



UNIT 3

What Impact Can I Have On Homelessness?

How should I interact with people experiencing homelessness?

What people and organizations are currently working to end homelessness?

What can I do to help?

Elementary School

UNIT 3: I am a Helper

Essential Questions

1. How should I interact with people experiencing homelessness?
2. What people and organizations are currently working to end homelessness?
3. What can I do to help?

Overview

- Students will learn about some of the people working to end homelessness throughout L.A. County and the barriers they face, as well as build an understanding of the progress that is happening to end homelessness.
 - Students will learn about young people who are doing amazing things to help people in their community experiencing homelessness and what they can do as well, and commit to at least one personal action they will take in their own lives.
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Materials

- Videos
 - a. [Outreach Workers in San Fernando Valley](#), Everyone In
- Articles (to project)
 - a. [9-year-old girl builds shelters for the homeless](#), Bored Panda
 - b. [Good Works: Local teens and tweens collect with love](#), LA Times
 - c. [12-Year-Old Middle Schooler Has Helped Feed 9,000 Homeless People: 'I Want to Help Them All'](#), People
 - d. [California girl raises money to help Chicago's homeless during severe cold](#), Chicago Sun Times
 - e. [Boy, 8, Break Dances for Southern California's Homeless](#), NBC Los Angeles
- Illustrated Statistics Cards (to project)
- Action Commitment Cards (printed, one for each student)

Prep

Read through the lesson and articles provided, and watch videos to ensure the materials are right for your students

Print out an Action Commitment Card for each student

Plan an action you can take as a class from the options provided, or come up with your own action

UNIT 3: Collective Action

Procedure

1. In the first step of this lesson, students will learn about the people who are working to end homelessness in L.A. County—what their work entails, the impact they are making throughout the 8 regions of L.A. County, why they chose this work, and the barriers they face on a daily basis. After learning about what people are already doing, students will explore what impact they can have on the housing and homelessness crisis.
2. Project the Illustrated Statistics Graphics for students and give them time to share out observations or questions that they have. These numbers and examples will help set the stage for the work that is happening throughout L.A. County.
 - a. Homelessness service organizations are housing more people than ever before but rent increases continue to dehouse people at a greater rate. Imagine trying to empty a bathtub while the faucet keeps getting turned up higher and higher and the drain just can't keep up.
 - b. 2,050 kids were housed in 2018. That's enough kids to fill 14 A320 Airbus airplanes.
3. Now, explain that you will be introducing your students to some of the people who are working to end homelessness in L.A. County. Show the video linked below and project the blog post with outreach worker photos and quotes, students can take turns reading aloud. Have each student share out one question they would ask an outreach worker about the work they do, about the housing and homelessness crisis, or about barriers they face in their job, write these on the board.
 - a. [Outreach Workers in San Fernando Valley](#), Everyone In
 - b. [Meet the people working to end homelessness in L.A. County](#), Everyone In
4. Next, students will take the time to learn about things that young people around their own age are doing to support people experiencing homelessness. You can project one on the screen to discuss together.
 - a. [Good Works: Local teens and tweens collect with love](#), LA Times
 - b. [12-Year-Old Middle Schooler Has Helped Feed 9,000 Homeless People: 'I Want to Help Them All'](#), People
 - c. [California girl raises money to help Chicago's homeless during severe cold](#), Chicago Sun Times
 - d. [Boy, 8, Break Dances for Southern California's Homeless](#), NBC Los Angeles

UNIT 3: Collective Action

Procedure (cont'd)

5. Ask students to share out what they noticed about the kids in the article(s). Was there anything special about them? Or did they just find ways to use their talents and abilities to give back to people experiencing homelessness? Allow students to discuss organically and make connections to things they themselves could do to help. Below are some more examples of things young people their age have done to give back.
 - In Chelmsford, Massachusetts a twelve-year old started a petition and testified with friends at a town meeting to protect a wooded area from being destroyed by a condominium development project. The woods are still there.
 - Fourth Grade students in Kittery, Maine ran a canned food drive at their school and donated the food to the local food pantry. Representatives of the classes helped prepare the food for distribution to the clients of the food pantry.
 - Another group of Fourth Graders in Eliot, Maine conducted a fundraising event at the school and presented the money they raised to their local food pantry.
 - Students in Concord, New Hampshire hosted a “banquet” for their parents. Everyone was required to bring canned food for the local food pantry.

