the first half of 2020 for the seven Arizona counties they serve.[68]

Host family homes are an economical solution for many types of homeless teens and students. Many organizations have been successful in developing this transitional option. Homeless Youth Connections, another agency in Arizona, says their host family program is a "low-cost, community-engaging strategy to address the immediate need without incurring the high costs of operating an emergency shelter or transitional housing program."[69] According to them, host homes have a nearly 100 percent success rate for participating youth to graduate from high school. Their program is available for teens who are still in high school and provides case management support for the host and the teens. The primary goal of Homeless Youth Connections is to increase high school graduation rates.[70]

Safe Place for Youth is another nonprofit in Venice Beach, California. It has experienced extreme program growth over the nine years since its inception. They have wrap-around services from a drop-in center and one of their main transitional housing solutions is the host home program that they launched in 2017. They match volunteer host families with their homeless youth participants for stays of three to six months.

---

[68] Arizona Youth Partnership, "Newsletter Sept-Dec 2020," accessed November 8, 2020, https://azyp.org/oct-dec-2020-newsletter/.

[69] Homeless Youth Connection, "Host Family," accessed November 11, 2020, https://hycaz.org/programs/#hostfamily1.

[70] Homeless Youth Connection, "Programs," accessed November 11, 2020, https://hycaz.org/programs/#hostfamily1.

Youth ages eighteen to twenty-five are eligible to stay in these homes while they await

housing placement through traditional coordinated entry housing resource portals. Host

families receive up to $500 per month in financial support to offset costs incurred.[71]

Family and Children's Center in La Crosse, Wisconsin has developed a successful

host family program.[72] The La Crosse Tribune told the story of two students and their

host families. Each example was unique. Wes and Linda Suskey were empty nesters who

took in a sophomore in high school. Their experience was very hands-on, helping with

expenses and driving her to appointments and sporting events. Another couple, Rick and

Cyndi Kyte had a more hands-off experience. Their teen was very independent and

simply needed to come home to a stable environment each night. In both cases the host

family's primary satisfaction was knowing they were providing a safe and secure place

for their teens to call home while they continued to apply themselves to school. Cyndi

said, "When she came to us, we could tell she was really stressed out. To see that go

away and to see the relief on her face when she knew she had a peaceful, safe place was

priceless."[73]

Lighthouse Youth and Family Services in Cincinnati, Ohio has a host home

program specifically for youth who self-identify as LGBTQ. Teens who do not identify

as heterosexual often receive additional rejection from families and are one of the most

---

[71] Safe Place for Youth, "Host Home Program," accessed November 11, 2020, http://www. safeplaceforyouth.org/host_home_program.

[72] Family and Children's Center, La Crosse, Wisconsin, "Host Homes Program," accessed November 11, 2020, https:// www.fcconline.org/seeking-help/for-children/host-home-program/.

[73] Nathan Hansen, "Family and Children's Center Looking for More Families to open Up Their Homes," *La Crosse Tribune*, May 2, 2017, accessed November 11, 2020, https://lacrossetribune.com/news /local/family-children-s-center-looking-for-more-families-to-open/article_ 5b34944f-bfad-5e08-944b-c76e4ba343dd.html.

marginalized segments of society. As stated in Chapter 1, 20 percent to 40 percent of homeless teenagers identify as LGBTQ, compared to only 4 percent to 10 percent of nonhomeless youth.[74] That ratio speaks to how marginalized these youth are even compared to other homeless teens. This housing solution pairs volunteers who are willing to "open their heart and home" to provide housing, food, and mentorship for up to a year. Hosts receive training and one-on-one support from program staff throughout their host period.[75]

California passed a series of legislative actions beginning in 2001 (Assembly Bill 427), which invested toward ending homelessness among aged out foster youth and probation youth. A host family model was the backbone of this effort to provide a safe transition to adulthood with mentoring role models. The California State Transitional Housing Placement-Plus program produced a guide to help communities implement this host home system, which could be a template for Spokane to develop its collaborative network.[76] Though this program was established for emancipated foster youth the same concept could be implemented for homeless youth in general, especially for those still in high school.

The Colorado Rural Collaborative on Homeless Youth has the enormous task of helping to stabilize teens from predominantly rural areas where consolidated resource

---

[74] Chapter 1, pages 18-19.

[75] Lighthouse Youth and Family Service, "Host Home Program," accessed November 11, 2020, https://www.lys.org/services/homeless-and-runaway-youth/safe-and-supported/host-home-project/.

[76] The John Burton Foundation for Children without Homes, "A Guide to Implementing the Host Family model in THP-Plus: Providing Affordable Housing and Supportive Services to youth Formerly in the Foster Care System," accessed November 11, 2020, https://www.jbaforyouth.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/The-Host-Family-Model-in-THP-Plus.pdf. See appendix for a copy of the guide.

centers and housing solutions are difficult. As a result, the primary transitional housing method they use are host family homes. In this system, the host families are asked to provide safe placement for up to twenty-one days for youth twelve to eighteen years of age. A short transitional stay of twenty-one days places a greater burden on case managers to find more permanent solutions. However, it does meet the objectives of removing the teen from a potentially dangerous survival environment and establishing a healthy supportive relationship with an adult role model.[77]

The host family relationship does face some challenges. Similar to foster parents or adopted parents, when adolescents have experienced abuse, neglect, or rejection from their biological family, it may be difficult for them to form trusting relationships new parent figures, such as a host family.[78] The host family might also struggle to manage the uncertainty of how long they will be obligated to this service and what level of bond they should attempt to forge. If birth parents, grandparents, and siblings still have access to the teen this may provide a source of intimacy but may just as well be a source of conflict and stress.[79] Host families need support from case managers and program counselors to navigate these relational complexities. A unique leadership approach is required to span all of the levels of society affected by teen homelessness, including the highest levels of authority and that intimate space within a family.

---

[77]Anthony A. Mestas, "Pueblo Needs Host Families for Homeless Teens," *The Pueblo Chieftain*, November 17, 2019, accessed November 14, 2020, https://www.chieftain.com/news/20191117/pueblo-needs-host-families-for-homeless-teens.

[78] Lisa D. Pearce, et. al., "The Increasing Diversity and Complexity of Family Structures for Adolescents," *Journal of Research on Adolescence* 28, no. 3 (2018): 596.

[79] Lisa D. Pearce, et. al., "The Increasing Diversity and Complexity," 596.

Effective Leadership for Community

Leadership is one of the most discussed topics in society. People have both innate and learned traits that give place to a personal leadership style. However, in consideration of all of the options, the Adaptive Leadership approach aligns well with community wide challenges that have no clearly defined technical solution, such as homelessness. Heifetz, a skilled psychiatrist, was tasked by Harvard to explore difficult leadership questions with students.[80] After a decade the Adaptive Leadership approach immerged. It is unique because it does not rely solely upon the person in authority or position, but rather empowers all members of the group or community. The following is a brief description of the model, which will be followed with application in Chapter 6.

A large community problem, such as homelessness contains competing values, biases, and opinions. Heifetz recognizes, "Typically, a social system will honor some mix of values, and the competition within this mix largely explains why adaptive work so often involves conflict."[81] By definition, Adaptive Leadership is, "the practice of mobilizing people to tackle tough challenges and thrive."[82] Adaptive work is interested not only in solving the problem but also in a process that allows all members to thrive, similar in some regards to the Transformational Leadership approach that includes elevating followers.[83] Leaders are faced with three kinds of situations: challenges that are primarily technical, challenges that are primarily adaptive, and those that have both a

---

[80] Richard E. Neustadt, "Forward," In *Leadership Without Easy Answers,* by Ronald A. Heifetz (London: Belknap Press, 1994), x-xi.

[81] Ronald A. Heifetz, *Leadership Without Easy Answers,* (London: Belknap Press, 1994), 31.

[82] Peter G. Northouse, *Leadership: Theory and Practice,* 7th ed. (Los Angeles: SAGE, 2016), 258.

[83] Ronald A. Heifetz, *Leadership Without Easy Answers,* 21.

technical and an adaptive element. Technical challenges are clearly defined with known solutions. In contrast, adaptive challenges are difficult to identify and are woven into people's ways of thinking, their perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors. Adaptive challenges cannot be solved simply by a leader's authority but require all parties involved to participate in the process of changing those ways of thinking.[84]

Leaders can take specific actions to participate in this adaptive mobilization work. First, they can "get on the balcony," a metaphor meaning to step back from the chaos of the problem to the position of observer. Actions can include quiet reflection or forming a group of unofficial advisors. The leader moves back and forth between the role of observer and participant. Second, leaders identify the challenge, something the balcony helps with. Differentiate between problems that are technical and can be solved with expertise in known solutions and those that require mobilizing people to adapt their beliefs, attitudes, and values. Third, regulate distress. People like what is predictable, so change produces stress. Create a holding environment where the tension between change and security is held loosely and safely.[85] A leader does this by providing "direction, protection, orientation, conflict management, and productive norms."[86] The fourth action is to maintain disciplined attention. The leader encourages people to stay focused on the tough work, which may require giving space at times but then redirecting focus on the problem. Since adaptive work is not about the role of a leader-savior, the fifth action is to give the work back to the people. Again, adaptive work is about mobilizing people to not

---

[84] Peter G. Northouse, *Leadership: Theory and Practice,* 260-262.

[85] Peter G. Northouse, *Leadership: Theory and Practice,* 262-272.

[86] Peter G. Northouse, *Leadership: Theory and Practice,* 266.

only tackle the problem but to thrive. The fifth and last action is to protect leadership voices from below. It is difficult because it requires listening to voices outside of the "in-group" that leaders are used to listening to. Yet, it is exactly this collaborative group process that allows a community to tackle hard to define problems like teen homelessness.[87]

Conclusion

The building blocks for a successful community homeless youth resource model have been well established for the past several decades. The Federal Runaway and Homeless Youth Program outlines three basic components: A Basic Center Program, a Transitional Living Program, and a Street Outreach Program. These essential pieces offer an immediate drop-in shelter program, and long-term independence building shelter program, and a human bridge to connect to vulnerable teens and direct them to resources. One of the major barriers to gaining health and stability for these youth is the lack of consolidated resources in some communities; it creates an access challenge. Integrating community resources for students into the school sector has become a key to consolidating social services for homeless students. The community samples that were explored in this chapter cast evidence of the possibility of creating a realistic and achievable resource model for the Spokane Valley.

