

# **NATIONAL HUNGER & HOMELESSNESS AWARENESS WEEK**

Sponsored by  
National Coalition for the Homeless  
National Student Campaign against Hunger & Homelessness

**November 14 – 22, 2015**

**RESOLVE** **TO FIGHT**  
**POVERTY**



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## Introduction

As the Thanksgiving holiday approaches, people take time to consider what they're thankful for and donate some of their time, attention and resources to others. In the spirit of thankfulness and giving, each year the National Coalition for the Homeless and the National Student Campaign against Hunger and Homelessness designate the week prior to Thanksgiving to sponsor the National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week. Last year during this week, more than 750 high schools, colleges, community groups and faith-based groups from cities across the United States came together to bring awareness to pressing issues: hunger and homelessness. As NCH enters its fourth decade, we seek to finish the long and difficult road to ending homelessness by solving the root causes of homelessness. This manual serves as a tool to inspire your community or institution to get involved with National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week!

## Considering Participation

If you and your group are considering participating in the *National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week*, first think about why this week is so important. Participating in *National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week* raises awareness, seeks to combat hunger and homelessness in your community, and bolsters the national social movement to end these social ills.

By doing even one event, you elevate consciousness of the national disgrace of homelessness, which is deeply vital work. Your participation in *National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week* will help build solidarity necessary among your friends and peers and the understanding necessary to heal the social issues of hunger and homelessness. Events such as hunger banquets, "One Night without a Home", and camp-outs can bring light to the horrific suffering many people face daily. We encourage you to discuss participation with community leaders and school administrators in *National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week*. Together we can eliminate the myth that hunger and homelessness are inevitable consequences of our society and recognize that ending hunger and homelessness is an achievable goal.

## Planning Ahead

Early planning is important. November 14-22, 2015 will arrive before you know it. Begin by reaching out and enlisting interested individuals. You may also want to reach out to organizations willing to participate and/or offer assistance. The more time you spend brainstorming, planning, and organizing now, the better your week will go in November. *If this will be your first time participating in National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week, remember that you do not need an event for each day. It might be better to focus up on one or two well-planned, well-attended events to increase your impact without increasing your workload. Perhaps choose one or two events that will be well planned, focused and vibrant.* Hunger and homelessness cannot be eliminated in a

week, but a creative, dedicated, and timely effort will contribute greatly to the national endeavor.

## How?

First off, you need a team. A small, dedicated group of people can make-up the main planning team, but you will undoubtedly need a larger support system. It is crucial that you are constantly recruiting individuals by promoting your events while obtaining input from people. Ask people what they would like to see and they will show up to your event. Hunger and Homelessness touches many communities and groups, do not be afraid to reach out to a large coalition. For example, many school children go to school hungry and do not have a home to go to, this may be a great selling point for collaboration from all education groups. Have a clear deadline for involvement and idea discussion and then nail dates and times down!

Who is your audience and focus for your event? Is it children, the elderly, college students, and/or policymakers?

Here is a sample checklist of some, but not all questions that you will need to answer:

- How many and which events should we plan for?
- When and where should the events take place?
- How many people should coordinate each event?
- Who should handle publicity?
- What is the best meeting time (preferably weekly) for everyone?
- What community organizations would help us by co-sponsoring the week?
- Who is knowledgeable about organizing events within the community?
- What are creative ways to educate the public on the events and the issue?
- What is the local political landscape?
- What would people experiencing homelessness like to see in H&H week?

## REGISTRATION

Before you get started please take a moment to register your Awareness Week on both the websites of the National Coalition for the Homeless and the National Student Campaign Against Hunger & Homelessness. This is vital and will help us keep record of national involvement to further push policymakers in DC.

National Coalition for the Homeless:

<http://www.nationalhomeless.org/projects/awareness/index.html>

National Student Campaign Against Hunger and Homelessness:

<http://www.studentsagainsthunger.org/>

We would also benefit from any feedback you can provide on events you hosted during Awareness Week so we can improve our support in the following years.

Good luck as you begin organizing!



## EDUCATION

In any endeavor, education is essential. Be able to speak confidently about why you want to, and why you think your community should, participate in *National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week*. Statistics are important, but stories allow an emotional connection, which often increases participation; know your audience. Listed below are a number of websites that you can utilize to educate yourself and your community about issues regarding hunger and homelessness. Try not to lecture but involve your audience when you discuss homelessness. Ask them what they think and take a look at NCH's awareness programs like its [Speaker's Bureau](#) (including the [Speaker Bios](#)) and its various [YouTube videos](#).

National Coalition for the Homeless  
<http://www.nationalhomeless.org>

National Student Campaign Against Hunger and Homelessness  
<http://www.studentsagainsthunger.org>

Videos and books are great tools when educating yourself and the public about hunger and homelessness. For recommendations on both informative and entertaining books and videos, please contact the National Coalition for Homeless at: [info@nationalhomeless.org](mailto:info@nationalhomeless.org); 202-462-4822

Below are three videos produced by the National Coalition for the Homeless.

"Faces of Homelessness I"

*The NCH video that features images of America's homeless people. This 13-minute video features images taken by award-winning photographers from around the country accompanied with powerful homeless-themed music that enables the viewer to get a sense of who is homeless in America. Available on YouTube.*

“Faces of Homelessness II”

*DVD was done by a trio of student filmmakers who interviewed a number of homeless people in the nation's capital. Available on YouTube.*

“The National Coalition for the Homeless: Bringing America Home”

*A short documentary that outlines the history and promotes the work of the National Coalition for the Homeless. Available on YouTube.*

## **SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES AND IDEAS**

Below is a list of suggested events and ideas for National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week. Please feel free to develop new activities. If you think your idea went well, please let us know so we can add it to our list and publicize it for next year!

### **Criminalization Theme**

- This year the National Coalition for the Homeless has taken interest in the de-criminalization of the homeless. Given the recent food sharing bans in cities across the U.S. that impose fines and even jail time for the disbursement of food to hungry and homeless individuals, we believe these issues are interrelated. This marks an important moment in history where not only are homeless individuals criminalized for sitting, standing, sleeping, and eating in public spaces, but service providers are also criminalized for providing life-sustaining aid to these vulnerable populations. We believe it is important to bring awareness to the conjunction of these issues that have fundamental implications for us all. In NCH's long history of advocacy many battles have been won, however, the larger struggle of homelessness persists and demonstrates the necessity of advocates looking for root-solutions to root causes.

Contact NCH to be added to our social media list where you can receive updates about the criminalization of the homeless and efforts to end this unconstitutional practice.

### **Popular Awareness Week Events**

- Organize a “One Night Without a Home” awareness sleep out in front of city hall or on a nearby college campus. (See the detailed description included on p. 21)

- Organize Oxfam America's *Hunger Banquet* or *Dining Hall Fast* in your community. (See the detailed description included on p. 27-28)

## Educational Events

- Host educational forums on hunger and homelessness. Invite speakers, such as individuals who have experienced homelessness, service providers, and community speakers to share their experiences. The National Coalition for the Homeless can refer you to Faces of Homelessness Speakers' Bureaus that operate in 16 states, Washington, DC, and Puerto Rico. Show videos and distribute fact sheets or other informational material (refer to the National Coalition for the Homeless' website: [www.nationalhomeless.org](http://www.nationalhomeless.org)).
- Organize a movie night with homelessness/hunger-related feature films or documentaries. Contact NCH for our recommendations. Request that attendees bring a non-perishable food item to donate. Have a local business or group donate popcorn and other refreshments.
- Organize a book reading and discussion group. Contact NCH for our recommendations. Helpful hint: see if there are any local authors in your community who have written on hunger and homelessness who would be willing to host a book reading/signing.
- Arrange a trip to an elementary school and read a children's book on hunger or homelessness while having the teacher facilitate an age-appropriate discussion.
- Homelessness Saturday or Sunday. Have religious institutions such as churches, synagogues, temples, or mosques focus their religious services on homelessness/hunger issues. Prayer breakfasts/meetings and candlelight vigils are also good ways to involve religious institutions.

