

Homelessness in Harrisburg Bethesda Mission

What We See

- Today there are over 900 homeless people in Harrisburg
- Harrisburg's homeless population has increased by 40% in the past six years
- Five key drivers of this:
 1. Substance abuse
 2. Chronic mental illness and paucity of outpatient treatment
 3. The economy--people living on the edge are falling off the edge
 4. Homeless veterans--one in four homeless men is a veteran
 5. The decline of the American family
 - a. Forty-two percent of births in the USA are out of wedlock, and significantly higher in some demographics
 - b. Harrisburg has approx 100 pregnant girls of high school age or younger--fourteen and fifteen year olds are having second children ---"It's cool to be a pregnant teen in Harrisburg."

What We Do

- Offer stability, safety, and an opportunity to reflect on life
- Offer an individualized fresh start through counsel and time/space to heal
- Believe in right and wrong--**do right; don't do wrong**

How We Do It

- Faith driven-- **I'm not God; I just work for Him.**
- Outcome oriented
- Private funding from 14,000 donors in Hbg area
- Goals, boundaries, accountability
 - Assistance without accountability leads to dependence, not freedom

What We Do Not Do

- Blame

What Must Be Done in the Future

- Change the community from the inside out
- Reach the kids--Adopt a Classroom
- Leadership is key