

AFFORDABLE HOUSING AT CRISIS STAGE FOR BLACKS AND HISPANIC, STUDY SAYS

More than 40 percent of all black and Hispanic households in the United States pay more for housing costs than the maximum amount considered affordable under federal standards, and one-fifth of black and Hispanic households live in substandard housing, according to a study issued today by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities.

Housing problems are especially severe among poor minority households, with nearly four out of five bearing housing costs outside the affordable range, the Center's analysis of new government data shows. Under standards set by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, housing is considered affordable if it does not consume more than 30 percent of a household's income.

Poor white households bear housing costs as high as poor blacks and Hispanics, the study found. Among all three groups, about 80 percent of households pay at least 30 percent of income for housing and approximately two-fifths pay at least 70 percent.

However, high housing cost burdens affect black and Hispanic communities more heavily than white communities, because blacks and Hispanics are much more likely to be poor, according to the Center report.

Some 42 percent of all black and Hispanic households--both the poor and non-poor--paid at least 30 percent of their incomes for housing in 1985, thereby exceeding the federal affordability standard, the Center found. Some 27 percent of all white households bore housing costs of this magnitude.

Substandard Housing Conditions Compound Problem

The study also reported that blacks and Hispanics in general--both poor and nonpoor--were much more likely than whites to live in substandard housing. While black and Hispanic households constitute 17 percent of all households in the United States, they make up 42 percent of those occupying substandard housing and more than half of those living in units with holes in the floor or evidence of rats, the Center reported.

While one of every three poor black households and more than one of every four poor Hispanic households lived in substandard housing, the report found that significant proportions of minority households that not poor--one of every six non-poor black households and one of every seven non-poor Hispanic households--also live in substandard conditions.

In fact, the proportion of non-poor black and Hispanic households living in substandard housing exceeded the proportion of poor white households living in substandard housing, the study noted.

The Center's report is based on extensive data collected by the Census Bureau and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development and released earlier this year. Although the data describe conditions in 1985, the Center study notes that housing cost burdens are unlikely to have eased since then because rental costs and the average income of poor families have risen at about the same pace since 1985.

"These stark findings indicate that the growing lack of affordable housing has reached a crisis stage for blacks and Hispanics, well as for low income American in general," said Center Director Robert Greenstein.

According to Edward Lazere, the report's principal author, "These high housing cost burdens are likely to have contributed substantially to the

New Book Looks at Development of Black Children from Ecological Perspective

Black children learn, as all children do, if taught with respect for their culture and if their families are actively involved in the ecological context of their learning, believes Antioch College Dean of Faculty Valora Washington.

This "ecological perspective" places the development of children in a larger historical, social and political context, rather than the more typical focus on individual or family problems.

"Since black kids under age 16 are on-third of the black population, their well-being is also a good barometer of the health of the black community," Washington said.

A new resource book, written by Washington and Velma LaPoint of Howard University in Washington, D.C., provides educators and scholars with an ecological perspective on the influences of American institutions on the development of black children.

Black Children and American Institutions: An Ecological Review and Resource Guide (Garland Publishing, Inc. 1988) examines how major community institutions, including family, schools, social services, child welfare, criminal justice and physical and mental health services, help or hinder the development of black children.

The volume provides an analysis of the applicability of theories of child development to the specific problems of black children from infancy to young adulthood. It reviews demographic characteristics and looks at changing family trends and those policy issues which have an impact on black children. Most importantly, it provides an analysis of the relevance and effectiveness of social programs serving black children and gives recommendations for policy-making and family and community action.

"Black children, regardless of social class, face unique developmental challenges. We found that black youth have made tremendous gains in education and they are less likely than white youth to abuse alcohol and drugs," Washington said. "But still half of black children are impoverished at some time in their life and there are tremendous racial differences in critical areas such as health care and employment."

Washington, who has a Ph.D. in child development from Indiana University, began her studies of black child development in 1977 when she looked into the process of classroom desegregation. She went on to study the effects of a teacher's race on students, children's perceptions of themselves and the parental role in the educational process. Over the past five years most of her work has been focused on Head Start programs.

The authors recommend a combination of government action and community initiatives to effectively serve the needs of individual children and the children as a group.

The introduction to Black Children and American Institutions was written by Dr. Andrew Billingsley, an eminent sociologist now at the University of Maryland. He concludes, "The reforms advocated in this book for improving the quality of life for black children will surely improve the conditions of life for all children and their families. It can serve as a signal to generations yet unborn that, at this time in history, the nation took a great step toward enhancing human values and creating a more caring society."

SENIOR TRANSPORTATION FUNDING SOURCE IN OREGON

The availability of transportation in Oregon for its senior citizens who do not drive is an ongoing need according to the Governor's Commission on Senior Services.

