Walden University

ScholarWorks

2023

Prevention of Eviction and Severe Housing Crisis

Kayla Hunter
Walden University, kayla.hunter2@waldenu.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/picportfolios

COUN 6785: Social Change in Action:

Prevention, Consultation, and Advocacy

Social Change Portfolio

Kayla Hunter

Contents

OVERVIEW

Keywords: Eviction, Homelessness, Rapid Rehousing

[Prevention of Eviction and Severe Housing Crisis]

Texas has the fifth highest rate of people experiencing homelessness in the United States. Many individuals are facing homelessness, faced eviction first causing them to be homeless. I want to prevent homelessness and eviction with my social change portfolio. Individuals facing homelessness may be unable to afford healthcare/ mental health care, and untreated diagnoses can cause lasting effects. Being unable to afford primary care can also make it a more significant challenge for someone to get back on their feet. Different risk factors, such as a history of homelessness, substance use, or a criminal background, can cause an individual to be homeless, but having a good support system, resources, and a job with a liveable wage can prevent homelessness. With my prevention plan, I would apply cognitive behavior therapy to address negative thoughts or behaviors that can continually be reframed into a positive. CBT can be applied to show individuals that they are also supported. In many states, legislation has created laws that specifically attack the homeless community and can make anyone feel unsupported. Advocacy is vital to shed light on these laws and the little resources/funding the homeless population may have in Texas.

Goal Statement: This social change portfolio aims to alleviate homelessness by minimizing evictions through increasing awareness of resources in the Dallas community.

Significant Findings:

According to the Dallas Express (2023), a volunteer census found a 214% increase in the Dallas homeless population from 2021 to 2022. On the national side, the End Homelessness Campaign (2023) reports that roughly 18 out of every 10,000 people across America are experiencing homelessness. Helping the homeless population by providing resources, adovaction and applying CBT therapy can be benefical.

Objectives/Strategies/Interventions/Next Steps:

- To connect indviduals to housing resources to homeless individuals such as rapid rehousing, supported housing, coordinated entry programs etc.

- To provide stable housing to those at risk and experiencing homelessness.

- To collobrate with homeless support services, so individuals can receive identification documents, work on getting an education/employment.

- To assist homeless individuals with a mental health diagnosis receive proper medication/ therapy.

- Overtime to reduce the homelessness population and population facing eviction.

INTRODUCTION
Prevention of Eviction and Severe Housing Crisis

According to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), Texas has the 5th highest rate of people experiencing homelessness. Almost half of Texas residents are living in some shelter. For my social change portfolio, I would like to address and prevent Texans in the Dallas area from experiencing homelessness due to facing eviction. With the overall cost of living skyrocketing, many families struggle to make ends meet. From my work experience, I understand that many individuals need to catch up on rental expenses to the point

they cannot catch up. I want to prevent families from getting to that status and be able to provide resources to aid in their situations. The preventions I will discuss in my portfolio will fall under the prevention stage of the continuum of care model.

PART 1: SCOPE AND CONSEQUENCES
Prevention of Eviction and Severe Housing Crisis

The target problem addressed in this portfolio is homelessness as a result of eviction. Dallas, Texas, residents facing eviction can cause them to experience displacement without resources or funding. Safe shelter is a significant component of one's mental health so homelessness can lead to a mental health crisis for many individuals. According to the Dallas Express (2023), a volunteer census found a 214% increase in the Dallas homeless population from 2021 to 2022. On the national side, the End Homelessness Campaign (2023) reports that roughly 18 out of every 10,000 people across America are experiencing homelessness. Trends from that statistic show nationwide, 22% are chronically homeless individuals with a disability, and 6% are veterans.

Due to the housing crisis and other factors, a study completed by the National Library of Medicine (2021) found that 1 in 8 homeless individuals either experienced major depression or schizophrenia spectrum. Physically, a homeless individual may not be able to afford healthcare or mental care. Homeless individuals do not have the same access to medications, food, or water, making them more susceptible to illnesses while searching for shelter. Being homeless and having a mental health disorder can make it difficult for individuals to receive help or even believe support is available. Individuals may worry about the cost of receiving mental health

help and cannot pay for care services. Homelessness can also make it difficult for individuals to contact friends or family, leaving many isolated without a support system. From my work experience with the homeless community, many individuals tend to connect with others in the homeless community. Individuals can share resources, food, and sometimes temporary shelter by connecting with others. The same concept goes for economic consequences, and many individuals may not have access to their funds or be able to communicate with loved ones for assistance. Individuals who have connected with others in the homeless community may share funds, help each other find resources for funds, or possibly panhandle for money.

