



The Voice Indianapolis



October 2015

SPONSORED BY: THE CREATIVE CHANGE PROJECT

HIGHLIGHTS IN THIS ISSUE

Welcome!

By: Us

Welcome to the Voice, a newsletter by the homeless voices of our community.

Welcome back to another issue of "The Voice." Like always, if you have missed any of our pervious issues click the following link to our website and find them there (www.creativechangeproject.com). On the Home page of our website you will see a designated box for the newsletters, click, and you are there.

The purpose of this newsletter is to raise awareness and educate the general public on real homeless issues and the truth about living homeless.

Our hope is that we can persuade readers to facilitate or attend a Cultural Competency Presentation which will profoundly change the way you view homelessness.

We hope you enjoy our work!

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What's in a name?

The way we speak of people influences how we think of them. (Page 4)



My Homeless Experience

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Camp sweeps hurt Homeless

ACLU files suit. (Page 2)

IN THE NEWS!

ACLU files suit against Honolulu over homeless-camp sweeps.....

Associated Press
September 16, 2015

The American Civil Liberties Union filed a federal lawsuit Wednesday against the city of Honolulu, claiming city officials deprived homeless people of food and other belongings during raids on encampments.

The attorneys filed the suit on behalf of residents of one of the nation's largest homeless encampments and formerly homeless families who say they lost medication, identification documents and valuable belongings in the sweeps.

Several children, identified by just their initials, were listed as plaintiffs in the lawsuit, which says they have gone hungry after city raids where food stored by their parents was thrown out.



"The Constitution prohibits what the city has done repeatedly to our clients, which is to come up to them and seize and destroy their property without any recourse whatsoever," said Dan Gluck, legal director of the American Civil Liberties Union Hawaii.

Honolulu Corporation Counsel Donna Leong says her department will defend the city vigorously. She says the city will continue to enforce those laws. Honolulu Mayor Kirk Caldwell did not immediately respond to requests for comment.

The suit involves the stored property ordinance, which

requires the city to give 24 hours of notice before seizing property and to store it so people can retrieve belongings for a \$200 fee.

"Instead of impounding it like the ordinances say that the city should do, they've been immediately destroying our clients' property," said Kristin Holland, attorney who co-filed the suit.

City officials recently stepped up enforcement of rules that ban blocking or storing property on sidewalks. They cleared tents from a section of the large Honolulu encampment last week and

planned to clear another small section Thursday.

The lawsuit has not changed that plan, Caldwell's spokesman Jesse Van Dyke said in an email.

The ACLU is seeking a court order to halt future sweeps and compensation for clients whose property has been destroyed.

Tabatha Martin, who lives in the camp with her husband and 4-year-old daughter, said her family lost their tent and her daughter's Christmas presents in a sweep last year.

"A lot of people lost their stuff," Martin said. "It's just hard ... we're people too."

An estimated 600,000 Americans are homeless on any given night, yet there are few city-funded projects that offer them free and safe places to store their belongings, according to the Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Honolulu banned storing property on sidewalks several years ago and prohibited sitting and lying down in Waikiki last year after tourists complained about too many homeless people near the beach.

Caldwell pushed for the first sit-lie ban in Waikiki and a later ban in Chinatown, but he was concerned about legal challenges to the City Council's recent expansions. He vetoed those bills but was overridden by the council.



IN THE NEWS





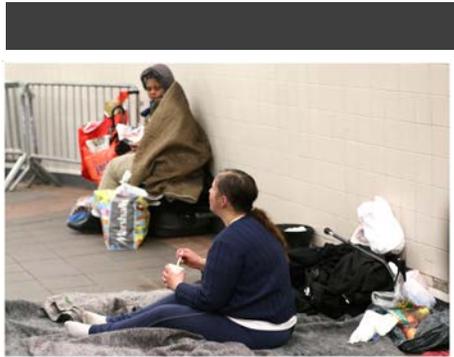
7168 Graham Road
Indianapolis, Indiana 46250
(317) 519-3839



Safe Families for Children is a national movement of compassion that gives hope to families in crisis. Safe, loving homes are provided where parents may voluntarily have their children cared for while they seek to restore stability in their lives. Our dedication to family support, stabilization, and child abuse prevention is driven by responsibility for the well-being of children in our communities.