In Oregon, the Public Transit Division, the Senior Services Division and its affiliated Area Agencies on Aging, Community Action Agencies, cities and counties, and sheltered workshops and residential programs for seniors and handicapped are funding transportation as their budgets permit. The major transportation funding source in Oregon is the Public Transit Division through which flows federal and state funds. Programs include: 1) Small City and Rural Transit Assistance. Through this program, cities and rural areas with populations under 50,000 receive funds to operate and acquire vehicles for public transportation. There are currently 28 grant recipients which support bus and taxi system, vans and dial-a-ride programs. 2) Elderly and Handicapped Capitol Assistance. This federally funded program provides money to purchase equipment for social service organizations that serve the transit needs of elderly and handicapped person. Federal funds provide 80 percent of equipment costs while local agencies supply the remaining 20 percent. Typical equipment purchases include vans, small buses, radio dispatch units, and wheel chair lifts. Sixty-three organizations throughout Oregon have received grants under this program. 3) Ride-share Cooperation. This program exists in Corvallis, Medford, Portland, Salem, Eugene, and Springfield. The Public Transit Division assists local efforts and provides technical help to expand care pool and vanpool programs. 4) Technical Resource Program. This program provides technical assistance to local governments and transit operators to help them research and develop plans for their programs. 5) Rural Transit Assistance Program. This program assists in the development of resources to meet the training, technical assistance and research needs of transportation operators. 6) Special Transportation Program. Local governments receive funds from cigarette tax revenues to finance transportation services for elderly and handicapped persons. Monies from this fund are used to maintain or expand existing transit systems, handicapped transportation systems. This one cent tax was recently increased by one cent per pack of cigarettes by the 1989 Legislature and should mean that approximately \$6 million will be available to transportation districts and counties in 1990. This program strongly impacts transportation availability across the State of Oregon. In Klamath Falls, monies helped purchase transportation services for the local Mental Health Department. In Lake County, monies have led to an expansion of transportation services to seniors for necessary medical test taken in Klamath and Medford. In many cases a volunteer driver program has been started with Special Transportation monies which has kept mature citizens from being homebound. In many cities and towns these monies have kept the cost of a taxi ride to \$0.75, allowing greater travel from home to store, doctor, or recreation.

All of the above mentioned resources help seniors travel from one point to another, particularly the Special Transportation Fund. Transportation availability, however, remains a strong concern of seniors and their advocates and will become even more important as baby boomers cross into the senior ranks.

AFRAIDS

is the only HIV-related disease transmitted by casual contact. Fortunately, there's a cure for AFRAIDS; it's called "A VOLUNTEER."

The OREGON AIDS HOTLINE needs your help. This statewide Hotline is sponsored by Cascade AIDS Project and the Oregon Health Division. As we rely heavily on volunteers to make it all work, we need your help.

If you can help, call 223-AIDS in Portland, or 1-800-777-AIDS from outlying areas. Ask for the volunteer application.

FIGHT THE FEAR. VOLUNTEER.



Photo courtesy of EBONY

The Muslim Patrol To The Rescue

Without benefit of federal or municipal funding, the Washington, D.C., Muslim Patrol transformed one of the city's most drug-plagued neighborhoods into a drug and crime-free zone in less than one year, reports the August EBONY.

The community, home to about 7,000 residents and once one of the preferred neighborhoods among the District's Black professionals, had been out of the decline throughout the '60s and '70s, that is until a Nation of Islam group under the leadership of Minister Louis Farrakhan, and armed only with waliekie talkies took a stand against crack dealers and the crack houses that infested the neighborhood. "Maybe the federal government should look at programs that are working like ours and finance them," says William Muhammad, chief of the Muslim patrol. "The answer may be in the least expected place."

Not only has the Muslim group's presence returned the D.C. community into the tranquil area it once was, but they had also set up a full service-medical clinic inside the housing development, assist the elderly with chores and escort neighborhood children to and from school.

SOLVING THE CRISIS OF BLACK YOUTH

By Ron Daniels



The crisis confronting African-American youth poses a major threat to the growth and development of the National African-American Community. It is a crisis which must be solved. But this crisis will not be overcome unless we as African-Americans develop the determination to do so. We simply cannot afford to allow our future to waste away. This crisis is a matter of national priority to African-Americans. All of our agencies, organizations, institutions and churches both nationally and locally must see the crisis of Black youth as a matter of life or death.

There are a range of actions which we must take, some of which are internal to the African-American community and other actions which must be aimed at the larger society and the system which is ultimately responsible for producing the crisis of Black youth. But the recovery must begin inside of the African-American community with ourselves. We must be devoted to ourselves and be convinced that it is possible to overcome the current crisis.

