Family Homelessness in New York City

As homelessness reaches record levels, it has a profound impact on New York City’s families and children.

In 2017, more than two-thirds of the population in DHS shelters were families with children. Within those families, approximately half were aged 13 and under. The vast majority of homeless families are Black and Hispanic. Among the heads of families staying in DHS Shelters, 57 percent were Black and 37 percent were Hispanic in 2017, which exceeds their share of the family household population across NYC.

Median Monthly Rent, 2012 and 2017

- Bronx: $1,024
- Brooklyn: $1,101
- Manhattan: $1,286
- Queens: $1,172
- Staten Is.: $1,079

Average number of families with children in shelter per day in New York City

- FY13: 9,480
- FY18: 12,619
- Change, FY13-18: ↑28%

Homelessness and the affordability crisis are two sides of the same coin.

Homelessness is a citywide issue, but it has a disproportionate impact on young children and families of color in poverty.

Total Population in DHS Shelters (2017)

- Families with Children
- Adult Families
- Single Adults

Age Breakdown, Families with Children (2017)

- 0–5
- 6–13
- 14–17
- Adults 18 and over

Race/Ethnicity of Head of Households (2017)

- Asian
- White, Non-Hispanic
- Hispanic
- Black, Non-Hispanic

Family homelessness is increasingly felt in New York City classrooms. More students than ever before are in temporary housing.

Not all shelter facilities offer services for families with children.

Number of Families with Children, by Shelter Facility Type (Sept. 2018)

- Cluster Sites: 1,691
- Commercial Hotels: 2,781
- Tier II Shelter: 8,644

Cluster Sites: Private apartment buildings used as temporary shelter for families. Social services are not provided on site.
Commercial Hotels: Private, for-profit hotels used to shelter families. Social services are not provided on site.
Tier II Shelter: Apartment or single-room shelters run by non-profit organizations and DHS. Social services are provided on site.

This increase was driven by students who are ‘Doubled up’—living temporarily with friends or relatives. Ten years ago, most homeless students were living in city shelters; for the 2017-2018 school year, 62% of homeless students were doubled up.

Sources:
- Data Dashboard Tables Fiscal Year 2017; Case Census by Borough, Community District, and Facility Type, October 2018.
- NYS-TEACHS. Data on Student Homelessness in NYC, Student Information Repository System.