



Activity Ideas

The Covenant House Sleep Out is a special experience that will make everyone who participates more aware of the stuff that homeless kids deal with every day. But apart from the "Sleeping Out", what do you do for 12 hours?

ACTIVITIES

Below are some specific activities that you can organize with participants at your Sleep Out - either in advance of the event, or on event night.

Cardboard Hunt

One of the questions the Sleep Out Group members are frequently asked is, "Where do I get cardboard boxes to sleep outside?" That's only one part of a larger set of questions that homeless kids are forced to ask themselves -- "Where am I going to sleep? How will I stay warm? Will I be safe?"

With a Cardboard Hunt, Sleep Out participants make note of this problem and work out how to solve it. In advance of the Sleep Out, brainstorm a list of all of the things you might need or want to sleep on. Then think about where you might find them -- make a list. Think about how you will transport them on foot and where you will store them -- make a plan.

Divide your lists and plan, and have every participant take part in the Cardboard Hunt -- and document the experience. Who did you talk to? What did you tell them? How did they treat you? What worked? What didn't work? Were you successful? How did you feel?

Then, at the event, talk about that experience? Were some participants more or less successful than others? Why might that have been true? What did you learn?

Statistics with Arts and Crafts

At Covenant House, we have gathered a lot of data about homeless kids - you can find it on [our website](#). But looking at data doesn't always make the problem real or tangible for people - and art can help.

Gather poster boards and arts-and-crafts supplies and divide them among groups of four or five participants. Let every group choose an issue, a statistic or piece of information and create a

poster that “brings it to life” for everyone else at the event. Then take turns presenting the finished works to one another.

Tip: Think about finding room to display these works in a public place, so that you can share them with people who aren't able to be part of your Sleep Out.

Roundtable Discussions

What is your perception of homelessness? Is that different from the perceptions your friends and classmates and family have? How can you know for sure?

Have Sleep Out participants [take this quiz](#) about families, poverty, and homelessness. Then, have all of the participants divide into groups to discuss the results.