

**TOPIC: IN SUPPORT OF INCREASED AWARENESS AND ADVOCACY FOR HOMELESS YOUTH IN THE UNITED STATES**

**SUBMITTED BY: Drexel University Student Nurses' Association**

WHEREAS, the 2009 National Student Nurses' Association (NSNA) House of Delegates supported awareness of mental health disparities in homeless youth; and

WHEREAS, researchers have estimated that between 5-7.7% of teenagers experience homelessness each year; and

WHEREAS, according to the National Coalition for the Homeless, 1.6 million U.S. teenagers are homeless on any given night with this population equally divided between male and female, between the ages of 15 and 17; and

WHEREAS, 21% of homeless children repeat a grade because of frequent absences from school, and within a single school year 41% of homeless students attend two different schools, while 28% attend three or more different schools; and

WHEREAS, environmental factors contributing to teenage homelessness include poverty, lack of affordable housing, family breakdown and conflict at home; and

WHEREAS, psychosocial factors contributing to teenage homelessness include substance abuse, mental health issues, physical or sexual abuse, questioning one's sexual identity, and sexual orientation; and

WHEREAS, homeless teens are at high risk for malnutrition, exposure to the elements, selling and/or using drugs, being a victim of sexual exploitation, violence, prostitution, illegal survival strategies, self mutilation and committing suicide; and

WHEREAS, homeless youth are at a greater risk of contracting AIDS or HIV-related illnesses; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the NSNA encourage its constituents to support awareness and advocacy for resources to homeless youth; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the NSNA hold focus sessions at MidYear and Annual Conventions in order to increase awareness of the incidence, contributing factors, and consequences related to youth homelessness, if feasible; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the NSNA publish an article in *Imprint* on homeless youth to further increase the awareness of this issue, if feasible; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the NSNA send a copy of this resolution to the American Nurses Association, the National League for Nursing, the American Association of Colleges of Nursing, the National Organization for Associate Degree Nursing, the National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth, the National Coalition for the Homeless, Stand Up For Kids, and any others deemed appropriate by the NSNA Board of Directors.