

America's Invisible Children Clip

(links for viewing and download at end of transcript)

Narrator: How many of America's Homeless Children are under the age of 5? 50,000, 100,000 or 500,000? The answer when we come back. To take the full quiz and learn more log on to AmericasInvisibleChildren.com
Narrator: 500,000 American under the age of 5 are homeless. Tampa, FL Population 332,888
Robert: I got to have my daughter with for six years on my own. Her mother just recently got out of jail because she abused her daughter for what i understand.
Narrator 2: This is Tampa FL where people come to enjoy the beach. For Brittany and her father Robert the beach is no longer a place for fun.
Robert: When this first starting happening i lost hope I thought this was it. this is the bottom line! My plant closed down in Georgia and the place we where living in bills kept getting so high. I lost my electricity first and then i lost my water and then my gas went out. So I ended up losing the house.
Narrator 2: To survive after he lost his job. Robert sold everything he had except a few tools and his car. They were fully paid off and he knew he needed them to make a living. Robert is a trained carpenter and Building Maintenance Engineer with many skills and eighteen years of experience. But in Georgia no one was hiring, so he and briny headed to Florida in a desperate attempt to find work. unfortunately once they got to Tampa Robert discovered that jobs were hard to find there too.
Robert: I work my butt off what ever takes to make a dollar, i'm not afraid of nothing. i'll work! i even tried applying to McDonald's just isn't happening.
Narrator 2: Robert also found that while there was assistance for mother's with children. There was much less available for a single father.
Robert: No program out there for a man and a child. Shelter wise it doesn't exist. me and my daughter ended up staying right here at this beach. And sleeping right here in this car and put the seats back!
Brittany: Living in the car is okay but you don't have a bathroom or food you can't wash your clothes you can have any friends come by and visit you. I have no toys
Narrator 2: Despite living in the car brittany still needed to go to school. Fortunately there are people like Kathy Wiggins who can help.
Kathy Wiggins: To date in the school system we have just under 1900 students identified and coded as homeless.
Narrator 2: Kathy works as a homeless liaison. According to the 1987 McKinney-Vento act every school district in the country is required to designate a Homeless education liaison. To assure that even children without homes can get an education. Kathy gave Robert some gas cards to help get Brittany to school. Robert worries about the future.
Robert: This gets emotional, i cry a lot and my inspiration is her she keeps me going. The feeling is deep just to have to deal with all of this. it's pretty deep! it really is! it's really hard!--End of Video--

-- Premalink for viewing (requires Flash and javascript)

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