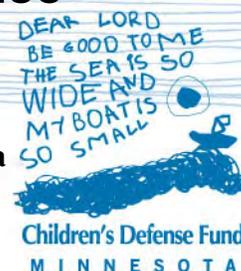


10-10-10 March for Children and Youth Because *All Children and Youth Need Stable, Healthy Housing*

Having a permanent address that is safe and healthy can provide children the stability and security they need to learn and explore the world around them in a caring environment.



Increased Cost Burden of Housing

Almost 70 percent of households in Minnesota spend more than 30 percent of income on housing, which is considered “cost burdened”. These households devote too much of their budget to housing, rather than to other necessities, like food or health care. This cost burden disproportionately affects lower income households.

The number of all households spending at least half of their income on housing has also been rising steadily. The “extremely cost burdened” in Minnesota include 140,000 homeowners, and more than 110,000 renters.

Homeless Children in Minnesota are on the rise.

Families remain the fastest growing homeless population and with the recent economic crisis, face competing issues that contribute to homelessness. Causes may include: unaffordable housing; declining wages; foreclosures; or crises such as job loss, illness, family violence, or divorce.

- The number of homeless families with children in Minnesota tripled from 1991 to 2006.
- Children make up nearly 40 percent of the homeless population, almost 85 percent of which are 12 years old or younger. Homelessness impairs children’s physical, mental, and academic development.

Homes must be safe and healthy for children.

More than 1,000 children suffered from lead poisoning in 2008 in Minnesota. Mold, lead, and asbestos are extremely toxic for children. Research has shown these contaminants cause developmental delays and can permanently damage a child’s brain. Older houses and rental apartments are at greater risk of having unhealthy toxins. Often this is where low-income families call home.

Homes also must be safe places for children, free from noise, crowding and other chaos. Children living in noisy and crowded housing are at risk for being more socially withdrawn, aggressive with their peers, and are at greater risk for abuse and neglect.

More safe and affordable housing is needed for Minnesota families.

The development of healthy, affordable housing and initiatives that regulate the cost burden of housing on families should be a priority of Minnesota’s lawmakers, so children will grow and develop in safe and stable homes.

Questions for Candidates:

What steps will you take to increase the health and safety of housing for children in our communities? How will you provide options for affordable housing to families?