



school on wheels inc.
Tutoring Homeless Children Since 1993

Our History

School on Wheels, Inc. is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization founded in 1993 by Agnes Stevens, a retired teacher. After reading Jonathan Kozol's *Rachel and her Children*, Agnes realized the extent of homelessness in the USA. She began tutoring homeless kids in a park in Santa Monica, encouraging them to stay in school and participate in school activities.

Today, hundreds of volunteers work one-on-one with children whose homelessness prevents them from getting the academic stability and help they desperately need. The heart of the School on Wheels' programs is the volunteer tutors who come from all backgrounds and professions, with a shared goal - to reach out to a child, to teach, to mentor, and assist in their educational life.

Our Mission

The mission of School on Wheels is to enhance educational opportunities for homeless children from kindergarten through twelfth grade. Our goal is to shrink the gaps in their education and provide them with the highest level of education possible.

Our Services

School on Wheels gives extra time and attention to homeless students so that they can be successful in school. Our program serves as a consistent support system to homeless students at a time of great stress and fear. We bring the message to our students that they are cared about and important. We do this by offering:

- One-on-one weekly tutoring with a volunteer
- Backpacks, school supplies and school uniforms
- A toll-free number for students to keep in touch with us
- Assistance in entering school
- Help in locating lost records
- Guidance for parents in educational matters for their children
- Two learning centers, one located in the heart of Skid Row and the other in South Los Angeles.
- Tutoring in seven major regions in Southern California, including Los Angeles, Orange, San Bernardino and Ventura counties.
- School on Wheels awards three scholarships annually.





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Homeless Statistics

Accurate statistics regarding the number of homeless children are difficult to obtain. The homeless population is constantly in flux. The statistics are the most recent and admittedly under-estimated. Most counts do not specifically identify children, do not include families staying in motels or children living in group foster homes.

United States

- One in every 50 American children goes to sleep without a home of their own each year. (1)
- Approximately **1.6 million** children are homeless annually in the United States. (2)
- The recession has led to a 50% increase in students identified as homeless in schools districts throughout the country. (3)
- There are almost 800,000 children and youth served in foster care each year in the United States. (4)

California

- California ranks 49 out of 50 in number of homeless children. (5)
- **292,624 California children** experience homelessness each year. (5)
- Families with young children account for 40% of the homeless population. (6)

Los Angeles County

- 141,737 residents of LA County are homeless at some point over the course of the year. (7)
- 83% of homeless people in LA County are unsheltered– living on the streets, in cars, or encampments– rather than in emergency or transitional housing. (7)
- Over 35,000 homeless youth are enrolled in LA County Schools, 12,461 in LAUSD alone. (8)

The Need for School on Wheels

Every child needs an education to have hope and a chance for success. The homeless child is no exception. School on Wheels' goal is to close the gap for these kids. Our program has the potential to help stop the cycle of homelessness and to support schools in serving homeless students.

Homeless mothers and children are now the fastest-growing segment of the homeless population. The number of homeless children who are in the U.S. is greater today than at any point since the Great Depression.



- 1 National Center on Family Homelessness, *One in 50 U.S. Children is Homeless*, Mar. 13, 2009 - <http://www.homelesschildrenamerica.org/>
- 2 The United States Department of Health and Human Services, January 2010 - <http://www.examiner.com/x-22573-St-Louis-Homelessness-Examiner~v2009m11d2-Homeless-Children-in-America>
- 3 July 2010, National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth (NAEHCY) <http://www.naehcy.org/dl/TheEconomicCrisisHitsHome.pdf>
- 4 U.S. Department of Health and Human Services report: The AFCARS Report: Estimates as of January 2008. http://www.abanet.org/child/education/National_EdFactSheet_2008.pdf
- 5 America's Youngest Outcasts: State Report Card on Child Homelessness http://www.homelesschildrenamerica.org/pdf/report_cards/long/ca_long.pdf
- 6 National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty - <http://nlchp.org/program.cfm?prog=2>
- 7 [2008 Report Card on Homelessness in Los Angeles County](http://www.homelesschildrenamerica.org/pdf/report_cards/long/ca_long.pdf)
- 8 Los Angeles Unified School District www.LAUSD.net



