

# Topeka Jump calls on city leaders to address mental health crisis, affordable housing



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TOPEKA, Kan. (WIBW) - The group known as Topeka Jump are calling on city officials to shift their focus on two issues they claim need extra attention.

More than a thousand people came together at Lee Arena to bring awareness to what they say are two growing issues in the city, a shortage of mental health resources and a lack of safe and affordable housing.

Topeka Jump's Annual Action Assembly was a community-wide conversation, among 30 different local congregations.

"All from different denominations and different backgrounds," said Raymond Berry. "A diverse group of people that have come together and that's what makes us unique."

Together the group members told city leaders that housing and mental health care issues require new plans and policies.

"We're looking to expand our resources for people who are in a mental health crisis because many times when they are in a mental health situation they end up in jail," said Berry. "We're trying to get some funding and get some bids available that can go to people in those types of crises."

"There are children that are dying, there are adults that are dying, I almost died, I tried to kill myself a month ago," said Staton Montoya, A Topeka resident. "I am struggling to get adequate health care and that shouldn't be the case, everyone deserves a chance to thrive."

Topeka Jump hopes the size of the crowd draws attention to the issues they all want to be addressed.

"We know that the positions that we take are in the best interest of Topeka and will be helpful to Topeka for it to become the place it needs to be," said Anton Ahrens, co-chair of Topeka Jump.

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