

Letters

Young and homeless: They need a show of support

The week of November 15-21 is designated as National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week. It is a time we should be especially aware of the homeless children, youth and young adults in our community. There are an estimated 5,000 homeless young people in Michigan. Many have been neglected, abused and abandoned by the very people who were supposed to care for them.

Too often, these young

people are forgotten because they are invisible. They dwell and sleep in abandoned buildings, parks, cars and other unsafe places. And while adolescence has its own set of challenges, these homeless youth are forced to deal with unimaginable circumstances such as mental health problems, sexual exploitation and violence, not to mention barriers to basic needs like food and shelter. These are issues that no young person should ever have to face.

At Covenant House Michigan, our mission is to help these young people break the cycle of homelessness. This year we will provide shelter, food and clothing, as well as educational and vocational programs for thousands of homeless, runaway and at-risk youngsters. But perhaps the most important thing that we can offer these youth is unconditional love.

We invite the public to join us at our 12th Annual Candlelight Vigil today at 6 p.m. on

the CHM campus, 2959 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. in Detroit, and to reflect on the thousands of young people in our community who are homeless and hopeless.

We look forward to a strong showing of support to show these young people that they are valuable and that, as a community, we will be the family they so desperately need.

Sam G. Joseph

Executive director

Covenant House Michigan