

Classroom VIDEO

Teacher's Notes

Homeless

A Contextual Case Study

Grades: 10-12

Duration: 25 mins

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INTRODUCTION

This video is suitable for students studying Community and Family Studies in Year 12 as it relates to the HSC core unit on Groups In Context. It investigates in detail one of the specific groups in need in our community, the homeless. The case study focuses on Gary, a man who has been homeless for over 20 years. Through his story we gain an understanding of some of the characteristics and needs of the homeless. Students can examine a vital support network used by Gary, the holistic strategies it uses to help Gary learn life skills, experience a sense of belonging and identity and hence contribute to his level of well being.

PRE VIEWING ACTIVITIES

1. Students are to research a definition, the characteristics and the needs of the homeless. The following web site addresses will assist students to gather this information:

ABC Online (Reality Bites page):
www.abc.net.au/news/features/homeless
Raising the Roof
www.raisingtheroof.org/lrn-home-index.cfm

National **Homelessness** Initiative - Home Page
www.homelessness.gc.ca/home/index_e.asp

Homelessness in Canada - From housing to shelters to blankets, by ...
www.shareintl.org/archives/homelessness/hl-ch_Canada.htm

WINTER 2004: THE HOMELESSNESS MARATHON
www.ckut.ca/homeless.html

OCASI MAY 2003 MONTH REPORT ARTICLE
www.ocasi.org/sys/report_detail.asp?ReportID=141

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[HOMELESS REPORT SURVEY OF MAJOR CANADIAN CITIES](http://www.pichamilton.net/content/homeless/report.pdf)
www.pichamilton.net/content/homeless/report.pdf

[The International Home Page of The Salvation Army](http://www1.salvationarmy.org/ihq/www_sa.nsf)
www1.salvationarmy.org/ihq/www_sa.nsf

2. Organize a workshop to develop an appreciation of the relative importance of areas of need for the homeless.

- a) Form groups of 4 or 5 students. Collect nine blank cards from your teacher.
- b) On each card write one of the following needs:
 - access to employment-training skills
 - greater access to refugees/shelters
 - availability of services that are holistic in their approach and emphasize the importance of education
 - improved societal attitudes toward the homeless
 - support from family and friends
 - free healthcare
 - food and blankets
 - educational and life skills training
 - emergency relief funds
- c) In order to ensure categories are understood, have a whole class discussion about each item's meaning.
- d) Each group should place its nine cards in priority in the pattern shown below.
- e) When the ranking is completed, each group should report it's ranking to the class and give reasons for the choices made. Conclude with a whole class discussion about the activity.
- f) After viewing the video, consider it your group would change their priorities for helping homeless.

REFERENCES

Commonwealth Advisory Committee on Homelessness, Working Towards a National Homelessness Strategy, a consultation paper for the National Homelessness Strategy, Commonwealth of Australia, 2001.

Harrison, Jenny, 2002 **Excel Community and Family Studies**, Pascal Press, Glebe NSW

Weihan L, Chapman S, Duggan B and Wood B (2002) **Community and Family Studies**. Heinemann Australia

Healey J 2002, The Homeless, **Issues in Society** vol 159m The Spinney Press, Sydney

Council to Homeless persons **Homelessness Fact Sheets**.