Lastly, homelessness can make it difficult for individuals to pursue an education. Enrolling can only be possible with proper identification, employment, and residential address. Thankfully, there are many resources to help individuals get back on their feet to get an identification card to sign up for things to get an individual ahead, such as school. It becomes problematic when many people are unaware of the resources, but I would like to make a difference with this portfolio. This social change portfolio aims to alleviate homelessness by minimizing evictions through increasing awareness of resources in the Dallas community.

PART 2: SOCIAL-ECOLOGICAL MODEL
Prevention of Eviction and Severe Housing Crisis

A social-ecological model is used in counseling to model an individual's network of people or support and how it may impact their mental well-being and personal development. The social-ecological model has various levels: individual, family, peer group, and community. Each level has different risks and protective factors associated with each one.

Individuals may be at risk for homelessness if they have a chronic history of homelessness or unemployment. Having a past of being unable to keep a job or stable housing is a significant risk factor for chronic homelessness. Additionally, a criminal background or being released from prison is a risk factor for homelessness because society treats individuals with criminal histories differently. Individuals with a criminal history also have a more challenging time reintegrating into the community. (i.e., finding a stable job, getting updated identification paperwork, finding housing, finding peers that do not have a criminal history. Some protective factors that may prevent homelessness include having a college education and a high socioeconomic status. A college education and a high socioeconomic status create more opportunities for individuals who may not have both. Though it is common for some individuals to be homeless with a college education, having at least a bachelor's when applying to jobs gives an individual a better chance of receiving a job versus only having a high school diploma.

An abusive family or family member can be a risk factor and cause an individual to be homeless. An individual may not have the resources to be stable when leaving a dangerous family situation and may leave the situation with very little just to be safe. A family with drug/alcohol addiction can also be a risk factor for homelessness. Addiction affects many families and can cause people to do whatever they can to get their fix. Addiction can cause people to sell everything they have to have the necessary funds to keep feeding their addiction. Some familial protective factors include families with close relationships or families living in the same household to care for the eldest in the family and each other. Close relationships create a sense of security and a bond that helps individuals turn to family members for assistance during hard times. In some cultures, family members live together for an extended time to raise the younger children and to take care of the eldest family members. This also can create strong bonds and

provide a backup plan if a family member wants to leave the household. They would always have a place to go back to if living alone does not work or becomes too expensive.

The following levels, peer group and community, have similar risk and protective factors. A community or peer group can have a history of high homeless rates, which could be a predisposing factor for homelessness, making it difficult for an individual to find housing. In a community, if affordable housing is challenging or resources are scarce, it can be a risk factor for higher homeless rates. Some protective factors include housing resources within a community or peer group to help homeless individuals. Low-cost mental health and medical care resources can also be beneficial. A peer group or community with a positive environment and a positive network support can help individuals feel supported by their community and feel like there is an outlet in case they do not have family to turn to.

On a societal level, some risks to homelessness can be an unstable job market and lack of support. An unstable job market can include high turnover rates, jobs needing to provide more income to support a liveable wage, or the only jobs available are minimum wage jobs. It can be hard to generate jobs as it depends on an individual's qualifications and society's economy. Still, an unstable job market can make it difficult for families to move to a better area with better financial opportunities. A lack of support from a society includes the same risks: inability to find a sufficient income to live off of, diminished resources, a society not taking action to help the homeless community, etc. Some protective factors to prevent homelessness include community resources giving back to individuals who are facing homelessness. For example, in my county, several organizations provide essentials to homeless individuals, such as clothes, hygiene products, food products, shelters, and places to shower. Also, if leaders in power positions

recognize a homeless problem and create a plan to get people housing (i.e., create more affordable housing, provide more shelters, job fairs, etc.)

PART 3: THEORIES OF PREVENTION
Prevention of Eviction and Severe Housing Crisis

A theory that could be applied to an eviction/ homelessness prevention program would be Cognitive Behavior Therapy. CBT helps individuals change negative thoughts by addressing how those thoughts can turn into negative assumptions and impact an individual's behavior. I believe this theory would be appropriate for an eviction prevention program because it focuses on an individual and not their environment. Individuals don't have to feel shame about facing eviction/homelessness. A prevention program can be focused on how reframing an individual's negative thoughts can help promote positive emotions and behaviors. A training completed by the University of Pennsylvania showed that when community case managers used CBT with their homeless clients in shelters, homeless clients could be discharged from shelters faster than before case managers were given CBT training. "The CBT framework shows early promise for improving services for people experiencing chronic homelessness. This program also demonstrates the benefit of involving community stakeholders and academic partners to address one aspect of chronic homelessness." (Pontoski, 2016) An existing evidence-based program I believe would work would be the Rapid Re-Housing program. Rapid Re-Housing is an evidence-based, permanent housing program that helps qualified individuals receive identification to get housing, provides rent and move-in costs, and provides case management services to support homeless individuals as they get back on their feet. With intensive case management services,

individuals are able to find housing and learn techniques to remain in stable housing. Individuals are able to stay in case management services after finding housing to have continuous support.

