

POVERTY & HOMELESSNESS STATISTICS

43,706 people live in Branch County. 17.7% fall below the poverty line. (DataUSA).

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Poverty and homelessness are often linked together. "If you are poor, you are essentially an illness, an accident, or a paycheck away from living on the streets" (endhomelessness.org). Due to limited resources, many of those struggling are not aware of the assistance that is available. This can lead to many missed opportunities. Several local organizations are working to help those in need.

Six Categories of Homelessness

- 1. Unsheltered (On the street)**- Living on the street or living in a makeshift shelter such as cars, tents, abandoned buildings, etc.
- 2. Sheltered**- Anyone living in a temporary residence facility or transitional housing through a shelter.
- 3. Transitional Housing**- Housing under the direction of a shelter.
- 4. Doubling Up**- Children or family that have moved in with other relatives or friends.
- 5. Hotel/Motel**- People who live in a welfare sponsored room or rooms in a hotel or motel.
- 6. Unaccompanied Youth**- Youth that are not living with a biological parent or guardian.

McKinney Vento

The McKinney Vento Act was created to assist youth in homeless situations. McKinney Vento can help pay for things that a student or youth needs such as school supplies. Youth that fit the specifications of the Act's definition of homelessness can qualify.

"Life is hard enough when everything is going right, but when basic needs aren't being met it makes it really tough,"

*-Beth Karney,
Counselor*

In America,
16 MILLION
children reside in households where they skip meals or eat less in order to save money.
familypromise.org

Poverty Unemployment Lack of affordable housing
...are the top reasons that lead to family homelessness.
familypromise.org

Each night, at least
500,000
Americans do not have a place to call home.
michigan.gov

10%
of people who become homeless each year are homeless long term. They use
50%
of shelter capacity
michigan.gov

ORGANIZATIONS

ETERNAL BREAD

- Eternal Bread is a Christian based organization aiming to teach kids lessons such as how to cook, budget and garden.
- Eternal Bread is holding a mid-winter break activity day Feb. 16 and 19 at the Union Church.
- Eternal Bread has a summer program in July that helps feed children when the school food program is not running.
- "The mission of Eternal Bread is to teach life-skills to promote self-care in the children of our community," Eternal Bread organizer **Penny Brockway** said.

BACKPACK BUDDIES

- Backpack Buddies is a program operated through the Branch County Domestic Violence Shelter that provides students with backpacks to take home on the weekend that are filled with food.
- The backpacks are used to help make the participants more discrete.
- The program runs completely on financial donations and volunteers. The backpacks are distributed through the school systems.

CLOTHING PANTRY

- The Quincy Clothing Pantry is available to all people.
- The clothing pantry was created to organize the clothes that were around the community into a single place.
- The pantry is designed to be like a boutique and give people a choice of what kind of clothes they want.
- "Many families have come and "shopped" for clothing for their entire household. They have sometimes left with up to six large garbage bags filled with clothing for themselves and their children," Clothing Pantry organizer **Laurie Talbot** said.

TEEN SHARE

- Altrusa Teen SHARE is a shelter and program for teens. It has been in operation since 1996. The program offers a home for teenagers and also provides a weekly group with the other people in the program.
- Teen SHARE has two homes: one for girls and one for boys. Each of the homes can shelter up to six teens each.
- Teens in this program come from backgrounds of parental neglect, substance abuse, or other difficult circumstances.



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