

2013 Santa Clara County

HOMELESS

P O I N T - I N - T I M E

CENSUS & SURVEY COMPREHENSIVE REPORT



Report Produced by Applied Survey Research
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SERVICE PROVIDERS

Asian Americans for Community Involvement ▪ Bill Wilson Center ▪ City Team International ▪ Community Services Agency ▪ Community Solutions ▪ Community Technology Alliance ▪ Downtown Streets Team ▪ EHC Lifebuilders ▪ Family Supportive Housing ▪ InnVision Shelter Network ▪ Next Door Solutions to Domestic Violence ▪ Salvation Army ▪ Santa Clara County Mental Health Department ▪ South County Housing ▪ Support Network for Battered Women ▪ Unity Care ▪ Valley Homeless Health Care Program ▪ West Valley Community Services

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Introduction

Close to two million people experience homelessness in the United States each year.¹ For most, this is caused by the gap between income and the cost of housing. Yet for many, health conditions, mental health, substance abuse, trauma, and lack of social supports also prevent them from obtaining permanent housing.

Every two years, communities across the United States conduct comprehensive counts of their homeless population during the last 10 days of January in order to gain a better understanding of the individuals who are currently experiencing homelessness, and to apply for federal funding for homeless programs.

All jurisdictions receiving federal funding to provide housing and services for homeless individuals and families are required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to conduct a Point-in-Time Count of homeless persons. The biennial Point-in-Time Count must include all unsheltered and sheltered homeless persons in emergency shelters and transitional housing facilities on the date of the count.

The data collected through Point-in-Time Counts across the United States help the federal government to better understand the nature and extent of homelessness nationwide. All jurisdictions report the findings of their Point-in-Time Count in their annual funding application to HUD. Santa Clara County was awarded \$9.9 million in renewed federal funding for homeless services in 2013. This is a critical source of homeless services funding for the county.

Project Overview and Goals

Santa Clara County partnered with Applied Survey Research (ASR) to conduct the 2013 Santa Clara County Census and Survey. Together, they identified four key project goals:

- » To preserve current federal funding for homeless services and to enhance the ability to raise new funds;
- » To improve the ability of policy makers and service providers to plan and implement services that meet the needs of the local homeless population;
- » To measure changes in the numbers and characteristics of the homeless population since the 2011 Santa Clara County Homeless Census and Survey, and to track progress toward ending homelessness; and
- » To assess the status of specific subpopulations including veterans, families, unaccompanied children and youth, and those who are chronically homeless.

Federal Definition of Homelessness

In this study, HUD's definition of homelessness for Point-in-Time counts was used. The definition includes individuals and families:

- » living in a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangement, or
- » with a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or camping ground.²

It does not include individuals or persons living in families who were living in “double ups,” hotels/motels, or an institutional setting.

Primary Components of the Study

The Santa Clara County Census and Survey had four primary components:

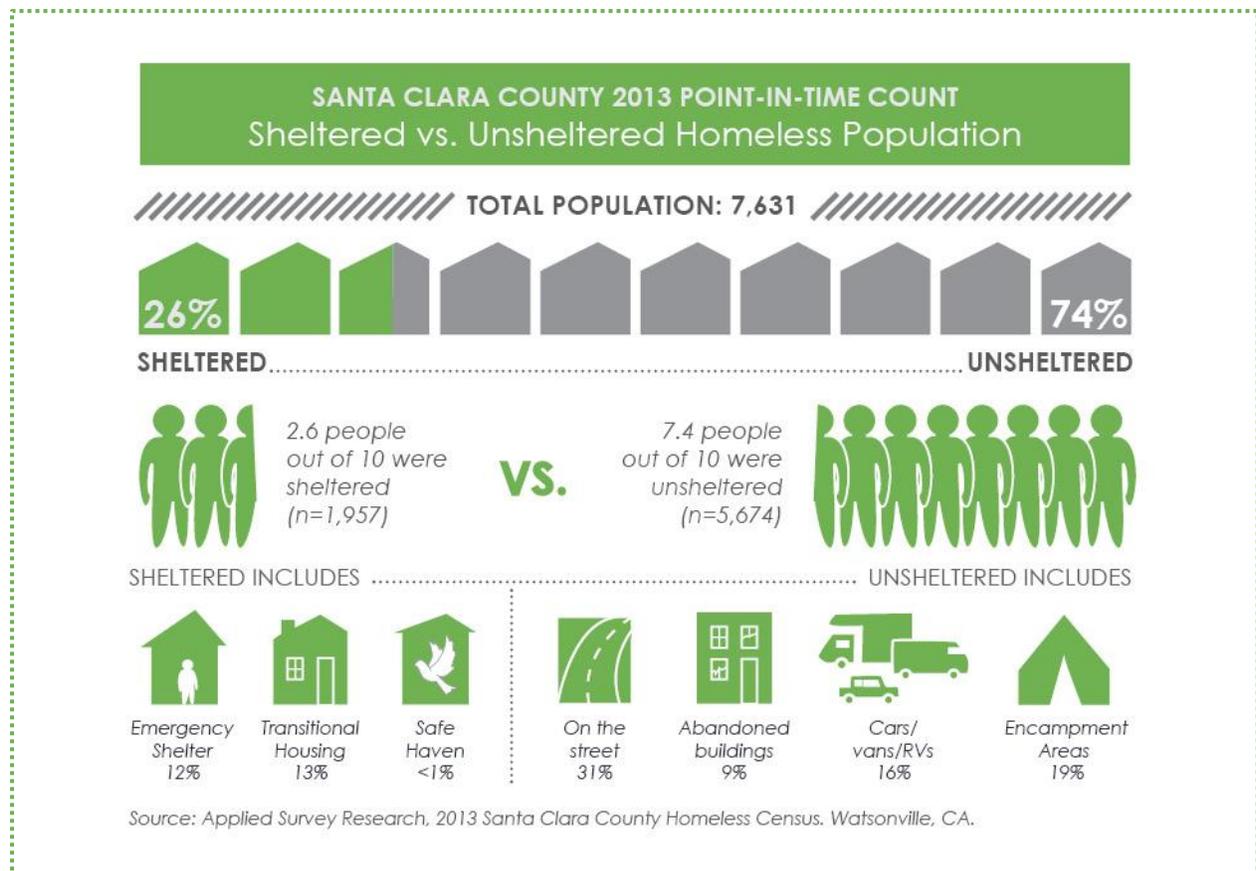
1. A Point-in-Time enumeration of unsheltered homeless individuals and families (those sleeping outdoors, on the street, in parks or vehicles, etc.);
2. A targeted Point-in-Time enumeration of unsheltered unaccompanied homeless children and youth;
3. A Point-in-Time count of homeless individuals and families who have temporary shelter, including those staying in an emergency shelter, transitional housing, or using hotel/motel vouchers; and
4. A qualitative survey of a representative sample of homeless adults and youth, administered in the weeks following the census efforts.

The results of both the census and survey presented in this report provide invaluable data regarding the number and characteristics of homeless individuals and families in Santa Clara County. These data can help guide countywide efforts to mitigate and end homelessness.

Point-in-Time Count

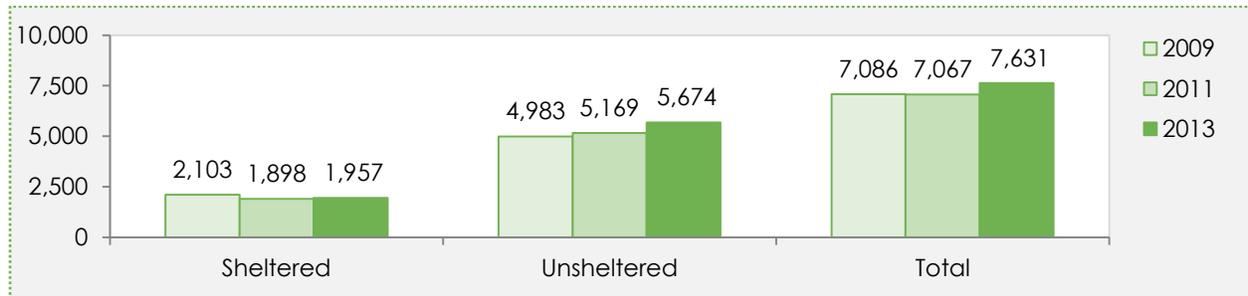
The 2013 Point-in-Time Count included an enumeration of sheltered and unsheltered homeless persons living in San Jose. The street count was conducted on Jan. 29th and 30th, 2013 from approximately daybreak to noon. Teams of homeless guides and volunteers canvassed nearly all 1,290 square miles of Santa Clara County. Individuals in emergency shelters, transitional housing, and domestic violence shelters were counted on the evening of Jan. 29th, 2013.

Number and Characteristics of Homeless Persons in Santa Clara County



A total of 7,631 individuals were counted in Santa Clara County, an increase of 564 (8%) people from 2011. Seventy-four percent of the population was unsheltered, living on the street, in parks, encampments, vehicles, or other places not meant for human habitation.

TOTAL NUMBER OF HOMELESS INDIVIDUALS ENUMERATED DURING THE POINT-IN-TIME HOMELESS CENSUS



Note: Changes in the shelter count may reflect changes in shelter designations and listed shelters rather than capacity or usage.

