Our Platform
Almost 70% of New York City homeless shelter users are families with children. The Department of Homeless Services shelters house more than 13,000 families with over 24,000 children. At least 1,500 additional families with another 2,800 children and youth use shelters operated by other city agencies. Homelessness is traumatic for everyone but especially for children because of the long-term negative impacts it has on their physical and mental health, education, and the likelihood they will experience homelessness as an adult. Several indicators point to the extent of this crisis and its potential long-term effect on children:

- 62% of children in shelters are chronically absent from school
- Half of all homeless families with children are placed in cluster sites or commercial hotels without sufficient access to proper social services, kitchens, laundry services, or recreational space.
- The average length of shelter stays for homeless families is well over a year.
- Almost 20 percent of adults who are now homeless were first in the shelter system as children.

Addressing The Crisis
The Family Homelessness Coalition (FHC) urges the City of New York to launch a coordinated effort focused on eliminating homelessness among children over the next 2 years. Because family homelessness has different root causes—e.g., income inequality, the scarcity of affordable housing, and domestic violence—the City’s approach must be multi-pronged. A collaborative, cross-agency effort is necessary to:

- **Strengthen** prevention and post-shelter services for families with children who are homeless or at risk of homelessness
- **Provide** safe and appropriate purpose-built shelters that promote child and family well-being when homelessness is unavoidable
- **Create** more permanent housing with access to services for homeless families

Who We Are
The Family Homelessness Coalition, a coalition representing service providers, housing providers, children’s organizations, and advocacy organizations, urges New York City to launch a coordinated, multi-agency, collaborative effort focused on the needs of homeless children and their families to prevent homelessness where possible, improve the well-being of children and families in shelter, and support the long-term stability of children and families who leave shelter.
Initiatives Supported By FHC

Strengthen prevention and post-shelter services for at-risk families
• Provide homelessness prevention services for families at risk of homelessness and for homeless families leaving shelters by developing neighborhood-based services
• Expand rapid rehousing to help domestic violence survivors remain safely in place or move quickly to permanent housing
• Improve public awareness of and access to information about housing resources and services

Promote child and family well-being when shelter is unavoidable
• Ensure educational stability for homeless children by quickly arranging transportation to school and increasing the number of Bridging the Gap social workers in public schools
• Ensure that that homeless parents and very young children receive needed supports including home visiting, early intervention, child care, and connections to after-school and summer programming
• Improve the living environment and access to services for families in hotels by addressing the need for nutritious food, recreation, social supports, and clean laundry

Create more permanent housing resources for homeless children and their families
• Develop a long-term project-based rent subsidy for HPD homeless set-aside units
• Support a State rent subsidy program for very low-income families who are homeless or at risk of homelessness
• Increase the number of units set aside for homeless families in all projects receiving City rental subsidies, capital funding, land, zoning bonuses, and/or tax abatements and exemptions
• Develop a service-enriched permanent housing model for vulnerable homeless families who are ineligible for NYC 15/15 supportive housing

Our Steering Committee

Advocates for Children  Enterprise Community Partners  New Destiny Housing
Barrier Free Living  Gateway Housing  Riseboro
CAMBA  Henry Street Settlement  Safe Horizon
Citizens’ Committee for Children  Homeless Services United  Settlement Housing Fund
Coalition for the Homeless  Monadnock Development  The Floating Hospital

Contact Information

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