

Names:

What Can Be Done to End Housing Insecurity?

The National Alliance to End Homelessness, a not-for-profit organization, has identified **5 key ways** to reduce housing insecurity in the United States:

[Solutions - National Alliance to End Homelessness](#)

With your fellow group members, read and discuss one of these ways:

Group 1 – A Coordinated Approach

Group 2 – Housing as the Solution

Group 3 – Assistance for the Most Vulnerable

Group 4 – Designing a Crisis Response

Group 5 – Increasing Employment and Income

Together, write bullet points below that summarize this one solution.

Be ready to explain it to the rest of the class.

Before I pinpoint in detail about why homelessness in America a big problem is, let me just mention that when someone goes homeless it's a multi-faceted issue that stretches across all boards. It involves massive disparities in income inequality, mental illness, addiction and substance abuse related problems, exploitation from real estate companies and landlords over pricing the cost of rent and mortgage and much more. Passing one bill or implementing one policy won't fix the problem. We need to focus on multiple issues crossing on systemic levels for real change to take place in our country. The examples I'm

going to show you will broadly touch on all these issues and how they tie in to the homelessness crisis we all observe today. Thanks for tuning in!

1. Rent control. The fact is, the price of mortgage and rent in America is to dang high. Here in the Seattle area for example is 114% higher than the national average. Even lots of high paying jobs can't really keep up the whopping costs of living here. We have 13,368 homeless people in Seattle right now. The problem is real estate developers keep building more and more vacant homes that are still overpriced. It's not a housing shortage. Part of it is that people can't sustain a living and have disposable income. They live paycheck to paycheck if they're lucky.
2. Mental illness. It's also a fact that mental illness plays a huge role in the homelessness crisis that we face. It's a shame that in our culture we stigmatize mental illness. When that happens, it goes untreated for most of the time. I think we should cater a lot of our money and resources to funding proper mental health treatment to hopefully rehabilitate people and help them get back up on there feet. When you can't think straight you can't hold a job and make money to live a decent life.

3. Addiction (predominantly the opioid epidemic in America). Addiction and substance abuse in our country plays a huge role in homelessness. Unfortunately, the United States is experiencing an addiction to powerfully addictive drugs called opioids. Opioids are drugs that are prescribed to treat pain and illegal drugs such as heroin and fentanyl that are used to get high. I think PSA announcements in schools are a good approach. If we can prevent people from becoming addicted and not only treat it in the first place it can make them go far in life. When we educate our kids about the dangers of substance abuse, we tend to only focus on the illegal schedule 1 drugs such as heroin and cocaine. I know for a fact that they aren't educated on the dangers of using prescription drugs, so they have a perception that just because it comes from a doctor and a pharmacy and people use them for legitimate reasons that they are safe for recreational use. Nothing can be further from the truth!!! And, if people have prescribed them for real medical purposes, then how to use them properly by not crushing the meds and making abuse deterrent formulations. And we don't teach our kids about prescription drug abuse. I say add it and keep reminding them of the harms and dangers. Now that we got that out of the way we need to make treatment more available and affordable. Having programs that can subsidize methadone and suboxone treatment can be a first start. I think we can decrease the regulations just a little bit so we can distribute the meds easier. The fact that most doctors can prescribe opiates for many types of pain but the treatment that decreases withdrawal and cravings are at a more restricted level is asinine in my opinion. We also need to fund programs to get people connected with one another so that their brains could be trained to find pleasure in real life activities instead of chemicals.

4. Lack of job programs. The fact that low paying jobs fills most of the void in many American cities, it's important that we can create higher paying jobs so people can afford to vacate more of the houses and apartment's being built. I don't think just relying on yourself is the only option to getting a job but if we can incentivize job creators to events where people are given the opportunity to work and get back on their feet it would be a good idea. It'll save the government more money in the long run from police budgets, prison costs and much more!

5. Lastly subsidized housing. The fact is that we spend way too much time and money incarcerating the homeless in prison and we don't have the time to treat the underlying cause of why they are homeless. Believe it or not, if we temporarily gave the homeless a tiny apartment space to sleep at night while they get help getting back up on their feet, it'll be cheaper in the long run. Right now, it costs us \$31,065 a year to lock these people up to just have them return to the street's years later back to their addiction and mental health problems. If we subsidized apartment complexes to these people, the taxpayer would save a whopping \$1.8 million dollars a year. It would also reduce the federal debt and deficit. Also, it would reduce crime by a lot. So, in the long run, if we spend money helping people instead of treating them like dogs on a leash it would help everyone in the long run and save us more money to do what we want with. I highly encourage the people and our government to take these steps to make the country a more equal and prosperous place for all of us Americans!