Life Skills Training – Homelessness

Helping those experiencing homelessness acquire life skills can help them move on from homelessness and resettle into the community. Life skills training is different from support, help or assistance in that the aim is to promote self-sufficiency.

Life skills are the skills that many people take for granted, like managing money, shopping, cooking, running a home and maintaining social networks. They are essential for living independently. Some people experiencing homelessness do not have all of these skills, either because they never acquired them or because they lost them through extended periods of homelessness. Helping those experiencing homelessness acquire life skills can help them move on from homelessness and resettle into the community. Life skills training is different from support, help or assistance in that the aim is to promote self-sufficiency.

Life skills can be thought of in terms of three broad categories: 1) core or basic skills (e.g. numeracy, literacy and information technology); 2) independent living skills (e.g. managing a household, budgeting, appointment keeping and contacting services, dealing with bills and correspondence); and, 3) social skills (e.g. interpersonal skills, avoiding or dealing with neighbor disputes, developing self-confidence and social networks). There is limited knowledge on the life skills needs of many groups of people experiencing homelessness including: families, people from ethnic minorities, and women.