## Community Building Events

- Organize a potluck dinner in which community members bring in a dish for themselves and three other persons. Invite individuals who are currently or formerly homeless as guests in order to encourage community interaction. Remember to choose a neutral site for the dinner — a convenient place with no religious affiliation.

- Arrange a Community Service Day where people can volunteer at different local organizations and learn about their activities. Suggested contacts: food pantries, homeless shelters, and soup kitchens (See NCH Directory: <http://www.nationalhomeless.org/directories/index.html>).
- Organize a Cardboard Brigade in your community. Miami-Dade County, FL successfully organized 40 cardboard brigades across the community encouraging citizens and students to make cardboard signs and take to the streets, stressing the importance of ending homelessness and raising awareness.
- Host an Open-Mic Night in a local coffee shop. Invite all community members to share poetry, prose, and thoughts on homelessness and hunger.
- Organize a Food Stamp Challenge in which participants attempt to eat on a food stamp budget for a week or a day. Some Congressional members and elected officials have taken the challenge (<http://foodstampchallenge.typepad.com/>); invite your local government officials to take the challenge with community members.
- Construct a community quilt. This is great for classrooms/students. Each person can contribute a square that relates to an aspect of homelessness and poverty that is meaningful to them. For more information view this example from Ms. Rhoads' 4<sup>th</sup> grade class in Yarmouth, Maine: <http://voicethread.com/#q.b1014788.i5411859>
- Organize a "We are All Homeless" event in your community during which non-homeless individuals hold-up signs asking for money, in order to raise awareness about homelessness. Volunteers can also give out information directing individuals to local homelessness/hunger charities/service providers. For more information view this example form Dallas, Texas <http://www.the33tv.com/news/kdaf-we-are-all-homeless-story,0,6452650.story>
- Organize a "Living in a Car" event in which volunteers take shifts living in a car for twenty-four hours in a public area to simulate how some homeless live while raising awareness about the plight of the homeless. A great example can be seen at: <http://www.tcpalm.com/news/2010/oct/04/hfc-joins-national-hunger-and-homelessness-awarene/>
- Organize collection of non-perishable items such as food, hygiene products, clothing, blankets, books, toys etc at local business.

## **Fundraising and Drives for Hunger and Homelessness Causes**



- Organize a drive to collect non-perishable items such as food, hygiene products, clothing, blankets, books, and toys. Involve the community organizations in a competition to see which group can collect the most donations. Helpful hint: **talk with local service providers to research what items are most needed in your community.**
- Designate one day for community members to skip a meal or embark on a fast. Instead of purchasing lunch that day, they can donate the money that they would have spent to hungry people in their community or prepare food for homeless people.
- Sponsor a bake sale or raffle. Donate collected money to NCH or a local shelter.
- Arrange a walk or a run. Have each participant collect sponsorship money; set a minimum, such as \$20 per participant. Donate collected money to NCH or a local shelter. Encourage local businesses to donate food and drinks. Encourage local bands to provide entertainment.
- Sponsor a gallery night by selling artwork created by homeless individuals, the proceeds to be donated to local homelessness/hunger organizations or directly to the homeless whose artwork is being sold.
- Organize an “Empty Bowls” fundraiser, in conjunction with an art department or local art center. Volunteers create ceramic bowls, which are then used to serve a simple meal of soup and bread. Guests at the meal give a suggested donation of ten dollars in exchange for the meal and the bowl, which they keep as a reminder of their experiences at the meal. The money raised is used to support local, national, or international hunger relief efforts. Empty Bowls is an ideal fundraiser to be combined with an educational event. Contact Empty Bowls at [www.emptybowls.net/](http://www.emptybowls.net/)
- Develop challenges associated with awareness events like donating whatever one brings to a sleep out event (i.e. tent, umbrella, sleeping bag, tarp).

## Advocacy Events

- Camp out in front of the halls of power to show solidarity with people experiencing homelessness *and* to make a visible statement to policy makers and citizens alike that policy must change!

- Consider gathering community stakeholders. Schedule a meeting between politicians, policy makers, people experiencing homelessness, social service organizations, and faith-based organizations.
- Think Globally, Act Locally--Washington, D.C. is not the only place that lobbying is possible! Gather a group of students and homeless/formerly homeless individuals and visit your city hall, county commission, state legislature and/or a local office of your Congressional representative or Senator. Because of inadequate state funding, homelessness persists, politicians need to know the importance of public funding. Focus on educating your audience on issues concerning homelessness and what ideas you have to better the situation. For more tips on lobbying effectively see the lobbying Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section in this packet or on NCH's website:  
[http://www.nationalhomeless.org/advocacy/lobbying\\_101.html](http://www.nationalhomeless.org/advocacy/lobbying_101.html).
- Have a booth where people can write to their Congressional representatives about the importance of programs for homeless persons. (See Bread for the World Offering of Letters description included in this packet).
- Attempt to integrate policy agendas into events in order to provide participants with an agenda to write representatives about, adding a way for people to push for ending hunger and homelessness at its sources (economic and health care policies for example). This could involve some sort of skill clinic that represents the importance of training and apprenticeship programs needed to help homeless people enter the skilled workforce. Similarly, having the event closely affiliated with a hospital could serve as a backdrop for insisting on implementing Medicaid's expansion.
- Register homeless and low-income people to vote.
- Have people come together and discuss the issues surrounding homelessness. Then write their opinions in Letters to the Editor in their local, state, and national newspapers.

All of these ideas leave plenty of room for ingenuity. Take one of these ideas and change it as you see fit, or combine components of multiple ideas, such as:

Check out the National Student Campaign Against Hunger and Homelessness website for more ideas that are specifically geared towards college campuses and students, such as the Spare Change for Social Change initiative, and Swipe Twice for Hunger.  
<http://www.studentsagainsthunger.org>

## **Business/Corporate Involvement**

Involvement in Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week is by no means solely limited to school-related and community events, corporate involvement can help bring light to hunger and homelessness. As well as possibly being an important component in funding or providing donations for community events, your business's own initiatives add a much needed benefit to the cause, but also can serve as a tool to promote your business.

- Businesses often have access to resources that can create important and unique opportunities for fundraising. This can include a business's access to buying supplies in bulk for relatively inexpensive costs, which makes clothing or food drives for example more affordable and successful. It also might involve service-oriented businesses providing their respective features (like Laundromats washing homeless people's clothes).
- Involvement in Hunger and Homelessness Awareness week helps promote the particular business as a trusted and locally active one, due to its involvement in the community and support of important initiatives on behalf of its interests. There can be both long-term and short-term impacts on a business's successes, where the long-term benefits involve the previously mentioned positive effects on reputation and the short-term could result from increasing customers' incentives to patronize the particular business.
- A particular business could pledge to donate a percentage of proceeds (perhaps from meals at a restaurant) to benefit a local homeless shelter or advocacy organization.
- Businesses have the option to utilize their corporate atmospheres uniquely, so as to incentivize donations or personal involvement with community events through their employees. This might involve something like allowing those who donate to shelters or advocacy organizations to dress down for a week or take an extended lunch break.

A truly successful Awareness Week for any contributor will inspire people to become further involved with the issues of hunger and homelessness, and support political initiatives that would contribute to ending root causes. At the end of this packet is a list of advocacy groups with whom people could work to continue their involvement. These organizations, along with other local ideas of how people can become more involved with the issue of homelessness on a more regular basis, should be advertised throughout your Awareness Week events.

