



# THE One-Pager

## 6,000 Homeless Infants Need Our Support—NOW *Remove Hurdles to Early Intervention Services*



Each year, an estimated 6,000 Pennsylvania infants (birth to 3 years old) are homeless. Some are in homeless shelters, some are in temporary housing, or they move from one place to another where anyone will take in their mother.

***Most of these homeless babies suffer the kinds of trauma and neglect that most of us will never experience.*** If they don't receive help early in their lives, most will very likely lead a life of poverty and dependence on government. C4WW believes homeless infants must automatically qualify for early intervention services.

**Here are five reasons why:**

- 1. Pay me now, or pay me more later** — According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, trauma, and poverty impact infants in unique ways, leading to low learning capacities, maladaptive behaviors, and lifelong physical and mental health problems. So does homelessness. Many will be enrolled in costly special education programs, then drop out of school, and become dependent on government assistance.
- 2. Lead poisoning is dangerous, and so is homelessness** — Babies with lead poisoning, victims of abuse or neglect, exposed prenatally to illegal drugs, admitted into a neonatal care unit, or born with a very low birth weight, by law automatically qualify for Early Intervention services. It's time to add another danger—homelessness—to the list of automatic qualifiers.
- 3. Remove bureaucratic barriers to help** — Imagine you're a mother fleeing with your baby in arms from a violent partner. It happens every day. Then imagine that someone from the "system" tells you that they want to help your baby, but only if your infant fails a test. You're hurt, confused, and afraid that someone might take your baby. It's time to remove this barrier and automatically provide mother and baby Early Intervention services.
- 4. Counties are ready to help** — Pennsylvania's Birth-to-Three Early Intervention services are administered by county governments. By adding homelessness as a category, counties will be able to develop a customized service plan for these babies and their mothers that complement other homeless services. These services work.
- 5. It's the right thing to do** — ***Anyone can find themselves homeless.*** A returning veteran and her family, a victim of domestic violence, the long-term unemployed, someone struggling with addiction. While there are many services for these unfortunate Pennsylvanians, homeless babies are on their own. They didn't ask to be homeless.

***Helping them is the right thing to do!***

**Early intervention services for homeless infants  
*works for Pennsylvania.***