

Family homelessness is a complicated experience that affects different families in different ways. For most families, it is the result of generational poverty; for others, some jolt to their life—a lost job or work hours, conflict with family members they are staying with, an unanticipated bill, or violence within the home—leads them to this unfortunate experience. Help raise awareness and show support for families experiencing it in the San Francisco Bay Area.

Some facts you may not know about family homelessness...

- Adults and children in families make up about 30 percent of the U.S. homeless population. 171,575 people in families—or 55,739 family households—were identified as homeless in 2020.¹
- Whereas families compose the largest segments of the homeless populations of Chicago (34%), New York City (59%), and Boston (61%), families make up only 14% of the overall Bay Area homeless population in 2019.²
- Families experiencing homelessness are usually headed by a single woman with limited income, are typically young, and have young children.¹
- Many families experiencing homelessness are living doubled up with friends or family, rather than in shelters or on the street, making them difficult to count. 75% are doubled up, 15% are in temporary shelter, 7% stay in motels. Only 4% are unsheltered.¹
- Children who experience long-term homelessness are five times more likely to become homeless as adults; it impedes the social, emotional, and intellectual development of children. Less than half of all homeless students are at grade level proficiency in writing and math.¹
- When compared to low-income and homeless families, children experiencing homelessness have been shown to have higher levels of emotional and behavioral problems, have increased risk of serious health problems, are more likely to experience separations from their families, and experience more school mobility, repeat a grade, be expelled, or drop out of school, and have lower academic performance.¹
- Most families would benefit from assistance to help them rapidly reconnect to permanent housing. Rapid Re-Housing provides help with housing search, financial assistance, and case management services to help families quickly transition out of shelter and back into housing of their own. A small subset of families require more intensive or long-term support through transitional housing or permanent supportive housing/rental assistance.¹
- Families also benefit from connection to other supports designed to strengthen and improve their lives, such as childcare, employment assistance, early childhood services, direct cash assistance and income support, or mental health counseling.¹

¹ National Alliance to End Homelessness, March 2021.

² Bay Area Council Economic Institute report, April 2019.