



# Homelessness and Children

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Homelessness in families can impact children in many ways. Children are sponges, when growing up they absorb everything around them and use it to grow. When families are experiencing homelessness, the effects can harm a child's growth cognitively and potentially physically if they are going hungry due to the effects of homelessness. In this article I am going to address some of the potential impacts that homelessness can have on the children in the family.

One of the articles I used to research used a screening battery to measure the language, and cognitive delays, and emotional status of children. They tested 88 children living in a family shelter program to show possible impacts of homelessness on the children. They found that language development of the children was severely affected, this seemed to be because of when living in shelters the parents have less time to interact and play with the children, causing a lapse in their language due to less interaction and growth with their parents. Another thing that caused this was that a lot of shelters don't have special programs to account for children and them needing to learn and play. They found that the lack of these programs for children is what mostly effected the language and cognitive growth. I think this could be solved if there were teachers or students that could volunteer at family shelters to help and interact with the children. They could even offer short little "classes" for kids, just something small like having a teacher come in and talk to them about school and help them with anything they need. I researched another article that focused on a different side of the effects on children.

This next article focused on the links between timing and duration of homelessness to a child's health outcomes. This article also looked into the timing and considered pre-natal effects on the children. It showed that any time over six months of homelessness can significantly increase the risk of harmful health effects on the children. Children that experienced both pre- and post-natal homelessness showed they were 99 percent more likely to have poor health compared to when children experienced just one of them they were only 41 percent more likely. They also showed that when they experienced both of these they were 60 percent more likely to experience developmental delays. It seems that the main effect of children experiencing homelessness is developmental delays.

In conclusion, the research I investigated showed that there were definite effects on children that experienced homelessness. These effects mostly revolved around developmental issues, but could be branched out to other things if a child were to experience malnutrition or other problems while the family is homeless. Now it is a tough problem to fix because, well alone it is hard to solve the issue of homelessness let alone family homelessness. But with some help from teachers or students there could be options for children to learn and play in these shelters and potentially alleviate some of the outcomes.

## References

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