



Resolving  
Homelessness  
Together

# Five Things You Can Do RIGHT NOW to Help End Local Homelessness

YOU can be part of the solution in Santa Cruz County

## #1 | GET CURIOUS: Talk About It

Homelessness can be hard to talk about, but these conversations are how we start to foster curiosity around the issue and move towards change.

### First, Ask

Ask your friends and family about homelessness. See what they think.

To start, say something like, "I have been thinking a lot about homelessness in our community lately, what are your thoughts on it?"

Or, "I can't imagine what it might be like to not have a home, can you?"

### Then, Listen

This is the time to learn from the people in your life and see what they think about the issue.

Pay attention to what they say. Notice any assumptions they make, experiences they pull from, questions they have, and their general reactions to the topic. This will help you develop an understanding of YOUR community's perspective on the issue. This is when the research begins!



## #2 | GET INFORMED: Boost Your Opinions With Information

It is time to get your nose in a book (or, ya know, the internet) to get your questions answered and learn about homelessness.

### Lay the Foundation

Learn about the history of homelessness.

Check out this [white paper](#) written by the National Academy of Sciences (we found the first section especially interesting!).

### Then, Dive Into the Solutions

Learn about the simple best practice of Housing First in this [quick 3-minute video](#). This informs all other long-term solutions.



### Pick Up a Book!

There are so many powerful books out there on homelessness. [Here](#) are a few top recommendations.

### Take a Tour

Visit a local shelter or organization working on homelessness (*psst: we will soon offer virtual tours!*)

### Did you know?

Housing Matters is the largest nonprofit working on ending homelessness in Santa Cruz County. Thanks for joining us in resolving homelessness together!



### #3 | GET INSPIRED: Learn What's Being Done Locally

Now that you're talking about it and have started your own research, it is the time to learn about what is actually being done about homelessness in Santa Cruz.

There are so many organizations addressing this crisis. Here's how to find some of them.

#### Community Resources

The [Get Help](#) section of our website offers a great starting point to learn about the services available in the community. Check out the various organizations and find a few whose mission sings to you.

#### Solutions Galore

Visit our [Get Informed](#) page and click on Solutions to see all types of information about solutions locally, regionally, and nationally.

There's a lot out there, we promise you will find something inspiring and fascinating!



### #4 | GET INVOLVED: Finding Your Role

You have now established your foundation. High five! Every step you've taken so far makes you a more engaged community member, which is what we'll need to [#ResolveHomelessnessTogether](#). But we're not done yet.

You are talking about homelessness, learning about it, AND you have an idea about what is being done to solve it. The next step is to find YOUR place in these efforts. Yep, we all have a role to play.

#### Find Your Role

Figure out what solutions-oriented part you're comfortable playing. Do you have time to volunteer? Are you able to give financial support? Can you provide professional skills?



#### Volunteer

Connect with the [Volunteer Center](#) to find opportunities or contact a local organization directly.

#### Say yes!

When new solutions are brought to the table, be inclined to say yes. Get involved in the planning process, and make sure things are done thoughtfully. The key there? Make sure things *get done*.

### #5 | SHARE: Encourage and Empower Others

Great job! Getting to this point takes time, effort, and a whole lot of energy. You are clearly dedicated to being part of the solution, and we applaud you.

You will know when you've reached this point when conversations around homelessness are flowing, you are answering questions with evidence and clarity, and you feel like you are a part of the movement.

Now it is time to empower others to do the same.



#### Share What You've Learned!

Write a blog post, share on social media, or re-engage in conversations with your community.

#### Reflect on Your Journey

What surprised you most? What did you learn (or re-learn) about homelessness? Was there a moment that touched your heart?

#### Don't Stop Now

You may find that the more you know, the more questions you have. Stay curious, keep learning, and stay engaged.

**Hooray! You are now a part of the solution. By simply learning about the issue and being willing to open your mind to new ideas you have joined the thousands of community members who are doing their part to ensure all our neighbors in Santa Cruz County have a stable place to call home. Congratulations, and keep up the good work.**