PART 4: DIVERSITY AND ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS
Prevention of Eviction and Severe Housing Crisis

Homelessness can affect any individual without warning and can cause anyone to be in an unstable situation. Specifically, according to the End Homelessness Campaign, homeless unaccompanied youth (under the age of 25) made up almost 20% of the homeless population in 2022. LGBTQ+ teens are at a higher risk of homelessness. The Trevor Project reports that 28% of LGBTQ+ youth either reported experiencing homelessness or housing instability at some point in their lives. From that percentage, those who were homeless had two to four times the odds of experiencing depression, anxiety, self-harm, or attempted suicide. Different situations can cause LGBTQ+ teens to become lost, such as running from violence or their families being chronically homeless. LGBTQ+ teens are also at a higher risk for mental health issues such as anxiety and depression. Due to discrimination and stigmas, the LGBTQ community is more susceptible to physical abuse, verbal abuse, and being turned away due to their sexual orientation. Many LGBTQ adolescents are displaced by their caregivers because of their sexual identity or orientation.

Mental health problems can make functioning and managing life stressors a challenge. Being homeless for an extended period of time can also impact a youth's mental health. The Journal of Research on Adolescence states that social relationships are essential to understanding mental health and homeless youth who spend most of their time alone.

A few mechanisms that could increase the cultural relevance of a homeless prevention program would be eliminating the stigma behind homelessness, providing additional resources to those actively homeless, and creating a step-by-step plan to help individuals facing eviction get back on their feet. The biggest stereotype regarding homeless people is that those individuals are uneducated or struggling with addiction. This is not the case for everyone, and breaking down this stigma can help individuals feel more comfortable reaching out for assistance and for their communities not to see these individuals negatively.

One ethical consideration in a prevention program is for a clinician to be developmental and culturally sensitive to any individual during the program. With any individual willing to be vulnerable and join a prevention program, it can be a challenge for an individual. As a clinician, I must stay focused on the client's goal and support them through the program. The same concept is applied when it comes to confidentiality and advocacy. The client is the priority, and protecting their information while advocating for them to reach their goals is crucial.

PART 5: ADVOCACY
Prevention of Eviction and Housing Crisis

Advocacy is essential to creating social change. According to the MSJCC guidelines, institutional advocacy relates to social institutions such as schools, community organizations, etc. Some barriers to homelessness institutionally can include a lack of income, the inability to afford professional clothing for a job, the inability to get identification documents, issues receiving consistent meals, etc. These barriers can make it difficult for homeless individuals to find a job,

find housing, and focus on bettering themselves. A lack of resources, such as not enough shelter beds, inconsistent food banks, lack of transportation, etc, can also be barriers to individuals who are experiencing homelessness.

On a public policy level, some specific laws/ policies target the homeless community. For example, in Texas, public camping has been criminalized, and individuals who don't comply can be fined up to $500 and arrested. In some states, public benches could have spikes to prevent individuals from sleeping on them. Additionally, residency laws can make it difficult for an individual who is homeless to receive identification documents. In Texas, an individual must reside in Texas for at least six months and have residency proof before receiving proper identification. It can be challenging to prove residency after being displaced for an extended period.

An advocacy action to address homelessness in the community would be to create community programs that assist individuals facing homelessness get back on their feet. For example, an organization that helps individuals pay for identification cards or a supported housing program that helps individuals with their rent for a short period. On a public policy level, writing to lawmakers regarding laws that target homeless individuals can show not only support for the community but also that these issues are essential and need to be addressed.

