

Miami-Dade County Homeless Trust's Homeless Sensitivity Poster and Essay Contest



Enter the Homeless Sensitivity Poster and Essay Contest.

You could win a \$300 gift card and community service hours

DEADLINE: Friday, March 12, 2021



Please see your sponsoring teacher/UP-START Liason for more information.



**Homeless Sensitivity
Poster and Essay Contest**

Deadline: Friday, March 12, 2021

Sponsoring Teacher or School UP-START Liaison Contest Details

Have you seen men and women experiencing homelessness in Miami-Dade? Did you ever wonder what our community is doing to help these individuals?

Glad you asked!

The Miami-Dade County Homeless Trust is the lead agency for Miami-Dade County's homeless [Continuum of Care](#) (CoC), responsible for establishing homeless policy, serving as the collaborative applicant for federal and state funding opportunities, and managing a Food and Beverage tax that helps fund services and housing for more than 8,000 people every single day! That's right, every day the Trust houses almost as many people as there are residents in Wynwood (8,621 people).

The fact is the people you see living on the streets are just the tip of the iceberg. While the Trust works to transition people off the street and into housing, it creates real change every day for thousands of others who find themselves homeless due to financial crisis, illness, job loss and a myriad of other reasons.

Another role the Trust has is to educate the community on efforts to end homelessness. This Poster and Essay contest is just one of many initiatives that educate and engage the youth in our community to be part of ending homelessness in South Florida.

This contest began in 2006 when a homeless man named [Norris Gaynor](#) was assaulted and murdered by three inebriated teenagers while sleeping on the streets. During the early-morning assault on January 12, 2006, he was clubbed to death with a baseball bat and a rake. His assailants were convicted of second-degree and third-degree murder.

The poster and essay contest was created in Gaynor's honor to educate public school students about homelessness, prevent future acts of violence against individuals living on the streets, and to build the foundation for a more compassionate community.

We look forward to enjoying your entry! Details are on the following pages.

A Few Notes on Getting Started

1. ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS, go to page 4 for instructions.
2. HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS, go to page 5 for instructions.
3. EVERYONE must fill out the form on page 10. It should accompany your entry.
4. Prize information is on page 9.
5. Turn in your items by March 12, 2021!

POSTER CONTEST: OPEN TO ELEMENTARY AND MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS

The purpose of this category is to reflect how your community can join together in breaking the cycle of homelessness for individuals. While adult supervision is welcome, posters must be the vision and original creation of the student.

The Homeless Trust discourages the act of giving spare change or money directly to individuals on the street, since it works against the Trust's goal of providing a pathway to stability and housing. Therefore, posters that depict panhandling will not be selected. Instead, brainstorm meaningful solutions that address the causes of homelessness, overcome negative stereotypes, or ways to create compassion for our county's homeless.

Students are not limited to one-dimensional art; we welcome creative artwork, designs, comics, and storylines that illustrate a powerful message.

*****Utilizing a poster board that is no larger than 22x28 inches, choose from the following themes:**

- How would you treat someone who is homeless?
- Why should we care for and respect an individual experiencing homelessness?
- Illustrate ways you can show a person experiencing homelessness that you care.
- Illustrate why bullying, hurting and demeaning a person, who is homeless, is wrong.
- Illustrate ways you can help impact a person, who is homeless, without giving them money directly.
- Illustrate reasons why it is important for the Homeless Trust to assist military veterans who are homeless.

Students who submit a poster will receive (2) community service hours for their school.

POSTER CONTEST SUBMISSION DIRECTIONS

To submit your poster, you can take a picture of the artwork and send the image along with the submission form to contest@homelesstrust.org

Due to the safety measures during the pandemic, the Project UP-START office is unable to accept posters being dropped off at the their office.

If you are unable to submit a photo of the artwork, contact sydne@m.network.

Posters should be submitted by **5:00 p.m. Friday, March 12, 2021.**

*****Upon submission, each poster MUST have a student form attached to the email. Please also write the student's name, sponsoring teacher or UP-START Liaison's name, grade level and school in the body of the email.*****

Please read: After the posters are submitted, they will become property of the Homeless Trust.

WRITTEN/VIDEO ESSAY CONTEST: OPEN TO HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS

The purpose of this category is to engage high school students' perceptions of homelessness and think about how they can encourage others to create real change in the lives of people experiencing homelessness.

The Homeless Trust discourages the act of giving spare change or money directly to individuals on the street, since it works against the Trust's goal of providing a pathway to stability and housing. Therefore, essays and videos that depict panhandling will not be selected. Instead, brainstorm meaningful solutions that address the causes of homelessness, overcoming negative stereotypes, or other creative ways to create compassion for our city's homeless.