---

[87] Peter G. Northouse, *Leadership: Theory and Practice,* 257-279.

CHAPTER 6:

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

Enclosing the field within bounds
sets it apart from the boundless
of which it was, and is, a part,
and places it within care.
The bounds of the field bind
the mind to it. A bride
adorned, the field now wears
the green veil of a season's
abounding. Open the gate!
Open it wide, that time
and hunger may come in.
 —Wendell Berry, *This Day: Sabbath Poems Collected and New, 1979-2013*

Farmer-poet Wendell Berry captures the essence of wholeness within the

nurturing fences of organized care. Homeless teens find themselves in a boundless wild

space filled with savage and survival. An effective change model for these precious

traumatized souls will open a door for them to walk into an enclosed field, a safe

environment nurtured by compassionate human relationship. That basic overarching

premise is not complicated. However, convincing a community to move its resources into

a holistic biodynamic field is a challenge that will require the right kind of leadership.

In this final chapter, I am proposing a structural model and values for our

community as a whole to consider. It will require leaders to embrace change and work

together toward realistic solutions for at-risk youth. The conclusions and

recommendations in this section come from two years of research and immersion into the

challenge of teen homelessness and their detachment from family. I have personalized

this research to the point of inviting a homeless teen into my home to share life with our

family. Lucy has not only become an icon and a personal connection to the subject matter, but she has entered into a committed relationship with caring adults.

Summary of the Problem

In the 2018-2019 school year there were 691 homeless students in Spokane Valley schools, of which 168 were unaccompanied homeless youth, detached from their family. That means one out of every 34 Valley students was homeless and one out of every 140 students was homeless and alone trying to survive.[1] Broaden the lens; there were 708 unaccompanied homeless youth in Spokane County, 5,786 in Washington State, and 129,370 in the U.S.[2] Homeless detached teens do not have the family safety net to help support and guide that their non-homeless peers have. The unaccompanied factor alone is a barrier to high school graduation and success in general. Why do they become detached and homeless? Many determinants exist, but common reasons include poverty, trauma, domestic violence, physical and sexual abuse, family mental health issues, substance abuse, deviant and aggressive behavior, a marginalized lifestyle such as LGBTQ, abandonment and rejection, failure within the Foster Care system, and lack of affordable housing.[3]

---

[1] See Table 1, in Chapter 1, page 8.

[2] See Chapter 1, U.S. student data obtained from U.S. Dept. of Education SY 2017-2018. All WA State student data obtained from OSPI, School Year 2018-2019, accessed May 21, 2020, https://www2. ed.gov/rschstat/landing. jhtml?src=pn; https:// www.k12.wa.us/data-reporting/data-portal.

[3] National Coalition for the Homeless, "Causes of Youth Homelessness," accessed June 11, 2020, http://nationalhomeless.org/issues/youth/.

Without intervention, homeless detached teens will typically encounter many negative life experiences. Educational success is less likely when students are homeless.[4] And education level clearly correlates to future income potential.[5] Therefore, adults that were homeless as teens are more likely to earn less and experience poverty and its effects. Research shows that homeless teens are more likely to become involved in criminal activity such as theft, drug crimes, assault, trespassing, and prostitution.[6] Criminal activity might be symptomatic of the traumatic consequences of life without family and home. Homeless teens are more susceptible to sexual exploitation, sex trafficking, become pregnant or father children at a higher rate than non-homeless peers, have high rates of physical and mental poor health, suicide ideation and attempts, and experience extremely high rates of victimization related trauma and its associated PTSD effects.[7]

To reduce the effects of these consequences a community identifies youth that are at risk because of homelessness and intervene as early as possible. Unfortunately, the Spokane Valley lacks a collaborative system designed to mitigate the problem. Resources in Spokane Valley are sparse, requiring that youth travel to Spokane to find assistance

---

[4] National Center for Homeless Education, "McKinney-Vento Law into Practice Brief Series: Supporting the Education of Unaccompanied Students Experiencing Homelessness," August 2017, accessed May 12, 2020, https://nche.ed.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/youth.pdf.

[5] John W. Fantuzzo, Whitney A. LeBoeuf, and Heather L. Rouse, "An Investigation of the Relations Between School Concentrations of Student Risk Factors and Student Educational Well-Being," *Educational Researcher* 43, no. 1 (2014): 34.

[6] Xiaojin Chin, Lisa Thrane, Les B. Whitbeck, and Kurt Johnson, "Mental Disorders, Comorbidity, and Postrunaway Arrests Among Homeless and Runaway Adolescents," *Journal of Research on Adolescence* 16, no. 3 (2006): 380; Les B. Whitbeck, Danny R. Hoyt, and Kevin A. Ackley, "Abusive Family Backgrounds and Later Victimization Among Runaway and Homeless Adolescents," *Journal of Research on Adolescence* 7, no. 4 (October 1, 1997): 378.

[7] Kevin Ryan and Tina Kelley, *Almost Home: Helping Kids Move from Homelessness to Hope* (Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, 2012), 4.

programs.[8] Spokane Valley does not have a Street Outreach Program, Basic Center

Program, or Transitional Living Programs. Some scattered resources are present for food,

clothing, mentoring, and counseling, but there is not a consolidation of resources.

Students needing shelter are forced to travel to Spokane at night and then back to the

Spokane Valley for school.[9]

Recommendations for the Community of Spokane Valley

This research project was intended to draw together the facts of teen homelessness

so that the Spokane Valley community could make an informed decision about a course

of action. Other communities are using several components to build their framework of

support for homeless teens. The first step for the Spokane Valley is to establish a teen

homelessness task force with full participation from the City of Spokane Valley City

Council. The task force group would incorporate city leaders and planners in addition to

members from all pertinent sectors, education, social services, mental health, business,

finance, and law enforcement. The role of the task force is to review the research on teen

homelessness and propose a long-term strategy. I recommend the following proven

support structures be considered:

- Basic Center Program (BCP)
- Street Outreach Program (SOP)
- Transitional Living Programs (TLP)
- Host Home Program
- Integrated Student Support in partnership with Communities In Schools

---

[8] See spreadsheet of services in Appendix A.

[9] Both Jaja and Lucy (Chapter 4) told me that a lack of consolidated resources in Spokane Valley forced them to relocate to the downtown Spokane corridore. Lucy specifically told me that this led to her most dangerous trauma over the past year.

Basic Center Program

A logical beginning would be to establish a Basic Center Program that meets the criteria outlined in Chapter 5 of this dissertation.[10] Spokane County is already exploring the establishment of a youth shelter for older teens and young adults. These two pursuits might be combined to establish a shelter that would accommodate teens and young adults. Additionally, in October 2019, the Central Valley School District dedicated a vacant structure, the Keystone Elementary School building, to become a Family Engagement Center in partnership with Boys and Girls Club of Spokane County.[11] The task force might explore whether that facility has the capacity to also serve as the initial BCP. The main anchor tenant is the Boys and Girls Club, but the district's goal was to establish wrap-around social services for youth. If that building does not have enough space, the three main Valley school districts could determine if there is another similar structure available. Considering that the City of Spokane Valley has no social services department, it is most likely that an experienced local nonprofit would need to take a leadership role to oversee the BCP, with support from other community sectors.

---

[10] U.S. Family and Youth Services Bureau, "Basic Center Program Fact Sheet," accessed November 6, 2020, https://www.acf.hhs.gov/fysb/resource/bcp-fact-sheet; See Chapter 5, page 127.

[11] Central Valley School District News Bulletin, October 18, 2019, "CVSD Opening a Family Engagement Center: Boys and Girls Club Partners with CVSD to Provide Services to Central Valley Families," accessed November 21, 2020, https://www.cvsd.org/apps/news/article/1109007.

Street Outreach Program

A Street Outreach Program[12] could operate out of this Basic Center to meet teens

in the streets, establish rapport, and direct them toward the BCP and other resources. The

goal of street outreach is to establish trusting relationships between the outreach staff and

the teens. Many teens ran away from home or became homeless because they lost caring

connections to adults.[13] The outreach workers will direct youth away from dangerous

living conditions toward shelters and programs. The Spokane Valley has had outreach

workers in the past supplied by organizations that were located outside of the Valley.[14]

Those partners could be approached to reestablish the positions until a full program could

be launched by the agency overseeing the BCP. Outreach workers could be a

combination of paid staff and trained volunteers.

Transitional Living Program / Host Home Program

Brick and mortar transitional living program structures could be a long-term

objective.[15] The task force would have to determine the highest needs among teens to

prioritize which housing programs would be initiated first. The least expensive but most

expansive transitional living arrangement is to establish a network of Host Family

---

[12] U.S. Family and Youth Services Bureau, "Fact Sheet: Street Outreach Program," accessed November 5, 2020, https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/fysb/sop_fact_sheet_september_2020 pdf.pdf.

[13] U.S. Family and Youth Services Bureau, "Street Outreach Program Fact Sheet," accessed November 1, 2020, https://www.acf.hhs.gov/fysb/resource/sop-fact-sheet.

[14] I have worked with both case managers that conducted street outreach in the Spokane Valley. They each worked for agencies located in the City of Spokane and were authorized to schedule 1-2 days per week in Spokane Valley. Both agencies withdrew their Valley outreach for budgetary reasons.

[15] U.S. Family and Youth Services Bureau, "Transitional Living Program Fact Sheet," accessed November 6, 2020, https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/fysb/tlp_fact_sheet_ september_2020pdf.

Homes.[16] A host home program is stronger when supported by case managers and adequate training to assist families who may otherwise be ill-equipped to respond to the unique needs of a trauma victim.[17] The program clearly defines the objectives and identifies the responsibilities of all parties to ensure that the host can manage their expectation of outcomes.

