



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 27, 2014

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STUDENT HOMELESSNESS ACROSS WASHINGTON STATE INCREASES 12%

Approximately 1 in 34 students homeless: All corners of Washington State affected:

SEATTLE – During the 2012-13 school year, 30,609 students in Washington schools were identified by school districts as homeless—a 12% increase from the previous school year and an 82% increase from 2006-07. Columbia Legal Services (CLS) conducted an analysis of student homelessness trends over the past five years using data compiled by the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction’s Homeless Education Office. CLS hopes this updated analysis will help local school districts and communities understand the enormous scope of the problem and work to ease the crisis that far too many of Washington’s youngest residents face.

Key findings include:

- 49% of homeless students are in fifth grade or below
- All but seven counties have a homeless student population greater than 2%.
- Almost a third (31%) of all homeless students attends school in rural areas. In many rural counties, the rate of homelessness is far above the average.
- At least 1 in 20 students is homeless in eleven counties: Pend Oreille, Asotin, Grays Harbor, Mason, Pacific, Grant, Klickitat, Lewis, Douglas, Chelan, Wahkiakum.
- Since 2006-07, most counties (27) have seen student homelessness increase more than 50%. Almost half have seen student homelessness increase more than 100%.
- 55% of homeless students are in the five most populous counties: Clark, King, Pierce, Snohomish, and Spokane.

“These findings highlight that no part of Washington State is untouched by the devastating impacts of student homelessness: rich, poor, urban, suburban, and rural,” said Katara Jordan, Attorney with the Children and Youth Project at CLS. “It is imperative that, as student homelessness increases, policymakers take an active role in developing clear, supportive, and focused policies that increase affordable housing and ensure that schools have the resources they need to ensure all students succeed.”

Educators, service providers, policymakers, advocates, reporters, and community members are encouraged to access www.waseh.org, where more information is available, including interactive charts, graphs, and other tools.

The Children and Youth Project uses community education, research, policy advocacy, and litigation on behalf of Washington’s children and youth who are low-income, at-risk, homeless or in foster care.

Student Homelessness in Washington State: 2012-2013

	County	% of Student Homelessness	# of Students Experiencing Homelessness	% Change since 2011-12	% Change since 2006-07
1	Pend Oreille	8.72%	142	5.97%	59.55%
2	Asotin	8.63%	285	24.45%	23.38%
3	Grays Harbor	8.48%	879	-1.01%	56.13%
4	Mason	7.33%	580	12.62%	53.44%
5	Pacific	7.14%	235	6.82%	535.14%
6	Grant	5.57%	1070	11.23%	166.83%
7	Klickitat	5.56%	179	-10.95%	135.53%
8	Lewis	5.24%	622	3.15%	73.74%
9	Douglas	5.03%	356	6.59%	313.95%
10	Chelan	4.97%	646	8.03%	18.10%
11	Wahkiakum	4.78%	21	10.53%	250.00%
12	Skamania	4.75%	57	46.15%	1800.00%
13	Spokane	4.44%	3217	26.65%	133.79%
14	Island	4.10%	332	11.78%	8.85%
15	Stevens	4.08%	265	10.88%	9.05%
16	Thurston	3.90%	1584	41.05%	113.77%
17	Cowlitz	3.78%	637	52.76%	250.00%
18	Walla Walla	3.20%	287	-15.34%	100.70%
19	Skagit	3.19%	599	0.00%	38.66%
20	Yakima	3.09%	1605	-4.69%	174.83%
21	Clallam	2.69%	285	31.34%	74.85%
22	Whatcom	2.58%	705	-13.92%	40.16%
23	Adams	2.47%	111	-28.85%	88.14%
24	Snohomish	2.43%	2639	10.56%	45.08%
25	Jefferson	2.37%	68	-33.33%	74.36%
26	Pierce	2.36%	3011	6.21%	25.20%
27	Okanogan	2.34%	220	7.32%	136.56%
28	Clark	2.32%	1807	9.18%	149.59%
29	Ferry	2.30%	23	64.29%	76.92%
30	King	2.28%	6188	18.68%	81.25%
31	Kitsap	2.19%	794	0.38%	151.27%
32	Franklin	2.06%	376	57.32%	79.90%
33	Lincoln	1.95%	39	143.75%	-17.02%
34	Benton	1.71%	585	-1.52%	185.37%
35	Whitman	1.59%	72	-14.29%	166.67%
36	Columbia	1.45%	7	-56.25%	40.00%
37	Kittitas	1.27%	62	26.53%	785.71%
38	San Juan	0.97%	19	11.76%	-20.83%
39	Garfield	0.00%	0	0.00%	0.00%
	Grand Total	2.92%	30609	11.80%	81.60%

About Columbia Legal Services (CLS): CLS advocates for people who face injustice and poverty. We seek to achieve social and economic justice for all, using policy reform, litigation, an innovative partnerships to reveal and end actions that harm the communities we serve.