

Ch 22 Section 2 Hardship and Suffering During the Depression

The Depression Devastates People's Lives

The Depression in the Cities

- People lose jobs, are evicted from homes
- **Shantytowns**, settlements consisting of shacks, arise in cities
- People dig through garbage, beg
- **Soup kitchens** offer free or low-cost food
- **Bread lines**—people line up for food from charities, public agencies
- African Americans, Latinos have higher unemployment, lower pay

The Depression in Rural Areas

- Most farmers can grow food for their families
- 1920s farmers debts increased
- Demand from corps fell after WWI
- About 400,000 farms lost through foreclosure
 - many become tenant farmers

The Dust Bowl

- Farmers in Great Plains exhaust land through overproduction
- 1930s, drought, windstorms hit; soil scattered for hundreds of miles
- **Dust Bowl**— area from North Dakota to Texas that is hardest hit
- Many farm families migrate to Pacific Coast states

Effects on the American Family

Hardship and the Family

- Family is source of strength for most Americans
- Some families break apart under strain of making ends meet
- Many families become homeless

Men in the Streets

- Many men used to working, supporting families have difficulty coping
 - cannot find jobs
- About 300,000 hoboes wander country on railroad box cars
- No federal system of **direct relief**—cash or food from government

Women Struggle to Survive

- Homemakers budget carefully, can food, sew clothes
- Women work outside home; resented by unemployed men
- Many women suffer in silence, ashamed to stand in bread lines

Children Suffer Hardships

- Poor diets, health care lead to serious health problems in children
- Lack of tax revenue leads to shortened school year, school closings
- Teenagers leave home, ride trains in search of work, adventure

Social and Psychological Effects

- 1928–1932, suicide rate rises over 30%
- Admissions to state mental hospitals triple
- People give up health care, college, put off marriage, children
- Stigma of poverty doesn't disappear; financial security becomes goal
- Many show great kindness to strangers
- Develop habit of saving and thriftiness