Ultimately, a variety of housing options for extended transitional living would allow program managers to pair the solution with the unique needs of the individual teen. Besides host family homes, options could include private leased apartments with case manager support, group homes with an adult live in mentor, or dormitory style housing similar to a university. Partners could be engaged to donate houses that can be renovated to accommodate the needs of a transitional living home. Transitional living program development could also consider the need for teen maternity homes.[18]

Integrated Student Support, Communities in Schools

One of our main objectives is to stabilize the lives of these homeless teens so they can first succeed in school and ultimately succeed in life. The list of barriers to educational success faced by these youth seem to be insurmountable.[19] Educators are

---

[16] Homeless Youth Connection, "Host Family," accessed November 11, 2020, https://hycaz.org/programs/#hostfamily1.

[17] When we decided to host Lucy, our family felt ill-equipped to deal with a traumatized teenager. Fortunately, my wife and I are well connected to the social services sector and understand how to navigate support systems. Families that are recruited for this service must have an extensive support system that is supplied by the program in order to be successful.

[18] U.S. Family and Youth Services Bureau, "Maternity Group Home Program Fact Sheet," accessed November 5, 2020, https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/fysb/mgh_ fact_sheet_ september_2020.pdf.

[19] See Chapter 1, page 26.

hired to teach and administrate learning, but they are forced to respond to these underlying barriers for students who are most disadvantaged. The Spokane region is fortunate to have an active presence of the organization Communities in Schools (CIS). [20]

CIS is one of the recommended programs that have been created to facilitate Integrated Student Support (ISS). The ISS model places a case manager or site coordinator into the school. That site coordinator's role is to connect students and educators to the resources available in the community that can mitigate these barriers to learning. CIS currently has site coordinators in just a few schools in the Spokane Valley.[21] This support system has proven results and is a cost saving solution.[22] I recommend the Spokane Valley community help CIS fund a position at every high school and middle school in the Spokane Valley. These representatives will build trusting relationships with the homeless students and partner with all other programs that the task force recommends being built.

Leading for Change: Adaptive Leadership

As mentioned in Chapter 5, adaptive work is "the practice of mobilizing people to tackle tough challenges and thrive."[23] The problem of teen homelessness requires that

---

[20] Communities In Schools, "National Model," accessed November 20, 2020, https://spokane.ciswa.org/what-we-do/national-model/.

[21] I have worked with many of the site coordinators and they are well trained and dedicated to both building community connections and developing helpful relationships with students.

[22] ICF International, "Communities In Schools National Evaluation Five Year Executive Summary," October 2010, accessed November 20, 2020, https://spokane.ciswa.org/what-we-do/publications/; EMSI, "The Economic Impact of Communities In Schools," May 2012, accessed November 20, 2020, https://spokane.ciswa.org/what-we-do/publications/.

[23] Peter G. Northouse, *Leadership: Theory and Practice,* 258.

community leaders and the teens, work together within the context of a changing set of circumstances and within an environment that contains a mix of values. Some of the problems associated with teen homelessness are technical in nature and the solutions are already established. How to build a Basic Center Program is well defined and examples exist that can be replicated. The real challenge is bringing together sectors involved to build a cohesive plan that the entire community can participate with and thrive in. Coherency is especially challenging when people have so many differing opinions and values regarding the topic of homelessness.

The first goal for leaders that will begin the process for the Spokane Valley is to stand on the balcony and observe the pulse of the community. The task force that I recommended could be a way to do this. The group would be comprised of an appropriate array of sectors to include youth voices that can help identify barriers and resistance postures. My interviews with homeless teens identified that even in institutions that are "read in" to the solution, like schools, there are biased employees that are themselves the problem. I believe a proper constructed exploratory task force can follow the actions of adaptive leadership and create a loosely held space for change. It is crucial that all voices are present at the table.

Changing the culture surrounding homelessness requires a communal acceptance of the idea that the relational aspect of care is just as important or perhaps more important than the resources we are providing. Morse said it well, "Leadership among Christians involves both a physical and a group dynamic: it has a physical dynamic because people instinctively use their bodies to influence others by taking up space in social settings. It has a group dynamic because each person's presence and role contribute to influencing

the group toward spiritual, cognitive and relational wholeness."[24] There is much to unpack in this. If the goal for homeless teens really is wholeness, then that will require intentional space that is both physical and group. The teens themselves could have leadership influence over the outcome, within that group relational context. Helping entities can make room for them at the table. Lucy has had difficulty thinking that she can obtain a goal or elevate from the lowest poverty existence to an independent healthy lifestyle.[25] Adults that become involved with traumatized teens can use this adaptive leadership method to not just solve the obvious housing problem, but also to facilitate solutions that allow them to thrive.

Recommendations for Further Research and Development

This research had three main objectives: to understand the scope of the problem, to discover current resources available in the Spokane Valley, and to determine a proven model for solutions that can be implemented. Therefore, the study covered a broad survey of topics related to solving this local teen homelessness problem. As such, some aspects of the research revealed opportunity to conduct a narrower study and thus, a few recommendations are offered.

---

[24] MaryKate Morse, *Making Room for Leadership: Power, Space and Influence* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2008), 32.

[25] Lucy told me that she has never been exposed to people like my family. When I asked her what the "it" factor was that made us different, she said, "You all have goals and you actually achieve them. My goals have always just been a fantasy in my mind. My family has never achieved anything." Discussion with Lucy on November 12, 2020.

First, although interviews conducted offered variety, only a small sampling of advocates and teens were interviewed. A larger study group would be beneficial to form conclusions regarding causes and solutions to teen homelessness in Spokane Valley. I suggest a thorough entrance and exit interview with each teen that enters extensive service components of the new Spokane Valley model, such as transitional living programs and host home programs. Entrance and exit interviews could include Beck Inventory tests, or something similar, to determine a scale of improvement or change with disorders such as depression and anxiety.[26]

Second, while conducting the research, the commonality and seriousness of mental illness coupled with substance abuse among homeless teens became apparent. I recommend additional consideration be given to determine the level of mental health screening and intervention required for teens prior to them entering housing programs. Levels of intervention for mental illness and substance abuse can be determined by mental health practitioners and an interagency referral process can be established for any new programs. Further research is needed to determine the capacities of the current mental health and substance abuse treatment programs in Spokane Valley and whether additional programs will be required.

Third, it is important to note that finding solutions that prevent teens from becoming homeless and detached from their families is a complex societal problem, one that is not addressed in this dissertation. It would include responding to the determinants

---

[26] American Psychological Association, "Beck Depression Inventory (BDI)," accessed November 10, 2020, https://www.apa.org/pi/about/publications/caregivers/practice-settings/assessment/tools/beck-depression; National Child Traumatic Stress Network, "Beck Anxiety Inventory," accessed November 10, 2020, https://www.nctsn.org/measures/beck-anxiety-inventory.

of teen homelessness and changes in the family unit in America that is interwoven throughout the problem.[27]

Final Conclusion

My desire is that policy makers, mayors, city council members, nonprofit executives, pastors, principals, superintendents, business owners, clinicians, doctors, attorneys, counselors, teachers, moms, dads, and teens will be encouraged to embrace actions that will produce transformational changes.[28] The Spokane Valley has deflected the issue of homelessness to be dealt with by the larger City of Spokane municipality. The community has had an attitude of "not in our backyard" whenever advocates began to rise up and mention homeless shelters.[29] For many years, the community has seemed satisfied to have our homeless students sheltered in another city and bused back into the Valley each day to attend school.

However, the tide is changing and my more recent interactions with Valley leaders indicate that there is a growing interest in tackling this problem. The timing is good for this extensive research and recommendation to be well-received. It will require a

---

[27] See "Determinants" section in Chapter 1.

[28] My time with leaders from every sector of the community encourages me that change can be adopted.

[29] I have witnessed city council members and other leaders express this value that the Spokane Valley does not want to house the homeless in any visible way. Homeless domestic violence victims or destitute moms with children have been tolerated as long as they were sheltered inconspicuously. The City of Spokane Valley has deferred millions of federal dollars back to the City of Spokane and Spokane County, funding that is available annually to address the issue of homelessness. By giving their homelessness dollars to other municipalities it relieved the City of Spokane Valley from being responsible to solve the problem in their own neighborhoods. I have attended many city council meetings when legal recommendations have been made to provide adequate beds for the homeless. Without adequate homeless shelter resources, the city cannot legally enforce "no camping" ordinances in their public parks and lands. Therefore, pressure is mounting for the City of Spokane Valley to take actions and this pressure coincides with a shift in leadership within the council that is also more compassionate toward the poor.

holistic campaign to educate and persuade within all sectors. In my opinion, one of the most important sectors to gain alliance with is the Church. Pastors and church leaders need to listen to the problem and take part in the solution. It is my hope that the Spokane Valley will implement an effective change model that will not only see results in their schools and with their teens but will be a template for other communities that suffer from the same barriers.

The spirit of the New Testament is love. It is to love God, to love your neighbor as yourself, and to express a pure religion that looks like helping orphans and widows in their affliction.[30] In a very personal way, my family and I have experienced this authentic and meaningful Christianity by yielding to the spirit of compassion. We brought Lucy into our home. It has not been easy. In fact, it has been one of the most difficult and challenging experiences of our lives. We have looked into the eyes of complex PTSD. We have held an eighteen-year-old at 2:00AM who is trembling because she is convinced someone is trying to drag her out of her bed to rape and kill her. We have encouraged her through extreme depression and tried to instill hope and vision in the midst of confusion and fear.

We have arranged for psychiatric counseling, mental health prescriptions, and enrollment back into high school after a two-year absence. We have questioned her motives, listened to her lies, and felt her manipulation. Yet, our hearts have been pricked by the hope that we see in her eyes and hear in her voice when she catches a glimpse of what could be. After only two months of loving relationship within our home, Lucy has made tremendous progress. She is sleeping through the night, is excited about finishing

---

[30] Matthew 22:39, Mark 12:30-31, Luke 10:27, James 1:26.

school, wants to learn to drive, and I even heard her mention for the first time wanting to consider college. That was unthinkable just two months ago.

Together with Lucy we have done all of this without any coordinated system in place to support us. We were led to become a host family before anyone told us how it would go or what we should expect. We have been able to do it without much support. Imagine how much better it could be if a whole community worked together to create a model of relational wrap around resources to help these young lives flourish. Helping the most vulnerable will not only change their life, but it will also change yours, just like Lucy has changed mine.

Who is your Lucy?

