

Bibliotherapy List: Children and Homelessness

by

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December 2011

Sources for Children, Professionals, Parents/Guardians

Axness, J. (Director). (1998). *Alef bet blast-off! Fixing the world episode two* [Motion picture]. United States: Ergo Media Inc.

This 23-minute movie (DVD) for children under 12 uses puppets to tell the story of the importance of helping others. When Grandpa Abe gives a job to a homeless man, David and Rachel want to do their part to “fix the world”. However, their grand attempts seem useless until they learn the meaning of giving of themselves. The purpose of the DVD is to introduce children to traditional Jewish values and how relevant they are to today’s modern world.

Bunting, E., & Himler, R. (1991). *Fly away home*. New York, NY: Clarion Books.

Eve Bunting, who has written over 100 books for young readers, writes a 32 page fictional book about a young homeless boy living in the airport with his father. They must move from terminal to terminal to avoid being caught. The boy notices a small bird that is trapped inside the airport. He is given hope when the bird finally finds its freedom and escapes the airport. This book has beautiful watercolor illustrations and is for ages 5 and up. This book is appropriate for the classroom and independent reading at home. Eve Bunting has received numerous awards and honors for her writing and has written many books about difficult subject matter for her readers.

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Greenberg, K. E., & Halebian, C. (1992). *Erik is homeless*. Minneapolis, MN: Lerner

Publications.

In this non-fiction photographic essay, Journalist, Keith Elliot Greenberg and photographer, Carol Halebian captures the life of 9-year-old Erik who is homeless in New York City. After many nights in shelters, Erik and his mother Lydia are placed in Prospect Interfaith Family Inn. Erik is able to attend school, receive tutoring, go on field trips, and visit museums. This book does not depict a typical experience of a homeless child; however it can be used, in conjunction with other materials, for developing an understanding of the homeless and confronting prejudices and stereotypes about them. This book contains black and white photographs and is for ages 8 and up.

Grimes, N., & Christie, R. G. (2009). *Rich: A Dyamonde Daniel book (CD included)*. New York, NY: G.P. Putnam's Sons.

Nikki Grimes writes a 95-page fictional chapter book about Dyamonde Daniel and her friend Free. Free is excited when a local poetry contest offers a cash prize. However, they meet a new classmate who is homeless and living in a shelter. They must reconsider the meaning of rich and poor. Nikki Grimes attacks the issue of homelessness in a thoughtful, child friendly way. There is also a 30-minute CD version with Nikki Grimes reading the story. This book has black and white illustrations and is for ages 7 and up. This book is appropriate for both home and for building awareness about homelessness in the classroom.

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Gunning, M., & Pedlar, E. (2004). *A shelter in our car*. San Francisco, CA: Children's Book Press.

Teacher, Monica Gunning, writes a 31-page fictional book about Zettie and her mother who left Jamaica after her father dies. They are now in America and living in their car. Zettie and her mother are both in school and planning for a real home against all odds. Zettie receives the love and support from her mother to build her determination and confidence to meet all challenges. Also included is an excerpt on homelessness in America at the end of the book. This book has colorful illustrations and is for ages 6 and up. This book is appropriate for the classroom and independent reading at home.

Hubbard, J. (1996). *Lives turned upside down: homeless children in their own words and photographs*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers.

Published by Horizons for Homeless Children, an independent, non-profit organization serving the homeless, this book features the photography and words of homeless children as guided by Jim Hubbard. Jim Hubbard is a photographer dedicating his life's work to documenting homelessness through photography. This 40-page photographic non-fiction book contains personal experiences of homelessness and life in shelters from the perspective of two girls and two boys, ages 9 to 12. The photographs captured in the book were taken by the homeless children. The book contains a foreword by Jim Hubbard and resources about homelessness in the United States at the end. One may also visit the efforts of Jim Hubbard at www.shootingback.org.

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José, C., Andersen, H. C., & Archipowa, A. (1994). *The little match girl*. Honesdale, Pa:

Published by Caroline House.

This 26-page fictional retelling of Hans Christian Andersen's classic tale by Christine San José and beautifully illustrated by Anastassija Archipowa depicts a poor young girl selling matches on New Year's Eve. She is not having any luck selling her matches and she is so cold. She begins to light matches and her dreams come true if only for a brief moment. This book, for ages 6 and up, has a difficult ending and will need to be read and discussed with a teacher or parent/guardian.