6. Distribute an Action Commitment Card to each student and give them some time to read it over and select any actions they would like to take. For younger students, you will need to read through the options for them and allow them to mark the actions that resonate with them. This would be a good opportunity to extend the lesson by taking one of the following actions as a class—or another action you come up with together such as:
 - a. Help students identify their elected official and write a letter to them
 - b. Plan and run a food or gift drive for a local homeless service organization
 - c. Write notes to people in the community experiencing homelessness to be distributed via a local homeless service organization

7. Save or display the cards in the classroom and revisit the discussion in a few weeks, opening up a dialogue about what actions and conversations students have participated in and what barriers they have encountered. This can be an ongoing conversation throughout the school year that is responsive to the news cycle and to things your students might observe or hear.

UNIT 3: Collective Action

Supplementary Materials

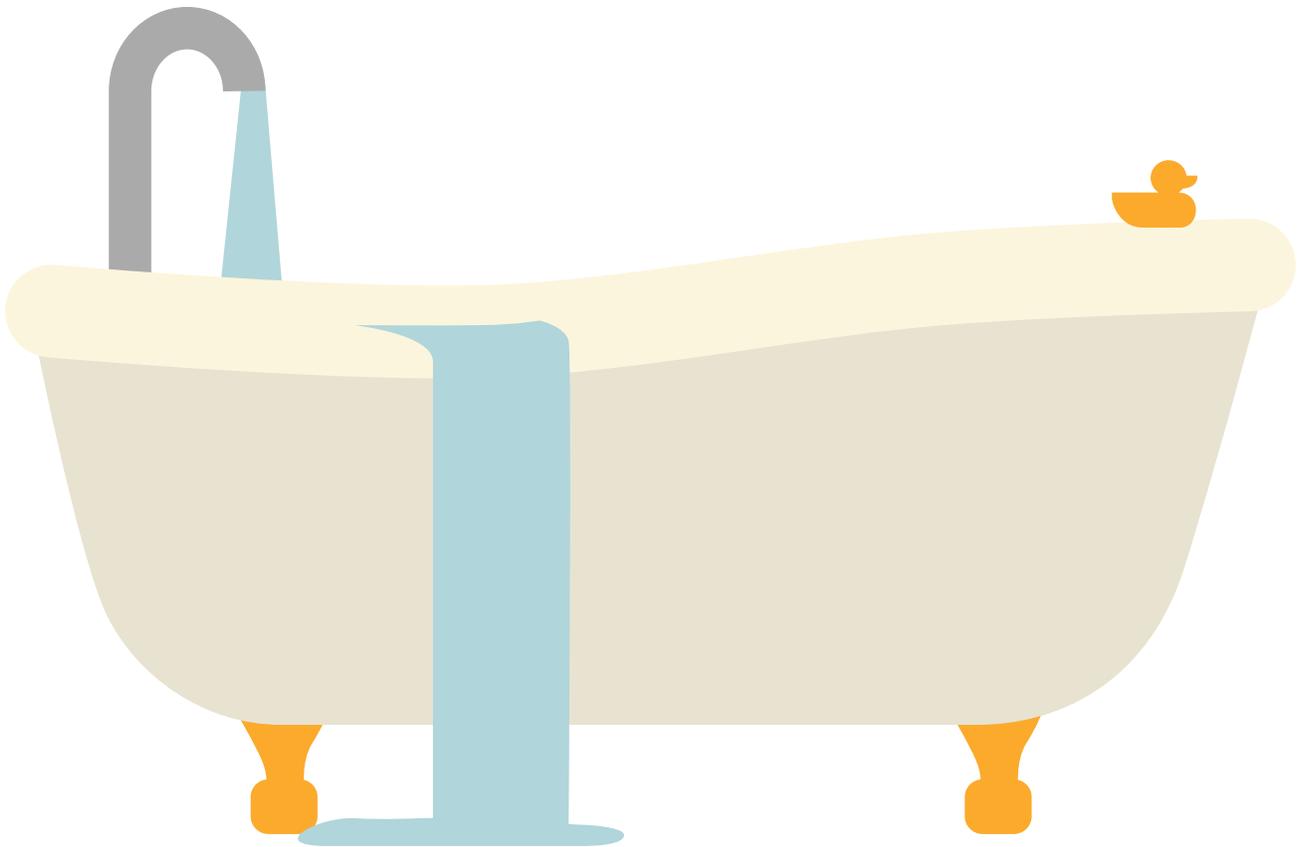
- Outreach Worker Videos
 - a. [A place for the grandkids to visit](#), County of L.A.
 - b. [Everyone In / Outreach with HOPICS](#), Everyone In
 - c. [Outreach Workers in Antelope Valley](#), Everyone In
