



## The Convention on the Rights of the Child says...

**CRC Article 26** - Right to social security and social benefits.

**CRC Article 27** - Right to adequate standard of living for the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development. This includes housing, clothing and nutrition.

## Key Questions

- What are some of the reasons why children experience homelessness?
- What are the resources available to homeless children?

## Facts and Figures

- One in every 50 American Children go to sleep without a home of their own each year.
- Approximately 1.6 million children are homeless annually in the United States.
- There are over 290,000 homeless children in California.
- The number of homeless people in Los Angeles is higher than any other US urban area.
- Over 35,000 homeless youth are enrolled in LA County Schools, of which 12,500 are enrolled in LAUSD.
- Homeless mothers and children are the fastest-growing segment of the homeless population.
- The percentage of youth who are homeless in the US is greater than during the Great Depression.
- The lack of preparation and services that youth in the foster care system receive after "aging out" of the system contributes greatly to the issue of youth homelessness in Los Angeles.
- The California Department of Social Service reports that 65% of emancipated youth lack access to safe and affordable housing at the time of their emancipation

*\*Most statistics do not include the number of youth who are constantly in transition in motels or in the foster care system. In addition, many families do not call themselves homeless to avoid discrimination or shame.*

## Legislation

- **California Fostering Connection to Success Act (AB 12)** was signed into law on September 30, 2010, and it extends support services to foster care you from age 18 to 21. Prior to this bill, many foster youth became homeless due to a lack of services.

## HRW Recommendations

- Guarantee that youth have useful emancipation plans.
- Create real opportunities for youth to develop skills for independence.
- Help youth establish relationships that extend beyond emancipation.

## Tent Activities/Outfitting

- "Imagine if..." scenarios.
- Get students to think about how they would pack all of their belongings.

## Further Resources

[My So-Called Emancipation](#) (HRW 2010)

[Voices from the Street: A Survey of Homeless Youth by Their Peers](#) (2007)

[School on Wheels](#)

[Homeless Children in America](#)

[National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth](#)

[National Center for Homeless Education at SERVE](#)

[PBS Fact & Figures: Homeless](#)