The majority (77%) of those counted in the 2013 Point-in-Time Count were single individuals over the age of 25. The age distribution of those experiencing homelessness showed 9% of the population were children under the age of 18, 14% were transition age youth (TAY) ages 18-24 years old and 77% were adults age 25 and older.

AGE DISTRIBUTION (2013)



Persons in families comprised 14% of overall homeless population. Ninety-five percent (95%) of those in families were sheltered and they accounted for 52% of the sheltered population.³

HOMELESS CENSUS RESULTS BY HOUSEHOLD TYPE & AGE GROUP (2013)

	Children under 18	Adults 18-24	Adults 25+	Total
Sheltered	509	179	1,269	1,957
Persons in family households	489	94	428	1,011
Persons in non-family households	20	85	841	946
Unsheltered	214	884	4,576	5,674
Persons in family households	31	11	14	56
Persons in non-family households	183	873	4,562	5,618
Total	723	1,063	5,845	7,631
Percent	9%	14%	77%	100%

Total Number of Unsheltered and Sheltered Homeless Persons, by Jurisdiction

As in previous years, the 2013 Santa Clara County Homeless Census collected data on the geographic distribution of sheltered and unsheltered persons in Santa Clara County. This data allows for the assessment of program needs addressing homelessness at both the City and County levels.

Between 2011 and 2013, a number of changes were made to shelter program designations, these changes were seen in the number of persons counted in each community's shelter count. The City of San Jose saw the greatest increase in unsheltered persons, while Gilroy and San Martin saw the greatest decreases. The cities of Mountain View, Sunnyvale and Santa Clara also saw moderate increases in their unsheltered population between 2011 and 2013.

HOMELESS CENSUS POPULATION BY JURISDICTION

Jurisdiction	Unsheltered			Sheltered			Total		
	'11	'13	Net Change	'11	'13	Net Change	'11	'13	Net Change
Total Incorporated	4,283	4,944	661	1,772	1,816	44	6,055	6,760	705
City of Campbell	103	91	-12	0	0	0	103	91	-12
City of Cupertino	34	92	58	15	20	5	49	112	63
City of Gilroy	265	125	-140	255	254	-1	520	379	-141
City of Los Altos	5	4	-1	0	0	0	5	4	-1
Town of Los Altos Hills	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	2	2
City of Los Gatos	18	11	-7	0	0	0	18	11	-7
City of Milpitas	139	95	-44	0	0	0	139	95	-44
City of Monte Sereno	11	1	-10	0	0	0	11	1	-10
City of Morgan Hill	176	61	-115	35	0	-35	211	61	-150
City of Mountain View	17	136	119	20	3	-17	37	139	102
City of Palo Alto	106	145	39	45	12	-33	151	157	6
City of San Jose	3,057	3,660	603	977	1,110	133	4,034	4,770	736
City of Santa Clara	132	203	71	264	275	11	396	478	82
City of Saratoga	7	35	28	0	0	0	7	35	28
City of Sunnyvale	213	283	70	161	142	-19	374	425	51
Total Unincorporated	886	730	-156	99	106	7	985	836	-149
San Martin	170	53	-117	99	106	7	269	159	-110
Other	716	677	-39	0	0	0	716	677	-39
Confidential Locations	NA	NA	NA	27	35	8	27	35	8
Total	5,169	5,674	505	1,898	1,957	59	7,067	7,631	564

Note: Changes in the shelter count may reflect changes in shelter designations and listed shelters rather than capacity or usage.

Annual Estimates of Homelessness in Santa Clara County

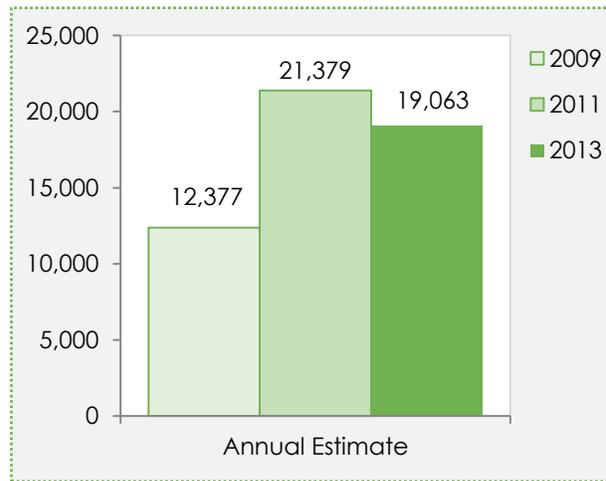
A Point-in-Time Count is a snapshot of the community; however it may not adequately reflect the number of people experiencing homelessness over the course of an entire year.

Annual Estimation

The Point-in-Time Count along with survey data can be used to estimate the number of people experiencing homelessness annually. This estimate uses data from survey respondents to determine the number of people entering and exiting homelessness throughout the year. This produced an annual estimate of 19,063 people experiencing homelessness in Santa Clara County in 2013.

While the number of individuals counted in the Point-in-Time Count increased between 2011 and 2013, the annual estimated decrease by 11%. This decrease was largely due the number of survey respondents who reported extended periods of homelessness in 2013.

POINT-IN-TIME COUNT AND ANNUAL ESTIMATE



Note: The 2009 and 2011 annual estimates were updated in 2013. For more information on the annual estimates please see Appendix I.

Annual Service Usage

The Santa Clara County Collaborative uses a shared database, the Help Management Information System (HMIS), to collect information on those who are currently homeless or at-risk of becoming homeless. HUD has mandated CoCs use an HMIS database to measure outcomes of HUD-funded programs and produce an unduplicated count of people experiencing homelessness. Data from January to December 2012 show nearly 80,000 people were served by homeless service providers in Santa Clara County, and nearly 29,000 of those were literally homeless at the time of service.

UNDUPLICATED COUNT OF PERSONS SERVED BY HMIS PARTNER AGENCIES (2012)



Community Technology Alliance. (2013). HMIS-SCC Quarterly Community Wide Report 2012. Retrieved from <http://collabsc.org>

Homeless Survey Findings

This section provides an overview of the findings generated from the homeless survey in Santa Clara County. Surveys were administered to individuals experiencing homelessness after the completion of the 2013 Point-in-Time Count, between Feb. 1st and March 19th, 2013. The survey effort resulted in 856 complete and unique surveys.⁴ In an effort to mitigate sample bias, and faithfully represent the overall population experiencing homelessness in the County, surveyors were recruited from multiple organizations and areas. Efforts were made to target respondents based on living accommodation, age, and geographic location.

The core organizational plan for the 2013 Homeless Census and Survey is described by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) as a “blitz count”, followed by an in-person randomized survey representative of the population. The survey sample is then used to profile and estimate the condition and characteristics of the county’s homeless population and subpopulations for the purposes of HUD reporting and local service delivery and strategic planning. The results of the “blitz” census, combined with the survey, are used to provide estimates of the number of people affected by a given experience, while survey percentages are the foundational data elements for data discussed in the following section of the report.

The following table is a brief overview of census population and the survey population.

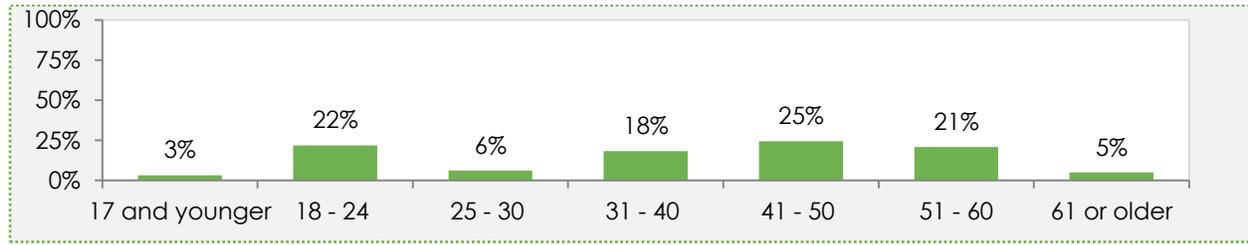
	Census Population	Survey Population
<i>24 and younger</i>	14%	25%
<i>Families</i>	14%	8%
<i>Sheltered</i>	26%	33%
Total Population	7,631	856

Survey Demographics

Age

Outreach to unaccompanied children and youth resulted in 25% of survey respondents being under the age of 25. Twenty-four percent of survey respondents were between the ages of 25-40, 25% were 41-50, and 26% were 51 and older.

SURVEY RESPONDENTS' AGE, 2013



2013 n: 836

Gender and Sexual Orientation

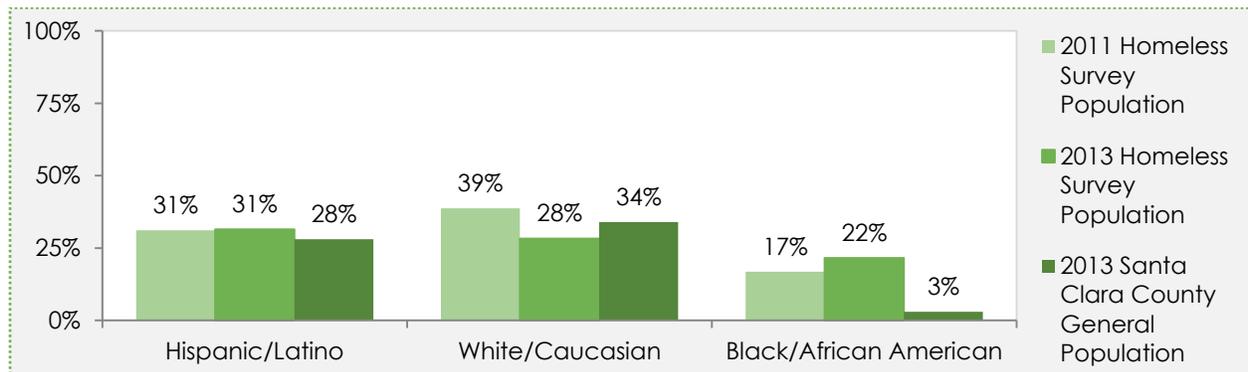
More than two-thirds of survey respondents identified as male (67%), while almost one-third (31%) identified as female and 2% as transgender, similar to previous years.