 - d. [Outreach Workers in San Gabriel Valley](#), Everyone In
 - e. [Outreach Workers in Central L.A.](#), Everyone In
 - f. [Outreach Workers in West L.A.](#), Everyone In
 - g. [Outreach Workers in South L.A.](#), Everyone In
 - h. [Outreach Workers in East L.A.](#), Everyone In
 - i. [Outreach Workers in South Bay](#), Everyone In
 - j. [Street medicine and compassion](#), County of L.A.
 - k. [Progress Is Building](#), Everyone In
 - l. [Supportive Housing at Marv's Place](#), Everyone In
 - m. [Gather Everyone In](#), Everyone In
- Illustrated Statistics Cards
 - Homelessness service organizations are housing more people than ever before, but rent increases continue to dehouse people at a greater rate. Imagine trying to empty a bathtub while the faucet keeps getting turned up higher and higher and the drain just can't keep up.
 - 2,050 kids were housed in 2018. That's enough kids to fill 14 A320 Airbus airplanes.
- Books
 - *A Shelter in Our Car* by Monica Gunning
 - *Lily and the Paper Man* by Rebecca Upjohn
 - *The Lady in the Box* by Ann McGovern
 - *Still a Family* by Brenda Reeves Sturgis
 - *I See You* by Michael Genhart
 - *On Our Street: Our First Talk About Poverty* by Dr. Jillian Roberts and Jaime Casap
 - *The Very Best Home for Me* by Garth Williams
 - *Scruffy and the Egg: Adventures on the Road* by Angela M. Sanchez

