



Reflection Guide



Thank you for your gracious courage to get involved in ending family homelessness here in our city by participating in our 3rd Annual Night Without A Bed experience. By attending the KickOff on June 2 or by taking the step to spend tonight anywhere BUT your bed, you open your heart and mind to a truly transformative experience.

Our hope for you is that you would bravely lean into the next 24 hours. That by putting yourself in the shoes of the hundreds of homeless families that live, sleep and play in our community, you would feel a new found sense of passion in advocating for families experiencing homelessness.

In this guide, you will find information about homelessness and poverty, reflection questions and other tools to engage fully with this experience. Check out what is available to you and pick and choose what you want to use to engage the experience.

If you lean In, this experience could dramatically change the trajectory of your life. **You will get out of it, what you put in.** Are you ready to take the next step?

With joy,

The Family Promise Team



EVENT SPONSORS

A huge thank you to all of our event sponsors!



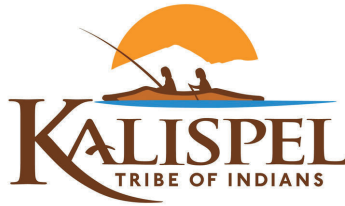
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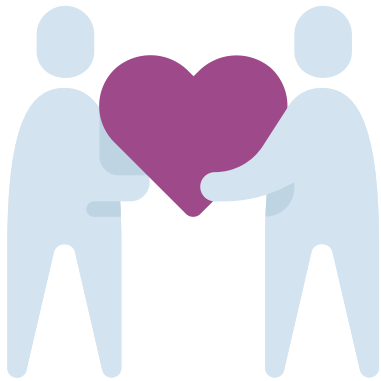
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We couldn't do it
without them!

What is empathy?



Empathy is about **sharing an emotion** with someone, or feeling the way they feel, even if you aren't in the same situation. You feel happy when someone else is happy or sad when someone else is feeling sad.

Having empathy means you can step back from the way you see a situation and think about how someone else might feel from their side of the story. (1)

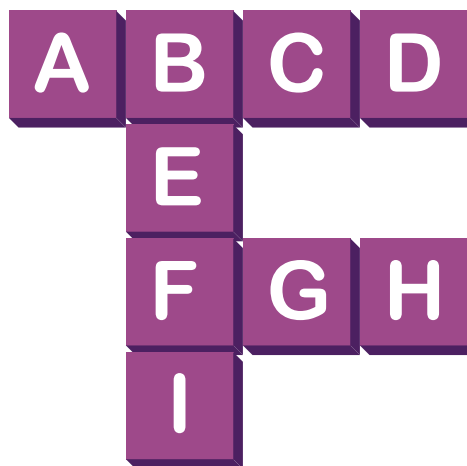
4 Pillars of Empathy

1. Take the perspective of others. Put yourself in their shoes.
2. Have a non-judgmental attitude towards others. Listen.
3. Choose to feel WITH another person by acknowledging how the same situation would make you feel.
4. Find connection by listening to understand, not listening to solve.

To learn more, watch this video on empathy by leading vulnerability and shame researcher Brené Brown.

To find video, go to YouTube and search "Brené Brown on Empathy" or click this link directly: <https://youtu.be/1Ewgu369Jw>

#BeKind



Let's Learn the Language

1. **"On Disability"**: Someone who is receiving financial assistance because of a disability.
2. **Donate Plasma**: Donating bodily fluids to the medical system in exchange for money.
3. **Housing Voucher/Section 8**: A federally issued voucher that subsidizes the total amount a family must pay for housing; various kinds have different qualifications, rules and renewal requirements.
4. **Heartbeat Rule**: A regulation from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development that deals with occupancy standards, claiming at least two people in every bedroom regardless of age or gender.
5. **"Benefits Cliff"**: referring to the sudden and often unexpected decrease in public benefits that can occur with a small increase in earnings.

Vocabulary to look up later:

Facts about Family Homelessness

On Housing & Eviction

- Spokane City Council unanimously voted two ordinances that allocated an extra \$2.3 million to help prevent evictions by paying "current due rent, future rent, utilities and home energy costs and other housing costs in response to the COVID-19 pandemic" (2)
- One in five renters living with children were behind in rent as of April 2021 (4)
- Nationally, the official poverty rate in 2020 was 11.4 percent, up .9 percentage points from 10.5 percent in 2019. This is the first increase in poverty after five consecutive annual declines. In 2020, there were 37.2 million people in poverty, approximately 3.3 million more than in 2019 (5)

On the Family Impact

- As of 2021, adults and children in families make up about 30 percent of the total population experiencing homelessness (1)
- One in 20 Spokane children that experience homelessness are unsheltered (3)
- Between 2019 and 2020, there was a 6.2% increase in homelessness in the State of Washington, and 23% of the homeless in Spokane County were families with children (5)