## **MEDIA**

An important component of National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week is publicity. The outcome of your event will depend largely on your ability to advertise prior to the event. A good use of the media will get people in your community to start thinking about hunger and homelessness and inspire them to take part in the events during the week. In order to get the word out and involve the community as much as possible, you need to alert your local media early on in your organizing process. *It is important to notify both campus and community media sources. Let them know about the events of Awareness Week.*

### **How to utilize the Media**

- Find multiple media outlets in your community such as newspapers and radio stations.
- Urge media to publish/run/air educational information as well as stories from homeless people and social service agencies. Since many news organizations aggregate their content. Suggest articles to them?
- Have your Awareness Week events published on Community Event Boards.
- One week before National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week, step up the publicity to make sure that Awareness Week is on everyone's mind. During the week, continue to work full force with the media to gather as many participants as possible for the events. Please see the sample news release we have included as a guide (p.14).

### **Other Publicizing Techniques**

- It is helpful to be creative in advertising your activities. Some suggestions are t-shirts, posters, bookmarks, or door hangers.
- The graphics department at a local school may be willing to help you create flyers and posters for the events, as well as fact sheets with information about hunger and homelessness. NCH Factsheets: <http://www.nationalhomeless.org/factsheets/index.html>
- Great places to hang flyers and posters include: local restaurants, businesses, college campuses, and service organizations. Make sure to get permission.

- In addition to the media, radio, and flyers, social network sites such as Facebook and Twitter are another good way to get the word out. Remember to keep tabs on NCH's Facebook and H & H week event page: <https://www.facebook.com/events/285913644850710/> as well as its Twitter account [https://twitter.com/Ntl\\_Homeless](https://twitter.com/Ntl_Homeless) throughout the entire process.
- Distribute your information (fact sheets and overview of the week's events) to community organizations.
- E-mail can be a great reminder as Awareness Week draws closer. Urge each community organization to participate—interest them in joining a canned food drive, promoting Awareness Week within their organization, and sending at least a few representatives to each event.
- Another idea for publicity, which is inexpensive and effective, is to enlist students or community residents to announce Awareness Week and the events to their classes or at work. Professors and employers are usually very supportive of this idea and should not mind giving a couple of minutes of class time to promote National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week.
- If you are on a college campus, using chalk on well-traveled sidewalks is another great way to publicize to a large number of people.

**Make sure you let the National Coalition for the Homeless and the National Student Campaign Against Hunger & Homelessness know about Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week in your community!**

Registration Form:

<http://www.nationalhomeless.org/projects/awareness/index.html>

Contact: Kyra Habekoss

National Coalition for the Homeless

Phone: (202) 462-4822

Email: [khhabekoss@nationalhomeless.org](mailto:khhabekoss@nationalhomeless.org)

Contact: James Dubick

National Student Campaign Against Hunger & Homelessness

Phone: (213) 840-2880

Email: [info@studentsagainsthunger.org](mailto:info@studentsagainsthunger.org)

## **SAMPLE NEWS RELEASE**

ATTENTION LOCAL MEDIA  
November 1, 2015

Contact: (Your Name)  
(Local Group Name)  
(123) 555-HHAW

On (date), 2015, (Local Group Name) will be sponsoring a Faces of Homelessness forum as part of National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week. The forum will be held at (place) at (time). The forum will include the following guest speakers:

Ms. \_\_\_\_\_, homeless mother of two living in (your city or state).  
Mr. \_\_\_\_\_, homeless man living in (your city or state).  
Ms. \_\_\_\_\_, director of your city or statewide homeless/housing coalition.  
Mr. \_\_\_\_\_, director of a local shelter in (your city or state).  
\_\_\_\_\_, president of your student hunger/homelessness organization

National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week (November 14-22, 2015) is a national endeavor by the National Coalition for the Homeless to promote education, action, and awareness about hunger and homelessness. (Local Group Name) is sponsoring this important effort in (your community). Other events include a "One Night Without a Home," (date), a canned food drive, and a Hunger Banquet (date).

For more information, please call (Your Name) at (your number).  
Thank you for your time and attention.

**\*\*Note:** Distribute similar news releases for each of your events. Perhaps you might choose to submit a news release that presents an overview of the entire week and then submit an individual news release for each event.

## **Sample Proclamation**

A RESOLUTION PROCLAIMING NOVEMBER 14-22, 2015 AS  
NATIONAL HUNGER AND HOMELESSNESS AWARENESS WEEK IN

\_\_\_\_\_.

By Your City Council/Mayor/County/Commission:

\_\_\_\_\_

Date Proclamation Issued:\_\_\_\_\_

WHEREAS, for the past several years the National Coalition for the Homeless and National Student Campaign Against Hunger and Homelessness have sponsored National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of the proclamation is to educate the public and advocate with and on behalf of people experiencing homelessness about the many reasons people are hungry and homeless including the shortage of affordable housing in \_\_\_\_\_ for very low income residents; and to encourage support for homeless assistance service providers as well as community service opportunities for students and school service organizations; and

WHEREAS, there are many organizations committed to sheltering, providing supportive services as well as meals and food supplies to people experiencing homelessness including: \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_; and

WHEREAS, the theme of National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week 2015 is “Being homeless is not a crime,” and

WHEREAS, the \_\_\_\_\_ recognize that hunger and homelessness continues to be a serious problem for many individuals and families in \_\_\_\_\_; and

WHEREAS, the intent of National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week is consistent with the activities of \_\_\_\_\_ (local organizations).

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the \_\_\_\_\_ hereby proclaims November 14-22, 2015 as National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the \_\_\_\_\_ encourages all citizens to recognize that many people do not have housing and need support from citizens, and private/public nonprofit service entities.

## Sample Week

A major component of scheduling for Awareness Week is to begin with “kick-off” events and work up to the larger events, even if you have only a couple of activities planned for the week. Planning your community’s Awareness Week in this manner allows residents in your community to increase their involvement as the week progresses. By doing this, you should have greater participation for your larger events.

Below is an outline of a possible National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week. This sample has been compiled from campuses and communities that have previously held an Awareness Week. *Your organization should determine how many and which events will be the most appropriate for your community.*

Remember, if you are new to planning an awareness week, one or two focused events will be more effective than five or six marginally organized events. Refer back to the “Suggested Activities” section (p. 6) for more event ideas and details about the events listed below.

### **Weekend**

Hold a “Homelessness Saturday or Sunday.” Have religious institutions such as churches, synagogues, temples, and mosques focus their religious services on homelessness/poverty issues.

### **Monday**

Have a kick-off event to start a money-raising or canned food/blanket drive competition.

### **Tuesday**

Faces of Homelessness Speakers’ Panel

### **Wednesday**

“One Night without a Home” Awareness Sleep Out

### **Thursday**

Oxfam America’s Hunger Banquet and/or Dining Hall Fast

### **Friday**

1. Think Globally, Act locally- Washington, D.C. isn’t the only place that lobbying is possible!
2. End-of-the-week benefit festival. Have local musicians, canned food for admission, donation collection, and information available on how people can continue to be involved in hunger and homelessness issues.

### **Saturday**

Organize a group to work at various community service sites as part of Community Service Day. Throughout the week, have sign-up sheets available.

### **Saturday/Sunday**

Set up a Homeless Challenge Project, see page 22 for details.

### **Remember!**



During National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week, as community members begin to really think about hunger and homelessness issues, it is crucial that you provide information on how they can take action after Awareness Week has concluded. Provide them with the following information and any other material that you believe is important for your own community.

- The name, address, email, and phone number of a local shelter at which they can volunteer.
- The names, addresses and phone numbers of local, state, and national homeless coalitions and advocacy groups which they can join. Contact the national organizations listed at the end of this packet to be referred to their local affiliates.
- Information about writing Members of Congress.
- Information about Alternative Breaks, which allow community members to spend a weeklong break doing service. Call **BreakAway at (800) 903-0646** or at <http://alternativebreaks.org> for more information.

