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How to Help the Homeless

1. **Be Kind** – It's true: A little kindness goes a long way. Treat homeless people as you would want to be treated. Instead of ignoring or dismissing the homeless, try a kind word, even if it's just "hello."
2. **Do NOT Give Money to Panhandlers** – The truth is that many panhandlers are not homeless, and most of the homeless don't panhandle. People who ask for money may need help, but often money given to individuals on the street supports destructive habits, including alcohol and drug addiction.
3. **Give Food and Water** – For food, most of the homeless rely on local soup kitchens and whatever they can get from passersby or from rummaging through trash cans. Contact your local soup kitchens, shelters and homeless aid organizations, and ask what food items they need. Participate in charitable food drives by providing nonperishable groceries, such as canned goods. Or simply keep a supply of healthy snacks and bottles of water in your car or bag, pack additional food for lunch, or give a homeless person your leftovers from eating out.
4. **Donate Money to Homeless Organizations** – Monetary donations to reputable organizations and charities are greatly appreciated. Contributions help to provide shelter, food and valuable services.
5. **Donate Goods** – New or gently used clothing, particularly socks and undergarments can be donated to shelters and other organizations that assist the homeless. These places also welcome everyday necessities such as hygiene products, toilet paper, towels, twin sheets, blankets, books and toys for children.
6. **Spread the Word** – Educate friends, family and neighbors about homelessness, including the realities of homelessness and how to help those in need.
7. **Get Involved** – Volunteer your time, knowledge and professional skills. Shelters, soup kitchens and charitable organizations thrive on the work of volunteers – from those who sign people in and serve meals to others that educate, treat and counsel the homeless.

The following is a list of local charities that need contributions and assistance to end homelessness in San Diego:

- Home Again San Diego <http://www.homeagainsd.org>
- Alpha Project <http://www.alphaproject.org>
- San Diego Rescue Mission <http://www.sdrescue.org>
- Townspeople <http://www.townspeople.org>
- Crisis House <http://www.crisishouse.org>
- Father Joe's Villages <http://www.fatherjoesvillages.org>
- Second Chance <http://secondchanceprogram.org>

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For a full listing of shelters that could use assistance, check the City of San Diego Homeless Services Web site: <http://infoline-sd.org/Client/InformSanDiego>.

About Home Again

Home Again is the homeless outreach and prevention public awareness campaign for San Diego County's Plan to End Chronic Homelessness (PTECH), facilitated by United Way of San Diego County. For more information, visit <http://www.homeagainsd.org>.

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