If you are in need of inspiration, check out the [Homeless Trust](#) and [Project UP-START](#) website for more information. Get creative with your research! This article on [Youth Homelessness](#) is also a good place to start.

Students participating in the written/video essay contest have four options.

Option 1:

- Write an essay between 300-500 words, typed or handwritten (legible writing only). All essays should demonstrate a clear and precise idea and include appropriate spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- Students are allowed to use essay prompt questions from categories 1 and 2.

Option 2:

- Write an essay between 300-500 words, typed or handwritten (legible writing only). All essays should demonstrate a clear and precise idea and include appropriate spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- Record yourself reading your essay. You can be creative with your video by using pictures, original drawings or visual aids which reflect the idea in your essay.
- Students are allowed to use essay prompt questions from categories 1 and 2.
- You can be creative when presenting and be sure to use clear diction when speaking.
- If you choose not to use original artwork in your presentation, please be sure to give appropriate attribution to artworks or photographs used at the end of the video.
- DO NOT USE MUSIC IN YOUR VIDEO TO AVOID COPYRIGHT ISSUES.
- Keep presentation under 3 minutes.

Option 3:

- Write an essay between 300-500 words, typed or handwritten (legible writing only). All essays should demonstrate a clear and precise idea and include appropriate spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- Students are allowed to use essay prompt questions from categories 1 and 2.
- Record yourself using Instagram or TikTok to create a :15-:30 second social media video summarizing the message you are conveying in your written essay.

- Music used in your videos MUST have appropriate language and message.
- You are ONLY allowed to use music provided on the social platform.

Option 4:

- Write an essay between 300-500 words, typed or handwritten (legible writing only). All essays should demonstrate a clear and precise idea and include appropriate spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- Students are allowed to use essay prompt questions from categories 1 and 2.
- Record yourself using Instagram or TikTok for a 1-2 minutes long informational video summarizing the message you are conveying in your written essay.
- Music used in your videos MUST have appropriate language and message.
- You are ONLY allowed to use music provided on the social platform.

You **MUST** submit a written essay along with your video in order for the submitted work to qualify for judging.

*****In order for the Miami-Dade County Homeless Trust to showcase the winner's video on their social media platforms, parent/guardian(s) MUST sign the form on page 10. *****

Students who submit a written/video essay will receive (5) community service hours for their school.

ESSAY QUESTIONS

CATEGORY 1: *Students who have NOT experienced homelessness*

- Do you know anyone who is homeless? If so, how did their story impact your life and/or how you view people who are experiencing homelessness? If this person became homeless during the pandemic, explain the impact that has had on you, a housed person.
- As a high school student, what are some tactics you can use to educate and inspire change in your fellow colleagues and community about homelessness?
- The Homeless Trust is determined to find housing for people/families who are experiencing homelessness. How can housing empower individuals or families? Further, how might you encourage a landlord or property owner to rent to a family or individual who is homeless?
- Miami-Dade County passed a feeding ordinance for organizations or individuals who feed more than 25 homeless persons. After researching the ordinance, what are some ways this can assist unsheltered homeless transition from the streets and into permanent housing?

- Research the Homeless Trust and its unique [Food and Beverage tax](#). Explain how the legislative process can impact social issues, particularly homelessness. Counter that with ways the private sector can get creative in working with organizations like the Trust to create long-term real change in the lives of people experiencing homelessness.
- After viewing the video [“Tents: Bad Idea - Tony,”](#) talk about the importance of facts over feelings when approaching the issue of homelessness. Why is it important to educate yourself, family, community on homelessness as opposed to doing what might feel good in the moment?

CATEGORY 2: *Students who HAVE experienced homelessness*

- Share about a moment when you were experiencing an unstable living situation, when someone or something inspired you to alter your perception of your living conditions. How were you able to find hope? Incorporate into your essay information about goals you have set for yourself because of this experience and if a mentor is part of your story, share how they helped give you purpose.
- Compare your feelings when you were homeless with having a place to call home. What experiences would you share with those who are currently homeless to give them hope about their future?
- Having experienced unstable housing, what **facts** would you share with a landlord or property owner to convince him/her to rent to an individual or family who is experiencing homelessness? What **feelings** and experiences would you also want to share during that discussion?
- As a high school student, how would you demystify the stigma of a student who is experiencing unstable housing, particularly during a pandemic (If applicable)? What facts would you want others to consider as they learn about homelessness?
- What are some ways to encourage students who are in unstable housing to seek help? Where would you send them and why? For more information, visit [Project UP-START](#).