Lynette, R. (2010). *What to do when your family loses its home*. New York, NY: PowerKids Press.

This 24-page non-fiction book by Rachel Lynne is part of a series called "Let's Work it Out" which deals with the economy and family issues. This particular book in the series lays out the causes of why a family may lose their home and also what it is like to live in a shelter. The book contains full-page photographs and kid friendly language for ages 7 and up. There is a glossary at the end of the book and a link to a website related to this topic. This book is appropriate for the classroom and independent reading at home.

Kaye, C. B. (2007). *A kids' guide to hunger and homelessness: How to take action*. Minneapolis, MN: Free Spirit Pub.

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This 44-page how-to guide for grades 6 and up addresses what kids and others can do to combat homelessness. It explores community needs and how to develop a service project. The workbook contains facts, quotations, real world examples, write-on pages, and notes to adults. Interviews and first-hand accounts are also featured. The end of the book contains further information and resources.

McGovern, A., & Backer, M. (1997). *The lady in the box*. New York, NY: Turtle Books.

Ann McGovern writes a 40-page fictional book about Ben and his sister Lizzie who meet a lady who lives in a box over a warm air vent. Ben and Lizzie worry about the lady and begin sneaking food and clothes to her. Marni Becker provides powerful illustrations in this book for ages 4 and up. The end of the book contains a note from the author about homelessness. This book is appropriate for the classroom and independent reading at home.

Woods, W. (Director). (2009). *The Little Match Girl in: The Hans Christian Andersen Collection* [Motion picture]. United States: New Video Group.

This animated movie (DVD) selection of *The Little Match Girl* from a collection of classic tales by Hans Christian Andersen is given present-day relevance and an upbeat ending from the original tale. Angela, a homeless little girl sells matches to survive. The director does take some liberties from the original, but the overall message is still the same. The movie is narrated by F. Murray Abraham and is appropriate for ages 6 and up.

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Sources for Professionals and Parents/Guardians

Hard times generation: Homeless kids - 60 Minutes - CBS News. (March 2011). *Breaking News*

Headlines: Business, Entertainment & World News - CBS News. Retrieved September 29, 2011, from <http://www.cbsnews.com/video/watch/?id=7358670n>

This poignant and thought provoking 13-minute news segment from 60 Minutes depicts the lives of children and families who have been affected by job loss and foreclosures and are now homeless. The news segment, reported by Scott Pelley in Florida, follows the lives of children and families who are forced to live in motels. Also discussed are the children's social and educational ramifications from their homelessness. This is a wonderful resource for professionals and parents/guardians to better understand this growing epidemic.

National Alliance to End Homelessness. (n.d.). *National Alliance to End Homelessness*.

Retrieved September 29, 2011, from <http://www.endhomelessness.org>

This website is an important resource for professionals and parents/guardians who need more information on the issue of homelessness. The National Alliance to End Homelessness is a non-profit organization committed to preventing and ending homelessness in the United States. The alliance is a leading voice in the issue of homelessness by improving policy and educating leaders. The website contains links to issues, policy, and solutions of homelessness.

National Coalition for the Homeless. (n.d.). *National Coalition for the Homeless*. Retrieved

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September 29, 2011, from <http://www.nationalhomeless.org>

This website is a wonderful resource for professionals and parents/guardians who want to learn more about the issue of homelessness. The National Coalition of the Homeless is a national network of people, who are currently experiencing or have experienced homelessness, activists and advocates for the cause, and community-based and faith-based service providers whose common goal is to end homelessness. They are committed to providing the immediate needs of people who are currently homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. The website contains information pertaining to advocacy, projects, news, fact sheets, and publications about homelessness.

National Student Campaign Against Hunger and Homelessness. (n.d.). *National Student*

Campaign Against Hunger and Homelessness. Retrieved September 29, 2011, from

<http://www.studentsagainsthunger.org>

This website is a great resource for professionals wanting to educate their students about the issue of homelessness and what they can do to help with this substantial issue in America. The National Student Campaign Against Hunger and Homelessness is committed to ending hunger and homelessness in the United States by educating and training students to directly meet the needs of homeless individuals and advocating for long-term solutions. They organize various projects and programs in colleges and universities all over the United States to combat homelessness in our country.