Volunteering at The Shade Tree Shelter

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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 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.

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:

TSTS logo, Noah’s Animal House, beds and serving dishes courtesy of TSTS’s website, http://www.theshadetree.org