## **Wrapping-Up Awareness Week**

When National Hunger and Homeless Awareness Week has concluded, there will still be a few loose ends that you will need to tie up. First, remember to send thank you letters to all of your contacts and your support network. You or other Awareness Week organizers will probably refer to these same people in the future. Also, meet with your team to discuss what went right and what went wrong during Awareness Week. Make sure everyone evaluates their own project, as well as how they viewed Awareness Week as a whole. Gather these individual and group evaluations to comprise a resource folder—one that you and other groups will be able to refer to in following years. This resource will allow you to have a foundation upon which to build your future Awareness Weeks.

AND...

**Contact the National Coalition for the Homeless and let us know how your Awareness Week was received by the community — send us newspaper clippings, posters, commentary and other news! Follow link to the online form: <http://www.nationalhomeless.org/projects/awareness/index.html>**

## **FACES OF HOMELESSNESS PANEL**

### **What is a Faces Panel?**

A Faces Panel provides an opportunity for dialogue between individuals who have experienced homelessness with those who want to learn more about homelessness. The Panel members speak about their experiences and answer questions from the audience. <http://www.nationalhomeless.org/faces/index.html>

### **Why do a Faces Panel?**

The Faces Panel makes a very powerful impact on those who attend. People are provided with a personal connection to the homeless statistics that they have heard. Myths can be dispelled and stereotypes can be broken down as the audience gets a chance to interact with homeless people. Audience members can listen to the perspectives and stories of those who are homeless and hear their ideas for solutions to hunger and homelessness issues.

### **Tips for Recruiting Homeless People as Speakers**

- If you know homeless people who would like to speak, ask them directly.
- Send letters to/call your local shelters asking them if someone from their shelter would like to speak. It's good to get a few "success stories" of people who are no longer homeless, as well as stories of people who are currently homeless. If you contact the shelter, you need to make follow-up calls to make sure the speakers will come. Sometimes shelters are not willing to let their clients speak. Shelters that house women fleeing domestic abuse, families, or youth, often want their clients to concentrate on their own problems and are sometimes protective. If possible, organize a diverse group of speakers (age, race, sex, homeless/formerly homeless).
- Make sure to arrange transportation for your speakers; this can include giving them bus/cab fare or simply picking them up. Sometimes the shelter will assign a staff member/volunteer to transport the client to and from the event.
- Make sure to contact the shelter and inform them that a resident will be speaking on your campus, and ensure that the speaker(s) will not lose their beds for the night if they return late.
- Be sure to compensate the speakers with an honorarium: \$40 is a suggested amount for local speakers, but feel free to give more.
- Invite the speakers to eat in your school cafeteria before the event.

## Other

- Make sure to get the community and campus media to cover the event. Consider videotaping the panel.
- To get the speakers started, meet with them beforehand and ask that they address the following in their presentations: if they are formerly homeless — what their life was like before homelessness, what their life was like while they were homeless, what brought them out of homelessness, and how their life is currently. If the speakers are currently homeless, have them share what their life was like before homelessness, what it is like to be homeless, and what their hopes and dreams are for the future. Ideally, each speaker should talk for 10-15 minutes.
- Take questions from the floor. Let the audience know that there is no question that is off limits. You should mention that some speakers may get a little emotional if posed with certain questions. Expect tears when people are asked about their contact/relationships with family. Francine, a speaker for the National Coalition for the Homeless, invited a student to give her a hug after the student said, with tears running down her face, that she was sorry that her mother gave her the wrong perception of homeless people. Another speaker, John, wrote a song about being homeless and not one eye in a room was dry after it was performed.
- Obtain a moderator to introduce the speakers. This moderator should be someone that knows about homelessness on a local or national level. It can be a student homeless activist. It is sometimes hard for homeless people to relate to people with homes, and vice versa. Therefore, it is necessary for the moderator to act as a bridge between the two. The moderator can also interject statistics and other important information in between the stories of the speakers. Generally, the moderator is a local advocate/student who is working on homelessness issues.

For more information, contact with the National Coalition for the Homeless at (202) 462-4822 or [speakersbureau@nationalhomeless.org](mailto:speakersbureau@nationalhomeless.org)



## **“ONE NIGHT WITHOUT A HOME”**

“One Night Without a Home” Awareness Sleep Out takes place nationally during Awareness Week.

The “One Night” is an opportunity for residents to spend a night outside to discuss, think, and learn about homelessness. Although one night outside can in no way simulate homelessness, this awareness-raising activity can promote advocacy, awareness, and education.

### **Format**

- “One Night Without a Home” usually lasts for about 12 hours, often from 7pm until morning.
- Develop your mission statement. Address the questions of who, what, where, when, and why?
- Make sure to receive permission right away from your city or county officials and community/school administrators concerning location, security, and other logistics.
- Invite homeless/formerly homeless people, community leaders, residents and community spokespersons to speak.
- Choose an appropriate site (central to community activities).

- Ask local businesses for donations (food, drinks, supplies, money).
- Ask other groups to co-sponsor the event, such as organizations (e.g. Food Not Bombs, Habitat for Humanity) that can serve food to homeless guests.
- Prepare group discussion topics that will promote interaction among all participants.
- Begin the night with a vigil or a march to draw attention, as well as participants, to the event.
- Include information that allows participants to act upon what they've learned (community service, letter writing, advocacy organizations).
- In the morning, allow time for participants to share their thoughts and concerns.

### **Sample Agenda**

6:00 p.m.	Gather participants and provide transportation for homeless/formerly homeless guests
7:00 p.m.	Serve coffee and/or a meal
8:00 p.m.	Speakers/candlelight vigil/music
9:00 p.m.	Discussion groups
11:00 p.m.	Late night food line/music
7:00 a.m.	Breakfast /closing remarks/wrap-up

### **Additional suggestions**

- Be mindful of what you bring. Keep in mind the situation that you are simulating; do not bring any objects or goodies that those without a home most likely lack. Do not bring cell phones, laptop computers, I-pads or portable radios. Stay away from having pizza delivered. For college groups, alcoholic beverages are not allowed.
- Consider bringing supplies to donate to the homeless. Anything you bring for additional comfort would be greatly appreciated by someone who undergoes the experience every night.
- Contact local shelters or homeless advocates about bringing homeless people to your event. Ask these contacts to participate in the Night as well.
- Ask local musicians to play. Music brings people together.
- Distribute fact sheets and information about hunger and homelessness and the other events for Awareness Week.
- Make sure to recruit other people to participate in your early planning stages. Ask homeless/formerly homeless people, students, faculty, and community members.
- Invite the media.
- Post a list of rules on the night of the event. These may include: 1) no drugs or alcohol, 2) do not interrupt those who are speaking, 3) respect all

views, 4) do not leave the site. Also, post and announce the agenda, people in charge, bathroom locations, indoor sites, food and first aid stations. You may choose to put a container out for donations.

- Designate a facilitator to mediate any disputes that may arise also designate a person in charge of representing the group to media so that the message is rehearsed and clear.
- Set aside some time for group discussion about hunger and homelessness in your community and/or in our nation. Provide paper and pencils for people to jot down their ideas. This is a good time to promote future projects, such as a day of fasting.

## Wrap-Up

Appoint a committee to draft a group resolution based on the discussions that night. Establish a common ground for participants who would like to take future action. Collect names, phone numbers, and email addresses of people for future reference and provide access to information on local service sites.

For more information, contact the National Coalition for the Homeless at (202) 462-4822; Email: [khabekoss@nationalhomeless.org](mailto:khabekoss@nationalhomeless.org).

## Homeless Challenge Project

Challenge the people and leaders of your community to take a Homeless Challenge (formerly called the urban plunge), a life-altering experience with the power to effect change.. This program asks individuals from economically privileged backgrounds to give up every day things (i.e. cell phones, warm bed, and shelter), and live on the streets as a person experiencing homelessness. The experience typically lasts for 48 hours.

