

Community Read "The Soloist" by Steve Lopez

10 WAYS YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN AREAS OF HOMELESSNESS AND MENTAL HEALTH.

- 1. Educate yourself and others about homelessness and mental illness.**
The first step in making a change is gaining knowledge - and sharing that knowledge with others. Information can be found in this guide and at www.porchlightinc.org/soloist.
- 2. Organize a group of people to read The Soloist.**
Ask a group of people to read the Soloist and then schedule a discussion. Use the information provided by Porchlight to have a meaningful discussion about homelessness in our area.
- 3. See The Soloist movie with friends.**
Organize a group to see The Soloist and have a discussion afterwards. The Soloist is an entertaining film that illustrates how complex the issues of homelessness and mental illness can be. The book discussion questions are applicable to the film and will lead to a great conversation.
- 4. Don't be a bystander.**
When you hear someone using a slur or perpetrating a myth about mental illness, say something. Psychiatric disorders are legitimate physical illnesses, just like any other illness such as heart disease, diabetes, or asthma. Do your part to remove the stigma, shame, and fear that is often associated with mental illness.
- 5. Volunteer your time.**
Contact Porchlight to find out how you get volunteer your time with a local shelter, food bank or soup Provide a home-cooked meal to homeless individuals who need it most.
- 6. Donate money.**
Porchlight actively working on providing more housing and support services for the mentally ill homeless in our community. Porchlight needs lots of community support to make this vision a reality. Consider joining the Madison Cares campaign by making a donation to this effort. You can donate online at www.porchlight.inc.org/madisoncares.
- 7. Pass along your unused items.**
You may have unused items that could be put to good use. Consider passing along clothing, blankets, toys, canned food, and personal hygiene products (such as shampoo, soap, toothbrushes and toothpaste, hair brushes, and deodorant). For more info on what is needed go to www.porchlightinc.org/clientNeeds.html.

10 Ways You Can Make a Difference continued on the following page...

10 WAYS YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE CONTINUED....

8. Become a fan.

Become a fan of Porchlight on Facebook. As a fan you'll be updated on our progress and issues affecting the homeless and mentally ill in Madison.

9. Just have cake.

For your next birthday or celebration ask your friends and family make donations to the Madison Cares campaign in lieu of gifts. The Madison Cares campaign is actively working on providing more housing and support services for the mentally ill homeless in Madison. Go to www.porchlightinc.org/madisoncares for more info.

10. Pass it forward.

Copy this list and give it to a friend!

Adapted from The Soloist Educational Resource Guide published by Participant Media.