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Volunteering at The Shade Tree Shelter

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Volunteering at The Shade Tree Shelter

Charlene Clark
COE 202

What is TSTS?

- TSTS is addressing homelessness, hunger, poverty, education, and abuse.
- TSTS is a non-profit organization that serves as a safe haven for women, children and their pets.
- TSTS is funded through private donations.
- Homeless persons in the United States are difficult to assess, estimates of homeless persons range from 250,000 to 3 million. The homeless population has shifted to include women and children, including two-parent families (DiMarco).



My Experience



While volunteering at TSTS I was able to see where the clients are housed. TSTS has about 364 permanent beds. Women from domestic abuse are never turned away.

My husband and I served lunch and dinner to clients as part of volunteering service. It was a rewarding experience. We met some very nice people.



Clients are expected to visit, feed and walk their pets daily at Noah's animal house.



It was pleasurable watching and interacting with the children in the Children's Activity Center.



Points of Interest

- Numerous factors increase one's risk for becoming homeless: including the lack of affordable housing, living in poverty, experiencing serious mental illness (SMI), and for women, domestic violence (Sullivan & Olen).
- Homelessness is not just a matter of lack of shelter. Sometimes women leave abusive homes because "housing IS the problem-homeless may well be a solution" (Somerville).



References:

Dimarco, M. A. (2000). Faculty Practice at a Homeless Shelter for Women and Children. *Holistic Nursing Practice*, 14(2), 29-37.
Somerville, P. (2013). Understanding Homelessness. *Housing, Theory and Society*, 30(4), 384-415.
Sullivan, C. M., & Olen, L. (2016). Common ground, complementary approaches: adapting the Housing First model for domestic violence survivors. *Housing and Society*, 43(3), 182-194.
TSTS logo, Noah's Animal House, beds and serving dishes courtesy of TSTS's website, <http://www.theshadetree.org>