The Homeless Challenge

([http://www.nationalhomeless.org/projects/Homeless\\_Challenge\\_Project/index.html](http://www.nationalhomeless.org/projects/Homeless_Challenge_Project/index.html)) serves as an educational tool providing awareness to those who participate. While a participant cannot experience homelessness entirely, when a bed and food awaits them at home, the Challenge does offer insight into the life of a person without a home – waiting in soup lines, walking great distances to access services, and feeling ‘invisible’ to those who are not homeless.

## How to Begin

- For a detailed manual about the Homeless Challenge as coordinated by the National Coalition for the Homeless in Washington, DC visit NCH’s website or contact:

**Kyra Habekoss**

Phone: (202) 462-4822

Email: [khabekoss@nationalhomeless.org](mailto:khabekoss@nationalhomeless.org)

The Homeless Challenge works best if coordinated with guides (either currently homeless or formerly homeless peoples) who can stay throughout the night with participants for security reasons. Make sure to recruit enough guides such that each guide stays with a maximum of five participants to avoid large crowds which might draw attention. In addition, a small ratio of guides to participants allows for each participant to partake in genuine conversation with a person who is experiencing or has experienced homelessness, as well as share their day's experiences with their guide and with the other participants. Remember to offer an honorarium to your guides – i.e. \$50 per guide, per night

*Contact local shelters for recommendations of potential guides and to notify staff of your plans. For contact information of local shelters or homeless coalitions, check out the Directories section on NCH's website:*

<http://www.nationalhomeless.org/directories/index.html>

## **Personal Preparation Tips**

- Dress in your worst clothes; they should be old/comfortable, items you won't mind getting dirty.
- Bring along one piece of ID and bury it in your sock
- Wear no jewelry or watches.
- Refrain from taking a shower for at least two days before beginning the challenge. No cologne, deodorant or use of scented soap. Rub unscented baby oil into your hair to make it look as though your hair hasn't been washed in some time.  
For men: don't shave for five days before starting the homeless challenge.
- Wear extra layers of clothes even if it is warm out. Homeless people wear extra clothes as they have no place to store clothes in the daytime and it keeps them warm at night.
- Wear roughed-up old shoes.
- Bring along a sheet of cardboard to use as a mattress. Or this will be one of the items you search for upon hitting the streets.
- Bring along an old blanket. Sleeping bags are okay, such as the flannel ones, but do not use state-of-the-art down sleeping bags. A sheet of plastic or a black garbage bag will also be useful in case of rain or snow.
- Women are encouraged to bring along sanitary napkins, as shelters do not always have these items available for free.

- Bring along a pack of cigarettes, plus matches, to share with homeless people. Giving someone a cigarette is a good way to start a conversation. (NCH does not encourage the habit of smoking. Studies have shown that up to 70% of homeless adults do smoke cigarettes).

### **Activities to Take Part in During Your Homeless Challenge Experience**

- Talk with and listen to other homeless people
- Beg for money. Challenge participants are sometimes reluctant to do this. We're taught that nothing in life is free, that it's better not to ask people for anything. Panhandle rich and poor alike. You're likely to get a better response from the so-called "working poor". Split up, but keep your partner in sight. Panhandle for at least two hours. Re-group to see who was the most successful and what techniques worked best. After completing the challenge, you may give the money that you collect to other homeless people you encounter on the streets or to your local host organization who will see its gets to the unsheltered homeless
- Sleep outside. Don't expect to get much sleep as the police or private security guards might chase you off.
- Do not stay in shelters as you may be taking away a bed from someone who really needs it. Sleep outside, regardless of the weather, with the unsheltered homeless. However, hang out in, or in front of, shelters, day centers, etc. to get to know your fellow homeless people.
- Go into cafeterias and fast food restaurants to look for food scraps left on the tables. Eat the food and stay in the facility until the manager runs you out.
- Go to restaurants and ask if you could sweep the sidewalk for a free sandwich.
- Go into restaurants, hotels, and office buildings and ask if you could use the restroom.
- Eat at local meal programs. In most cities finding food is a relatively easy endeavor so don't worry about eating food meant for homeless people, as there is plenty of food to be found while on the streets. Even if you are not hungry, go to the soup kitchens anyway. This will allow you to interact with other homeless people and familiarize yourself with the various food programs in the city.
- Some religious organizations nationwide still require homeless people to attend services as a condition for getting a meal or a bed for the night. To feel how homeless people are treated by religious institutions, sit in on a mandatory religious service.
- Find a highly visible place to sleep (e.g. park bench, heat/steam grate, bus stop



bench). Go to these places late at night to guarantee you are not taking away someone's favorite spot. If this somehow happens, give up your spot and move somewhere else. Have your partner stay awake at all times. Do this in two-hour shifts.

- Go dumpster diving in search of food and recyclable materials. You might be shocked by the "abundance from the streets." Watch out for needles. Use a stick instead of your hands. If you must use your hands, borrow a pair of gloves.
- Apply for work at fast food restaurants. Tell them you live in a well-known local shelter or live on the streets. Tell them that you don't have an address, but you are willing to come back daily to find out if there are any job openings.

## Candidate Challenge

When planning a Homeless Challenge extend the Challenge to political candidates, incumbents, and other public officials. Contact these local, state, and national political figures to offer them a chance to see how public policy directly affects the homeless and low-income people. In the end, this program might garner the necessary political will to end poverty and homelessness in the United States.

For the Candidate Homeless Challenge, possible alternatives include:

**Homeless Challenge (Short Version):** Same as the above, but anywhere from *12 to 24 hours*. Participants can eat at local meal programs and panhandle. We suggest that this challenge be taken at night.

**Listening Session:** Candidates/public officials, homeless/formerly homeless persons, service providers, and/or advocates have a moderated, frank discussion about public policy, homelessness, poverty issues, etc., as well as the root causes and solutions that will end homelessness/poverty.

**“Walk a Mile in My Shoes”:** Participants are paired with a homeless or formerly homeless person and will spend a half day, or full day together having lunch at a meal program, going to a day-labor office, sharing where they sleep for the night, or just trying to access social services. This is an opportunity for the participant to share quality time with someone who is homeless, someone that will share their struggles and hardships of life on the streets.



## OUTREACH RUN

Get a group together and distribute food, clothing or toiletries to those in need on the streets.

1. Find out who is interested and advertise the opportunity
2. Pick a date and time (daytimes or early evening works best)
3. Contact local shelters and food programs to see what groups already provide outreach to the location you've chosen in order to avoid duplication.
4. Decide what you want to distribute- clothing, food, toiletries or a combination? Collect or purchase supplies needed. Then make bags to organize the donations so they are easy to distribute.
5. Go out on foot or via vehicle onto the streets in your community and engage in conversation with those whom you encounter and ask them if they would like what you have to offer them.

The dialogue/conversation you have with each person you meet is the most important part.

A typical outreach run will last for up to two hours, but it depends on how many things you have and how many people you encounter.

**Outreach Run Fact Sheet and Information Form:** Whether you are doing the Outreach Run in your own community or with NCH in Washington, DC, visit this manual's appendix to view this fact sheet and information form. This includes information on: history, purpose, guidelines, recommendations for what to distribute, length of Outreach Run, and safety tips. Also included are a supplemental form and sample cover letter.



## OXFAM AMERICA'S DINING HALL FAST

This event is great for high school and college campuses that offer meal plans.