Respondents were asked to identify their sexual orientation for the first time in 2013 because national research shows a higher prevalence of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning (LGBTQ) individuals, especially youth, who experience homelessness.⁵ In Santa Clara County, 29% of homeless youth respondents under the age of 25 identified as LGBTQ, as did 10% of homeless respondents 25 years or older.

Race/Ethnicity

Thirty-one percent of survey respondents identified as Hispanic/Latino, followed by White/Caucasian (28%), and Black/African American (22%). In comparison to the overall population of Santa Clara County, there was a disproportionately high number of Black/African Americans experiencing homelessness. Three percent of the overall population of Santa Clara County identified as Black/African-American compared to 22% of homeless survey respondents.

RESPONDENTS BY RACE/ETHNICITY (TOP 3 RACES/ETHNICITIES)



2013 N=846 2011 N=1007

Transition from Foster Care

Sixteen percent (16%) of the 2013 homeless survey respondents reported having been in the foster care system. This was slightly higher than in 2011 (13%). Of those who reported having been in the foster care system, 27% had been in the system for one year or less, while 26% had been in the system for 10 years or more.

PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS WHO HAD EVER BEEN IN FOSTER CARE



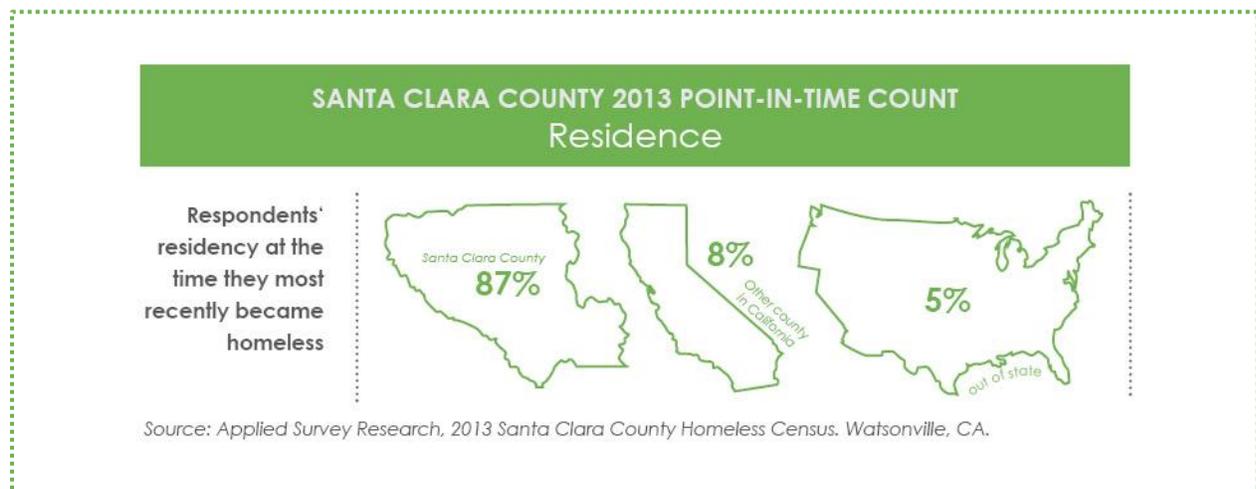
2009 n = 924; 2011 n = 965; 2013 n = 843

Living Accommodations

Where individuals resided prior to experiencing homelessness, and where they have resided since, affects the way they seek services and helps to determine their well-being. Survey respondents were asked about both the geography and environment in which they were living prior to experiencing homelessness.

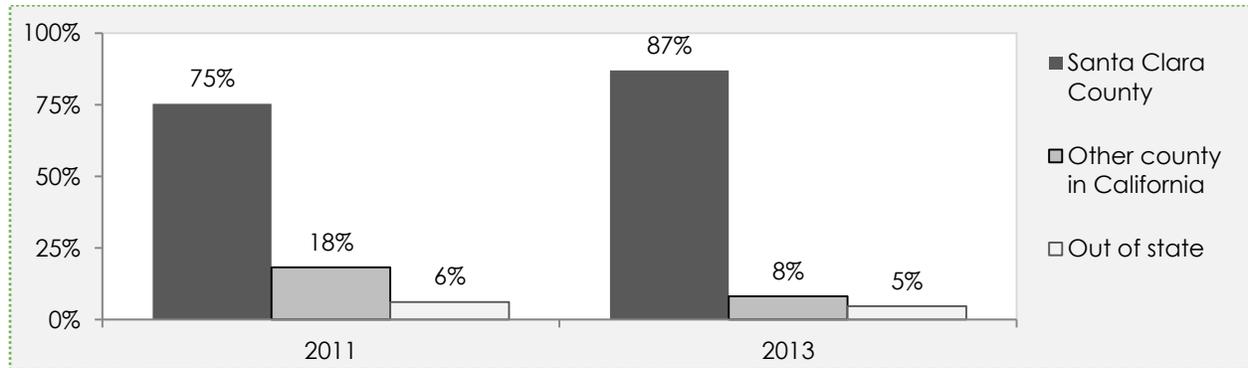
County Residency

Eighty-seven percent (87%) of Santa Clara County survey respondents reported having lived in Santa Clara County at the time they most recently became homeless. Of those living in Santa Clara County at the time they most recently became homeless, over half (54%) had lived in the City of San Jose, followed by Sunnyvale (19%), Gilroy (7%), and Santa Clara (6%).



The percentage of respondents who reported living in Santa Clara County at the time they most recently became homeless increased between 2011 and 2013, from 75% to 87%.

WHERE RESPONDENTS WERE LIVING AT THE TIME THEY MOST RECENTLY BECAME HOMELESS

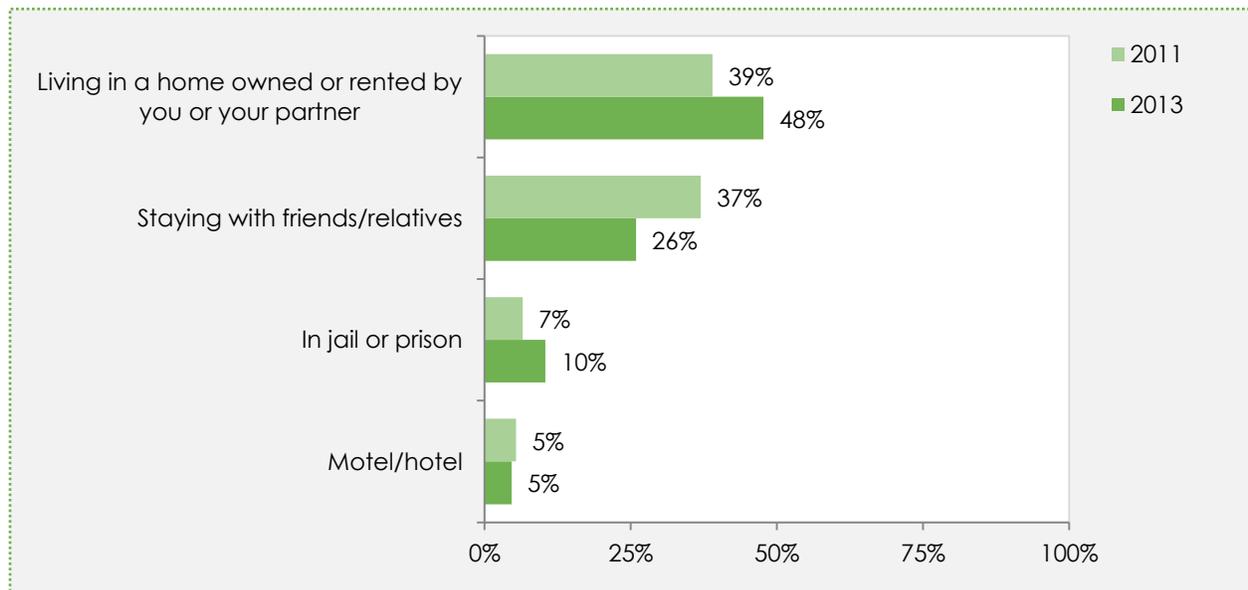


2013 N=826 2011 N=1014

Previous Living Arrangements

Nearly half (48%) of respondents reported that prior to experiencing homelessness they were living in a home that they or their partner owned or rented, slightly higher than in 2011 (39%). Twenty-six percent (26%) of respondents reported staying with friends or family, and 11% reported they were in a jail/prison or a juvenile justice facility prior to becoming homeless.