Founded in 2002, Safe Families for Children has partnered with churches, local community agencies, and volunteer families, as well as government organizations in more than a dozen states. The Safe Families for Children network has provided essential extended-family relationships to nearly 1,000 children and families annually. Learn more about the national movement at www.safe-families.org. Safe Families For Children Central Indiana (SFFCCI) is consistent with the national movement and focuses on the needs of the greater central Indiana community. Founded in May 2008, over 1350 children have been served by over 270 volunteer families in central Indiana.

For more information follow the link below:
<https://www.insafefamilies.org/>



“He’s Homeless”: A Rose by any other name sometimes isn’t....

By: Amy L Freeman – Development Director, Bethesda Cares

HOMELESS FACTS

80%

Eighty percent (80%) of our homeless population suffer from mental health issues.

60%

Sixty percent (60%) of the homeless population have jobs.

FOR MORE INFORMATION



I'd like to share an excerpt from an email I got from my colleague John, Director of Outreach at Bethesda Cares, and a juggernaut about helping people suffering homeless move toward permanent supportive housing. But before I get to his email, I'd like you to take note of what I just wrote: "people suffering homelessness."

Not, "people who are homeless."
The distinction is crucial, and not just political correctness.

We all know it: the way we speak of people both influences and reflects how we think of them, and that drives our behavior.

Consider someone with an illness. Would you say "Jane is cancerous"? Of course not. You'd say, "Jane has cancer," or maybe "Jane is fighting cancer." You'd do because you know Jane, and you know that there is a whole lot more to her than just a medical diagnosis. And you'd want to keep active the reminder that Jane may well overcome this horrible obstacle.

Cancer is not who Jane is. Jane's a person dealing with cancer.

At Bethesda Cares, we've discussed the language around homelessness for several years. The issue boiled over last week, when a woman apparently complained to the police about "the homeless" whom she saw standing outside our offices, ready for our doors to open.

Why were they there? Because they are working toward better lives. They're seeking access to our caseworkers. And because they need food and the privacy of a bathroom.

Well, that lady wants that standing-outside to stop. I don't know whether she's afraid a client will leap up and snatch her purse, or whether the condition of some of them, after a rough night on our streets, simply makes her uncomfortable. But I can't help wondering whether she ever complains about the mostly white crowd who gathers outside our nearby Apple store, or the line of tourists queued at Georgetown Cupcake. I wonder what she thinks forcing them to walk away would accomplish. I wonder what she thinks it would do for or to our clients.

I actually don't really blame her, for her language. Her posture isn't uncommon and probably indicates ignorance, not callousness. While I worked at a food bank, a

teacher once phoned to ask if he could bring his class "to see the hungry." I'm sure he didn't realize that "see the hungry" sounded like a field trip to a zoo.

Maybe the teacher, or the complainer, hadn't had cause to think this issue through. That's a matter of education, right? Like so many things I've written about, I didn't know better until I knew better, either. And while it's an active topic of discussion in the field, it's not on the front page of the Washington Post.

So here's a look John's email, as staff digested the woman's complaint:

Traditional language: "The people waiting on the steps for our drop-in lobby to open are homeless and in need of assistance."

Better language: "The people waiting on the steps are very poor, hungry, need access to bathrooms and have no other place to go. They come to us seeking assistance."

Why am I changing my own language? Because "homeless people" or "the homeless" has become the all-too common stereotype language when referring to our population. The old language puts the people we serve into a stereotyped box together, as if

they're a herd of cattle...animals. As a result, the general public fails to recognize the people we serve for what they truly are: individual human beings with individual needs.

Bottom line: Homelessness is not a person. Homelessness is a situation. The people we serve are human beings, and they have dire needs that are being met by Bethesda Cares. The community needs to see these individuals as human beings who are very poor, hungry, and need our assistance.

Identifying people by their challenges dehumanizes them. A label prevents the speaker from seeing the individuality, the vulnerability and the suffering of the people--of the individuals--simply seeking help. We--you, I, the planet--need to use start using that same sensitivity, that same awareness, in how we talk about and to people enduring homelessness.

I'm pontificating, I know. But changing speech means changing a habit, which requires conscious deliberation, so I'm speaking plainly. And perhaps if that woman paused to shift her thoughts, she might shift her actions, too.