“Dining halls on most campuses are operated by a food service company that contracts with the school to prepare and serve students’ meals. On the day of your Dining Hall Fast, students agree to give up one meal, and the food service company agrees to donate a percentage of the cost of that meal to Oxfam. In most cases, the company cannot donate the full cost, since it needs to cover their normal overhead expenses, including paying dining hall staff. Some students have successfully arranged to collect the unused portions of student meal plans at the end of each semester and donate those funds to Oxfam.” ([www.oxfamamerica.org](http://www.oxfamamerica.org))

Go to the [www.oxfamamerica.org](http://www.oxfamamerica.org) for more detailed information and download a free toolkit.

### Guidelines

- *Start early.* Begin your planning four to eight weeks ahead to ensure the dining hall has plenty of time to prepare, and you have plenty of time to publicize.
- *Contact your school's dining service.* Talk with the food service director and explain the details of the fast and what you need from the dining service.
- *Recruit Help.* Gather volunteers to help sign-up fasters, staff information tables, and get the word out.
- *Publicize.* Put up posters, hand out brochures, and set up information tables. Oxfam can provide the materials you need. Send a press release to campus and local media or place an ad in your school newspaper. Get the president of your school or a prominent guest to join your Dining Hall Fast.
- *Educate.* Help participants understand why their involvement is essential. Visit Oxfam's web site— [www.oxfamamerica.org/actfast](http://www.oxfamamerica.org/actfast) —for free materials you can pass out at your event.

### Wrap-Up

- After the Fast, send thank you letters to the food service staff and other contributors. Tell them to include their names and contact information with their donations to Oxfam America. Make sure you receive a photocopy of the check for your records.
- Evaluate your event. Record what went well and what did not for future reference.

If you are interested in this event, please contact:

## **Oxfam America**

*Attn: ACT FAST*

226 Causeway Street, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor

Boston, MA 02114-2206

Email: [actfast@oxfamamerica.org](mailto:actfast@oxfamamerica.org), Website: [www.oxfamamerica.org](http://www.oxfamamerica.org)

Toll Free: 800-77-OXFAM (800-776-9326) Fax: (617) 728-2573

## **Hunger Banquet**

Another fund/awareness-raising event recommend by Oxfam America is a Hunger Banquet. An Oxfam America Hunger Banquet dramatizes the unequal distribution of food in the world. The Banquet will leave many hungry, some with just enough, and very few with full stomachs. Money is raised through a standard admission charge and/or by gathering donations.

Hunger Banquet participants are randomly assigned to one of three socio-economic levels that represent proportional global standards-of-living. Out of every 100 people, 15 enjoy a full-course meal complete with royal treatment, 25 sit in a simple setting and eat a meager meal (such as rice and beans), and the remaining 60 share rice, without utensils, while sitting on the floor.

### **Steps**

- Call **Oxfam America at 800-77-OXFAM**. The Fast Team will provide you with materials and help you organize a Hunger Banquet.
- Gather interested people in your Awareness Week team to help co-ordinate the event.
- Establish a time and place. For example, school cafeterias and student unions are ideal locations, but will require agreements with the administration and dining service.
- Invite local celebrities to the event—local media stars will generate publicity and greater public response.
- Ask local restaurants to donate food.
- Send invitations with RSVPs. The invitations should include endorsers, special guests, and sponsors.
- Prepare the materials for the event. These materials include fact sheets (you can get information about global hunger from Oxfam America), menus, posters, a program (check with Oxfam America for a suggested script), and colored or numbered tickets (15% high-income, 25% middle-income, and 60% low-income).
- Publicize! Send out news releases and use other publicity strategies (see the media section in this packet) to gather as many participants as possible.

- On the day of the banquet, set up the room accordingly. Make sure the first group has an elaborate setting and service, while the third group has only the bare essentials.

For more information about this event, please contact:

**Oxfam America**

*Attn: ACT FAST*

226 Causeway Street, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor

Boston, MA 02114 - 2206

Email: [actfast@oxfamamerica.org](mailto:actfast@oxfamamerica.org),

Toll Free: 800-77-OXFAM (800-776-9326) Fax: (617) 728-2573

Website: [www.oxfamamerica.org](http://www.oxfamamerica.org)

**Offering of Letters**

Bread for the World is an advocacy organization which lobbies for public policies that address the needs of hungry and poor people in our nation and around the world. Each year, Bread for the World sponsors an Offering of Letters campaign. In this campaign, participants write letters to Members of Congress in order to impact policy decisions. Contact Bread for the World for their specific focus for this year, 2015. Start by using their website: [www.bread.org/OL](http://www.bread.org/OL)

- Publicize extensively before the actual letter writing campaign. As with other events during National Hunger and Homeless Awareness Week, send out news releases, post flyers, and utilize other media. This way, community members will know both locations and times to either write a letter or drop one off.
- Decide when you would like to have an Offering of Letters campaign during Awareness Week. Some communities set up a booth for one day, while other communities have distributed letter writing information following the events during Awareness Week.
- Find names and contact information of Congressional representatives for your district.
- Ask local businesses and sponsors to buy postage, envelopes, pens, and paper.
- Handwritten letters are best; draft a sample letter that community members can replicate - please contact Bread for the World for sample letters. Some community members may have never written to their Congressional representatives so make this experience as convenient and straightforward as possible to encourage successive letter writing.

- Provide information about hunger and homelessness during the letter writing so that community members can include compelling statistics/facts in their letters on the need for supportive legislation. You can obtain this information from Bread for the World.
- Urge community members to continue their political action through voting, by writing letters to, calling, and visiting local Congressional representatives.

To receive the Offering of Letters 2015 Kit and more information about Bread for the World, please contact

**Bread for the World**

425 3<sup>rd</sup> St., SW; #1200

Washington, DC 20024

Phone: (202) 639-9400 and (800) 82-BREAD

Fax: (202) 639-9401

Email: [bread@bread.org](mailto:bread@bread.org)

Website: [www.bread.org/OL](http://www.bread.org/OL)

## **Lobbying—Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What is lobbying?**

While it may seem complicated, lobbying is simply influencing legislation (local, state, or national) and/or influencing administrative actions. Lobbying can take the form of direct meetings, phone calls, letters, and e-mail. Discover more on NCH's Lobbying 101 webpage:

[http://www.nationalhomeless.org/advocacy/lobbying\\_101.html](http://www.nationalhomeless.org/advocacy/lobbying_101.html).

For more information on letter writing as lobbying refer to the Bread for the World's Offering of Letters section (p.29). This section will focus on how to set up direct meetings and make speak with elected officials.

### **Who/where can I lobby if I don't live in Washington DC?**

Raising awareness and ending homelessness needs to happen at all levels of government. Consider visiting state senators and representatives, mayors, and other local officials. Federal senators and representatives have local offices in their districts as well, if you are really passionate about a piece of federal legislation. Remember, you may not be able to set up a meeting directly with an elected official, but ask to speak with a staffer or aid who deals with homelessness and hunger issues.

## **How do I Prepare?**

You should pick your topics, no more than two or three that you want to address. Then do some research so that you feel comfortable discussing the issue. If you're nervous practice talking to others before you go. Also, consider what your goal for the meeting is, for example, a commitment to cosponsor a bill, vote in favor of a bill, or to take a leadership role on an issue. Also gather some background information on the official you will be speaking with. Find out where they have stood on past issues. Make sure to acknowledge/thank them for past support if applicable during the meeting, this will show them you are informed and serious.

## **What topics should I bring to elected officials?**

You don't have to talk about a specific piece of legislation. It is appropriate to discuss homelessness, hunger, or poverty in general, but do be specific on the actions that you would like to see taken. For current policy recommendations visit the NCH website at [www.nationalhomeless.org/advocacy](http://www.nationalhomeless.org/advocacy). The website breaks down issues into four different areas: civil rights, housing justice, economic justice, and health care justice.