APPENDIX A:

Spokane Area Services

Agency Name	Zip Code or Region	Serve in the Valley	Ages Served	Boys Served	Girls Served	Moms w. Children Only	Emergency Shelter	Length of Stay	Transitional Housing	Mental Health	Medical Care	Substance Abuse
Next Generation Zone	99201		16-21	X	X							
Boys and Girls Clubs (opens 2021)	99207	X	All	X	X							
S. Perry Learning Center	99202		All	X	X							
Northeast Youth Center	99217		All	X	X							
Southwest Community Center	99201		Youth	X	X							
West Central Community Center	99205		All	X	X							
The Drop Inn (Shadle Park Presbyterian)	99205		All	X	X							
HRC Ministries	99214	X	All	X	X		X		X			
Youth Reach (Multi Org Collaboration)	County			X	X							
YFA Connections: Hope Ctr/Crisis Res. Ctr.	County		All	X	X		X		X			
YMCA	County		Youth	X	X							
YWCA	County		Youth	X	X							
WA Dept of Children, Youth & Families	County	X	All	X	X					X	X	
Young Lives	County	X	Teens			X						
Teen Runaway Hotlines	County	X	Youth	X	X							
TeamChild	County		12-19									
Summer Meal Programs	County	X	5-19									
Spokane Angels	99207	X	0-18	X	X							
Students Mastering Important Life Skills	99223		5-19									
Communities in Schools	County	X	19-May	X	X							
Safe Passage- Domestic Violence	CDA		All	X	X					X		
Partners w Families & Children	99201		Children	X	X					X		X
Odyssey Youth Project- for LGBTQ+	99202		13-18	X	X							
Native Project	99201		Child/Uth							X		
Lutheran Community Services	County	X								X		X
Kinderhaven	Sandpt		19-Oct		X		X		X			
Indian Child Welfare/Family Services	99207		All	X	X		X					
Homeless Educ. Liaisons	County	X	Sch. Age	X	X							
Healing Lodge of 7 Nations (Native)	99212	X	Youth	X	X				X			X
GraceSon Housing Foundation	99019	X	13-18		X	X			X			
Cup of Cool Water	99201		Youth	X	X							
Daybreak Youth Services	99202		12-18	X	X				X			X
Excelsior	99208		All	X	X				X	X	X	
Anchor House	CDA		13-18	X					X			X
Aston-Bleck Apartments	99202		18-21		X	X			X			
Crosswalk Teen Shelter	99201			X	X		X		X	X	X	
2nd Harvest, Bites to Go program	County	X	5-18	X	X							
Spokane Valley Partners	County	X	All	X	X							
Big Brothers Big Sisters	County	X	5-18	X	X							
Frontier Behavioral Health	County	X	All	X	X					X		
Children's Home Society	County	X	All	X	X					X		
Children's Village Inc.	CDA								X			

Spokane Are Services, Continued

Agency Name	Fam/Reconcil.	Legal Counseling	Groceries/Meals	Clothing	Diapers	School Supplies	Trans/Bus Pass	Showers	Laundry	Job Training	Life Skills Training	Parenting Trng	Recreational	HS/GED Program	Tutoring	Coll. Scholarship	Mentoring	Connect to Resource
Next Generation Zone										X	X						X	X
Boys and Girls Clubs (opens 2021)													X		X			
S. Perry Learning Center															X			
Northeast Youth Center													X		X		X	
Southwest Community Center													X		X		X	
West Central Community Center													X		X		X	X
The Drop Inn (Shadle Park Presbyterian)			X										X		X			
HRC Ministries			X	X	X		X			X	X						X	X
Youth Reach (Multi Org Collaboration)																	X	X
YFA Connections: Hope Ctr/Crisis Res. Ctr.	X									X	X		X				X	X
YMCA										X	X	X	X		X		X	X
YWCA										X	X	X	X		X		X	X
WA Dept of Children, Youth & Families	X									X	X	X				X		X
Young Lives										X	X						X	X
Teen Runaway Hotlines																		X
TeamChild		X															X	X
Summer Meal Programs	X																	
Spokane Angels												X					X	
Students Mastering Important Life Skills											X	X						
Communities in Schools			X	X	X	X	X											X
Safe Passage- Domestic Violence												X						X
Partners w Families & Children																		
Odyssey Youth Project- for LGBTQ+													X				X	X
Native Project													X					X
Lutheran Community Services	X																	X
Kinderhaven																		
Indian Child Welfare/Family Services	X											X						
Homeless Educ. Liaisons														X	X		X	X
Healing Lodge of 7 Nations (Native)																		
GraceSon Housing Foundation										X	X	X		X	X		X	
Cup of Cool Water			X	X				X		X			X	X			X	
Daybreak Youth Services																		
Excelsior												X	X	X	X			X
Anchor House										X	X						X	
Aston-Bleck Apartments																		
Crosswalk Teen Shelter							X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X
2nd Harvest, Bites to Go program			X															
Spokane Valley Partners			X	X	X	X												X
Big Brothers Big Sisters																	X	
Frontier Behavioral Health																		
Children's Home Society	X											X						
Children's Village Inc.																		

APPENDIX B:

Teen Homelessness Questionnaire—For Advocates
A Doctoral Research Project by Calvin B. Coblentz
George Fox University, Portland Seminary

Research Project Objectives

First, I want to thank you for caring about the marginalized teen who is experiencing a distressed life that includes homelessness. I have decided to contribute my efforts in doctoral pursuit to the fight against this plight in our community and I thank you in advance for helping these efforts. This questionnaire is just one step of many toward finding reasonable solutions.

Information gathered through this questionnaire will be part of the data used toward a written doctoral dissertation project. The ultimate goal of this dissertation research is to determine community-based solutions for teen homelessness. Proper solutions begin with a full understanding of the problem; the problem is what we seek to better understand with this questionnaire.

Instructions for Questionnaire

Please, answer the questions as completely and thoughtfully as possible, providing examples when necessary. You may include descriptions of teens but please do not include names.

Consider your answers to the questions within the context of your personal experiences interacting with homeless teens.

Think about conversations that you have had and observations that you have made, which might point to causes.

Think about homeless teens who have experienced failures in school or in life and how the instability of homelessness might have contributed.

Think about the barriers that you face as an advocate, the limitations that you experience when trying to help homeless teens.

Confidentiality Statement

All information gathered from both this questionnaire and any follow-up conversations will be recorded for the purpose of research. However, the personal or corporate identities of participants or teen examples discussed will never be disclosed in any product developed as the result of this research. The overall project will include participation from every stakeholder position, including school officials, counselors, teachers, case managers, police officers, medical professionals, politicians, church leaders, family members, homeless teens, their friends, and anyone else who might provide prospective and insight. However, this particular questionnaire is limited to adults who are homeless teen advocates.

Questionnaire (It may be helpful to read all the questions prior to beginning)

What types of interactions have you had with homeless teens? Mark "**X**" to all that apply:

☐	I have talked with or know homeless teens
☐	I have taught homeless students or provided administrative support
☐	I have helped homeless teens obtain resources
☐	I have provided medical or psychological treatment for homeless teens
☐	Other

Consider conversations and experiences you have had surrounding the problem of teen homelessness to answer the following questions.

What do you think are the most common reasons that they become homeless?

What support network(s) do they use; who do they rely upon?

What do you think are the biggest challenges they face?

What do you think are their greatest fears? What are their deepest wishes?

What are your deepest disappointments as you advocate for them?

What resources do they need most that are not available in our community?

What is our greatest sin as a community, our greatest failure with these teens?

```



```

Do you identify any common family conditions or factors among homeless teens?

```



```

Are there any other comments you would like to make regarding the problem of homelessness among teenagers in Spokane or the Spokane Valley?

```



```

Questionnaire: Teen Homelessness in Spokane Valley—For Youth
A Doctoral Research Project by Calvin B. Coblentz
George Fox University, Portland Seminary

To School Staff Helping Administer Questionnaire to Teens:

First, I want to thank you for caring about your students and how to help them succeed in life. I have decided to contribute my efforts in doctoral pursuit to evaluate what the community offers to teens in the Spokane Valley who find themselves without a permanent place to live. The ultimate goal of this research is to determine community-based solutions for teen homelessness. Proper solutions begin with a full understanding of the problems and challenges they face, which is the objective of this questionnaire.

Information gathered through this questionnaire will be part of the data used toward a written doctoral dissertation project. Spokane Valley Partners will also use this research to establish smart programming for our teens. Thank you for helping!

Instructions for the Student

Please, answer the questions as completely and thoughtfully as possible, providing examples when necessary. You may include descriptions of situations but please do not include names. We will not be asking for your name either, so the information you provide cannot get you into any trouble.

Consider your answers to the questions within the context of your own personal experiences and the experiences of your friends who have experienced homelessness.

Our aim is to gather the real story from you and others like you in order to understand how we as a community can help you make it in life. We care about you and we want the very best for you. It's important that we understand the challenges you face so that we can build the best system of support possible. Please, tell us how we can help do that.

Confidentiality Statement

All information gathered from both this questionnaire and any follow-up conversations will be compiled for the purpose of research. However, the identities of participants or teen examples discussed will never be disclosed in any product developed as the result of this research. The overall project will include participation from every stakeholder position, including school officials, counselors, teachers, case managers, police officers, medical professionals, politicians, church leaders, family members, homeless teens, their friends, and anyone else who might provide prospective and insight.

QUESTIONNAIRE
(It may be helpful to read all the questions prior to beginning)

<u>How old are you</u>? [ ]

<u>How would you describe your home situation, where you sleep and keep your possession</u>s?

Check all that apply   (By family we mean your parent(s), guardian, or other relative)

[ ] I have a permanent place to live and keep my things with my family.

[ ] I have a permanent place to live and keep my things but it's not with a family member.

[ ] I have a permanent place to live with family, but sometimes live with friends.

[ ] I am currently in foster care or I have been in foster care at some point in my life.

[ ] I consider myself to be "on my own" and I no longer live with my family or foster family.

[ ] I don't have a permanent home, but I usually find places to live and keep my things.

[ ] I don't have a permanent home, I sometimes worry where I'll stay or keep my things.