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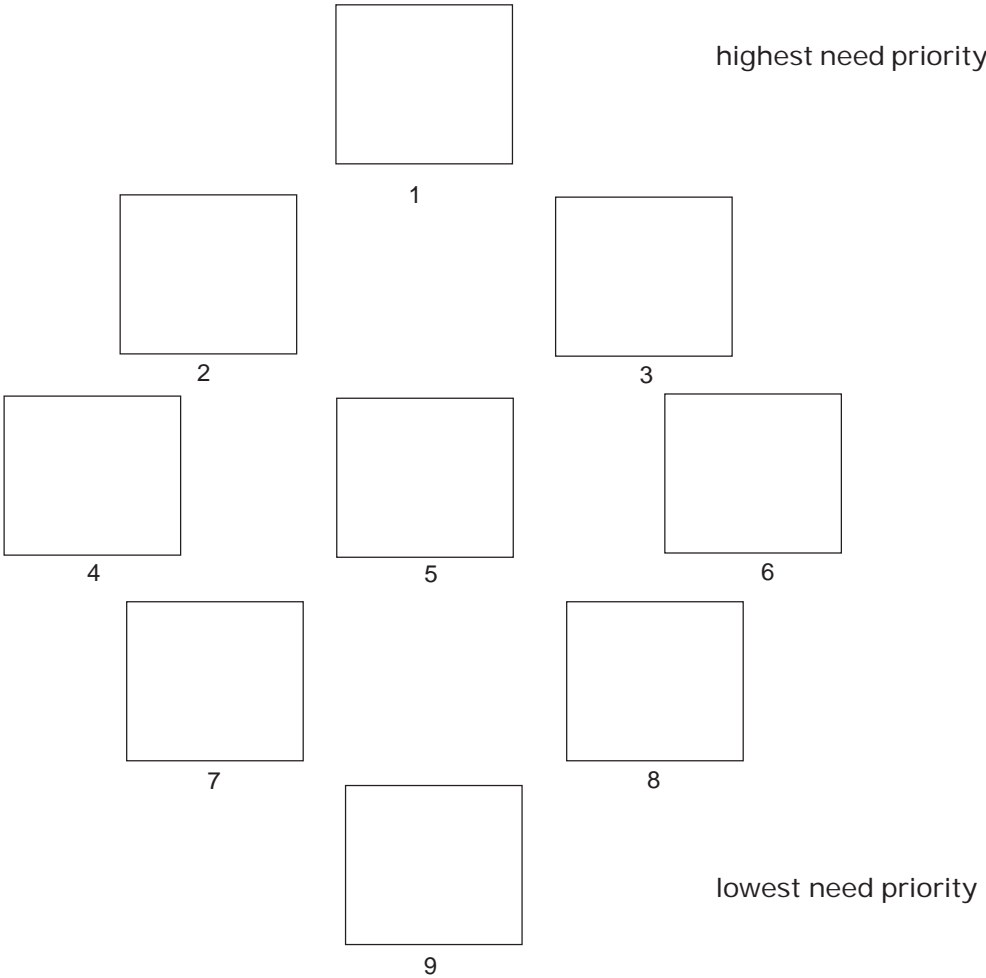
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From Gary's story students should show an appreciation for support services that use a holistic approach. By educating a person, providing them with life skills, and utilizing group support will increase their confidence, self-esteem and sense of identity. Such programs give a sense of purpose in life and therefore a sense of future.



*Note – even though one need may be considered more important than another, they are all important.

Name:

Questions to accompany the video

1. Being homeless means having no _____ place to call home, no place you feel you _____.

2. The stereotypical view of a homeless person is an old man sleeping on a park bench. List places a homeless person is more likely to be found other than on a park bench.

_____	_____
_____	_____

3. Identify the causes of homelessness according to Gary.

_____	_____
_____	_____

4. _____% of young and homeless Australians have attempted suicide.

5 Describe the contributing factors to Gary's homelessness.

6. Besides childhood trauma such as abuse, list other major contributions to homelessness.

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

7. Describe what Gary means by 'self sabotaging'

8. _____ people were homeless in Australia on the night the census was taken in 2001. _____ were found to be absolutely homeless. 78% of homeless people were aged less than _____ years.
The largest group were _____ year old 14% of _____ are homeless.
The fastest growing group of homeless people are _____ with young children.

9. Mental health issues include:

* 75% of homeless people have at least one _____

* _____ % men and _____ % women suffer from alcohol abuse.

* 36% suffer from _____ abuse.

Other health issues include:

*

*physical and sexual assault

*exposure to the elements

*

10. Outline how Gary got to Charles O'Neill House.

11. Discuss the model used by Charles O'Neill House to help the homeless.

12. **Summary**

Homelessness is not just a lack of _____ shelter, it is the lack of a _____ and _____ environment, a place where you feel _____ and settled, a place that is private and where you feel you _____.

