The Dynamics of Family Homelessness in New York City

II. Neighborhood Dynamics
Neighborhood Dynamics in New York City

Neighborhood Dynamics in New York City takes a closer look at the community factors driving family homelessness. Neighborhood determinants such as educational attainment, unemployment, rent burden, and poverty all contribute to the homelessness crisis. It is important to study geographic patterns of neighborhood instability and community resources to assess need and determine if resources are being allocated to the areas in which families are the most at risk for homelessness.
Low-Wage Occupations & Educational Attainment

For homeless and low-income students, education is the key to breaking the cycle of poverty. A high school diploma gives adults access to further educational opportunities and higher-paying jobs, which will in turn vastly decrease their risk of falling into homelessness.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates.

Percent in Low-Wage Occupations

- 22.5%–28.8%
- 28.9%–44.3%
- 44.4%–51.1%
- 51.2%–57.2%
- 57.3%–66.0%

Percent of Residents with Less Than a High School Degree

- 2.6%–12.5%
- 12.6%–23.1%
- 23.2%–39.5%

Percent of Residents with Less Than a High School Degree, by Borough

- Staten Island: 11.3%
- Manhattan: 13.2%
- Queens: 18.9%
- Brooklyn: 19.3%
- Bronx: 28.5%

NYC: 18.9%
Unemployment & Job Center Locations

Parental job loss increases a family’s likelihood of experiencing housing instability. Meanwhile, some neighborhoods with high unemployment lack services in their own communities. Ensuring that job centers are easily accessible to those who need them could prevent families from becoming homeless.

Percent Unemployed

Unemployment Rate, by Borough

NYC: 7.8%

Staten Island 5.5%
Manhattan 6.2%
Queens 6.9%
Brooklyn 11.6%
Bronx

Unemployment Rate, by Community District

Severely rent burdened households are often just one lost paycheck or medical emergency away from eviction, which is the second-most common reason that families enter shelter in NYC. As rents continue to rise, the preservation of affordable housing is essential to keeping families on the brink of homelessness stably housed in their communities.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2017 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates; NYU Furman Center’s CoreData.nyc.
Low-income single mothers of young children are at high risk for becoming homeless. Head Start and child care programs are invaluable to parents struggling to make ends meet. Services like these give children the best chance of future academic success.

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