[ ] I've spent at least one night at a shelter in the past year. If so, how many nights?

[ ] I've spent at least one night outside or in a car in the past year.   If so, how many nights?

If you've found yourself without a permanent place to stay and keep your things, why did that happen?

[   ]

When you found yourself without a permanent place to stay, who helped you, who did you rely upon?

[   ]

What do you think are the biggest challenges you face or what might keep you from succeeding?

[   ]

What are your greatest fears or disappointments?

[   ]

What are your greatest hopes and dreams?

<div style="border:1px solid black; height:60px;"></div>

What resources do you need most that are not available in our community?

<div style="border:1px solid black; height:60px;"></div>

What do you think is the greatest failure in our community for helping people like you?

<div style="border:1px solid black; height:60px;"></div>

Is there anything else you would like to share to help us understand how the community can help you?

<div style="border:1px solid black; height:60px;"></div>

Questionnaire: Central Valley School District (CVSD)
Leslie Camden-Goold, Social Worker & Homeless Student Liaison

A questionnaire consisting of these three questions was administered to students and to available parents in CVSD.

Question 1: What is something you would like schools to know about being in a homeless situation?

Question 2: How are (or did) the schools support you through your homeless situation?

Question 3: What could schools do to support students and families better when they are experiencing homelessness?

APPENDIX C: EPILOGUE

My vision forward is to use this dissertation as a catalyst for change in my region. Progress toward that end has already been made to begin the review and implementation of the recommendations from this research. Discussions have begun regarding the establishment of a regional task force to address teen homelessness in eastern Spokane County. I have spoken with officials from the City of Spokane and the City of Spokane Valley. I have also spoken with local pastors and educators. Meetings are scheduled for January 2021 to begin more concrete steps. To help with these discussions, I will be condensing this dissertation into a 10-15-page summary and will present that document to anyone interested in pursuing this change. My goal is to have the summary document ready by February 2021.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act of 1980, Public Law 96-272, (June 17, 1980).

Ahmann, Elizabeth and Deborah Dokken. "Supporting Youth Aging out of Foster Care." *Pediatric Nursing* 43, no. 1 (2017): 43-48.

Alexander, M. Wayne and William Violet. "The Marketing of People: Slave Trade in the Ancient Near East." *Journal of Business and Behavioral Sciences* 26, no. 2 (2014): 138-155.

American Psychological Association. "Beck Depression Inventory (BDI)." Accessed November 10, 2020, https://www.apa.org/pi/about/publications/caregivers/ practice-settings/ assessment/tools/beck-depression.

Arizona Youth Partnership. "Newsletter Sept-Dec 2020." Accessed November 8, 2020, https://azyp.org/oct-dec-2020-newsletter/.

———. "Starting Out Right for Homeless Parenting Youth Program." Accessed November 7, 2020, https://azyp.org/program/hpyp/.

Barker, Kenneth L. and John Kohlenberger III, eds. *Zondervan NIV Bible Commentary: Volume 1: Old Testament.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994.

Bent-Goodley, Tricia, Noelle St. Vil, and Paulette Hubbert. "A Spirit Unbroken: The Black Church's Evolving Response to Domestic Violence." *Social Work and Christianity* 39, no. 1 (2012): 52-65.

Berry, Wendell. *This Day: Sabbath Poems Collected & New, 1979-2013.* Berkeley: Counterpoint Press, 2013.

Borgford-Parnell, Donna, Kerry R. Hope, and Robert W. Deisher. "A Homeless Teen Pregnancy Project: An Intensive Team Case Management Model." *American Journal of Public Health* 84, no. 6 (1994): 1029-1030.

Bortz, Abe. "Mother's Aid." *Social Welfare History Project.* Accessed September 5, 2020, https: //socialwelfare.library.vcu.edu/programs/mothers-aid/#:~:text=This %20Mothers'%20 Pension%20 Movement%20%E2%80%94%20cash,in%20its% 20awareness %20of% 20the.

Boyer, Paul S., Clifford E. Clark Jr., Joseph F. Kett, Neal Salisbury, Harvard Sitkoff, and Nancy Woloch. *The Enduring Vision: A History of the American People.* 2nd ed. Toronto: D.C. Hearth and Co., 1993.

Braveman, Paula, Kristen Marchi, Susan Egerter, Soowon Kim, Marilyn Metzler, Tonya Stancil, and Moreen Libet. "Poverty, Near-Poverty, and Hardship Around the Time of Pregnancy." *Maternal and Child Health Journal* 14 (2010): 20-35.

Bronstein, Laura R. "Intervening with Homeless Youths: Direct Practice without Blaming the Victim." *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal.* 13, no. 2 (1996): 127-138.

Browne, Angela. "Family Violence and Homelessness: The Relevance of Trauma Histories in the Lives of Homeless Women." *American Orthopsychiatric Association* 63, no. 3 (July 1993): 370-384.

Buckner, John C., Ellen L. Bassuk, Linda F. Weinreb, and Margaret G. Brooks. "Homelessness and Its Relationship to the Mental Health and Behavior of Low-Income School-Age Children." *Developmental Psychology* 35, no. 1 (1999): 246-257.

Carleton, David. *Student's Guide to Landmark Congressional Laws.* London, Greenwood Press, 2002.

Central Valley School District. "News Bulletin, October 18, 2019, CVSD Opening a Family Engagement Center: Boys and Girls Club Partners with CVSD to Provide Services to Central Valley Families." Accessed November 21, 2020, https://www.cvsd.org/apps/news/article/1109007.

Chandler, Diane. *Christian Spiritual Formation: An Integrated Approach for Personal and Relational Wholeness.* Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2014.

Chappell, Frank R. "Negotiating Contemporary Hindu Beliefs and Practices in the United States." *Religions of South Asia* 12, no. 1 (2018): 78-99.

Chin, Xiaojin, Lisa Thrane, Les B. Whitbeck, and Kurt Johnson. "Mental Disorders, Comorbidity, and Postrunaway Arrests Among Homeless and Runaway Adolescents." *Journal of Research on Adolescence* 16, no. 3 (2006): 379-402.

Chittister, Joan. *The Rule of Benedict: Insights for the Ages.* New York: Crossroad Publishing, 1992.

Clark, Elaine. "City Orphans and Custody Laws in Medieval England." *The American Journal of Legal History* 34, no. 2 (1990): 168-187.

———. "Social Welfare and Mutual Aid in the Medieval Countryside." *Journal of British Studies* 33, no. 4 (1994): 381-406.

Comer, Ronald J. *Fundamentals of Abnormal Psychology.* 5th ed. New York: Worth Publishers, 2008.

Communities in Schools. "National Model." Accessed November 20, 2020, https://spokane. ciswa.org/what-we-do/national-model/.

Crawford, Brandon L., Jacqueline McDaniel, David Moxley, Zohre Salehezadeh, and Alisa West Cahill. "Factors Influencing Risk of Homelessness among Youth in Transition from Foster Care in Oklahoma: Implications for Reforming Independent Living Services and Opportunities." *Child Welfare* 94, no. 1 (2015): 19-34.

Cushman, Beverly W. Review of Steven D. Mason, "Eternal Covenant in the Pentateuch: The Contours of an Elusive Phrase, *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 72, no. 1 (2010): 118.

Davis, Jordan P., Graham Diguiseppi, Jessenia De Leon, John Prindle, Angeles Sedano, Dean Rivera, Benjamin Henwood, and Eric Rice. "Understanding Pathways Between PTSD, Homelessness, and Substance Use Among Adolescents." *Psychology of Addictive Behaviors* 33, no. 5 (2019): 467-476.

Duvall, J. Scott and J. Daniel Hays. *Grasping God's Word: A Hands-On Approach to Reading, Interpreting, and Applying the Bible.* 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005.

Dworsky, Amy, Laura Napolitano, and Mark Courtney. "Homelessness During the Transition from Foster Care to Adulthood." *American Journal of Public Health* 103, no. S2 (2013): S318–S323.

Dyer, Ralph E. *News for an Empire: The Story of the Spokesman-Review.* Spokane: Cowles Publishing, 1952.

Edelen, Amy. "Climbing rents in Spokane County a burden for many," *The Spokesman-Review,* June 12, 2020. Accessed June 12, 2020, https://www.spokesman.com/stories/2017/dec/11/climbing-rents-in-spokane-county-a-burden-for-many/#:~:text=Low%20vacancy%2C%20high%20demand&text= Spokane%20has%20a%202.9%20percent,rate%20hovered%20around%201.4%20percent.

Edidin, Jennifer P., Zoe Ganim, Scott J. Hunter, and Niranjan S. Karnik. "The Mental and Physical Health of Homeless Youth: A Literature Review." *Child Psychiatry and Human Development* 43, no. 3 (2012): 354-375.

Edwards, Gene. *The Divine Romance.* Gardiner, ME: Christian Books Publishing, 1984.

Ellison, Christopher G. and Kristin L. Anderson. "Religious Involvement and Domestic Violence Among U.S. Couples." *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 40, no. 2 (2001): 269-286.

EMSI. "The Economic Impact of Communities In Schools," May 2012. Accessed
November 20, 2020, https://spokane.ciswa.org/what-we-do/publications/.

Fabian, Maria and Fred Smith. *Invisible Innocence: My Story as a Homeless Youth.* N.p.:
CreateSpace Independent Publishing, 2013.

Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, US Code 29, §203.

Family and Children's Center, La Crosse, Wisconsin. "Host Homes Program." Accessed
November 11, 2020, https:// www.fcconline.org/seeking-help/for-children/host-
home-program/.

Fantuzzo, John W., Whitney A. LeBoeuf, and Heather L. Rouse. "An Investigation of the
Relations Between School Concentrations of Student Risk Factors and Student
Educational Well-Being." *Educational Researcher* 43, no. 1 (2013): 25-36.

Ferguson, Kristin M. "Exploring the Psychosocial and Behavioral Adjustment Outcomes
of Multi-Type Abuse among Homeless Young Adults." *Social Work Research* 33,
no. 4 (December 2009): 219-230.

