



# The Lord's Place Advocacy & Education Guide for Children




The Lord's Place is dedicated to breaking the cycle of homelessness. Our goal is to ensure that every family and individual experiencing homelessness in Palm Beach County has a place to call home.



## Included in this guide are:

-  Facts about homelessness
-  Common misconceptions
-  Discussion topics
-  Educational activities
-  Ways you can help

This guide will give you the knowledge and tools needed to understand the state of homelessness in our community, as well as the capability to make positive change.

-  **Page 1: Learning the Facts**  
Read statistics about homelessness and challenge common misconceptions
-  **Page 2: Putting Yourself in Their Shoes**  
Engage in activities and discussion topics to explore and better understand homelessness
-  **Page 3: Making A Difference**  
Discover ways to volunteer, fundraise, and advocate for the most vulnerable in your community



**45%** Of Floridians struggle to meet their basic needs.  
Of that 45%, **13%** of Floridians are living in poverty.

**14%**

of Americans Have been homeless at one point in their life



Homelessness has been on the rise since 2017, growing 6% between then and 2022 nationwide. In Palm Beach County, homelessness has **risen 32%** in the past year.

The #1 cause of homelessness is simply not having a home. Some factors that may contribute to this are:



- Lack of stable housing/ rising rents
- Natural Disaster
- Lack of family support system
- Unemployment/ low wages
- Mental health issues
- Medical debt



Florida has the 3rd highest amount of people experiencing homelessness in America, behind New York as #2 and California as #1.

Nationwide: 580,000

Florida: 30,809

Palm Beach County: 1,855

### COMMON MISCONCEPTIONS

"People choose to be homeless."

People can become homeless due to many reasons, such as eviction, loss of a job, escaping domestic violence, or mental illness. Homelessness is not a choice, and does not mean someone is a bad person or lazy.

"Homeless people should just get a job."

There are many barriers to employment while homeless, such as a lack of street address, no access to showers or clean clothes, difficulty affording transportation, and more. Many people experiencing homelessness are employed, yet don't make enough to cover living expenses and rent.

"They're homeless because they do drugs."

Only a percentage of homeless people have drug use issues, just like housed people. Doing drugs is not the leading cause of homelessness, and even people who do it are deserving of compassion, respect, and housing.

## Putting Yourself In Their Shoes: Discussion Topics and Educational Activities to Increase Understanding of Homelessness

### Getting the Conversation Started

How would you feel having to go to school without having a bath and in clothes that aren't clean? How do you think the other kids would treat you?

What does homeless mean to you? If you had to move and could only take 3 special things with you, what would they be?

If you don't know someone, how do you figure out if they are a good person or a bad person? Do you ever decide this based on how people look or smell, or if they seem dirty?

Why is it important to not judge a person by their appearance?

Why is it important to help each other?

Why is it important to have a place to call home?

### Activities

Make a list of 3 random acts of kindness that you can do today. Draw yourself doing each one, and write down how doing these things would make you feel, and how the person receiving would feel! They can be as simple as holding the door for someone or helping a parent with a chore.

Write a card with positive messages to someone you know needs to hear one. Give it to the person to brighten both of your days!

Imagine you are told you have to leave your home, with nowhere else to go. You can only take what you can carry with you. Draw what you would be able to take with you, and think about what you would miss



## Making a Difference: What YOU Can Do to Create Positive Change

Below are a few examples of ways you can help:

With your friends or classmates, host a donation drive of items like canned food or toiletries. You could even make a party out of getting together as a group to package and distribute the items!



Share what you've learned here with your family and friends!



Donate your unused toys to a homeless child who may not have any toys of their own.



With your parent's permission, raise money to donate by setting up a lemonade stand, yard sale, or car wash. You can do it with friends, your brothers or sisters, or parents!

