

Newspaper Version

Hi, my name is Hadlie, I'm 11 years old and I'm part of Impact Academy, the co-op Quinae just explained.

Hi Hadlie, my name is Jay.

Hi Jay. So, how did you become homeless?

I was in a situation with the state, I put a lot of my time into someone else and after that, I was left with nothing and when I say nothing, I mean nothing. All I had was a backpack and a suitcase.

What is it hard to be homeless?

Yeah. The weather was pretty bad, one day it could be snowing, the next day it could be sunny, today it was raining! It kind of surprised me, but you never know.

Did anyone try to help you while you were homeless?

Most definitely. I had family down here, I had my grandma and my cousins.

How did you get here, to the tiny homes?

Through the hard bank. They do shelters and little food giveaways, and clothes, so yeah.

Do you like it here?

Most definitely. It's a little wicked at night—well, not wicked, but loud.

How long have you been here?

It's about to be six months.

How long were you homeless?

Since the middle of 2024, so probably for a little minute.

Did you come to Washington because you had family?

That and because my grandma is fighting cancer for the third time, so time and time I go up there and help her.

What was the hardest thing about being homeless?

Having to start over. I had to start over with everything, with my job, my life, I mean, I had to start over with everything.

Do you think anything could have prevented you being homeless?

A lot. Me avoiding that situation is all I can say.

Did starting over help?

Most definitely. It was a new beginning. Helping me get up out of here.

Are you working now?

Yeah. But I don't go back to work till the 19th because I recently got hit on the back by a car on my bike.

Did people give you a hard time on the streets?

Yeah. They don't want to help. Just like people, they pretend you're invisible.

Did it feel scary, or dangerous?

Yeah, especially where I was at, and at night you never know what could happen.

What did you feel when you got a home of your own?

I just knew it was a new step. It felt good.

What is your goal for your next step?

Getting an apartment of my own.

What do you want people to know about homelessness?

Stay strong, whatever you're gonna do. You can't let whatever you're gonna do take over. Remember that God is always by your side.

Do you have any advice?

Keep your circles small.

Can you explain that further?

If your friend shares instead of takes, then you know you're safe.

Thank you for taking this time to talk to us!

No problem, I'm glad I made your day!

My View Version

Hi, my name is Hadlie, I'm 11 and I'm part of a homeschool co-op called Impact Academy.

Homelessness is a big problem in our community, and it's growing. As a co-op, we have been studying homelessness to learn more about why and how it happens and what we can do about it to help others, and decrease the problems.

I'd like to share my experience of interviewing a once-homeless person to you today.

I'd never been to a tiny home village before. I was most intrigued because it was like a *house*, but split into different buildings. To the right was a giant room that was for laundry and community gatherings. In the next building there were the kitchens. The bedrooms (aka the tiny homes) were neatly placed in 4 rows spaced close together, and the office. I was just amazed.

I've seen these conjunctions of tents and litter clouding the forests on the highways. They're places where the homeless try to stay alive, but they looked messy, unsafe, and very dirty. But here, it was organized, clean and tidy, and it was peaceful and calm with an air of a neighborhood too close to each other. This was a place where the once-homeless could be happy, and socialize together. It was a quiet and happy community where hopes were allowed to grow again; this was an opportunity for the homeless to live their lives in freedom.

The person I was interviewing was a 21-year-old man named Jay. He became homeless after he gave too much of his time to the wrong person. He had his challenges—moving to Seattle was very hard. One day he was riding his bike to work when he got hit in the back by a car, he said, was another challenge. When I interviewed him, I was stunned with his answers, especially his advice. I asked him, **“What do**

you want people to know about homelessness?” His reply was, “Stay strong, whatever you’re gonna do. You can’t let whatever you’re gonna do take over. Remember that God is always by your side.” I also asked him, **“Do you have any advice?”** He said, “Keep your circles small.”

Keep your circles small.

In other words, he meant “be careful who you choose as friends or companions.” Jay had learned for himself. He wanted to surround himself with people that would share and give instead of take and hurt. That is how you know you have a friend who’s good and loyal to the end.

I was so inspired. I had never interviewed anyone before, let alone someone who had personally experienced homelessness. Jay had pushed through homelessness like it was cake walk. I was so inspired by him that I was smiling all the way back to my house.

“Did it feel scary, or dangerous?” I asked him.

Yeah, especially where I was at, and at night you never know what could happen.

That confirmed it—he was strong. Not just physically, but in every other way; spiritually, intellectually. He admitted to being scared but it didn’t stop him from striving forward. He could have hated God for abandoning him during his time of hardship but he didn’t, and instead he kept going forward. I admired him for his bravery and hope.

He changed my mind nearly completely about homelessness. One of the reasons—he reminded me that homeless people are human. They don’t *want* to be homeless—they don’t have a choice. When I was little I saw homeless people a lot. Now I was older, and I had a chance to actually help stop it. If I saw a dandelion—

I wish homelessness would end.

Jay inspired me to help stop homelessness.

He also inspired me to tell others *you can do it!*