REFERENCES

- American Counseling Association (2014). 2014 ACA Code of Ethics.Links to an external site. Retrieved from https://www.counseling.org/Resources/aca-code-of-ethics.pdf

- Brott, H., Kornbluh, M., Banfield, J., Boullion, A. M., & Incaudo, G. (2022). Leveraging research to inform prevention and intervention efforts: Identifying risk and protective factors for rural and urban homeless families within transitional housing programs. *Journal of Community Psychology*, *50*(4), 1854–1874. https://doi.org/10.1002/jcop.22663

- Digital, F. 26. (2023, March 28). *Closer look: Texas has 5th highest homelessness rate in the nation, study says*. FOX 26 Houston. https://www.fox26houston.com/news/texas-has-the-5th-highest-homelessness-rate-in-the-nation-studyDownload Digital, F. 26. (2023, March 28). Closer look: Texas has 5th highest homelessness rate in the nation, study says. FOX 26 Houston. https://www.fox26houston.com/news/texas-has-the-5th-highest-homelessness-rate-in-the-nation-study

- Dholakia, N. (2021, December 17). *How the U.S. criminalizes homelessness*. Vera Institute of Justice. https://www.vera.org/news/how-the-u-s-criminalizes-homelessness#:~:text=It%20mirrors%20a%20new%20Texas,and%20fined%20up%20to%20%20%24500.

- Grattan, R. E., Tryon, V. L., Lara, N., Gabrielian, S. E., Melnikow, J., & Niendam, T. A. (2022). Risk and Resilience Factors for Youth Homelessness in Western Countries: A Systematic Review. *Psychiatric services (Washington, D.C.)*, *73*(4), 425–438. https://doi.org/10.1176/appi.ps.202000133

- Gutwinski, S., Schreiter, S., Deutscher, K., & Fazel, S. (2021). The prevalence of mental disorders among homeless people in high-income countries: An updated systematic review and meta-regression analysis. *PLoS medicine*, *18*(8), e1003750. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pmed.1003750Download Gutwinski, S., Schreiter, S.,

Deutscher, K., & Fazel, S. (2021). The prevalence of mental disorders among homeless people in high-income countries: An updated systematic review and meta-regression analysis. PLoS medicine, 18(8), e1003750. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pmed.1003750

- Haines, J. (2023, March 22). *The 25 U.S. cities with largest homeless populations - U.S. news ...* The 25 U.S Cities With Largest Homeless Population. https://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/slideshows/cities-with-the-largest-homeless-populations-in-the-u-s?onepageDownload Haines, J. (2023, March 22). The 25 U.S. cities with largest homeless populations - U.S. news ... The 25 U.S Cities With Largest Homeless Population. https://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/slideshows/cities-with-the-largest-homeless-populations-in-the-u-s?onepage

- *Homelessness and housing instability among LGBTQ youth*. The Trevor Project. (2023, August 23). https://www.thetrevorproject.org/research-briefs/homelessness-and-housing-instability-among-lgbtq-youth-feb-2022/

- Keuroghlian, A. S., Shtasel, D., & Bassuk, E. L. (2014). Out on the street: a public health and policy agenda for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender youth who are homeless. *The American journal of orthopsychiatry*, *84*(1), 66–72. https://doi.org/10.1037/h0098852

- Parents Lead. (n.d.). *Behavioral health Continuum of Care Model Download Behavioral health Continuum of Care Model*. Retrieved December 12, 2021, from https://prevention.nd.gov/files/pdf/parentslead/ContinuumofCareModel.pdfDownload Parents Lead. (n.d.). Behavioral health Continuum of Care Model Download Behavioral health Continuum of Care Model. Retrieved December 12, 2021, from https://prevention.nd.gov/files/pdf/parentslead/ContinuumofCareModel.pdf

- Perlman, S., Willard, J., Herbers, J. E., Cutuli, J. J., & Eyrich Garg, K. M. (2014). Youth Homelessness: Prevalence and Mental Health Correlates. *Journal of the Society for Social Work and Research*. https://doi.org/2334-2315/2014/0503-0005/$10.00

- Pontoski Taylor, K., Cunningham, A., Schultz, L., Jager, H. S., Sposato, R., Evans, A., Beck, A. T., & Creed, T. A. (2016). Using a cognitive behavioral framework to train staff serving individuals who experience chronic homelessness. *Journal of Community Psychology*, *44*(5), 674–680. https://doi.org/10.1002/jcop.21786

- Pruett, C. (2023, April 17). *Dallas' 214% spike in chronic homelessness*. Dallas' 214% Spike in Chronic Homelessness. https://dallasexpress.com/city/dallas-214-spike-in-chronic-homelessness/Download Pruett, C. (2023, April 17). Dallas' 214% spike in chronic homelessness. Dallas' 214% Spike in Chronic Homelessness.

  https://dallasexpress.com/city/dallas-214-spike-in-chronic-homelessness/

- Reese, L. E., & Vera E. M. (2007). Culturally relevant prevention: The scientific and practical considerations of community-based programs Download Culturally relevant prevention: The scientific and practical considerations of community-based programs. *The Counseling Psychologist,* 35(6), 763-778.

