

For The Ladies

NNPA FEATURE

Child Watch

by Marian Wright Edelman



HOME IS WHERE THE CHILDREN SHOULD BE

Home is where the heart is, they say. Unfortunately for too many Americans, especially children, losing a home is a constant fear or a real occurrence.

The figures are dismal. An estimated 100,000 American children are homeless each day — about equal to the total number of children in Atlanta, Boston, Miami or Newark. Every year 2 million children live the pain of homelessness for days, weeks or months.

How can this nation tolerate this horrendous situation? How did this happen? What can be done so no child has to worry about losing a home? These questions race through my head constantly. Consider three points:

First, we must understand that homelessness is not only men sleeping on benches or women pushing carts down a street. Today we see more and more families with children — one-third of the nations homeless population — sleeping in cars or shelter or begging for money on street corners.

Second, many families are barely getting through each day. They are victims of an expen-

sive housing market, and most often decreasing incomes. There are now more than 10 million low-income households competing for the more than 6 million housing units they might possibly afford. As long as this gap exists, millions of poor families and their children will live on the edge, spending most of their income on housing they cannot really afford. If you had to choose between paying for your child's health care or pay rent, which one will take priority? Or do you repair the car to get work or pay rent? These are tough choices — choices families should not agonize over.

Finally, we know positive efforts can turn these families around. With 100 percent effort from federal, state and local government, the private sector, as well as community support, we will reverse this dangerous trend.

Fortunately there are many programs and people who are making a difference with their support and compassion:

- Washington State has a \$10 million Housing Trust Fund which supports a Homelessness Prevention program and a Rental

Choose Seafood Salad for Summer Socializing

If the weather is hot and steamy on the day when it is your turn to host your social circle, "think cool, light and nutritious," and serve your guests this Seafood Pasta Medley with refreshing iced tea. The salad is a snap to assemble and can be made ahead of time with very little fuss and bother.

A variety of cooked or canned seafood, marinated in a special but simple dressing, then combined with pasta shells, green onions, parsley, fresh dill, celery and salad greens, provides a light but lively repast ideally suited for summer lunches.

Be sure to have lots of iced tea with this delightful dish, as it soothes parched throats without nullifying other flavors or adding unwanted calories. Start with a quality "name-brand" tea, thus ensuring the best tasting beverage to enhance any meal.

Easy Directions For Good Iced Tea

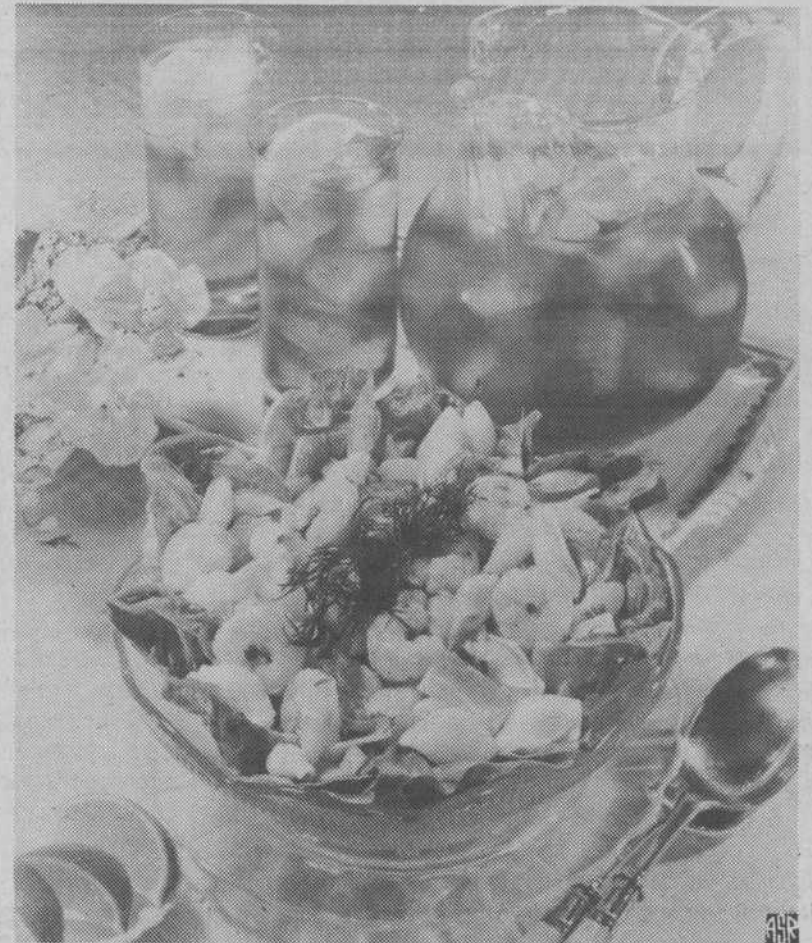
Bring 1 quart of freshly drawn cold water to a full rolling boil in a saucepan. Remove from the heat and immediately add 15 teabags or 1/3 measuring cup of loose tea. Stir, cover and let stand 5 minutes. Stir again and strain into a pitcher holding another quart of cold water. Serve over ice. Makes 2 quarts.

Seafood Pasta Medley (Makes 6 to 8 servings)

Dressing:

- 1/3 cup olive or salad oil
- 1/3 cup lemon juice
- 1/3 cup wine vinegar
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- Dash white pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon dry mustard
- 1/2 teaspoon paprika
- 1/4 teaspoon sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 tablespoon drained capers, optional

Combine ingredients in jar with tight lid. Shake well. Let stand 30 minutes or more for flavors to blend. Shake well just before using.



Treat your special gathering to a seafood pasta salad, served with lots of cool, clear iced tea.

Salad:

- 2 1/2 cups mixed cooked or canned seafood*
- 4 cups cooked pasta shells
- 3 green onions with tops, sliced
- 3 parsley sprigs, chopped
- 1/3 cup coarsely snipped fresh dill or 1 teaspoon dried dill weed
- 1/2 cup finely chopped celery
- Salad greens

Pour half the dressing over seafood and let marinate at least 30 minutes.

Rinse pasta well with cold water; drain thoroughly. Add onions, parsley, dill, celery and remaining dressing. Mix well. Add seafood with dressing; toss lightly. Cover and refrigerate. When ready to serve, stir pasta salad and place in serving bowl. Add salad greens. If desired, garnish with fresh dill sprigs and black olives or cherry tomato halves.

*Use your favorite seafood or any combination of tuna, crab (real or imitation), shrimp, lobster or clams.

Assistance program.

- The New Jersey Homelessness Prevention Program provides cash assistance for rent and mortgage payments, as well

as much-needed loans and grants.

- Project Homecoming in South Bend, Indiana provides critical services to homeless

families and children.

- In Atlanta, Georgia, homeless shelters work with the state's Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) to ensure that eligible homeless pregnant women and young children are enrolled.

- A Girl Scouts program for homeless children launched in Los Angeles, New York, Washington, D.C., Philadelphia and elsewhere is providing youngsters a sense of community and stability.

The list goes on. Children are the innocent

victims. Homeless children are at-risk of poor health and nutrition. Ultimately it affects their ability to learn. If they don't do well in school, their future is in jeopardy.

We've seen the homeless around us. We understand the circumstances surrounding homelessness, so let's work on making it a thing of the past. This country owes our children and families nothing less than to make them a priority.

Marian Wright Edelman is president of the Children's Defense Fund, a national voice for children.

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