CHARTING THE WAY:

Source: Below

THESE EXTREMELY LOW INCOME HOUSEHOLDS
ARE AT THE GREATEST RISK OF
HOMELESSNESS.

EXTREMELY LOW INCOME
HOUSEHOLDS HAVE INCOMES
AT OR BELOW 30% OF THE
AREA MEDIAN INCOME.



NATIONAL LOW INCOME HOUSING COALITION www.nlihc.org

Source: National Low Income Housing Coalition Tabulations of 2011 American Community Survey Public Use Microdata Sample.

Homeless Experience – Alumni

By: Ed

My Homeless Experience: My family has served in various community outreach programs. I thought we had a good understanding of poverty and the many needs in our community, but I still wanted to better understand homelessness and poverty.

As soon as I learned about Walk a Mile, I knew I had to have this experience with my two sons. I wanted them to see the problems people face in our community. My main focus was learning to develop better ways for our family to serve those in need. We walked through this homeless experience in September 2015.



Here are a few things we noticed while briefly experiencing homelessness:

- **“Walk a Mile in My Shoes”** is an understatement- The various resources for the homeless are spread out all over the city. You aren’t even done warming up after you walk the first mile; that’s assuming you know where to go. Since we started our experience on a rainy Friday evening, we didn’t even get to visit local shelters, clinics, or offices that offer legal and government assistance.

-**Finding a meal is a challenge**- A person really needs to get connected to others in the community to know where to find a meal. Many community and church groups come from all around the city on the weekends. They pop up in parks, parking lots, churches, and campus buildings. You have to be in the right place at the right time to find a meal.

-**You’re not always welcome here**- It’s depressing to see parks and university staff remove benches, tables, and seating in order to prevent the homeless from sticking around. This seems like a great waste of resources. Oddly enough a place that is unwelcoming to one group of people looks unwelcoming to all. Other than eating a quick meal there, these spaces empty out fast and continue to look lonely.

-**Sleeping in Military Park takes some getting used to**- The only luxury is a large ornate shelter with a big concrete pad and bright florescent lights. A diverse group of people sleep under its roof. There are no bathrooms or emergency call boxes. The lights are bright enough that we sleep on the mulch outside of the shelter. The ground was more forgiving than the concrete, but the steady roar of the city doesn’t let the newbie rest comfortably.

-**The homeless work**- I heard some rustling sometime after 5am. I looked out a few times and saw various people packing up their stuff and going to work. It’s hard to process how someone can get adequate rest in the park and wake up before sunrise to walk to work.

-**You can’t always sleep here**- At around 6:20am a park maintenance man quickly drove up to the shelter in a golf cart. Since he had a ladder lying loosely across the back of the cart, you could hear the banging as he got closer. Everyone had to get up and leave. Preparations were beginning for a festival later on at the park.

-Finding resources can be discouraging- After seeing everyone scramble up and either head to work or to find some breakfast, I realized how hard it would be to keep up with the ever-changing whirlwind schedule of available resources. It's evident that meals and other resources are easier to find on certain days. Unfortunately for those in the homeless community that work, they often miss out on much of what's available.

My sons and I only spent two nights sleeping in the park with others in the homeless community. I did not sleep well the first night, but got plenty of sleep our second night. After the experience, we headed to our car, and drove home. I had to set up for a company picnic in the afternoon. Even though I slept well, I still felt run down. I ended up working for only 5 hours Sunday afternoon and I was completely wiped. I had the luxuries of leaving homelessness, driving home, and driving to work. I was so amazed that someone can live outside, walk to work, walk to their meals, and walk to all the other resources that are spread around the city.

Homelessness fills the mind with preconceived ideas. It can be too easy to make a quick assumption as to why people are homeless. With the abundance of resources in this country, it has also become common for people to ignore homelessness when they see it. So I walked away from this experience with a new level of respect for the homeless. I get to walk away from an experience that others in our community cannot. I always had the comfort of knowing this was just an experience, not the life I live every day. The Homeless Experience is a blessing to all who want to better understand the weight of homelessness and the toll it takes on those who are trying to get out.

