

Housing

fewer benefits also contribute to homelessness, as do declines in public assistance and lack of affordable health care. In one study of 777 homeless parents, most of them women, 22 percent reported having left their home due to domestic violence (NCH). Homelessness can have a devastating impact on children.

Homeless children have worse health; more developmental delays; more anxiety, depression, and behavioral disorders; and lower educational attainment.

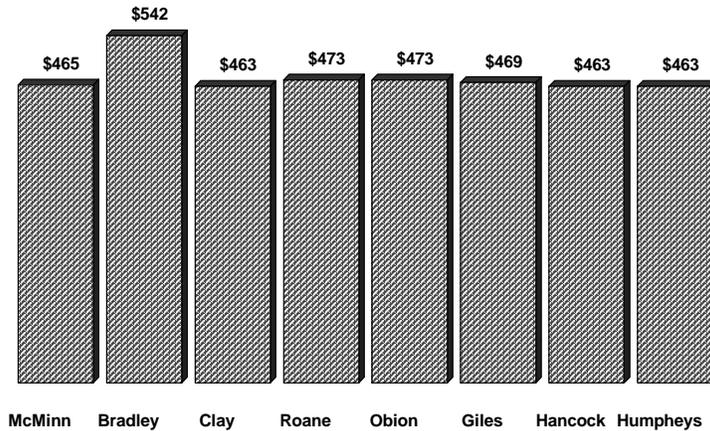
Homelessness and housing instability have an especially harmful impact on young children; unfortunately it is estimated that half of all homeless children are 5 years old or younger. School-age homeless children face barriers to enrolling and attending school, including transportation, residency requirements, inability to obtain previous school records, and lack of clothing and school supplies (NCH).

Although considered to be an urban problem, homelessness is not limited to the state's metropolitan areas. There are many homeless people living in rural areas. The rural homeless are more likely to live in a car or camper or with relatives in overcrowded, substandard conditions. Single mothers with children make up the largest group of homeless people in rural areas. Homelessness in rural areas is most pronounced in agricultural areas and areas whose economies are based on extractive industries such as mining, logging, or fishing. Housing is also an issue in regions experiencing rapid economic growth due to new industries, which attract more workers than jobs available, and areas near large urban centers that attract new businesses and higher income residents, thereby driving up taxes and living expenses (NCH).

Habitat for Humanity has affiliates in 54 counties and has built more than 1,200 homes in Tennessee.

Final Fair Market Rents for Non-Metropolitan Counties, 2000

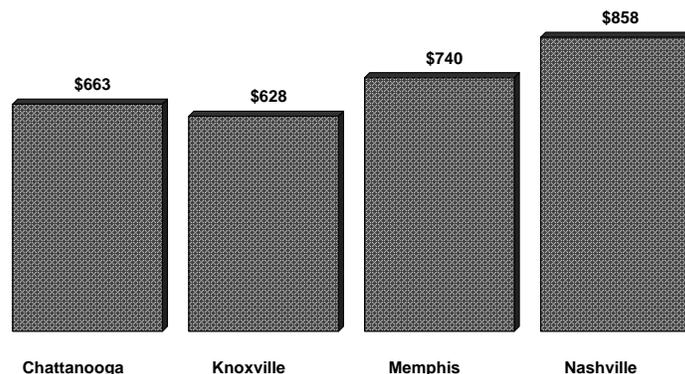
Average Monthly Rental for Three Bedroom Apartment



Source: The Federal Register of September 26, 1999 (Housing and Urban Development)

Final Fair Market Rents for Metropolitan Areas, 2000

Average Monthly Rental For Three Bedroom Apartment



Source: The Federal Register of September 26, 1999 (HUD)