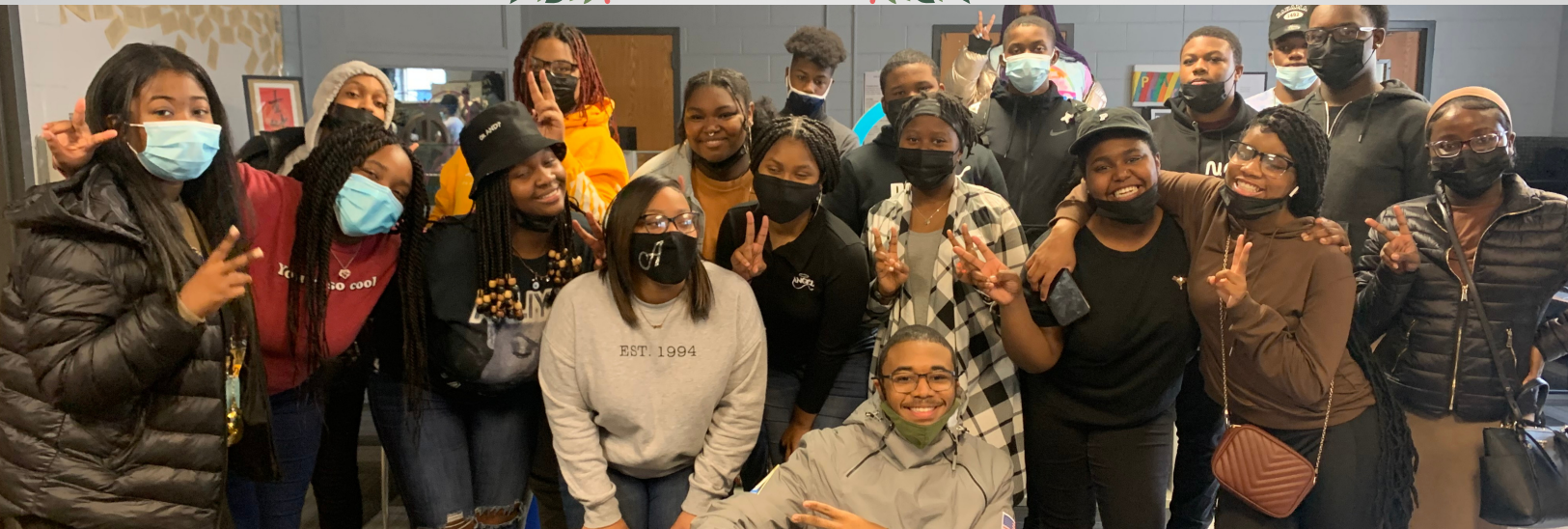


# PARKWAY NORTHWEST HIGH SCHOOL THE PEACE & SOCIAL JUSTICE NEWSLETTER

DECEMBER 2021



## HOMELESSNESS IS STILL A REAL PROBLEM IN PHILADELPHIA

*Written by Destiny Holley*

Homelessness is the state of not having stable and appropriate housing. It varies from unexpectedly having to live with family or friends, to living in temporary shelters, or emergency accommodations, to the most unfortunate condition of living on the streets. Although we live in the wealthiest country in the world, over half a million people are homeless on any given night. But, what is homelessness? And why have so many been affected by it? Far too many people mistake the stereotyped “skid row” type of homelessness as the only form of homelessness there is, but many families are transitionally homeless, while episodic homelessness has the greatest impact on young people. Though people are homeless for many reasons, according to the National Coalition of Homelessness, the leading causes are poverty and lack of affordable housing. Other major factors include: domestic violence, mental illness, and addiction.

### Poverty

Poverty, a systemic issue, that can inextricably lead to homelessness, can be the result of unemployment, low wages, generational poverty, and lack of public assistance programs. A 2020 PEW study titled Philadelphia Research and Policy reports that “among the nation’s 10 most populous cities, none has a higher proportion of cost-burdened households with low incomes than Philadelphia.” This means despite Philadelphia’s relatively low housing costs, many city residents simply do not have enough income to find housing they can afford. According to the 2020 Census Report, the average family household in Philadelphia earns a little over \$45,000 per year, but in far too many cases, this can not support monthly rent for an apartment and other necessary living expenses.

## FEATURED NEWS

- Understanding Homelessness & Poverty
- Depression During the Holidays
- Top 10 PSJ Moments of 2021
- What Parkway students want for the holidays...
- Election Results.



HUGHE DILLON/FOR PHILLYVOICE



## Homelessness continued...

### Poor Health, Mental Illness & Addiction

Health issues including mental illness, diseases, disabilities, and drug addiction can also lead to homelessness. In some cases, people are faced with exorbitant medical bills that are difficult to pay off, and as a result, they can't afford housing. As stated in a Project Home report, more than 10% of all people seeking treatment for mental illnesses and/or drug abuse are homeless. And out of the 67 Pennsylvania counties, Philadelphia was ranked the worst for health outcomes and clinical care. For this reason, many people are left to fend for themselves which can result in them being homeless

### Domestic Violence

Another important factor of homelessness is domestic violence. Fifty percent of the cities surveyed by the U.S. Conference of Mayors identified domestic violence as the primary cause of homelessness among women and children. Battered women who live in poverty are often forced to choose between abusive relationships and homelessness. Children who grew up in the foster care system are subjected to homelessness once they turn 18. In an interview conducted by Covenant House, a young woman named Marilyn stated, "No one wants to be homeless, I was just tired of being abused."



Zac Durant / Unsplash

### Solutions

While it may seem that many causes of homelessness can be prevented, without significant wage increases and effective programs that support housing, jobs, and healthcare, it will continue to be a scourge in urban and rural communities.

To help aid in the fight against homeless in Philadelphia, you can educate yourself and spread awareness, or reach out to the following organizations: The Bethesda Project, Project Home, Covenant House, and the People's Emergency Center.



Seasonal affective disorder (SAD) is depression that happens to a person only at a specific time of year. With SAD, a person becomes depressed in fall or winter, when days are shorter and it gets dark earlier. SAD is brought on by the brain's response to the seasonal changes in daylight. When the daylight hours grow longer again, the depression lifts.

- John Hopkins Medicine, 2021

### If you've experienced...

- Unusual Fatigue
- Difficulty in School
- Social Withdrawal

### S.A.D may be the culprit

Talk to a trusted adult, try not to isolate yourself, and adopt healthy habits like exercise and eating right.- Ms. Morris, School Counselor at PWNW

### 2021 General-Municipal Election Results

**VOTER TURNOUT: 21.88%**

**Total Ballots Cast: 229,700**

**Registered Voters: 1,050,042**

**Ballots Cast by Mail: 74,110**

**Ballots Cast at Polling**

**Place: 153,162**

**Ballots Cast by Provisional: 2,428-**

2021 GENERAL ELECTION VOTER TURNOUT SOURCE: PHILADELPHIA CITY COMMISSIONERS

## Top 10 PSJ Moments of 2021

10. The minimum wage is increasing across the nation.

9. Joe Biden's Inauguration

8. Commemorating the 100-year anniversary of the Tula Race Massacre.

7. Jan. 6th insurrectionist are being tried and convicted.

6. Stacy Abrams being a champion for voting rights.

5. Raphael Warnock become first black U.S senator from Georgia

4. Ahmad Aubrey's killers convicted of murder.

3. 59.7 % of Americans are vaccinated!!!

2. Kamala Harris becomes the first woman and POC Vice President of the United States. .

1. Derek Chauvin was convicted to 22.5 years in prison for the murder of George Floyd.