LIVING ARRANGEMENTS IMMEDIATELY PRIOR TO BECOMING HOMELESS THIS TIME (TOP 4 RESPONSES IN 2013)

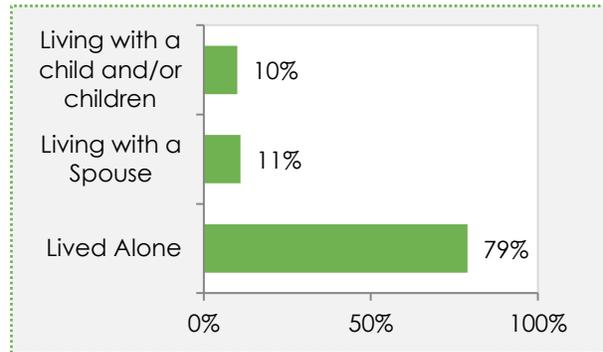


2013 N=811 2011 N=1004

Current Living Arrangements

Seventy-nine percent (79%) of respondents reported living alone in 2013, slightly up from 74% in 2011. Eleven percent of the population reported living with a spouse or significant other and 10% reported living with a child or children.

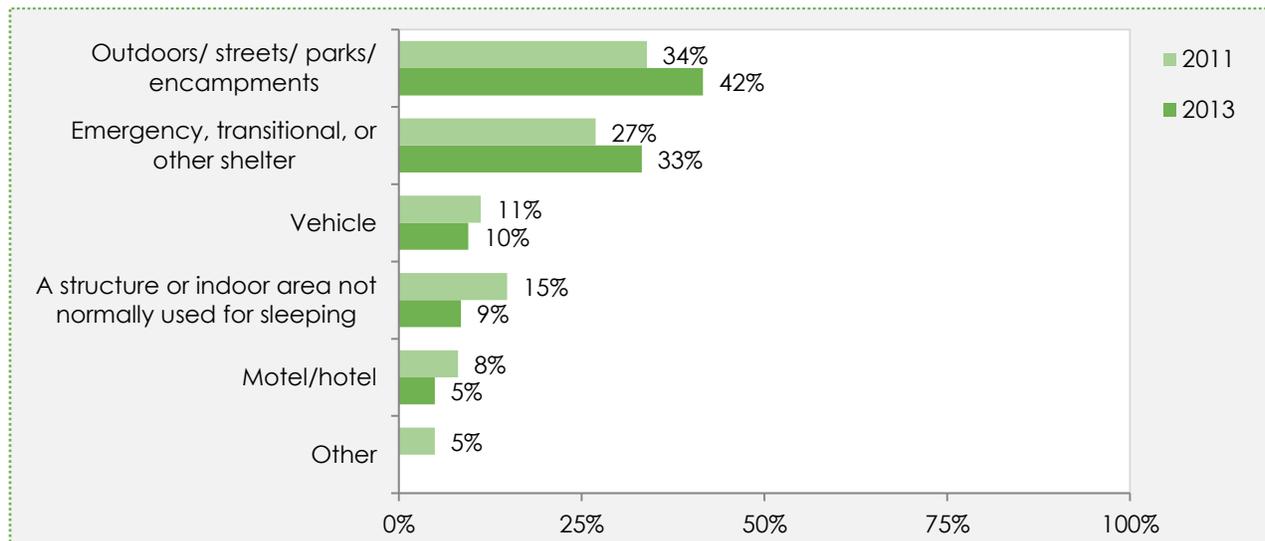
HOUSEHOLD MAKEUP



2013=856

A higher percentage of respondents reported that they usually slept outdoors, on the street, in parks or encampment areas in 2013 – 42% compared to 34% in 2011. Ten percent of survey respondents reported living in vehicles (similar to 2011 at 11%) and 9% lived in an indoor area not meant for sleeping, including transit centers, abandoned buildings, and interior spaces such as foyers, doorways, and hallways (down from 15% in 2011).

WHERE RESPONDENTS USUALLY STAY AT NIGHT



2013 N=850 2011 N=1012

Living in Encampments

Of individuals living in encampments, 79% reported they lived alone, without other family members. It was estimated that average encampment areas included between four or five people living near to one another.

Seventy-five percent (75%) of those living in encampments had been homeless for a year or more, a higher percentage than those who did not live in encampments (54%). Slightly more than two thirds

(74%) of survey respondents who lived in encampments were living in the City of San Jose at the time. Seventy-one percent (71%) of those who lived in encampments had been living in Santa Clara County for 10 or more years.

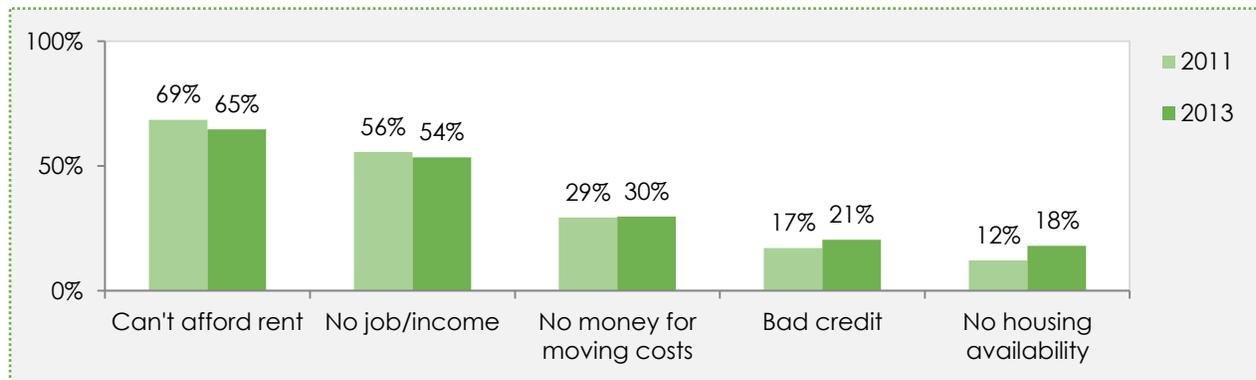
Permanent Housing

A common misperception about individuals experiencing homelessness is that they do not want housing and prefer to live outdoors, also known as homeless by choice. Respondents were asked if they would want affordable permanent housing were it available and 93% said yes.

Obstacles to Obtaining Permanent Housing

The most commonly cited obstacles to obtaining permanent housing were associated with income. Almost two-thirds (65%) of 2013 respondents reported an inability to afford rent, followed by 54% reporting a lack of job or income, and 30% who didn't have the money for moving costs.

CIRCUMSTANCES THAT WERE PREVENTING RESPONDENTS FROM SECURING PERMANENT HOUSING (TOP 5 RESPONSES IN 2013)



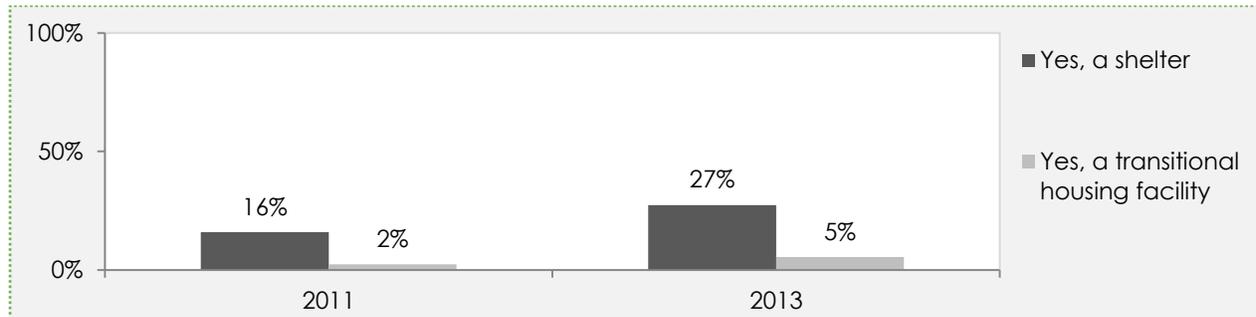
2013 N=774 respondents giving 1,831 responses 2011 N= 999 respondents giving 2,412 responses

Shelter Stays

Access to Shelters

Respondents were asked if they were turned away from a shelter they had tried to stay in during the prior 30 days. Twenty-seven percent reported they were turned away from an emergency shelter and 5% reported being turned away from a transitional housing facility in 2013.