Sources

- [2019 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count](#), Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority
- [What Kids Can Do](#), Kids Can Make a Difference

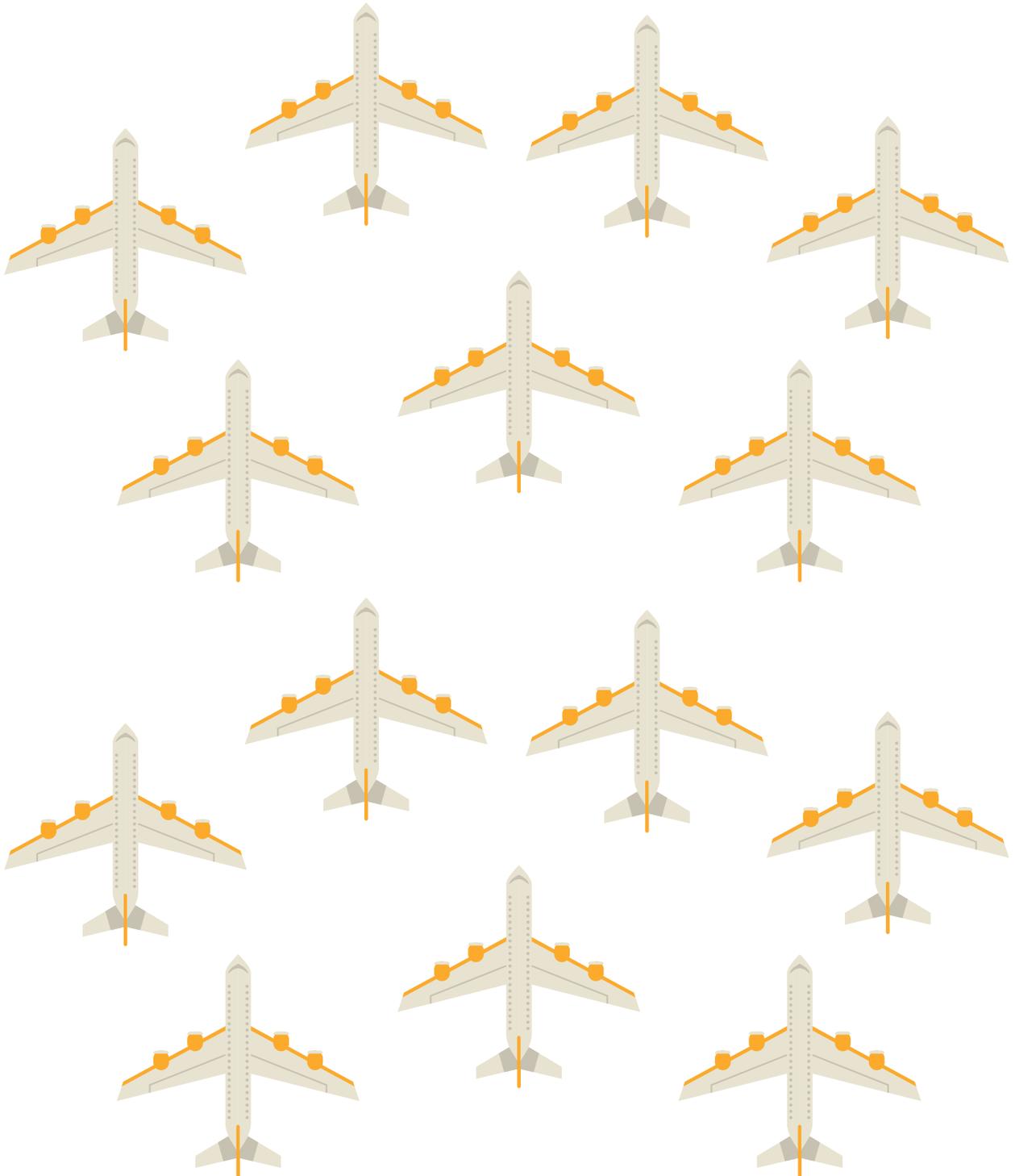
Homelessness service organizations are housing more people than ever before but rent increases continue to dehouse people at a greater rate.

Imagine trying to empty a bathtub while the faucet keeps getting turned up higher and higher and the drain just can't keep up.



2,050 kids were housed in 2018.
That's enough kids to fill

14 A320 Airbus airplanes



Action Commitment Card

I commit to take the following actions to support my neighbors experiencing homelessness, change people's perception and understanding of the housing and homelessness crisis, and advocate for solutions that will end homelessness for good:

(check all that apply)

- Write a letter to my local elected official to let them know that I support more affordable and supportive housing for people who need it
- Write a letter to a person who is experiencing homelessness in my community and have an adult help me deliver it
- Create a care package for a person who is experiencing homelessness in my community and have an adult help me deliver it
- Help organize a food or gift drive in my classroom or school for a local homeless service organization
- Help gather food, clothing, or toy items from my home to donate to a local homeless service organization
- Talk to my family and friends who may not understand why people experience homelessness and help them understand the reasons for the housing and homelessness crisis and how we should see and treat people who are impacted
- Volunteer with a parent or guardian at a homeless service organization in my community
- Smile and say hi to someone living on the street when I am out with a parent or guardian