- *State of Homelessness: 2023 edition*. National Alliance to End Homelessness. (2023, May 23). https://endhomelessness.org/homelessness-in-america/homelessness-statistics/state-of-homelessness/#indicators-of-riskDownload State of Homelessness: 2023 edition. National Alliance to End Homelessness. (2023, May 23). https://endhomelessness.org/homelessness-in-america/homelessness-statistics/state-of-homelessness/#indicators-of-risk

- Tucker, S. (2015, December). *Powerful possibilities for making prevention better than cureLinks to an external site.* [video]. TED Conferences. (11 minutes): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mEPMRoBUAkADownload Tucker, S. (2015, December). Powerful possibilities for making prevention better than cureLinks to an external site. [video]. TED Conferences. (11 minutes): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mEPMRoBUAkA

- Tyler, K. A., Schmitz, R. M., & Ray, C. M. (2018). Role of Social Environmental Protective Factors on Anxiety and Depressive Symptoms Among Midwestern Homeless Youth. *Journal of Research on Adolescence (Wiley-Blackwell)*, *28*(1), 199–210. https://doi.org/10.1111/jora.12326

- Naeh. (2021). *A legal matter: Laws that disproportionately impact people experiencing homelessness*. National Alliance to End Homelessness. https://endhomelessness.org/blog/a-legal-matter-laws-that-disproportionately-impact-people-experiencing-homelessness/#:~:text=There%20are%20particular%20laws%20and,the%20state%20of%20being%20homeless.

- Walden University. (n.d.). *Scholars of changeLinks to an external site.*. Retrieved from https://academicguides.waldenu.edu/social-change/scholars-of-change

SCHOLARWORKS CONTRIBUTOR AGREEMENT

ScholarWorks Publication Consideration

ScholarWorks makes the intellectual output of the Walden University community publicly available to the wider world. By highlighting the scholarly and professional activities of our students and faculty, ScholarWorks' rich repository encourages new ideas, preserves past knowledge, and fosters new connections to improve human and social conditions.

If you would like your portfolio from your Counseling 6785 course to be considered for submission to ScholarWorks, please review the ScholarWorks Contributor Agreement below and agree to the terms and conditions.

Acceptance of the policies and terms of the ScholarWorks Contributor agreement
- will not impact your grade
- will not guarantee publication

ScholarWorks Contributor Agreement

To administer this repository and preserve the contents for future use, *ScholarWorks* requires certain permissions from you, the contributor. By making a submission to *ScholarWorks*, you are accepting the terms of this license. However, you do not give up the copyright to your work. You do not give up the right to submit the work to publishers or other repositories.

By including an email contact below, you hereby grant Walden a limited license to review the Submission for the purposes of review of scholarly content; to distribute the Submission to the public on the Website; to make and retain copies of the Submission; and to archive the Submission in a publicly accessible collection.

You agree to defend, indemnify and hold Walden harmless from and against any and all claims, suits or proceedings, demands, losses, damages, liabilities and costs and expenses (including, without limitation, reasonable attorney's fees) arising out of or resulting from the actual or alleged infringement of any patent, trademark, copyright, trade secret or any other intellectual property right in connection with any Submission.Walden will not be required to treat any Submission as confidential.For more information, see the Contributor FAQ.

By executing this Agreement, you represent and agree that:
- You are the author or of the submitted work or you have been authorized by the copyright holder, and the submission is original work.
- You hold the copyright to this document and you agree to permit this document to be posted, and made available to the public in any format in perpetuity.
- The submission contains no libelous or other unlawful matter and makes no improper invasion of the privacy of any other person.
- The submission will be maintained in an open access online digital environment via the *ScholarWorks* portal. Because works on *ScholarWorks* are openly available online to anyone with internet access, you do not hold Walden University responsible for third party use of the submission.

ScholarWorks (the Website) is owned and maintained by Walden University, LLC (Walden). All content that you upload to this Website (a Submission) will be available to the public. You

represent and warrant that you have the right to upload any such Submission and make it available to the public.

I have read the Scholarworks agreement above, and I agree to have my COUN 6785 portfolio document considered for inclusion in Scholarworks; I also grant my permission for representatives from Walden University to submit this work on my behalf.

By signing again below, I agree to allow my email contact information below to be included in the published document, so that others may contact me about this work.

SIGNATURE: K. Hunter
DATE: 9/11/2023
DIRECT EMAIL ADDRESS:kayla.hunter2@waldenu.edu