## **What Should I Say or Do?**

- Make sure you identify yourself as a constituent, and as a participant in a Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week.
- Go in a small but diverse group (no more than five people) to show that a wide range of citizens care about hunger and homelessness. Additional tip: bring someone who has experienced homelessness.
- Be concise and clear and answer questions as best as possible.
- Make sure to tell them what your opinions are and share any relevant personal experiences.
- It is best to listen closely and provide information when you can. Consider taking a notepad with you and jotting down some key points during the conversation, this will also show you're listening and interested in what they are saying. The meeting should be a dialogue not an attack or a rant.
- Feel free to make a one page fact sheet to leave with the office so they have a reminder of what was said.

## **What Should I NOT Say or Do?**

- Do not overwhelm an elected official or their staffers. Keep your group to five or less.
- Do not be disrespectful, argumentative, or confrontational. They may not agree with you on this issue, but if you're negative they may not listen to you in the future.
- Do not make up facts. It is okay to say, "I don't know, I'll have to get back to you on that" if you cannot answer a question. Just be sure to actually follow up with information you promised.

### **Okay, so I Visited my Elected Official, Now What?**

Send a follow-up letter thanking them for their time. Reiterate your opinion, and if they made any commitments during the meeting repeat your understanding of their plan of action.



### **ORGANIZATIONAL CONTACTS**

The following includes a list of national organizations that could provide you further information and support for organizing National Hunger and Homeless Awareness Week in your community.

**Bread for the World**  
(Offering of Letters)  
425 3<sup>rd</sup> St., NW; #1200  
Washington, DC 20024

Phone: (800)-82-BREAD or  
(202) 639-9400  
Fax: (202) 639-9401  
Email: [bread@bread.org](mailto:bread@bread.org)



Website: [www.bread.org/OL](http://www.bread.org/OL)

**Break Away**

*(Alternative Breaks)*

2451 Cumberland Parkway  
Suite 3124

Atlanta, GA 30339

Phone: (800) 903-0646

Email:

[breakaway@alternativebreaks.org](mailto:breakaway@alternativebreaks.org)

Website:

[www.alternativebreaks.org](http://www.alternativebreaks.org)

**Church World Service**

*(CROP Walk)*

P.O. Box 968

Elkhart, IN 46515

Phone: (800)-297-1516 or

(574) 264-3102

Fax: (574) 262-0966

Email: [info@cwsglobal.org](mailto:info@cwsglobal.org)

Website: [www.cwsglobal.org](http://www.cwsglobal.org)

**Empty Bowls**

*(Fundraising for Hunger Causes)*

P.O. Box 1689

Burnsville, NC 28714

Phone: (828) 675-9636

Email: [ImagineRen@yahoo.com](mailto:ImagineRen@yahoo.com)

Website: [www.emptybowls.net](http://www.emptybowls.net)

**Habitat for Humanity  
International**

*(Building Homes for Low Income  
People)*

121 Habitat St.

Americus, GA 31709-3498

Phone: (800) HABITAT (800)  
422-4828

Email: [publicinfo@hfhi.org](mailto:publicinfo@hfhi.org)

Information about affiliates in  
your area can be found at:

Website: [www.habitat.org](http://www.habitat.org)

Information about volunteering:

Website:

[www.habitatyouthprograms.org](http://www.habitatyouthprograms.org)

**National Coalition for the  
Homeless**

*(Faces of Homelessness*

*Speakers' Bureau, One Night*

*Without a Home, Outreach Run,*

*Homeless Challenge, and*

*Homelessness*

*101/Advocacy/Lobbying*

*Workshop)*

2201 P St., NW

Washington, DC 20037-1033

Contact: Kyra Habekoss

Phone: (202) 462-4822

[khabekoss@nationalhomeless.org](mailto:khabekoss@nationalhomeless.org)

Website:

[www.nationalhomeless.org](http://www.nationalhomeless.org)

**National Student Campaign  
Against Hunger &  
Homelessness**

*(Annual Conference, Hunger  
Cleanup, Organizing Student  
Chapters)*

44 Winter Street; 4<sup>th</sup> floor

Boston, MA 02108

Contact: James Dubick

Phone: (213) 840-2880

Fax: (617) 292-8057

[info@studentsagainsthunger.org](mailto:info@studentsagainsthunger.org)

Website:

[www.studentsagainsthunger.org](http://www.studentsagainsthunger.org)

**Oxfam America**

*(Oxfam Hunger Banquet, ACT  
FAST)*

Attn: ACT FAST

226 Causeway St., 5th Floor

Boston, MA 02114-2206

Phone: (800) 77-OXFAM (800-  
776-9326)

Fax: (617) 728-2594

Email:

[actfast@oxfamamerica.org](mailto:actfast@oxfamamerica.org)

Website: [www.oxfamamerica.org](http://www.oxfamamerica.org)

## **Appendix**

### **Outreach Run Fact Sheets**

#### **History**

In 1984, with horrible, dehumanizing poverty reaching new levels in New York City, a partnership was made between members of a church in the suburbs of NYC and a homeless woman from Manhattan. These unlikely teammates shared the same goal—to help those who were less able to get to resources they desperately needed on the streets: food and clothing. Members of the church began making trips to Manhattan to pass out food and clothing directly to their homeless neighbors. More and more groups began joining the group, which is now a collaboration of over 150 community organization, and now called Midnight Run.

In 1987, students from Marquette University attended a National Student Campaign Against Hunger and Homelessness conference, and were inspired by the group from New York City. A year later, they started their own midnight run program to meet the needs of Milwaukee's homeless population.

A vital part of outreach programs like these is serving people fellowship, along with, and above food or clothing. Outreach runs like these put a real face on the suffering homeless people experience. These are real people who have dreams, aspirations, and hope, beyond their despair, just like any one of us. The companionship and conversations you have with people you encounter on your outreach run will be the most memorable part of the trip. You will carry some of the relationships you form on these runs for years to come.

So, get a group together, and walk with your brothers and sisters in need. Make a difference in someone's life, no matter how small, and allow someone to make a difference in your life. You will be surprised at how great a difference that may be!

#### **Outreach Run Guidelines**

‡ You are going on an outreach run to distribute helpful supplies and lend a caring ear to members of the homeless community. The conversations you have and relationships you develop are the most important part of the outreach run!

Here are some helpful tips from different groups who organize outreach runs to help make your outreach run as effective and enjoyable as possible:

⚡ Find out who is interested in joining you, and advertise the opportunity to everyone in your community.

⚡ Be familiar with local resources for the homeless.

⚡ Plan ahead: Pick a date and time, set up a route, and make transportation arrangements.

» Pick a time that is good for everyone. Evenings/early nighttime or weekends usually work best.

» Remember to schedule enough time for preparation close beforehand, including clothing sorting (for easy distribution) and preparing bag meals.

» Have a pre-planned route for your run. Pick spots where larger numbers of homeless people congregate. Also, be sure to pick busy spots in your neighborhood or city. Try not to go off to secluded spots like wooded areas. It probably wouldn't be efficient to stop for every person you see, so try to stick to your route. If your run is going to be a regular program, with a definite next-date, spread the word of where/when you will be back so more people can be ready for you. This would make your run more equitable for the entire homeless community.

» You can go out on foot, but remember you are bringing supplies with you. It might be better for your group to travel in a van or another vehicle that can fit both your volunteers and supplies.

⚡ Decide on what you want to distribute: clothing, food, toiletries, or all three!

» Host clothing, food, toiletries, and donation drives well ahead of your run. Whatever supplies aren't donated, purchase with the money you were donated, or money collected from volunteers. Call local hotels to ask for donations of hotel shampoo/conditioner/soap.

⚡ Here are some more specific tips for preparation and distribution of items on your run:

**Food:** Try to prepare bag meals of substance. Include a hearty sandwich, a piece of fruit, a high-protein snack (perhaps a hard-boiled egg), energy bar, nutritional drink a juice box, and a dessert or two.

