Homelessness in 2019
6 Myths About Homelessness in the San Gabriel Valley

MYTH #1

There are more people than ever experiencing homelessness in all our communities.

FACTS

• There are a few bright spots. The services and community of Pasadena have made a difference. Homelessness is down 56% from 10 years ago. In 2019, 542 individuals were experiencing homelessness versus 1,144 in 2009.

• In the San Gabriel Valley, we found housing for almost 1,000 people in 2018 with 96% still housed a year later.

• Together we are addressing homelessness and it is working. We have seen positive results with our efforts with families and veterans. We have worked to ensure none are left to sleep on the streets.

• The next challenge we can tackle together are the rising number of 55+ people experiencing homelessness and those who are highly vulnerable.

MYTH #2

Most of the people experiencing homelessness came from outside of our community to take advantage of the great weather and services.

FACTS

• A recent survey showed that 95% of the people experiencing homelessness in Pasadena were either residents or had ties to the city including family, work, medical services or grew up here.

• Only 5% reported being homeless first from outside of LA county or the state.

• By utilizing our Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), we are able to see if a client has a history with other homeless service providers within the county. We work to reconnect them with the provider in their original Service Planning Area (SPA).

*Data courtesy of from Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority (lahsa.org) and Pasadena Partnership to End Homelessness.
**MYTH #3**
So many of the people experiencing homelessness are on the streets because they are “Service Resistant” or because they choose to live on the streets.

**FACTS**
- The majority of people experiencing homelessness in the San Gabriel Valley have been assessed by case managers, are qualified for housing, and have said YES to housing but are still “Housing Waiting.” They are working with service providers like Union Station Homeless Services, but are waiting to be matched to a voucher or housing.
- 75% of Section 8 vouchers in Pasadena expire before people can find a landlord to accept them.

**MYTH #4**
Those experiencing homelessness either are mentally ill, on drugs or criminals.

**FACTS**
- The number one reason given for people experiencing homelessness in Pasadena is job loss.
- 835 people experiencing homelessness in the San Gabriel Valley area are 55 or older; many can no longer work or afford housing on fixed incomes.

**MYTH #5**
If we just get rid of homeless services, homelessness will disappear.

**FACTS**
- Following the same logic, if we get rid of Huntington Hospital, disease would disappear from Pasadena.
- Permanent Supportive Housing and Intensive Support Services are part of the solution, not the cause.
- We must work together to end homelessness.

**MYTH #6**
We are all helpless to deal with this problem; our hands are tied.

**FACTS**
- The Housing First approach works! Provide housing first, then provide services to keep people stable and housed.
- Last year in the San Gabriel Valley, we found housing for almost 1,000 people.
- 96% housing retention success rate for those housed under the Housing First approach!