



BEYOND BELIEF NETWORK

Beyond Belief Network Guides: National Homeless Youth Awareness Month

November is [National Homeless Youth Awareness Month](#). As many as [550,000 unaccompanied single youth and young adults](#) up to age 24 experience a homelessness episode longer than one week. This month, help raise awareness about this issue. If you decide to do a service event, don't forget to submit a [report](#) telling us how it went. You can also email us for help!

Youth Homelessness Facts

- **Homeless Youth.** It's not always an easy task to identify homeless youth. Unlike homeless individuals in other age ranges, they're less likely to spend time in the same place. They may also be unwilling to reveal that they are homeless. Approximately, [380,000 youths under the age of 18](#) may experience a homelessness episode longer than a week. 50,000 American youths experience homelessness for a period of six months or more. Given the difficulty of counting homeless youth, this figure is likely underrepresented.
- **LGBTQ Homeless Youth.** [Homeless youth that identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered, or questioning](#) experience higher rates of physical and sexual assault. There is also a higher incidence of mental health problems and unsafe sexual behaviors than heterosexual homeless youth. Currently, less than a dozen non-profit organizations nation-wide offer focused services to LGBTQ homeless youth, and most are on the east or west coast.
- **Potential Solutions.** There are potential solutions to this situation, but they will take time and effort. All communities need to improve data collection and performance measurement as well as how they respond to crises. Collaboration with mainstream systems to prioritize family reunification or support as part of an initial intervention is also crucial. Finally, communities need to work to expand the reach and effectiveness of transitional living programs.

Event Ideas

- **Volunteer.** In any given community, there are [homelessness-related programs that are in need of volunteers](#). If you're part of a volunteer group, consider helping at a youth

housing organization or supporting housing program. Employment is another issue for homeless youth; consider offering to help individuals with the interview process (ex. filling out a resume, how to prepare for an interview, etc.)

- **Fundraise.** Host a fundraiser and donate the proceeds to a local shelter that caters to homeless youth. Invite a representative from the shelter to speak at the event. If your volunteer group is part of [Beyond Belief Network](#), the event would be considered as a Volunteers Beyond Belief event. Perfect for teams looking to raise their BBN team level!
- **Advocate.** Advocacy is just as important as donating time and funds. Support homeless youth programs or policies at the local, state, or federal level. Contact your representatives and urge them to vote.

Questions or Concerns?

If you need help with planning your event or have additional questions, the best way to contact Beyond Belief Network is to use the [contact webform](#), which enables us to track the resolution of your question. You can also email us at bbn@foundationbeyondbelief.org.