-Be sure to bring bottled water and coffee or hot cocoa

- Fast food coupons/grocery store gift cards
- Can opener
- Deck of cards (used or new)
- Blankets—a clean/used or a new one.

- Rain poncho/gear
- Sleeping Bag—a clean/used or a new one
- Hand warmer packets
- Long Johns
- Sports/Book Bag
- Umbrella—a small, compact one that can fit in a sports/book bag
- Clothing: Try to collect all the essentials (coats, pants, shirts), but don't forget socks, underwear, knit hats (men and women), gloves and scarves. Socks are extremely popular! Wool socks in winter.
  - -In preparation for your run, organize clothing into a system that will allow for easy distribution.
  - -Organize clothes into Men's/Women's/Children's and then sizes. Roll-up socks into pairs to easily grab and distribute.

**Toiletries:** The most effective and easiest way to distribute toiletries is to make up small kits of unused hotel toiletries or travel-sized toiletries. If you are coming from your hometown to the big city, call your local hotels seeking donations.

Try to include:

- Hand Sanitizer
- Soap
- Toothbrush, Toothpaste, floss
- Bar of soap
- Shampoo
- Towelettes
- Disposable razors, shaving cream
- Small package of Kleenex
- Nail File/clippers
- Lip balm
- Lotion—body and hand
- Deodorant
- feminine hygiene products.
- Band Aids
- Cough drops & throat lozenges

If you don't have any of these items and can't afford to buy some of them, approach stores/businesses and ask for donations.

‡Take to the streets!

‡When distributing goods, here are some helpful tips to remember,

»Homeless men and women do not often get to decide their wardrobe. So, offer them the opportunity to choose. Work to accommodate special requests.

Ask them what size they would prefer, and if you have several of their sizes, allow them to choose their favorite style.

-Receiving something they wanted and requested will mean a lot.

»When approaching someone, try to visibly hold an item you are distributing. Introduce yourself and explain what you are doing. Offer the item you have in your hands and any other items your group has.

»Try not to wake anyone up who is sleeping. We want to respect their privacy, but we also don't want them to miss out on anything they may need.

-Try standing at a decent distance (so as not to wake them if they are in a deep sleep) and identify yourself and begin naming some of the items you have to offer. If they still seem to be sleeping, leave a bag meal or two for when they wake up.

»TALK! Most people, even more than they want your socks or food, want someone to talk to. Again, these conversations are the most valuable part of these Outreach Runs, so take advantage of them.

»Never feel like you have to treat the run like an assembly line, having to personally talk to each individual person. A few homeless people may be too busy or may not want to talk. If you find someone who is interested in having a serious, longer conversation, open up and listen!

**-When talking to people you meet on your run, remember you are not professional counselors, student researchers, or evangelists. You are people who care. Make a connection, but try not to make anyone believe you have professional advice to give.**

\* Some questions not to ask. Are you homeless? Do you have family? What caused them to become homeless? If they volunteer that info, this is fine.

»As a rule, try not to give money to people on your run. Your supplies, conversation, and genuine interest/care are enough.

»Always be fair and equitable in your distribution. You should not have a problem with equitable distribution, but if you do, calmly request order. If the problem persists, simply pack up and move on to your next scheduled stop.

»Never be afraid if you run out of food! No one will hold that against you. Don't cancel any additional stops, especially if they are expecting you. Go anyway, and talk to the group and distribute whatever supplies you can offer.

### ‡Clean up

»Remember to bring garbage bags to help keep the streets/parks and these people's homes clean.

‡Some other general suggestions:

»Try to refrain from bringing cameras or taking pictures. If you would like, take pictures of your volunteers preparing food or sorting clothes, or even on the street, but respect the privacy of homeless individuals by not revealing their identities or where they sleep.

»There is no reason to be afraid of people you encounter on an Outreach Run. These projects are safe and occur all around the country, without incident. However, in the rare occasion that there is an emergency, including a medical emergency, call 911 immediately!

## **Supplemental Information Form**

Thank you for your interest in our Outreach Run program. This public education program is an essential part of our mission at the National Coalition for the Homeless, and we appreciate you giving us the opportunity to work with you on this.

The Outreach Run is about finding common ground between the housed and the homeless through hearing from one of our Outreach guides and meeting our homeless neighbors. The Outreach Run is not the solution to ending homelessness, but the human exchange, rather than the exchange of goods, is the essence of the Outreach Run's mission.

We look forward to working with you and learning more about your event.

- Please review the attached fact sheet on getting ready for and doing an Outreach Run.
- Please read carefully the Outreach Run Guidelines section.
- Please fill out the Outreach Run Event Request Form section that spells out many of the logistics, and return it in as timely a manner.

### **Outreach Run Guidelines**

#### **Donations**

The group should collect the donations to be distributed before the time of the event.

Recommended donation items:

Bottled water, toiletries, and socks.

Other suggestions are t-shirts, rain gear, jackets (winter time only), non perishable food items or gift certificates from fast food establishments.

**For a more detailed suggestions listing, see the attached: Outreach Run Fact Sheet**

#### **Introductions: 10-15 minutes**

One of NCH's Outreach Run guides will meet with your group at either the location your group is staying in or has booked, or we can meet at NCH's office.

The Outreach Run guide will share some of his/her personal experiences with homelessness and discuss stereotypes and leading causes of homelessness with the group.

The guide will then instruct the group on best practices before distributing donations in the neighborhood.

#### **Donation Distribution: Typically about 45-60 minutes**

The guide will lead the group to nearby areas where people are in need of the donations to be distributed.

#### **Purpose of Having a Homeless/Formerly Homeless Guide**

In addition to sharing his/her personal story at the beginning with Outreach Run participants, the guide will interact the participants throughout the Run, plus taking part in a reflection session at the end of the Run. The guide also knows the local community well and is a lot more "streetwise" than run participants. While by no means a body guard, the guide is usually able to handle most adverse situations.

#### **Number of Homeless/Formerly Homeless Guide(s)**

We recommend one guide per 15 to 20 people

**Honoraria and Program Fee**

Each guide will receive a \$40 honorarium. NCH charges a program of 50% of the total honorarium amount. If you only need one guide, the total amount would be \$60. The check should be mailed in advance of the event.

**Donation**

We invite your organization to support the work of the National Coalition for the Homeless by becoming a member. Go to our website: [www.nationalhomeless.org](http://www.nationalhomeless.org)

**Outreach Run Event Request Form**

What is the name of your organization?

Primary Contact Information

name:

email:

fax:

Office phone:

Home phone

Cell phone of a site leader/participant who will be doing the Run:

Postal mailing address:

How many Outreach Run guides would you like? (1 guide per 15-20 people recommended).

If you have participated in an Outreach Run with NCH in the past, would you like to request a particular guide?

What is the date and time of your event?                      Arrival Time?

Where is the event located?

What is the easiest/cheapest way of transportation to get to the meeting place? (metro, taxi, bus)

What is your position in the organization? Will you be present at the event?

Do you have a particular focus or audience need?

Please describe the audience in terms of size, age, and previous knowledge about homelessness issues.

Are you able to provide a \$40 honorarium (minimum) for each of our guide(s) and program fee of 50% of the total honorarium amount? Yes\_\_\_; No\_\_\_



All honorariums and program fee must be provided in one check made out to the National Coalition for the Homeless in c/o Speakers' Bureau. In the memo section of the check, write-"for guide(s) honorarium". Please don't give the check to the guide during the Run as the guide would then have to make a special trip at his/her own expense to hand deliver the check to NCH.

NCH/Group Agreement

\_\_\_\_\_, agrees to reimburse the National Coalition for the Homeless for the honorarium(s) and program fee. Check payment is to be made out to NCH. The undersigned, agrees to reimburse NCH mailing the check in advance of the outreach run.

Name	Organization	Date
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