OPTION 1: Written

Upon submitting you will send the following:

- An essay between 300-500 words, typed or handwritten (legible writing only).
- Homeless Sensitivity Poster and Essay Contest Entry Form.

OPTION 2: Written/Video Presentation

Upon submission you will send the following:

- An essay between 300-500 words, typed or handwritten (legible writing only).
- A creative presentation of you reading your essay (keep presentation under 3 minutes).
- Homeless Sensitivity Poster and Essay Contest Entry Form.

OPTION 3: Short Social Media Video

Upon submission you will send the following:

- An essay between 300-500 words, typed or handwritten (legible writing only).
- :15-:30 seconds social media video using Instagram or TikTok.
- Provide the artist name and song title with your submission. (**Reminder: When downloading a video from Instagram using copyright music, the platform will only allow you to download your original audio and not the music track.**)
- Homeless Sensitivity Poster and Essay Contest Entry Form.

OPTION 4: Long form Informational Video

Upon submission you will send the following:

- An essay between 300-500 words, typed or handwritten (legible writing only).
- A 1-2 minutes video using Instagram or TikTok.
- Provide the artist name and song title with your submission. (**Reminder: When downloading a video from Instagram using copyright music, the platform will only allow you to download your original audio and not the music track.**)
- Homeless Sensitivity Poster and Essay Contest Entry Form,

HIGH SCHOOL VIDEO/ESSAY CONTEST SUBMISSION DIRECTIONS

On the top left corner on all essays MUST include the category and question chosen, the essay title, the student's name, sponsoring teacher or Project UP-START Liaison's name, school, grade level and Student Entry Form.

Please read:

After video/written essays are submitted, the project will become property of the Homeless Trust to be used to post submissions on Homeless Trust social media platforms.

Parent/guardian(s) signature on the entry form gives The Miami-Dade County Homeless Trust consent to use submissions on their social media platforms.

Videos and/or essays MUST be submitted to contest@homelesstrust.org by 5:00 p.m. Friday, March 12, 2021.

If you have issues submitting your work, please contact sydne@m.network.

Essay Contest Deadline: Friday, March 12, 2021.

*****Essays will be screened to detect plagiarism.*****

Judging of the Poster and Essay Contests

The judges will consist of a panel with community representatives, Homeless Trust Board members and Miami-Dade County Public Schools personnel. All final decisions will be made by the judges. All entrants MUST attend a public school in Miami-Dade County.

The poster contest judges will choose one poster winner among the elementary school entries and one from the middle school entries.

Essay contest judges will choose one essay winner from each high school essay entry category.

Students will be notified of the contest results through their school's Project UP-START Liaison or sponsoring teacher.

***Winners will be announced at a virtual awards ceremony on Monday, May 17, 2021.**

***Time and date are subject to change.**

Check Homeless Trust social media feeds for any updates - @homelessmiami

Prizes for the Poster and Essay Contests

Prizes will be awarded to the student and Project UP-START Liaison and/or sponsoring teacher. All student winners will receive a \$300 gift card (one per student) and the Project UP-START Liaison or sponsoring teacher will receive a \$200 gift card (one per Project UP-START Liaison).

If we do not choose a winner for a category, the Homeless Trust has the option of redistributing the prize money to other categories as determined by the judging panel.



HOMELESS TRUST

MIAMI-DADE COUNTY

Homeless Sensitivity Poster and Essay Contest

Entry Form

***Please email forms to: contest@homelesstrust.org

Deadline: Friday, March 12, 2021

STUDENT INFORMATION

School Name: _____

Student Name: _____

Student ID#: _____ Grade level: _____

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Name: _____

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) Cell Phone Number: _____

Parent(s)/Guardian(s) signature: _____

SPONSORING TEACHER/ UP-START LIAISON INFORMATION

Teacher/ UP- START Liaison Name: _____

Teacher/ UP-START Liaison Cell Phone Number: _____

School Name: _____

School Location Number: _____

School Contact Cell Phone Number(s): _____

School Principal's Name: _____

School Principal's Signature: _____

*****More on next page*****

Please place a checkmark or highlight below the type of entry you are submitting.

- Poster
 - Elementary School
 - Middle School

- Written/ Video Essay- Category 1
 - Option 1
 - Option 2
 - Option 3
 - Option 4

- Written/ Video Essay- Category 2
 - Option 1
 - Option 2
 - Option 3
 - Option 4