TEDxIndianapolis
Independently organized TED event

About Events Speakers Sponsors Blog Videos Photos Contact



2015 Speakers

Maurice Young

Homeless advocate (Indianapolis)

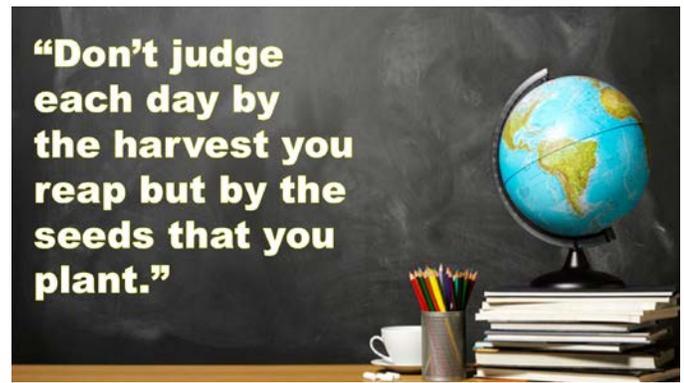


Homeless by design

On April 12, 2011, Maurice Young checked himself into a local homeless shelter looking for a break from his life. What he didn't expect to find was his life's work. Maurice was never homeless, but since that day he has lived on the streets...by choice. Sometimes to help someone, you have to become one of them. From being kicked out of public places, sleeping on sidewalks, eating at soup kitchens, bathing in restrooms to actually getting arrested, Young has fully submerged himself into the homeless way of life. To what end has this sacrifice been made?

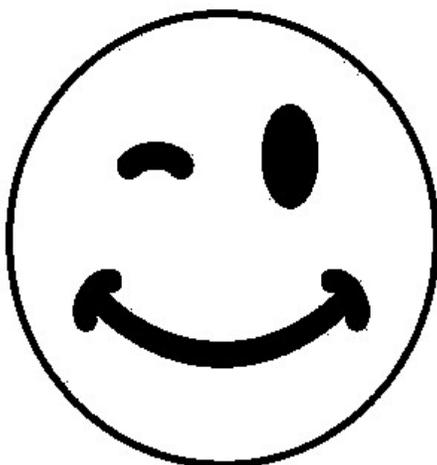


Homeless Graphic Art



Check out our Facebook page to see more: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Creative-Change-Project/303593586466151>

a bit of Humor....





how to help the HOMELESS



What do you really know about Homelessness?



November 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	1	2	3	4	5



SATURDAY

9a - 10:30a

November 14, 2015

BridgeWay Community Church

12945 Parkside Drive

Fishers, IN 46038



<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/cultural-competency-presentation-tickets-17084718854>



Child Care AVAILABLE



The **HOMELESS** EXPERIENCE



DATE: Friday, November 20, 2015

TIME: 4pm Friday (Begin) – 2pm Sunday (End)

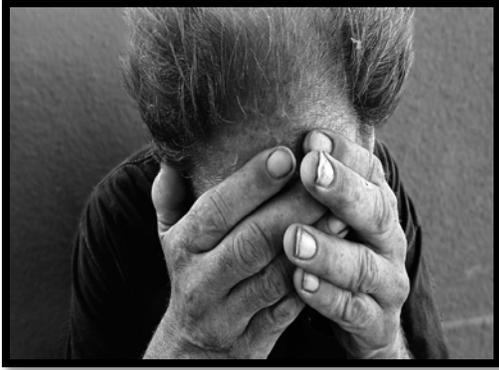
LOCATION: Downtown Indianapolis



Have you ever wondered what it's really like to be homeless and live out on the streets? Come see firsthand the situations that homeless individuals face daily by "Walking a Mile in my Shoes." This new program will allow you to:

1. Engage with the homeless of our community
2. Meet those who serve the homeless community
3. Acquire knowledge regarding the growing crisis of homelessness and
4. Become aware of the public's attitudes towards people who are homeless

Space is limited, so visit our website to sign up for this rare experience. A general itinerary is listed on our website for preview.
<http://indy26aug.wix.com/indyhbr#!form/c6rr>



On any given night in the United States, over a million people are likely to be experiencing homelessness. Homeless individuals are a diverse population, including children, families, veterans, and the elderly. The causes of homelessness are also varied. Many homeless individuals have serious and persistent physical, mental or behavioral health conditions that neither they nor the communities in which they live have sufficient services to accommodate. As a result, these individuals are unable to obtain permanent housing.

The
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CreativeChangeProject.com



The Creative Change Project

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