Fernandes, Elizabeth Cordeiro, Gillliat Hanois Falbo-Neto, Maria Gorete Lucena de
Vasconcelos, and Maria de Fatima de Souza Santos. "Homeless Teen Girls:
Social-Affective Network and Resilience." *Journal of Nursing UFPE Online* 13,
no. e242969 (2019), DOI: https:// doi.org/10.5205/1981-8963:2019.242969.

Fitzgerald, J.T. "Orphans of the Mediterranean Antiquity and Early Christianity." *Acta
Theologica* Supplementum 23 (2016): 29-48.

Fontenot, Kayla, Jessica Semega, and Melissa Kollar. "Income and Poverty in the United
States: 2017." *U.S. Census Bureau* Current Population Reports (2018): 60-263.

Forge, Nicholas, Robin Hartinger-Saunders, Eric Wright, and Erin Ruel. "Out of the
System and onto the Streets: LGBTQ-Identified Youth Experiencing
Homelessness with Past Child Welfare System involvement." *Child Welfare* 96,
no.2 (2018), 47-74.

Fothergill, Kate E., Elaine E. Doherty, Judith A. Robertson, and Margaret E. Ensminger.
"A Prospective Study of Childhood and Adolescent Antecedents of Homelessness
among a Community Population of African Americans." *Journal of Urban
Health: Bulletin of the New York Academy of Medicine* 89, no. 3 (2012): 432-446.

Fowler, Patrick J., Paul A. Toro, and Bart W. Miles. "Pathways to and From
Homelessness and Associated Psychosocial Outcomes Among Adolescents
Leaving the Foster Care System." *American Journal of Public Health* 99, no. 8
(2009): 1453-1458.

Freuchen, Dagmar, ed. *Peter Freuchen's Adventures in the Arctic.* New York: Julian Messner, Inc., 1960.

———, ed. *Peter Freuchen's Book of the Eskimos.* New York: Fawcett Premier, 1961.

Fry, Charlotte E., Kate Langley, and Katherine H. Shelton. "A Systematic Review of Cognitive Functioning Among Young People Who Have Experienced Homelessness, Foster Care, or Poverty." *Child Neuropsychology* 23, no. 8 (2017): 907-934.

Gambon, Thresia B and Janna R. Gewirtz O'Brien. "Runaway Youth: Caring for the Nation's Largest Segment of Missing Children." *American Academy of Pediatrics* 145, no. 2 (February 2020): 1-12.

Gonzalez, Justo L. *The Story of Christianity Volume 1: The Early Church to the Dawn of the Reformation.* New York: HarperCollins, 1984.

Gorski, Paul C. *Reaching and Teaching Students in Poverty: Strategies for Erasing the Opportunity Gap.* New York: Teachers College Press, Columbia University, 2018.

Grant, Roy, Delaney Gracy, Grifin Goldsmith, Alan Shapiro, and Irwin E. Redlener. "Twenty-Five Years of Child and Family Homelessness: Where Are We Now?" *American Journal of Public Health* 103, no. S2 (Supplement 2, 2013): e2-e10.

Greenman, Jeffrey P. and George Kalantzis, eds. *Life in the Spirit: Spiritual Formation in Theological Perspective.* Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2010.

Greeson, Johanna K. P., Daniel Traglia, Debra Schilling Wolfe, and Sarah Wasch. "Prevalence and Correlates of Sex Trafficking among Homeless and Runaway Youths Presenting for Shelter Services." *Social Work Research* 43, no. 2 (2019): 91-100.

Grudem, Wayne. *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Doctrine.* Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994.

Gwadz, Marya, Robert Freeman, Noelle R. Leonard, Alexandra Kutnick, Elizabeth Silverman, Amanda Ritchie, James Bolas, Charles M. Cleland, Lara Tabac, Margo Hirsch, and Jamie Powlovich. "Understanding Organizations Serving Runaway and Homeless Youth: A Multi-setting, Multi-perspective Qualitative Exploration." *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal* 36 (April 2019): 201-217.

Haleem, M.A.S. Abdel, trans., *Oxford World's Classics: The Qur'an.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2010.

Hands, A. R. *Charities and Social Aid in Greece and Rome.* London: Camelot Press, 1968.

Hansen, Nathan. "Family and Children's Center Looking for More Families to Open Up Their Homes," *La Crosse Tribune*, May 2, 2017. Accessed November 11, 2020, https://lacrossetribune.com/news /local/family-children-s-center-looking-for-more-families-to-open/article_ 5b34944f-bfad-5e08-944b-c76e4ba343dd.html.

Harper, Robert Francis, ed. *The Code of Hammurabi King of Babylon, about 2250 B.C.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1904. Accessed April 12, 2020, https://oll. libertyfund.org/ titles/hammurabi-the-code-of-hammurabi.

Hegerty, Scott W. "The Rust Belt, the Sunbelt, and the Concentration of Poverty Within Large U.S. Cities." *The Review of Regional Studies* 49 no. 3 (2019): 474-494.

Heifetz, Ronald A. *Leadership without Easy Answers.* Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press, 1994.

Hetling, Andrea and Haiyan Zhang. "Domestic Violence, Poverty, and Social Services: Does Location Matter?" *Social Science Quarterly* 91, no. 5 (2010): 1144-1163.

Hipsky, Shellie, Deborah Scigliano, and David Parker. "Schools Leaders Successfully Partner with Community Organization: Providing Nutrition so Students Focus on Learning Instead of Hunger." *Journal of Cases in Educational Leadership* 16, no. 2 (2013): 54-60.

Holtzman, Benjamin. "Shelter is Only a First Step: Housing the Homeless in 1980s New York City." *Journal of Social History* 52, no. 3 (2019): 886-910.

Homeless Youth Connection. "Host Family." Accessed November 11, 2020, https:// hycaz.org/programs/#hostfamily1.

———. "Programs." Accessed November 11, 2020, https://hycaz.org/ programs/# hostfamily1.

Hopkins, Jared S. "Seeking Safety: County Tries to Find Second Home for Safe House Kids." *Times-News,* April 17, 2007. Accessed November 15, 2020, https://magic valley.com/ news/local/seeking-safety/article_04ae42d8-1766-58b2-85fe-b2d1a 037cc8b.html.

———. "Twin Falls County Has New Safe House but Old One Sits Vacant." *Times-News,* May 24, 2009. Accessed November 15, 2020, https://magicvalley.com/ news /local/twin-falls-county-has-new-safe-house-but-old-one/article_987e2211-ffaa-5339-aebd-c0ca6afadfc4.html.

Howard, Aronda L. "An Exploration of the Life Experiences and Well-Being of Youth Who Have Aged-Out of Foster Care." PhD diss., Morgan State University School of Social Work, 2015. EBSCOhost Academic Search Premier.

Hunter, James Davison. *To Change the World: The Irony, Tragedy, and Possibility of Christianity in the Late Modern World.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2010.

ICF International. "Communities In Schools National Evaluation Five Year Executive Summary, October 2010." Accessed November 20, 2020, https://spokane.ciswa. org/what-we-do/ publications/.

J Bar J Youth Services. "Cascade Youth and Family Center, Shelter and Programs for Runaway and Homeless Youth." Accessed November 15, 2020, https://cascade youthandfamilycenter.org/.

———. "Cascade Youth and Family Center, Street Outreach." Accessed November 15, 2020, https://cascadeyouthandfamilycenter.org/our-programs/street-outreach/.

———. "Good News Letter: Summer 2020." Accessed November 15, 2020, https:// www.jbarj.org/events-and-news/newsletter-6-20/.

The John Burton Foundation for Children without Homes. "A Guide to Implementing the Host Family model in THP-Plus: Providing Affordable Housing and Supportive Services to youth Formerly in the Foster Care System." Accessed November 11, 2020, https://www.jbaforyouth.org/wp-content/uploads/ 2018/12/The-Host-Family-Model-in-THP-Plus.pdf.

Kachingwe, Olivia N., Kent Anderson, Carla Houser, Jamie L. Fleishman, Julia G. Novick, Danielle R. Phillips, and Elizabeth M. Aparicio. "She Was There Through the Whole Process: Exploring How Homeless Youth Access and Select Birth Control." *Children and Youth Services Review* 101 (2019): 277-284.

Kirkpatrick, Sharon I., Lynn McIntyre, and Melissa L. Potestio. "Child Hunger and Long-term Adverse Consequences for Health." *Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine* 164, no. 8 (2010): 754-762.

Klein, William W., Craig L. Blomberg, and Robert L. Hubbard, Jr. *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation.* Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2004.

Kollie, Emmanuel G. M. "The Divine Plan of Redemption from a Point of View of Covenant Theology." *Valley View University Journal of Theology* 5 (2018): 61-70.

Kozloff, Nicole, Amy H. Cheung, Lori E. Ross, Heather Winer, Diana Ierfino, Heather Bullock, and Kathryn J. Bennett. "Factors Influencing Service Use Among Homeless Youths with Co-Occurring Disorders." *Psychiatric Services* 64, no. 9 (2013): 925-928.

Leland Consulting Group. "Draft Market Analysis: Spokane Grand Boulevard," March 2020. Accessed June 12, 2020, https://static.spokanecity.org/documents/projects/grand-boulevard-transportation-and-zoning-analysis/grand-blvd-study-market-analysis-final-draft-march-2020.pdf.

Levin, Christoph. "The Poor in the Old Testament: Some Observations." *Religion and Theology* 8, no. 3-4 (2001): 253-273.

Lewis, Thomas, Fari Amini, and Richard Lannon. *A General Theory of Love.* New York: Random House, 2000.

Lewit, Eugene M. and Nancy Kerrebrock. "Childhood Hunger." *The Future of Children* 7, no. 1 (1997): 128-137.

Lighthouse Youth and Family Service. "Host Home Program." Accessed November 11, 2020, https://www.lys.org/services/homeless-and-runaway-youth/safe-and-supported/host-home-project/.

Lindenmeyer, Kriste. "The U. S. Children's Bureau and Infant Mortality in the Progressive Era," *Journal of Education* 177, no. 3 (1995), 57-60.

Loy, David R. "Buddhism and Poverty." *Contemporary Buddhism* 2, no. 1, 2001, 54-71.

Loyd, Deborah Koehn. *Your Vocational Credo: Practical Steps to Discover Your Unique Purpose.* Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2015.

Madrick, Jeff. *Invisible Americans: The Tragic Cost of Child Poverty.* New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2020.