POSTVIEWINGACTIVITIES

1. Centrelink provides services for homeless people through Community Service Units and the work of Community Service Officers (CSOs). Investigate the role of such services and identify their strengths and weaknesses in helping the homelessness situation in Australia.
2. Investigate one of the following support agencies within your community which assist the homeless.
 - a) State the name, contact details and aims of the service
 - b) Describe the support that the service provides
 - c) Explain how to access the service
 - d) Outline the source of funding provided for the service to operate
 - e) Evaluate the strategies used by the service to assist the homeless person.

Support Agencies: Mission Australia, St Vincent's de Paul, Red Cross, Salvation Army, Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP), Capital Accommodation Program (CAP), Counsellors, Wesley Mission, Matthew Talbot Hostel, Samaritan House, Catherine Booth House, Gordon House.

It is recognized that a holistic approach to homelessness requires more than the provision of accommodation and food. The service should address the homeless' needs in relation to a lack of personal and family support, disabilities, mental health issues, employment social recognition, drug/alcohol problem, abuse, rejection, lack of education and self esteem, loss of hope for life.

3. Case Study

Marcus is a 19 year old who suffers from low self-esteem and struggles to accept his homosexuality. He recently opened up to his parents in _____ the hope that they would be supportive and accepting. However his father 'thought it best he move out'. This rejection, coupled with his _____ poor HSC results the previous year, has left Marcus feeling messed up and vulnerable. He has no place to go.

* Devise a range of strategies that could be used to prevent Marcus from becoming another young homeless statistic.

4. Write an extended answer on the following:
Describe a range of equity issues faced by the homeless and evaluate management strategies that are used to address these issues.

Equity issues include:

- high rates of unemployment
- lack of access to affordable housing
- highest % of indigenous people
- greater attempts of suicide
- lack of access to services
- societal attitudes (lack of acknowledgment that homelessness can occur due to factors outside the control of the individual)

5. Read the article on homelessness. Identify the key issues they are highlighting.

Homeless are just not sexy enough to help

By ANDREW WEST

BIG Australian companies support children's charities and medical research because they are "sexy" causes, says one of our leading churchmen.

But homeless people don't provide attractive photo opportunities for a company's annual reports, according to the Reverend Gordon Moyes.

Dr. Moyes, who heads Sydney's Wesley Mission and sits on Prime Minister Howard's Community Business Partnership Board, said "helping the homeless is fairly unattractive to corporations".

"They much prefer to work with a major hospital or in cancer research or in some of those charities we regard as sexy because they have a good public image and profile," he said.

"It can fit with the corporate image, which is clean and concerned for the

community. Caring for, say, children with cancer fits in with what they are doing. But to care for the homeless, especially people who are unkempt, dirty or unemployed, is not a good image for a corporation.

"If you can have a group of children who are suffering from cancer being taken aloft in a hot air balloon, that's a really lovely, warm feeling for [a company's] annual report. But the whole picture of homelessness is pretty bleak and despairing.

"I don't altogether blame corporations for that but we have to educate them that real need isn't always pretty."

Dr. Moyes was speaking about a major Wesley study into homelessness, to be released on Tuesday by NSW Governor Marie Bashir.

According to the study, 304,000 Australians are turned away from hostels

and shelter each year because they have insufficient beds. It also found that 31 per cent of homeless people are children and about 10pc are families, often with one parent working for a low wage. They cannot afford to rent, let alone buy, houses.

The Wesley Mission believes that more than 10pc of homeless people aged over 60 are war veterans.

The report, the most comprehensive since the Burdekin inquiry of the late 1980s, also shows 93pc of homeless people have suffered "significant trauma", such as rape, abuse or mental breakdown.

Dr. Moyes called on the Howard Government to restore the \$50 million it removed from the Commonwealth-State housing agreement between 1999 and 2003. He also said the Carr Government should turn over old schools and police youth clubs to major charities so they could establish low-rent boarding houses.