On the Solution

- Apartment prices have increased 14% from 2020 to 2021. In April 2021 alone, prices increased by 5%. To accommodate forecast housing needs for the City of Spokane, around 357 housing units need to be produced per year through 2037 (Spokane County, 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan) (5)



1. <https://endhomelessness.org/homelessness-in-america/who-experiences-homelessness/children-and-families/>
2. https://www.thecentersquare.com/washington/article_ddb0523e-e944-11ed-a551-bba58cb71459.html
3. <https://static.spokanecity.org/documents/ending-homelessness/point-in-time-count/pit-report-2022-spokane-county.pdf>
4. <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/periodicals/em/Summer21/highlight2.html>
5. https://www.snapwa.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/2022_2024_CNA_Final_.pdf



SLEEP WITHOUT Your Bed

This is a challenge by choice. You will get out of this experience what you put into it; our hope is that you will be able to push yourself to engage and truly be present. What follows on this page is our best advice for getting the most out of this experience :)

You get to choose! You can choose to sleep in your car, in your living room on the couch, in your backyard in a tent, or so many other options. Be as creative with this decision as you want, but make an intentional choice that is brave for you and your situation. As you are making this decision, **please ensure that you and everyone with you will be safe in the place you are spending the night.**

Take this experience seriously, and make sure you have a plan for the night. Tell someone where you will be. Make sure you have a plan for what to do if you need to use the bathroom in the middle of the night, or if your phone dies.

At some point in the night, take a picture of the space you are sleeping in with the cardboard sign from the KickOff Event, and share it with friends, family, and social media.

Reflect after the event and process what your experience was. This could be done through journaling, talking with someone close to you, talking through the questions we provide, or doing more research on your own.

Reflection Questions

For those looking to get the most out of the experience, we encourage you to work through these questions yourself and with those with you. We've broken it down into questions aimed at adults or children.

For Adults

Before Night Without A Bed

- What is my experience with people in poverty? Do I know someone who has been at risk of or experiencing homelessness?
- When I think of someone who is homeless, what do I think are the main reasons for why they're homeless? What assumptions/biases do I have?
- What do I hope to learn and experience tonight?

During Night Without A Bed

- What stuck out to you about the stories and information shared in the Kick Off event?
- What are the "rules" you are going to abide by to give yourself the most realistic experience tonight?
 - What will you do when you need to use the restroom?
 - What will you do for dinner and breakfast?
 - Will you get ready for your day tomorrow in your car/tent/etc.?
 - Will you avoid taking a nap when you're tired tomorrow?

After Night Without A Bed

- How did you sleep? What does your body feel like as you prepare for your day?
- What surprised you most about sleeping not in your bed?
- What was the most inconvenient part of this experience?
- What did you learn?
- What was the most impactful insight you gained by participating in Night Without A Bed?

Reflection Questions

For Children & Families

Before Night Without A Bed

- What is poverty? What are different ways that people can be poor?
 - "Social/emotional poverty" leads to loneliness, weak relationships, poor mental health, etc.
 - "Financial poverty" leads to homelessness, not paying bills, debt
- Do we know someone who has been at risk of or experiencing homelessness?
- When I think of someone who is homeless, what do I think are the main reasons for why they're homeless?
- What do I hope to learn and experience tonight?

During Night Without A Bed

- What stuck out to you in the he KickOff event?
- What are the "rules" you are going to abide by to give yourself the most realistic experience tonight? Decide these as a family and explain why its important to commit to it together.
 - What will you do when you need to use the restroom?
 - What will you do for dinner and breakfast?
 - Will you get ready for your day tomorrow in your car/tent/etc.?
 - Will you avoid taking a nap when you're tired tomorrow?

After Night Without A Bed

- How did you sleep? What does your body feel like?
- What surprised you most about sleeping not in your bed?
- What was the most annoying part of this experience?
- What did you learn?
- What was the most impactful insight you gained by participating in Night Without A Bed?
- What ways would you like to help families that don't have a home?

WHAT SHOULD I DO NOW?

THE THREE CHALLENGES



NOW

Create and post your cardboard sign, encouraging others to learn about the "Hidden Homeless". Include this web link and tag Family Promise of Spokane!

Encourage others to choose discomfort and grow their empathy by spending the night anywhere but their bed. Utilize our Reflection Guide to consider what families experiencing homelessness may experience.

TONIGHT



TOMORROW

Start your monthly gift to Family Promise of Spokane. This experience, by design, is one night. However, the reality is that children and families sleep without a bed in Spokane County throughout the year. Your monthly gift of \$122 provides 24 hours of expert, holistic care for an entire family, ensuring that no child sleeps without a bed.



Night 
without
a Bed

 Family
Promise
of Spokane