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Youth Homelessness

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Project 150- Youth Homelessness

Social Issue

Facts

- Approximately 1.7 million homeless teens in the United States (Fernandes)
- 11,200 of those homeless teens live in Las Vegas, Nevada. (Project 150)
- 61.8% of homeless youth reported depression, 71.7% reported physical or sexual abuse, and 79.5% experienced post traumatic stress. (Street Outreach)
- 75% of homeless or runaway youth have or will drop out of school. (Runaway and Homeless Youth)

Outcomes

- Homeless youth experience stress and anxiety due to not having a guaranteed place to sleep and eat every night.
- Due to not going to school, these youth are not educated and cannot excel very well.
- They are not as confident in themselves as they would be if they had a secure lifestyle.

What Project 150 is doing

- Feeding the homeless
- Giving them clothing to feel confident
- Lending a helping hand/guidance
- Building confidence so that these youth can stay in school.
- Giving makeup, sports gear, and school supplies.

References

"Facts About Youth Homelessness." *Project 150*, 29 Dec. 2014, www.project150.org/facts-about-youth-homelessness/.
Fernandes, Adrienne L. "Runaway and Homeless Youth." *Congressional Research Service*, 15 Jan. 2013, pp. 1-31., www.nchcw.org/uploads/7/5/3/3/7533556/crs_2013_rhya_history_and_lit_rev_iew.pdf.
"Street Outreach Program." *Data Collection Project Executive Summary*, pp. 1-6., www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/fysb/fysb_sop_summary_final.pdf.
"Youth Homelessness." *National Coalition for the Homeless*, nationalhomeless.org/issues/youth/.

Service Learning Experience

Serving my Community

- Sort/folded clothing to put in the boutique shop
- Organized the boutique shop
- Interacted with the homeless youth
- Donated gently-used items to help the homeless
- Created Thanksgiving boxed dinners for the homeless
- Delivered and handed out the boxed dinners to the youth homeless

Pros

- ✓ Being able to be hands-on with the homeless youth
- ✓ Put a smile and lightened the moods of the youth
- ✓ Personal growth/opportunities
- ✓ Great volunteer experience

Cons

- x Activities were repetitive/lots of the same concepts
- x The service site was far away from my house
- x Tedious work, but in the end turned out to be a good thing (worth it)

Expectations/End-results

Going into Project 150, I was blind and did not know exactly what I was going to be doing. I thought the work was going to be more behind the scenes and not much hands-on activity. I expected the place to not be organized and the boutique to be hectic. After completing my service, I realized it was very hands on, only one job was actually behind the scenes. Also, the site was very clean and organized and the boutique was kept up by the volunteers, just needed a little bit of work. At first, my expectations were very low and after doing my service I was very pleased with the site.



Impact/Outcome

What I learned

- Importance of community involvement
- Importance of leaders/guidance
- How severe the issue of youth homelessness is
- How difficult it is to be homeless
- What these youth go through on a daily basis

Personal/Professional Learning

Personal:

- Never judge a book by it's cover
- Some of my classmates could have been homeless without me knowing
- These youth are my age or younger

Professional:

- Working in the boutique helped me run my own business
- Increased my organizational skills
- Learned the do's and don'ts of a non-profit business.

Future change

- To completely remove homelessness
- To get the current homeless youth off of the streets
- To get the current homeless youth educated and into the school system

Difference I have made

- Project 150 would not run without it's volunteers.
- Helped the community by giving to the youth homeless in need
- Helped the youth homeless by donating and giving boxed dinners to the individuals.