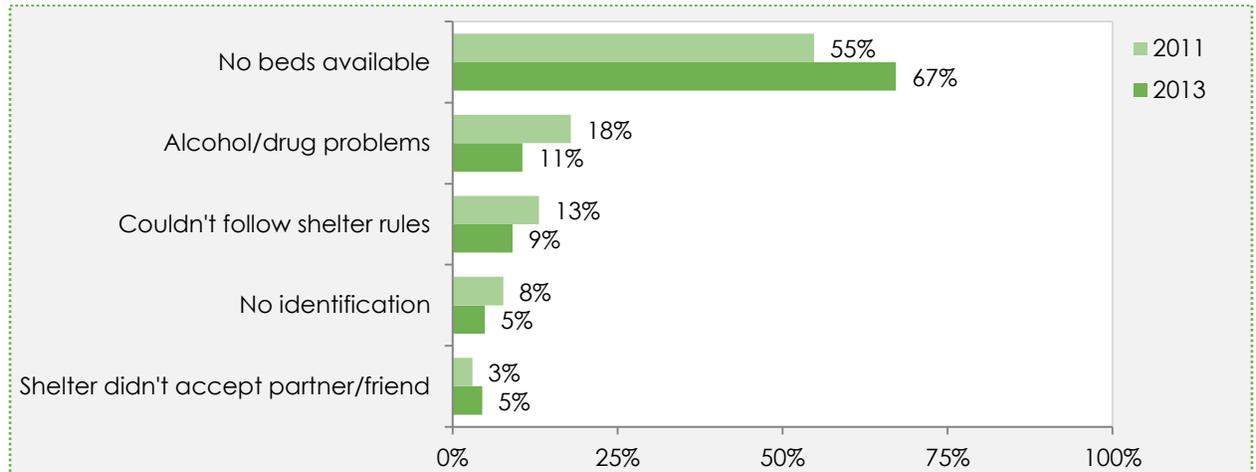
IN THE LAST 30 DAYS, HAVE YOU EVER TRIED TO STAY AT A SHELTER OR TRANSITIONAL HOUSING FACILITY IN SANTA CLARA COUNTY AND BEEN TURNED AWAY?



2013 N=855 2011 N=1,004

Of those who were turned away from a shelter in the last month, the three most frequently reported reasons in 2013 were: no beds available (67%), alcohol or drug problems (11%), and could not follow shelter rules (9%). Compared to 2011, a higher percentage of individuals had been turned away from shelter because there were no available beds (67% as compared to 55% in 2011).

OF RESPONDENTS WHO TRIED TO STAY AT A SHELTER IN THE MONTH PRIOR TO THE SURVEY, REASONS THEY WERE TURNED AWAY (TOP 5 RESPONSES IN 2013)



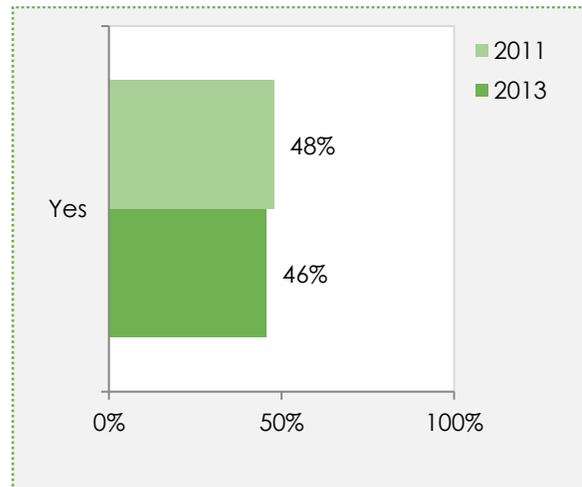
2013 N=265 2011 N=168

Occurrence and Length of Homelessness

Occurrence of Homelessness

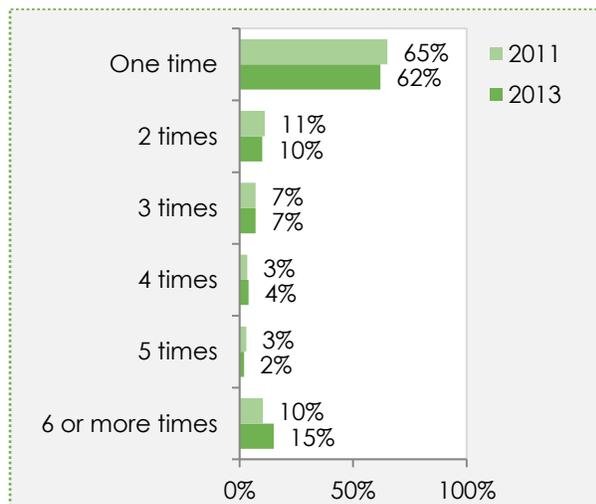
For many, the experience of homelessness is part of a long and recurring history of residential instability. Individuals may fall in and out of homelessness as they develop different subsistence strategies and housing opportunities.⁶ Nearly half (46%) of 2013 survey respondents reported experiencing homelessness for the first time in their lives, yet 21% of 2013 respondents reported that they had experienced six or more episodes of homelessness in the last three years.

IS THIS THE FIRST TIME YOU HAVE BEEN HOMELESS?



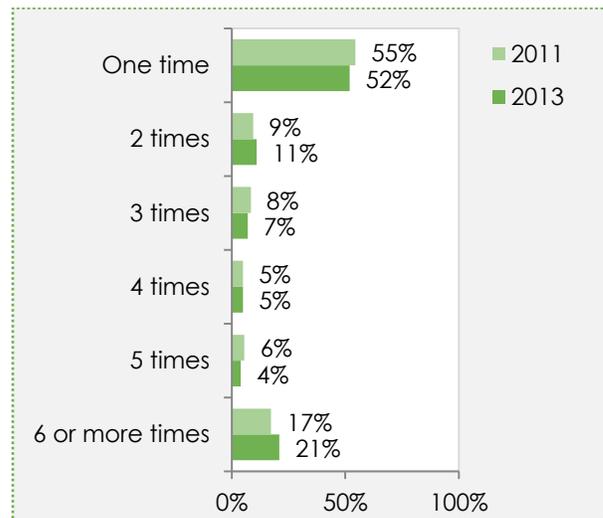
2013 N=855 2011 N=1009

NUMBER OF TIMES RESPONDENTS HAD BEEN HOMELESS IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS, INCLUDING THIS TIME



2013 N=465 2011 N=1009

NUMBER OF TIMES RESPONDENTS HAD BEEN HOMELESS IN THE LAST 3 YEARS, INCLUDING THIS TIME

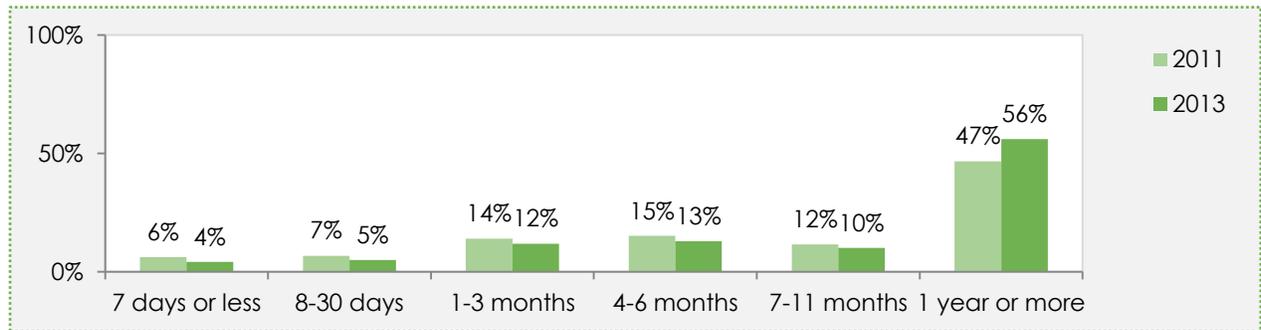


2013 N=465 2011 N=1009

Duration of Homelessness

More than half (56%) of respondents reported they had been without housing for one year or more. Nine percent (9%) reported their current period of homelessness had been one month or less.

LENGTH OF HOMELESSNESS THIS CURRENT TIME (2013)



2013 N=836; 2011 N= 992

Causes of Homelessness

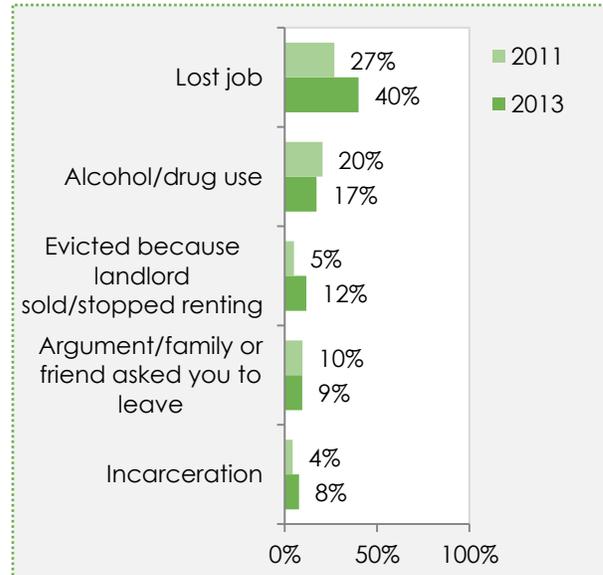
An individual’s experience of homelessness is often the result of multiple and compounding factors at both the individual and societal level. In a struggling economy, many face financial vulnerability to homelessness.⁷ While causal factors of homelessness are complicated, respondents appeared candid in their assessments.

Primary Cause of Homelessness

Survey respondents were asked to identify the primary cause of their homelessness. Forty percent (40%) reported job loss, up from 27% in 2011. Seventeen percent (17%) reported alcohol and drug use as the primary cause, followed by eviction at 12% (up from 5% in 2011).

While it was not one of the top five responses, 8% of survey respondents reported family/domestic violence as the primary cause of their homelessness.