McAllister, John Michal, and Amelia Roberts-Lewis. "Social Worker's Role in Helping the Church Address Intimate Partner Violence: An Invisible Problem." *Social Work and Christianity* 37, no. 2 (2010): 161-187.

McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act of 1987, US Code 42 (2015) Chapter 119-Homeless Assistance, Subchapter VI-Education and Training, Part B: Education for Homeless Children and Youths, §11434a.

McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act of 2001. 42 U.S.C. 11431-11435. Retrieved from http://center.serve.org/nche/downloads/mv-full-text.docx

Mestas, Anthony A. "Pueblo Needs Host Families for Homeless Teens." *The Pueblo Chieftain*, November 17, 2019. Accessed November 14, 2020, https://www. chieftain.com/news/20191117/pueblo-needs-host-families-for-homeless-teens.

Milaney, Katrina, Nicole Williams, Stacy Lee Lockerbie, Daniel J. Dutton, and Elaine Hyshka. "Recognizing and Responding to Women Experiencing Homelessness with Gendered and Trauma-Informed Care." *BMC Public Health* 20, no. 397 (2020): 1-6.

Milburn, Norweeta, Li-Jung Liang, Sung-Jae Lee, and Mary Jane Rotheram-Borus. "Who is Doing Well? A Typology of Newly Homeless Adolescents." *Journal of Community Psychology* 37, no. 2 (2009): 135-147.

Miller, Vincent J. *Consuming Religion: Christian Faith and Practice in a Consumer Culture.* New York, Continuum, 2005.

Mitchell, Matthew S., Casey L. K. Leon, Thomas H. Byrne, Wen-Chieh Lin, and Monica Bharel. "Cost of Health Care Utilization Among Homeless Frequent Emergency Department Users." *Psychological Services* 14, no. 2 (2017): 193-202.

Mohan, Erica and Carolyn M. Shields. "The Voices behind the Numbers: Understanding the Experiences of Homeless Students." *Critical Questions in Education* 5, no. 3 (January 1, 2014): 189–202.

Moriarty, Sheila. "Turbulent Transitions: A Day in the Life of a Homeless Teen." *Reclaiming Children and Youth* 18, no. 3 (2009): 12-15.

Morse, MaryKate. *Making Room for Leadership: Power, Space, and Influence.* Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2008.

———. "What is Spiritual Formation." PowerPoint lesson, LSF4 Cohort Retreat Cannon Beach, OR, Portland Seminary, February 27, 2019.

Murphy, Erin Roark and Brittany H. Eghaneyan. "Understanding the Phenomenon of Older Adult Homelessness in North America: A Qualitative Interpretive Meta-Synthesis." *British Journal of Social Work* 48 (December 2018): 2361-2380.

Murray, Liz. *Breaking Night: A Memoir of Forgiveness, Survival, and My Journey from Homeless to Harvard.* New York: HarperCollins, 2010.

National Center for Education Statistics. "Fast Facts." Accessed June 5, 2020, https:// nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/ display.asp?id=16.

———. "Programs." Accessed June 5, 2020, https://nces.ed.gov/programs/ coe/indicator _cgc.asp.

National Center for Homeless Education. "McKinney-Vento Law into Practice Brief Series: Supporting the Education of Unaccompanied Students Experiencing Homelessness," August 2017. Accessed May 12, 2020, https://nche.ed.gov/wp-content/uploads/2018/10 /youth.pdf.

National Child Traumatic Stress Network. "Beck Anxiety Inventory." Accessed November 10, 2020, https://www.nctsn.org/measures/beck-anxiety-inventory.

National Coalition for the Homeless. "Causes of Youth Homelessness." Accessed June 11, 2020, http://nationalhomeless.org/issues/youth/.

Nellis, Natash. "Is Spokane's Apartment Market on the Brink of Stability?" *Journal of Business, Spokane and Kootenai Counties,* May 19, 2019. Accessed June 12, 2020, https://www. spokanejournal.com/local-news/is-spokanes-apartment-market-on-the-brink-of-stability/.

Nicoletti, Angela. "The Homeless Teen Mom." *Journal of Pediatric and Adolescent Gynecology* 22, no. 6 (2009): 379-380.

Northouse, Peter G. *Leadership: Theory and Practice.* Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2016.

O'Sullivan Oliveira, Joanne and Pamela J. Burke. "Lost in the Shuffle: Culture of Homeless Adolescents." *Pediatric Nursing* 35, no. 3 (2009): 154-161.

Pathak, Vibha, Bijayini Jena, and Sanjay Kalra. "Qualitative Research." *Perspectives in Clinical Research* 4, no. 3 (2013): 192. https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc /articles/PMC3757586/.

Paul, Catherine A. "The Progressive Era." *Social Welfare History Project.* Accessed September 5, 2020, https://socialwelfare.library.vcu.edu/eras/progressive-era/.

Pearce, Lisa D., George M. Hayward, Laurie Chassin, and Patrick J. Curran. "The Increasing Diversity and Complexity of Family Structures for Adolescents." *Journal of Research on Adolescence* 28, no. 3 (2018): 591-609.

Pendall, Rolf, Brett Theodos, and Kaitlin Hildner. "Why High Poverty Neighborhoods Persist: The Role of Precarious Housing." *Urban Affairs Review* 52, no. 1 (2016): 33-65.

Perry, Bruce D. and Maia Szalavitz. *The Boy Who Was Raised as a Dog: And Other Stories from a Child Psychiatrist's Notebook.* New York: Basic Books, 2006.

Perschbacher, Wesley J., ed. *The New Analytical Greek Lexicon.* Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1990.

Pew Research Center, "Religious Composition by Country, 2010-2050." Accessed August 10, 2020, https://www.pewforum.org/2015/04/02/religious-projection-table/2020/number/all/.

———. "What it Means to be Poor by Global Standards." Accessed August 10, 2020, https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2015/ 07/22/what-it-means-to-be-poor-by-global-standards/.

Pohl, Christine D. *Living Into Community: Cultivating Practices That Sustain Us.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing, 2012.

Polaski, Donald C. "Reflections on a Mosaic Covenant: The Eternal Covenant (Isaiah 24.5) and Intertextuality." *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 77 (1998): 55-73.

Powers, Dorothy R. *Heritage from Heroes: Spokane's Dreamers and Builders.* Spokane: Fairmount Memorial Association, 1993.

The Pulpit Commentary. *Volume 1: Genesis – Numbers 20*. N.p, n.d.

Purser, Gretchen. "The Circle of Dispossession: Evicting the Urban Poor in Baltimore." *Critical Sociology* 42, no. 3 (2016): 393-415.

Pyrcz, Andrew A. "Set in Stone: The Ancient Babylonian Law Code of King Hammurabi." *Agora* 50, no. 1, (2019): 11-18.

Quigley, John M. and Steven Raphael. "The Economics of Homelessness: The Evidence from North America." *European Journal of Housing Policy* 1, no. 3 (2001): 323-336.

Rabinowitz, Leah. "The Early Bird Gets the Worm: A Proposal to Develop Early Intervention Shelters Throughout Massachusetts." *Boston College Third World Law Journal* 30, no. 145 (2010): 145-178.

Rhule-Louie, Dana M., Sarah Bowen, John S. Baer, and Peggy L. Peterson. "Substance Use and Health and Safety among Homeless Youth." *Journal of Child and Family Studies* 17, no. 3 (2008): 306-319.

Robinson, Brandon Andrew. "Child Welfare Systems and LGBTQ Youth Homelessness: Gender Segregation, Instability, and Intersectionality." *Child Welfare* 96, no. 2 (March 1, 2018): 29-45.

———. "Conditional Families and Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Youth Homelessness: Gender, Sexuality, Family Instability, and Rejection." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 80, no. 2 (2018): 383-96.

Rolheiser, Ronald. *The Holy Longing: The Search for a Christian Spirituality.* New York: Crown Publishing, 2014.

———. *Sacred Fire: A Vision for a Deeper Human and Christian Maturity.* New York: Crown Publishing, 2014.

Rouse, Heather L., John W. Fantuzzo, and Whitney LeBoeuf. "Comprehensive Challenges for the Well Being of Young Children: A Population-based Study of Publicly Monitored Risks in a Large Urban Center." *Child Youth Care Forum* 47 (2011): 281-302.

Rouse, Steele. "Renewing the Healthy, Hunger Free Kids Act and Strengthening the Farm to School Program." *Journal of Law and Education* 47, no. 1 (2018): 177-187.

Ryan, Kevin and Tina Kelley. *Almost Home: Helping Kids Move from Homelessness to Hope.* Hoboken, NJ: Wiley & Sons, 2012.

Safe Harbor Bill, HB 1775/SB 5744 (2020). Accessed November 10, 2020, https://app.leg.wa.gov/billsummary?BillNumber=1775&Initiative=false&Year=2019.

Safe Place for Youth. "Host Home Program." Accessed November 11, 2020, http://www.safeplaceforyouth.org/host_home_program.

Sampson, James P. Jr. and Robert C. Reardon. "Maximizing Staff Resources in Meeting the Needs of Job Seekers in One-Stop Centers." *Journal of Employment Counseling* 35, no. 2 (1998), 50-68.

Santrock, John W. *Adolescence.* 9th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2003.

Scappaticci, Anne, Lise Silveira, and Sergio Luis Blay. "Homeless Teen Mothers: Social and Psychological Aspects." *Journal of Public Health* 17 (2009): 19-26.

Scherr, Tracey G. "Preparing Students in Foster Care for Emancipation, Employment, and Postsecondary Education." *School Psychology Forum* 9, no. 1 (2015): 59-70.

Sedlak, Andrea J., David Finkelhor, and J. Michael Brick. "National Estimates of Missing Children: Updated Finding from a Survey of Parents and Other Primary Caretakers." *Juvenile Justice Bulletin* June (2017): 1-20.

Shelton, Katherine H., Pamela J. Taylor, Adrian Bonner, and Marianne van den Bree. "Risk Factors for Homelessness: Evidence from a Population-Based Study." *Psychiatric Services* 60, no. 4, (2009), 465-472.

Sheppard-Towner Act of 1921, Public Law 67-97 (November 23, 1921).

