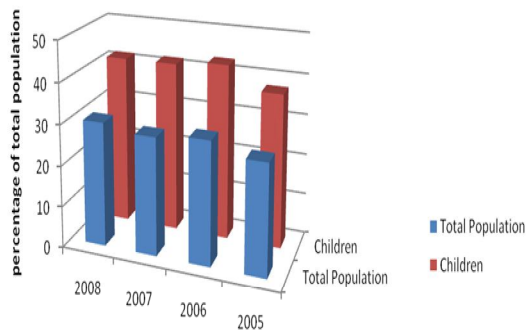


Crisis of Poverty in Buffalo

On any given night close to 2,000 people in Buffalo are homeless. Countless more live in poverty, doubled and tripled up with family and friends, staying in homes without utilities, subsisting from paycheck to paycheck, mere steps from becoming homeless.

Many of the people residing in such circumstances are children. Countless research has shown that children who experience homelessness as a child are more likely to repeat a grade, to drop-out of high school, have lower rates of literacy than their peers, and become homeless as adults.

Buffalo's Poverty Rate 2005-2008



Data from ACS 1-Year Estimates 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008
Compiled by the Homeless Alliance of WNY

Contact Information

If you are interested in participating in the 2010 Poverty Challenge, please contact Kristin Cipollone at cipollone@wnyhomeless.org or Tim Munier at munier@wnyhomeless.org. We can also be reached by phone at 853.1101.

You can also visit our website (wnyhomeless.org) to learn more about past Challenges, review new Poverty Challenge materials, and learn more about what we do.



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Buffalo, NY 14213

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Website: wnyhomeless.org

Blog: homelessalliance.wordpress.com

HAWNY is a not-for-profit organization that focuses on research, education, advocacy, and community collaboration to work to end homelessness.



Homeless Alliance of WNY

facilitating dialogue and strategic action to end homelessness

Poverty Challenge 2010



Learn what poverty means, demand that it ends.

Tel: 716.853.1101

What is a *Poverty Challenge*?

The Poverty Challenge is an awareness raising event sponsored by the Homeless Alliance of WNY. During this week-long experience, we challenge participants to live on a low-income budget and reflect upon their normal spending patterns as well as learn more about the causes and consequences of poverty.

This is not an opportunity to play poor or to “walk in someone else’s shoes.” Rather, the Poverty Challenge highlights the struggles inherent to living on a low-income budget as well as the privileges that many of us benefit from yet rarely recognize.



This event combines experiential learning with critical thinking and analysis in an attempt to broaden the community’s understanding of poverty and homelessness. Participants will engage in reflective questioning that will push them to think about social issues anew.

This solidarity effort aims to bring the circumstances of many of our neighbors to the forefront. Such awareness, we hope, will lead to more equitable change for our community.

Schedule of Events

Monday, May 24: Orientation
2pm and 7pm
Homeless Alliance Offices

Tuesday, May 25: Day 1
Reflect on spending
Eastside Bus Tour, Time
TBA

Wednesday, May 26: Day 2
Maintain Budget
Chat with the Experts
Poverty Simulation Event,
Time TBA

Thursday, May 27: Day 3
Maintain Budget
Movie Series, Time TBA
Volunteer Night, 4-7pm

Friday, May 28: Culmination
Press Conference, 10 am
Location TBA



You may ask, “Why is this called a Poverty Challenge if participants have the choice of maintaining a minimum wage or poverty-level budget?”

The name “minimum wage” is a bit misleading. It would seem to indicate that this is the wage needed to ensure that basic needs were met. However, this is not the case. The minimum wage has not kept up with the cost-of-living and inflation.

Many people earning a minimum wage cannot make ends meet yet make too much to qualify for a number of government benefits. Furthermore, few minimum wage employers provide health insurance or paid leave to their employees. Therefore, even though employed, many minimum wage workers find themselves living paycheck to paycheck, on the verge of homelessness, and unprepared for any crisis that may befall them. In this sense, minimum wage workers live in poverty, even if not officially recognized as such.