PRIMARY EVENT OR CONDITION THAT LED TO RESPONDENTS’ CURRENT EPISODE OF HOMELESSNESS (TOP 5 RESPONSES IN 2013)



2013 N=818 2011 N=997

Prevention of Homelessness

Respondents were asked to identify services that might have prevented them from experiencing homelessness. The most common responses were related to income; 42% reported the need for employment assistance, and 34% reported rent or mortgage assistance.

Twenty-four percent (24%) reported that mental health services might have prevented their homelessness in 2013.

WHAT MIGHT HAVE PREVENTED YOUR HOMELESSNESS (2013)

	2011	2013
Employment assistance	39%	42%
Rent/mortgage assistance	35%	34%
Mental health services	19%	24%
Alcohol/drug counseling	34%	21%
Legal assistance	15%	15%
Help accessing benefits	16%	14%
Transportation assistance	17%	13%
Case management after leaving hospital/jail/prison/juvenile justice	10%	13%
Health insurance/services	10%	7%

Multiple response question with 995 respondents offering 2,133 responses in 2011 and 822 respondents offering 1563 responses in 2013

Government Assistance, Employment, and Income

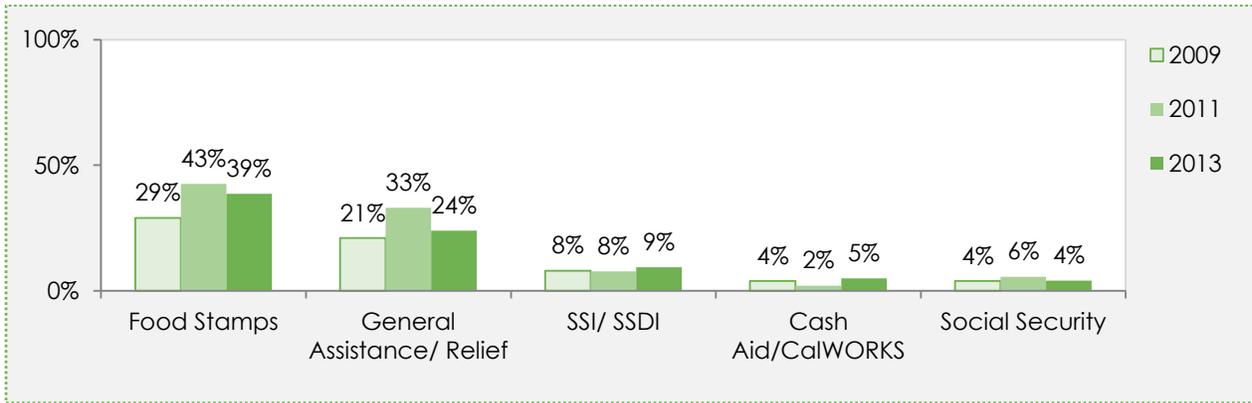
The homeless survey asked questions about income, employment status, and the use of government assistance in order to measure how the recent economy might have impacted individuals experiencing homelessness. The overall economy has improved slightly in the county, as measured by a decrease in the unemployment rate in Santa Clara County from 9.8% in 2011 to 7.5% in 2013. However, this rate represents only those who are unemployed and actively seeking employment. It doesn't represent all joblessness.

Government Assistance

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Federal Poverty Guideline for one person to be eligible for support services and programs is approximately \$11,490 per year in 2013.^{8,9} Sixty-five percent (65%) of respondents reported they were receiving government assistance in 2013. Of those receiving government assistance, the greatest percentage of survey respondents reported receiving CalFresh, WIC, or food stamps (61%), followed by General Assistance (38%), and SSI/SSDI (15%).

The average income from government benefits was \$426 a month. Fifty-three percent (53%) of respondents who reported an income from government benefits reported receiving less than \$250 per month. Only 6% received more than \$1,000 a month.

TYPES OF ASSISTANCE RECEIVED (TOP 5 RESPONSES IN 2013)

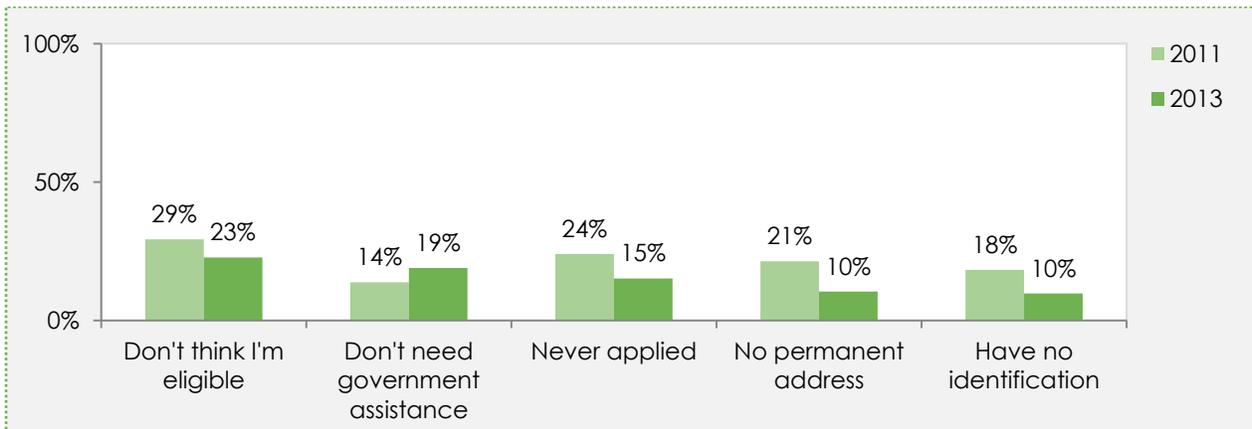


2013 N=811 respondents offering 1004 responses 2011 N=989 respondents offering 1316 responses 2009 N=895 respondents 1142 responses

Reasons for Not Receiving Government Assistance

Of those who reported they were not receiving government assistance, the top two reasons were: they did not think they were eligible (23%) and they did not government need assistance (19%).

REASONS FOR NOT RECEIVING GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE (TOP 5 RESPONSES IN 2013)

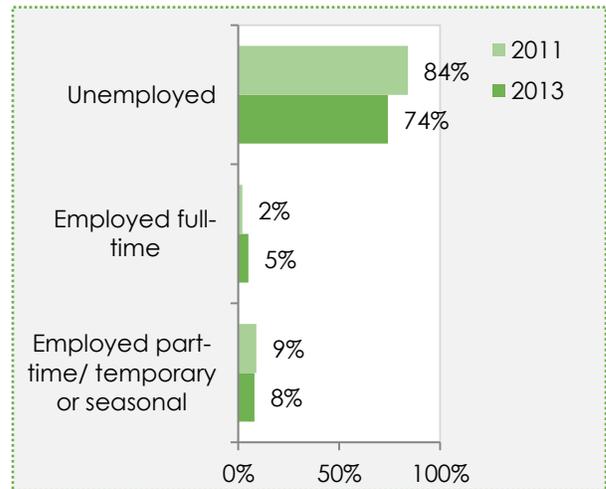


2013 N=289 2011 N=341

Employment Status

Seventy-nine percent (74%) of homeless survey respondents reported being unemployed, down from 84% in 2011. Five percent of survey respondents (5%) were employed full-time; this was an increase from 2% in 2011. In 2013, 5% reported part-time employment and 3% reported seasonal or temporary employment, similar to 2011.

EMPLOYMENT STATUS OF RESPONDENTS



2013 N= 807 2011 N=1005

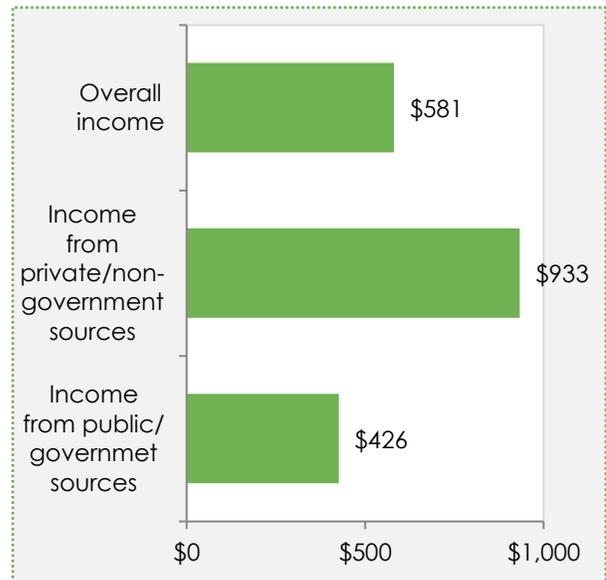
Barriers to Employment

Of those who reported being unemployed in 2013, the top five most commonly cited barriers to obtaining a job included no transportation (34%), the need for education or training (32%), lack of a phone (28%), no permanent address (24%) and alcohol or drug issues (18%).

Income

The average income reported by survey respondents was less than the Federal Poverty Level. The monthly income defined by the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) is \$958, while the average income of those who reported income from non-government source was close (\$933), most respondents did not report private income (86%). The average total monthly income of respondents from all sources was \$581, which was roughly 60% of FPL.

AVERAGE MONTHLY INCOME FROM ALL NON-GOVERNMENT SOURCES



2013 N=520

Panhandling

More than one quarter of respondents (28%) reported panhandling, in 2013. However, those who reported income reported earning an average of \$5.90 per day.