Shigematsu, Ken. *God in My Everything: How an Ancient Rhythm Helps Busy People Enjoy God.* Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2013.

Shpiegel, Svetlana. "Resilience Among Older Adolescents in Foster Care: The Impact of Risk and Protective Factors." *International Journal of Mental Health and Addiction* 14, no. 1 (2016): 6-22.

Sivaraksa, Sulak. "Buddhism and Development – A Thai Perspective." *Ching Feng* 26, no. 2-3 (1983): 123-133.

Social Security Act of 1935, US Code 42, §301-1305, Suppliment 4 (1935).

Stewart, Nikita. "New York City Investigates Youth Shelter Accused of Fraud." *New York Times,* May 17, 2016. Accessed October 18, 2020, https://www.nytimes. com/2016/05/18/nyregion/city-investigates -covenant-house-youth-homeless-shelter-for-fraud.html.

Stickley, Andrew and Mall Leinsalu. "Childhood Hunger and Depressive Symptoms in Adulthood: Findings from a Population-based Study." *Journal of Affective Disorders* 226, no. 1 (2018): 332-338.

Sum, Andrew and Ishwar Khatiwada. "The Nation's Underemployed in the 'Great Recession' of 2007-2009." *Monthly Labor Review* (November 2010): 3-15.

Sweeney, Marvin A. "EGLBS Plenary Address Berit Olam, the Eternal Covenant: Is the Conditional Covenant Really Conditional?" *Conversations with the Biblical World* 38 (2018): 1-19.

Targett, Pam, Cynthia Young, Grant Revell, Sophie Williams, and Paul Wehman. "Customized Employment in the One Stop Career Centers." *Teaching Exceptional Children* 40, no. 2 (2007), 6-11.

Thomas, Lynn. "Negotiating the Spaces: Exploring Issues of Human Rights in an Indian Text." *Religion* 48, no. 1 (2018): 105-127.

Thompson, Sanna J., Kimberly A. Bender, Carol M. Lewis, and Rita Watkins. "Runaway and Pregnant: Risk Factors Associated with Pregnancy in a National Sample of Runaway/Homeless Female Adolescents." *Journal of Adolescent Health* 43, no. 2 (2008): 125-132.

Tickamyer, Ann R., Jennifer Sherman, and Jennifer L. Warlick, eds. *Rural Poverty in the United States.* New York: Columbia University Press, 2017.

Tracy, Steven R. "Patriarchy and Domestic Violence: Challenging Common Misconceptions." *Journal of Evangelical Theological Society* 50, no. 3 (2007): 573-594.

Trejos-Castillo, Elizabeth, Gayle Davis, and Terri Hipps. "Economic Well-Being and Independent Living in Foster Youth: Paving the Road to Effective Transitioning out of Care." *Child Welfare* 94, no. 1 (January 2015): 53-71.

Trenchard, Warren C. *Complete Vocabulary Guide to Greek New Testament.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1998.

Twin Falls County, Idaho. "Safe House." Accessed November 15, 2020, https://twinfalls county.org/safe_house/.

Twin Falls Optimist Youth House. "The Aged-Out Foster Care Youth Home the Community Built." Accessed November 15, 2020, https://optimistyouth house.com/about-us/the-house/.

Tyler, Kimberly A. and Lisa A. Melander. "Foster Care Placement, Poor Parenting, and Negative Outcomes Among Homeless Young Adults." *Journal of Child and Family Studies* 19, no. 6 (December 1, 2010): 787-794.

U.S. Census Bureau. "Data Portal." Accessed June 5, 2020, https://www.census.gov/data. html.

U.S. Children's Bureau, *The Children's Bureau Legacy: Ensuring the Right to Childhood,* (Washington DC: U.S. Children's Bureau, 2013), https://www. childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/cb_ebook.pdf.

———. "Child Welfare Information Gateway." Accessed July 12, 2020, https://www. childwelfare.gov/topics/preventing/preventionmonth/resources/ace/.

———. "Foster Care Statistics 2017," *Numbers and Trends,* March 2019. Accessed June 13, 2020, https://www.childwelfare.gov/pubPDFs/foster.pdf#page=3&view= Children%20in,%20entering,%20and%20exiting%20care.

———. "History." Accessed September 2, 2020, https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/about/ history.

———. "Timeline." Accessed September 2, 2020, https://www.childwelfare.gov/ more-tools-resources/resources-from-childrens-bureau/timeline1/.

U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service. "National School Lunch Program." Accessed October 2, 2020, https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default /files/resource-files/NSLPFactSheet.pdf.

U.S. Department of Education. "Data and Statistics." Accessed June 5, 2020, https:// www2.ed.gov/rschstat/landing.jhtml?src=pn.

———. "Education for Homeless Children and Youths Program: A Brief History of the McKinney-Vento Act." Accessed November 4, 2020, https://nche.ed.gov/wp-content/uploads /2018/12/ehcy_profile.pdf.

U.S. Family and Youth Services Bureau. "Basic Center Program Fact Sheet." Accessed November 6, 2020, https://www.acf.hhs.gov/fysb/resource/bcp-fact-sheet.

———. "Bought and Sold: Recognizing and Assisting Youth Victims of Domestic Sex Trafficking, revised May 2016." Accessed November 15, 2020, https://rhy clearinghouse.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/Bought%20and%20Sold %2C %20 May%202016%20 Revision_0.pdf.

———. "Maternity Group Home Program Fact Sheet." Accessed November 5, 2020, https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/fysb/mgh_ fact_sheet_ september_ 2020.pdf.
———. "Report to Congress on Runaway and Homeless Youth Program for Fiscal Years 2014 and 2015." Accessed June 13, 2020, https://www.acf.hhs.gov/fysb/resource /report-to-congress-on-rhy-program-fy2014-2015.

———. "Runaway and Homeless Youth Program." Accessed September 11, 2020, https://www.acf.hhs.gov/fysb/programs/runaway-homeless-youth/programs/ transitional-living.

———. "Runaway and Homeless Youth Program Fact Sheet." Accessed September 11, 2020, https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/fysb/rhy_ factsheet_043018_ 508.pdf.

———. "Street Outreach Program Fact Sheet." Accessed November 1, 2020, https:// www.acf.hhs.gov/fysb/resource/sop-fact-sheet.

———. "Transitional Living Program." Accessed September 11, 2020, https://www. acf.hhs.gov/fysb/programs/runaway-homeless-youth/programs/ transitional-living.

———. "Transitional Living Program Fact Sheet." Accessed November 6, 2020, https: //www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/fysb/tlp_fact_sheet_ september_2020pdf.

Valdez, Avelardo, Charles D. Kaplan, and Russell L. Curtis, Jr. "Aggressive Crime, Alcohol and Drug Use, and Concentrated Poverty in 24 U.S. Urban Areas." *The American Journal of Drug and Alcohol Abuse* 33 (2007): 595-603.

Volunteers of America. "2017-2018 Annual Report." Accessed November 15, 2020, https://www. voaspokane.org/our-financials.

———. "Crosswalk Youth Shelter." Accessed November 15, 2020, https://www.voa spokane.org/crosswalk.

Walls, N. Eugene, Cathryn Potter, and James Van Leeuwen. "Where Risks and Protective Factors Operate Differently: Homeless Sexual Minority Youth and Suicide Attempts." *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal* 26, no. 3 (June 1, 2009): 235-257.

Washington Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction. "Data Portal." Accessed June 5, 2020, https://www.k12.wa.us/data-reporting/data-portal.

Wasser Gish, Joan. "Building Systems of Integrated Student Support: A Policy Brief for Local and State Leaders." *America's Promise Alliance* (2019): 1-25. Accessed November 11, 2020, https://www. americaspromise.org/resource/building-systems-integrated-student-support.

Whitbeck, Les B., Danny R. Hoyt, and Kevin A. Ackley. "Abusive Family Backgrounds and Later Victimization Among Runaway and Homeless Adolescents." *Journal of Research on Adolescence* 7, no. 4 (October 1, 1997): 375-392.

Whitbeck, Les B., Danny R. Hoyt, and Wa-Ning Bao. "Depressive Symptoms and Co-Occurring Depressive Symptoms, Substance Abuse, and Conduct Problems among Runaway and Homeless Adolescents." *Child Development* 71, no. 3 (2000): 721-732.

Whitbeck, Les, Melissa Welch Lazoritz, Devan Crawford, and Dane Hautala. "Street Outreach Program: Data Collection Project Executive Summary." *Family and Youth Services Bureau* (October 2014).

Willard, Dallas. *The Great Omission: Reclaiming Jesus' Essential Teachings on Discipleship.* San Francisco: Harper, 2006.

Wineburg, Shoshana. "Washington State Must Help, Not Arrest Sex Trafficked, Homeless Minors," September 10, 2019. *Youth Today.* Accessed June 13, 2020, https://youthtoday.org/2019/09/washington-state-must-help-not-arrest-sex-trafficked-minors-such-as-homeless/.

Yarrow, Andrew L. "History of U.S. Children's Policy, 1900-Present." *First Focus on Children.* Accessed August 18, 2020, https://firstfocus.org/ wp-content/uploads /2014/06/Childrens-Policy-History.pdf.

YMCA of Greater Seattle. "Arcadia Grand Opening Promotional Video." Accessed November 8, 2020, https://www.seattleymca.org/blog/arcadia-young-adult-shelter-grand-opening-auburn.

———. "Arcadia Young Adult Shelter Grand Opening in Auburn." Accessed November 8, 2020, https://www.seattleymca.org/blog/arcadia-young-adult-shelter-grand-opening-auburn.

Zaretzky, Kaylene, Paul Flatau, Bridget Spicer, Elizabeth Conroy, and Lucy Burns. "What Drives the High Health Care Costs of the Homeless?" *Housing Studies* 32, no. 7 (2017): 931-947.

Zelechoski, Amanda D., Ritu Sharma, Kari Beserra, Jennifer L. Miguel, Mia DeMarco, and Joseph Spinazzola. "Traumatized Youth in Residential Treatment Settings: Prevalence, Clinical Presentation, Treatment, and Policy Implications." *Journal of Family Violence* 28, no. 7 (2013): 639-652.