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School on Wheels Fast Facts

- School on Wheels, Inc. was founded in 1993 by Agnes Stevens, a retired teacher.
- School on Wheels is a unique organization dedicated to the enhancement of educational opportunities for homeless children in K through 12th Grades.
- Our goal for 2011 is to serve 6,500 students and provide one-on-one tutoring to 2,000 homeless students.
- To qualify for our program, children must be in kindergarten through grade twelve, currently reside in a homeless shelter, motel, car, on the street or in a group foster home and have permission from their parent/guardian to work with a School on Wheels' tutor.
- The average age of our students is 8 years old.
- School on Wheels relies on the support of 1,500 volunteers annually.
- Our volunteer tutors work in over 150 different tutoring locations throughout Southern California.
- Our volunteer tutors work with homeless children 52 weeks each year.
- To become a School on Wheels tutor, a volunteer must complete our application form, attend orientation and training, complete two reference checks and pass a fingerprint and background check.
- Our students meet with their tutor for an hour each week, either at their place of residence (homeless shelter, group home, etc.) or in a public place, such as an after-school club, library or book store.
- School on Wheels has two Learning Centers in Los Angeles. The Downtown Learning Center is located in the heart of Skid Row and the other is in South Los Angeles.
- School on Wheels awards three scholarships annually.
- We distribute on average 3,000 bus tokens to children who would not otherwise get to school.
- We provide 500 School uniforms for students who need them.
- We rely on donations from individuals, corporations and foundations; we do not accept government funding.
- Over 85% of our funding goes directly into our programs.





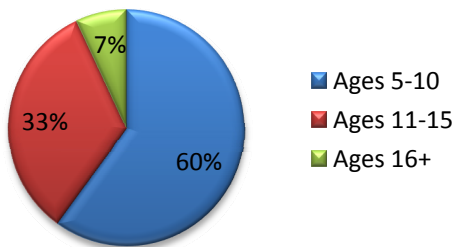
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School on Wheels Program Statistics

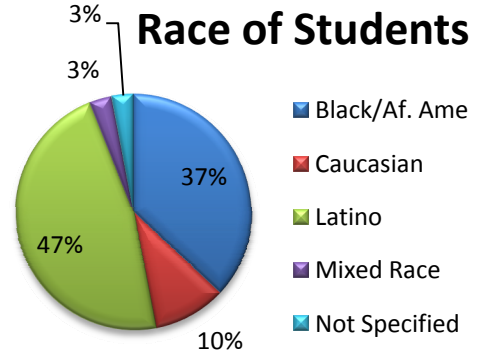
Every year, School on Wheels goal is to provide tutoring services to 2,000 homeless students ages 5- 18, and support in the form of backpacks and school supplies to 6,500. We do this by training and matching 1,500 volunteer tutors with children in over 150 different locations throughout Southern California.

Student Information

Age of Students

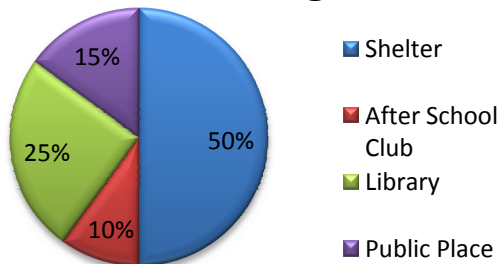


Race of Students

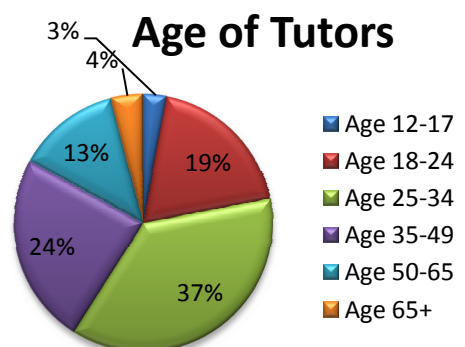


Tutor Information

Tutoring Locations



Age of Tutors





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Frequently Asked Questions

Who are your students?