Justice System

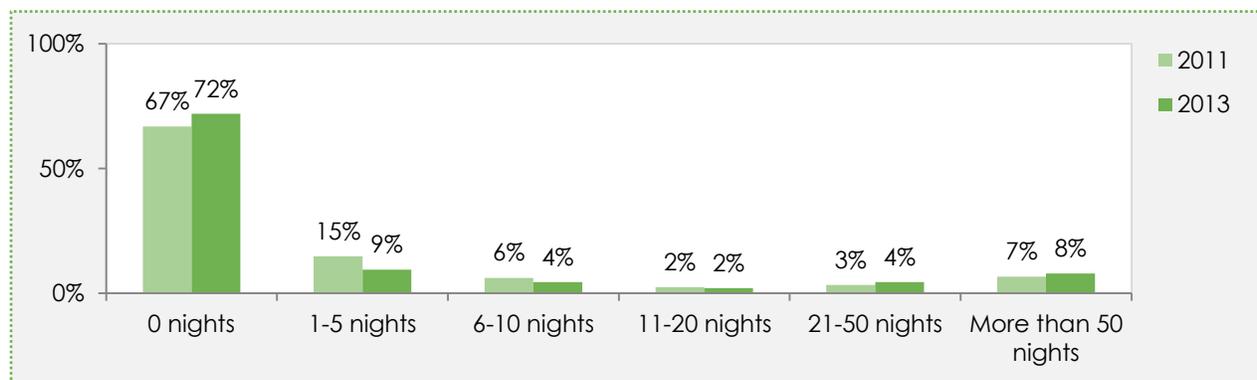
Being released from the criminal justice system can often result in homelessness. Individuals who leave jail or prison face an increased risk of homelessness as well as greater barriers to employment. At the same time, those experiencing homelessness are more vulnerable to incarceration.¹⁰

Incarceration, Probation and Parole

Seventeen percent (17%) of respondents reported they were on probation or parole at the time of the survey, and 22% percent reported they were on probation or parole when they most recently became homeless.

Twenty-eight percent (28%) of homeless survey respondents had spent at least one night in jail or prison in the 12 months prior to the survey. This was lower than in 2011 (33%). Nine percent of survey respondents spent between 1 and 5 nights, and 8% reported they had spent more than 50 nights incarcerated. Six percent (6%) of survey respondents reported being convicted of a 290 (sexual) offense.

NUMBER OF NIGHTS RESPONDENTS REPORTED SPENDING IN JAIL OR PRISON IN THE YEAR PRIOR TO THE SURVEY



2013 N=855 2011 N=963

Health

Without regular access to health care, individuals suffer preventable illness, longer hospitalizations, and a higher rate of premature death. It is estimated that those experiencing homelessness stay four days (or 36%) longer per hospital admission than non-homeless patients.¹¹ A study conducted by the National Health Care for the Homeless found that the average life expectancy for a person without permanent housing was between 42 and 52 years. That's more than 25 years younger than the life expectancy of the average person in the United States.

Access to Medical Care

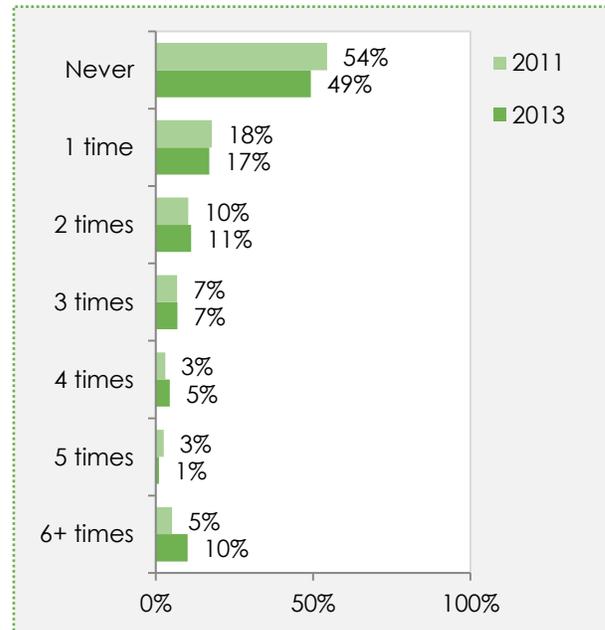
Of those who needed medical care in the past year, more than one-third (39%) went without the care they needed. Twenty-five percent (25%) of survey respondents reported they had not needed health care in the 12 months prior to the survey.

Sources of Care and Emergency Room Use

Forty-two (42%) percent of respondents reported primarily accessing care through the emergency room, followed by 19% using community clinics, 9% using Urgent Care, and 5% accessing care through a Department of Veterans Affairs facility.

Many respondents reported an ER visit. More than half (51%) reported they had used the ER in the year prior to the survey; 10% reported 6 or more visits.

NUMBER OF TIMES RESPONDENTS HAD USED THE EMERGENCY ROOM FOR ANY TREATMENT IN THE YEAR PRIOR TO THE SURVEY

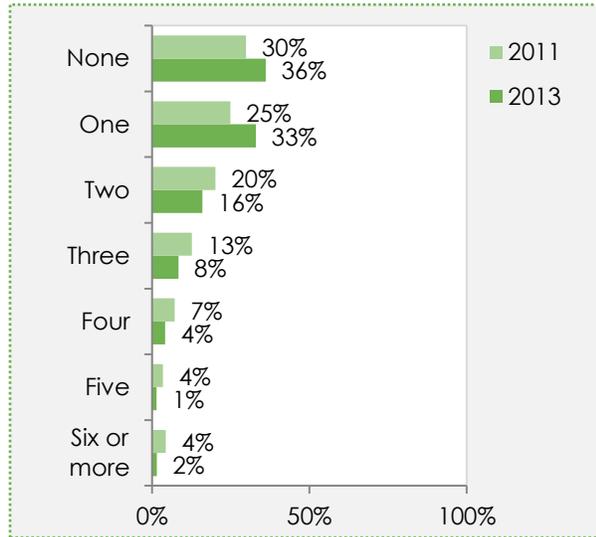


2013 N=734 2011 N=972

Disabling Conditions

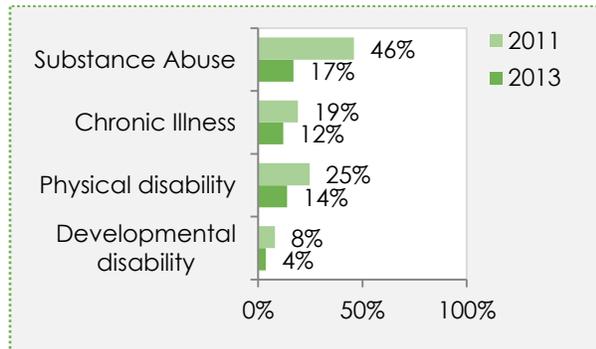
Almost two out of three respondents (64%) reported one or multiple disabling conditions. These conditions included chronic physical illness, physical or mental disabilities, chronic substance abuse and severe mental health conditions. Forty-four percent (44%) of survey respondents reported a disabling condition limited their ability to get or keep a job in 2013.

NUMBER OF DISABLING CONDITIONS AMONG ALL HOMELESS RESPONDENTS



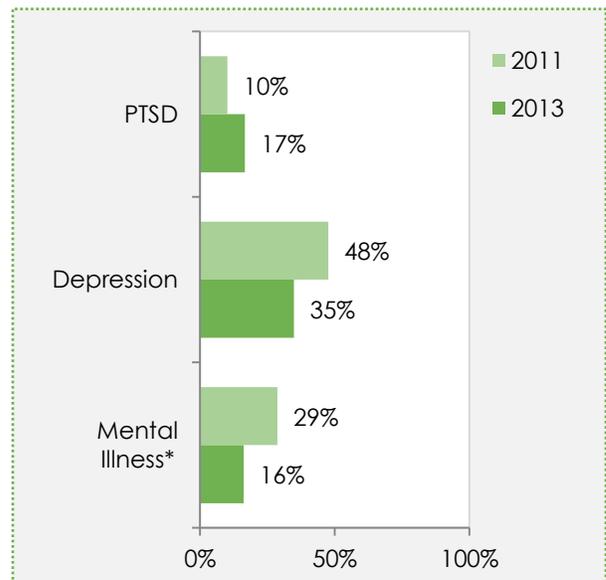
2013 N=807 2011 N=1009

RESPONDENTS WHO WERE CURRENTLY EXPERIENCING A PHYSICAL OR DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITY, CHRONIC ILLNESS OR SUBSTANCE ABUSE



2013 N=807 2011 N=967

PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS WHO WERE CURRENTLY EXPERIENCING DEPRESSION, PTSD, OR ANOTHER FORM OF MENTAL ILLNESS



2013 N=807 2011 N=967

Note: Mental illness as presented in this chart does not include depression or PTSD

Domestic/Partner Violence or Abuse

Ten percent (9%) of female and 5% of male survey respondents were currently experiencing domestic/family violence. Although domestic violence is consistently underreported, these percentages for the homeless survey respondents are much higher than the general U.S. population, where 1.8% of women reported being raped, physically assaulted, or stalked in the previous 12 months.¹²

Homeless Subpopulations

In 2010, the federal government identified three primary subpopulations to focus on in order to move towards the goal of ending homelessness. The subpopulations in the federal plan known as Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness included the 1) chronically homeless, 2) veterans, and 3) families. Since that time, the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) released an amendment to Opening Doors, which focuses on preventing and ending youth homelessness. The 2013 Santa Clara County Homeless Census and Survey emphasize gathering data for each of these HUD defined subpopulations. A total of 856 surveys were conducted in the county, and of these 296 were with chronically homeless individuals, 89 with homeless veterans, 62 with individuals in homeless families, and 210 with unaccompanied children and transition age youth.

