

[Back to Kansas City >](#)

Archives & Research Center

Search Archives

■ **Kansas City** (archives from 1991 - Current)

■ **NewsLibrary.com** (archived articles from hundreds of newspapers)

For

Show

Most recent matches first

From

all documents

Search

[Redeem Coupon](#)

• [Advanced Search](#)
• [Basic Search](#)

• [Help](#)
• [FAQ](#)

• [Pricing](#)

[Return to results](#)

Kansas City Star, The (MO)

November 16, 2006

Section: Photo

Page: 4

FACES OF THE HOMELESS DON T FIT USUAL IMAGE

GOOD CONNECTIONS DEBRA SKODACK

FAMILIES IN NEED There are more kids ... than there are single men

Cynthia Larcom is convinced most people have not seen the true face of the area's homeless.

To many people, the image is men sitting on sidewalks, propped up against office buildings or standing on street corners with cardboard signs asking for money, said **Larcom**, executive director of the Homeless Services Coalition of Greater Kansas City.

"That's actually the smallest segment of the homeless population," **Larcom** said. "There are more kids who are homeless than there are single men. You don't see that face."

A count taken in January of the area's homeless proves **Larcom's** point.

During a 24-hour period, 1,878 individuals were homeless in Jackson, Johnson, Platte, Clay and Wyandotte counties.

In that same period, 694 families -- totaling 2,381 members -- were homeless.

"That shows there are more (homeless) people in families than individuals," **Larcom** said.

And, she added, the homeless aren't just in the central city. That same count in January found 58 families with 190 people homeless in Johnson County.

Why the inaccurate image of our area's homeless? People don't see them.

"Families tend to not live on the streets," **Larcom** said.

Many families find shelter in their cars; others get hotel rooms through the help of church organizations.

"And a lot of them sofa-surf, meaning they move from one family member to another," **Larcom** said. "They are precariously housed and not interacting with services."

The effect, she said, is "there are not a lot of programs" to help families.

A lot can be done if more resources -- including volunteers -- are used to provide more affordable housing and job training, she said.

The details

The Homeless Services Coalition of Greater Kansas City will hold a benefit from 5:30 to 8:30 tonight at the Crestwood Condominiums, the Treetop Penthouse, 5401 Brookside Blvd. Cost is \$60 per person.

For more information about helping the homeless or getting services for the homeless, contact **Cynthia Larcom** at (816) 924-7997.

Good for...

Marcia Tammeus, who received the 2006 Award for Excellence from the Missouri Association of Directors of Volunteer Services. Tammeus is program manager in the volunteer service department of Children's Mercy Hospitals and Clinics.

Don't forget...

The Survival 6 event from noon to 4 p.m. Nov. 25 at the Levitt Warehouse, 2107 Central. To find out more about volunteering and the materials needed or the drop-off sites, call Richard Tripp at (816) 483-4081 or go to www.coppinc.com. Donations needed include new and used winter clothing for men, women, and children and hygiene materials.

To reach Debra Skodack, call (816) 234-4738 or send e-mail to dskodack@kcstar.com.

No Art

Copyright 2006 The Kansas City Star Co.