The first aspect of our struggle therefore is about attitude, transforming our internal view of ourselves. We must be committed to the proposition that our CULTURE is a key to our survival and the VALUES of racial pride, self-help and self-development are essential to our growth and development as a people. This is a fundamental problem which we must face squarely. Far too many African-Americans are not committed

to self-development. Too many of us think, hope, or even pray that something or someone else will deliver us. Then we won't have to deal with that, "Black stuff".

The cold fact is, however, that racism historically and contemporarily and cultural destruction are major contributing factors in terms of the crises we face as Black people. We cannot solve our problems by avoiding the realities of racism and cultural aggression. We cannot save our youth running away from ourselves and the realities of our condition. African-Americans must approach the question of solving the crisis of Black youth with the right attitude.

Our own self interest as African-Americans, therefore dictates that youth organization and development must be a major priority for our development as a people. WE MUST ORGANIZE, EDUCATE, AND TRAIN OUR OWN as a matter of principle. All of our organizations, institutions, agencies, and churches, both nationally and locally should assume the responsibility of doing some work in the area of youth organization and development.

There are several critical items which must be included in an overall program for youth organization and development. The matter of culture, history, and values is of utmost importance. Our youth must learn who we are as people, internalize a positive sense of our capacity to achieve, and acquire the confidence that African-Americans can sur-

vive, grow and prosper as a group. Cultivating a positive sense of self-esteem is an indispensable element in the chemistry of success.

But we must also teach African-American youth how to succeed within the context of the African-American struggle for survival and development. Self-esteem after all is ultimately buttressed and maintained through concrete achievements. Hence attention to basic skills like reading, writing, mathematics, computer literacy, training/orientation to placement testing etc. should be incorporated into our youth development programs. Business and entrepreneurial skills should also be imparted. African-American youth enterprises and ventures which employ young people should also be developed and supported as a part of our youth development strategy.

Indeed African-American business development and the exercise of Black economic power and leverage must be included in the formula to solve the crisis of Black youth. More solid sustained, and successful Black business development should translate into more job opportunities for African-American youth. We must control the economy within our neighborhoods and use it in the best interest of our people. Beyond our neighborhoods we must fight for a fair share of jobs in those business establishments where we spend our dollars. Black youth will gain employment in these establishments if we demand it and mean it.

PROFESSIONAL ATHLETES, ALL FORMER ADDICTS, URGE YOUNGSTERS TO AVOID DRUGS

Those Surveyed Agree It's Not Enough to Just Say 'No'; Emphasize Excessive Cost to Both Health and Financial Status

Numerous professional athletes, who were formerly addicted to drugs and/or alcohol, have appealed to the nation's youth to avoid drugs at all cost, warning that to "just say no" is not enough.

Society has to get rid of its "pill mentality" and its reliance on drugs, according to the athletes, who participated in an informal survey to be published this Sunday in PARADE magazine. They also agreed that education concerning drug abuse has to begin in kindergarten or before.

"Getting into drugs is a hell of a lot easier--a way lot easier--than getting out of them," declared professional basketball star John Lucas, a former cocaine addict, who now heads Students Taking Action Not Drugs, a national non-profit group, and John Lucas fitness Systems, a drug treatment therapy based on exercise.

All of the athletes, who participated in the survey, including Lucas,

who was first addicted to beer, agreed that alcohol played a part in his or her problems and none of them believed they would ever become hooked.

"The riddle is how some people can handle it, control how much they drink, and how some people, like me, couldn't stop," declared Chris Mullen, 26, an alcoholic. Mullen, an all-American at St. John's University, who was the 1985 first-round draft choice of the Golden State Warriors, was making \$400,000 a year in 1988 when he was suspended for one game, then placed on the injured list while undergoing rehab.

All of the athletes surveyed recalled not paying a single cent for those first few uses of cocaine or other drugs and said it is unfortunate that young people don't seem to believe how costly drugs can become, both to the body and to the pocketbook.

"First it's free, but then it costs," declared Mets pitcher Dwight Gooden, who became addicted to cocaine in 1986 when he was making \$1.5 million. "You go through a whole heap of money. Looking back, you think you're better off just ripping it up and

throwing it in the ocean. The lesson is that there's no free ride. You start with drugs, and you're going to pay and pay and pay, and it'll never be enough.

"Kids aren't armed with the mechanisms to dispute what they are told," declared Derek "Turk" Sanderson, once the world's highest paid athlete, "so when someone tells them, 'Try it, you'll feel great, it can't hurt', they go ahead and try it."

They might not if they were told the truth. You do feel great, but you do get hurt--bad."

Sanderson, who made \$2,650,000 a year with the Philadelphia Blazers hockey team, lost his fortune after nearly eight years of alcoholism and, according to both Sanderson and his medical report, an addiction to 11 different drugs. The turning point for Sanderson came, he recalled, in 1980 when he tried to get a drink from someone in Central Park who refused. "Don't you know who I am?" he shouted. "Just another drunk," came the reply.

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