

https://www.mankatofreepress.com/opinion/editorials/our-view-homelessness-challenges-can-be-overcome-with-community-response/article_64ca1b42-17a2-11ea-b9b7-7ff8cac299ea.html

Our View: Homelessness: Challenges can be overcome with community response

Dec 8, 2019



The number of people experiencing homelessness in the Mankato area has grown. The need for shelters has grown. The need for affordable housing has grown. Now it is time for the community response to grow.

The Free Press has embarked on in-depth series of reports on homelessness with the second installment in today's edition.

The first installment published on Nov. 24 showed the number of homeless families tracked by Mankato schools has grown from about 95 six years ago to 120 today.

In October, The Reach center that serves homeless youth had 315 visits, far above the typical 200-250 per month and the most ever since 2011.

A Wilder Foundation survey found 589 people homeless in a spot check in 2018 in a 20-county area of southern Minnesota that includes Mankato.

Partners for Affordable Housing shelters at the Welcome Inn and Theresa House have about 32 residents. A new shelter in St. Peter has 15.

The emergency shelter at the Salvation Army houses 10-18 regularly and the new Connections Shelter run by area churches has about 20 people every night.

The story in today's edition explores the ability of six local organizations to continue to have enough funding to meet the needs of growing homeless populations. Most face flat or lower funding. Federal funding for these programs has modestly increased compared to the needs. State funding for housing programs has been uneven, but more recently on the rise.

And the groups are joining together to hire a support worker who can help people fill out sometimes burdensome paperwork for these programs.

These nonprofits groups are making efforts nothing short of heroic in many cases. They are stretching their dollars, thinking about how to best serve the most critical cases and collaborating on how to work with each other.

A regular homeless response team meets once a month that includes representatives from nonprofits, county, city and others.

How can the community help? At a minimum, you can support the organizations caring for the homeless with time, money or in-kind contributions.

In the coming months, The Free Press series will also offer broader solutions to the problem. At that time, there may be a need to lobby local, state and federal elected officials to increase funding or adopt specific strategies.

The Mankato community has often risen to the challenge of solving local problems. The homeless not only need stable places to live and a hand up to get training or counseling or other services so they can get jobs and live the life many of us take for granted.


Why it matters:

Shelter is a basic need for living a productive life.

TRENDING VIDEO

Mankato Free Press Events

 See All Events

 Add your event

Sun, Aug 08

Mon, Aug 09

Mon, Aug 09

Mon, Aug 09

Mon



RibFest 2021

Mankato, MN



SUN
8

MON
9

TUE
10

WED
11

THU
12

FRI
13

Pet DIY Kits

North Mankato Taylor...

SUN
15

MON
16

Family Movie Mondays

North Mankato Police...

TUE
10

WED
11

THU
12

FRI
13

Library Night at the Mankato MoonDogs

ISG Field

TUE
17

WED
18

THU
19

Eco Aut Inte

FRI
20

