Stephanie Hansen
Standup For Kids

Standup For Kids is a volunteer and donation based, national operation dedicated to ending youth homelessness. We, as volunteers, have many opportunities to interact and build rapport with the youth. Some of these kids have never had an adult role model they can trust and we fulfill a unique place in their lives. If interacting with the kids is not something a potential volunteer feels comfortable with or he or she only wants to commit to a short period of time, there is a wealth of other volunteer opportunities within our organization. It takes many personality types and volunteer needs in order to meet the needs of our kids.

Standup For Kids Seattle has only been around for 2½ years, but the national organization has been present in homeless kids’ lives all over the United States for twenty-one years. I recently returned from the national convention in Las Vegas and found inspiration in other chapter’s practices. There is much room for growth in the Seattle chapter and I plan on seeing it to its mission’s end. I want to be a part of ending youth homelessness.

As a Nation, we have tried putting a band-aid on the problem for too many years. We have ignored the fact that youth are homeless and we have fed, clothed and sheltered the many adults that have become homeless. There has never been an initiative to END homelessness especially in youth in America. There is now.

In the mental health field, it is sometimes difficult to measure success. Because we work with generally higher functioning human beings, we are most times seeing small changes. When working with a kid who has never experienced unconditional love and then providing that for them it is easy to see the enormous change that occurs with only a few interactions. As much as I would like to say that the endeavor of joining this organization was altruistic in my life; that would be a lie. It not only met and exceeded the requirements for the cultural immersion project for our program, it also happens to be the most rewarding work I have ever done.

If you are interested in hearing more about our organization, please email me @ stephenieh@standupforkids.org or you can call me at 206-229-5025.