Our students are homeless children who live in shelters, motels, cars, on the street and in group foster homes. We tutor children from kindergarten through twelfth grade. The average age of our students is 8 years old.

Why do homeless children need our help?

Every time a homeless child changes schools, they fall behind in their studies. Our tutors help them fill in the gaps. We believe that education is key to ending homelessness and by helping homeless children succeed at their number one job, doing well at school, we can help break the cycle of homelessness and poverty.

Do you have a school bus?

No, our name suggests that we do, but in fact our volunteers are our 'wheels'. They go to wherever the children are, a homeless shelter, group foster home, a library or after-school club.

Are your students with their families or homeless alone?

Typically, our students are with one or two parents, with the exception of children in group foster homes.

Do your students attend public school?

Yes, although one sad statistic is that in Los Angeles, over 30% of homeless children are not enrolled in school. One of our services is to help families quickly enroll their children in school.

How many students do you tutor?

We provide tutoring services to 2,000 students annually.

When does tutoring take place?

The majority of tutoring takes place on weekdays between 4pm and 8pm. Additionally, there are some possibilities for tutoring on the weekends, typically Saturday mornings or early afternoons.

Where in California do you tutor?

School on Wheels tutors in over 150 locations throughout Southern California.

Is School on Wheels nationwide?

No, but we have chapters in Indianapolis and Massachusetts. Our current focus is to provide a tutor to every homeless child in California.

Do you have any success stories?

Yes, we have hundreds. Each time we match a student and a tutor, we consider that a success. By meeting regularly with a positive adult role model, we believe that our students have a greater chance to succeed. Please visit our website to meet some of our students!





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Testimonials

It is with heartfelt thanks that I send this letter to you. Your organization was such a help to my family during such a dark time in our lives. Never would have guessed that we would have been homeless. But we were and your organization was very instrumental in assisting us in getting our children in school, providing school supplies and tutors.....With extreme gratitude, **Carmen and Family**

Having someone who had genuine concern for my situation, both academic and personal, dedicate an hour of his time helped me stay focused in my endeavors.For a year and six months I was homeless, but the situation was never a measure of my capabilities.

Angela Sanchez – Former School on Wheels Student and Scholarship Recipient; now attending UCLA

Homeless children typically are behind in school because of their high mobility. School on Wheels is making a positive difference in the lives of homeless children by strengthening their educational skills and connecting families to other needed services. Education may not be the only way to improve the lives of homeless children, but it is the best way.

Homeless Education Program Coordinator – LAUSD

Wow! I just walked into our office and saw all the backpacks that you dropped off. Words can hardly express the gratitude we have in our hearts for our partnership with School on Wheels. Your organization is an incredible blessing to our homeless children. Thanks again for all you do for the kids!

San Fernando Valley Rescue Mission

School on Wheels has proven to be a strong ally by providing tutors to our school aged children. The tutors build a rapport and healthy relationship with the students and parents. The children like their tutors, look forward to the sessions and have benefited scholastically from their aid. The tutors are faithful and this helps to build stability with the family, often a missing link.

Union Rescue Mission, Skid Row, LA

The academic and emotional support that School on Wheels provides to very needy students and their families is unparalleled and has no peer...Young people's lives are made better every day because of School on Wheels.

Coeur D'Alene Avenue Elementary School, Venice, California

What you and your team do for our kids is amazing and appreciated. Our trip to your center was a giant energy boost to me. Your commitment of time and energy to what you believe in makes companies like us want to help in any way that we can. All of you are heroes in my mind. Thank you again for helping our kids.

Sam Duncan, Chairman and CEO of OfficeMax