Chronic Homelessness



The mortality rate for those experiencing chronic homelessness is four to nine times higher than the general population. The public costs incurred by those experiencing extended periods of homelessness include emergency room visits, interactions with law enforcement, incarceration, and regular access to existing poverty and homeless services.¹⁸

The USICH reported that there were 99,894 chronically homeless persons in the United States in 2012, or 16% of the national homeless population was chronically homeless in 2012.¹⁹ The federal strategic plan to end homelessness includes a plan to end chronic homelessness by 2015 by focusing on permanent supportive housing for those with the greatest needs and barriers to housing stability.

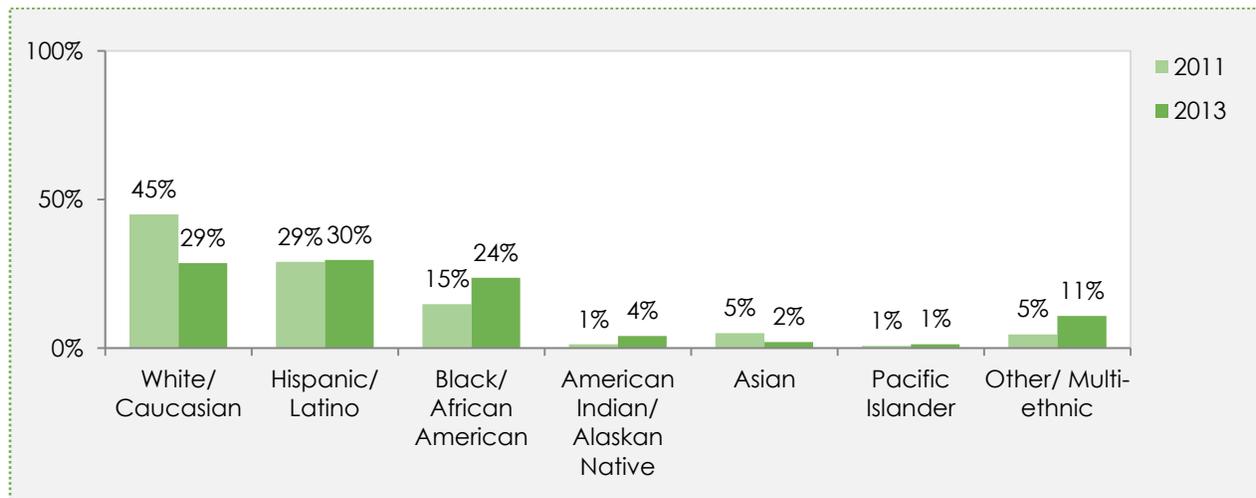
Prevalence of Chronic Homelessness

Chronically homeless individuals represented 33% of the homeless population in Santa Clara County in 2013. There were 2,509 individuals and 9 persons in families experiencing chronic homelessness in 2013, a very slight decrease from 2,520 in 2011.

Demographics of Chronically Homelessness Individuals

Of those individuals experiencing chronic homelessness in 2013, 90% were unsheltered. A total of 296 surveys were conducted with individuals who were experiencing chronic homelessness. There was a higher percentage of men (76%) who were chronically homeless as compared to the non-chronic homeless population (63%). They were also more prone to be over the age of 40 (65%) compared to 43% of the non-chronic population.

CHRONICALLY HOMELESS POPULATION BY ETHNICITY



2013 N=297 2011 N=414

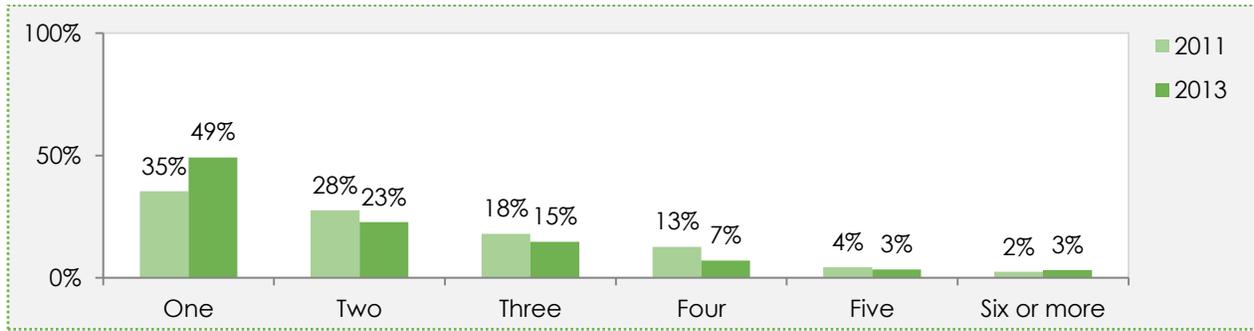
Disabling Conditions

By definition, those who are chronically homeless have a disabling condition. However, about half (51%) of chronically homeless survey respondents reported experiencing two or more disabling conditions in 2013.

The biggest disparity amongst those who had disabling conditions was between the 54% of individuals experiencing chronic homelessness who suffered from chronic depression compared to the 24% of non-chronically homeless.

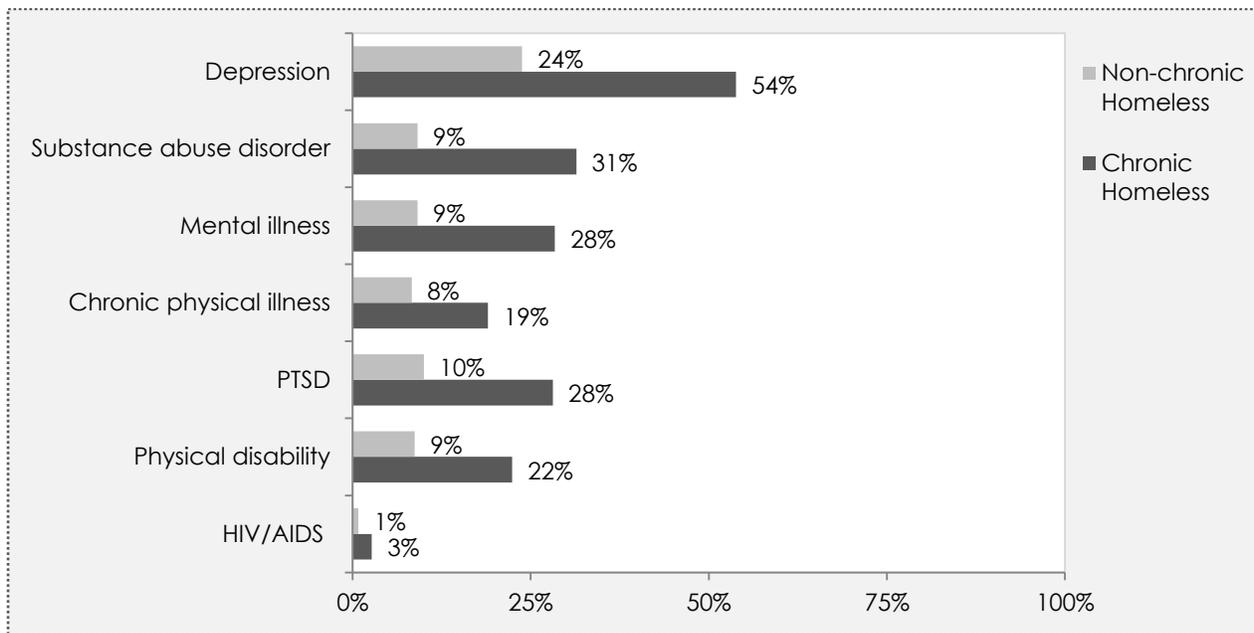
Thirty-seven percent (37%) of individuals experiencing chronic homelessness said that mental health services would have helped prevent them from becoming homeless and 26% said drug and alcohol counseling would have done the same. When asked if their disabling conditions prevented them from getting a job, 54% reported it had; much higher than the 21% of non-chronic individuals.

PERCENTAGE OF CHRONICALLY HOMELESS RESPONDENTS WHO REPORTED ONE OR MORE DISABLING CONDITIONS



2013 N=299 2011 N=414

CHRONICALLY HOMELESS RESPONDENTS EXPERIENCING PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS



Chronic N=299 Non Chronic N=450

Emergency Room Use

About half (49%) of chronically homeless survey respondents reported using the emergency room as their usual source of care, as compared to 39% for the non-chronic population. Sixty-one percent of chronically homeless survey respondents reported having used the emergency room one or more times in the 12 months, as compared to 45% of the non-chronic population.

Primary Cause of Homelessness for the Chronically Homeless

Individuals experiencing chronic homelessness most commonly cited job loss (36%) as the primary cause of their homelessness, followed by alcohol and drug abuse (23%), illness or medical problem (10%), and eviction (10%). Only 14% of non-chronically homeless individuals reported alcohol and drug abuse as the primary cause of their homelessness.

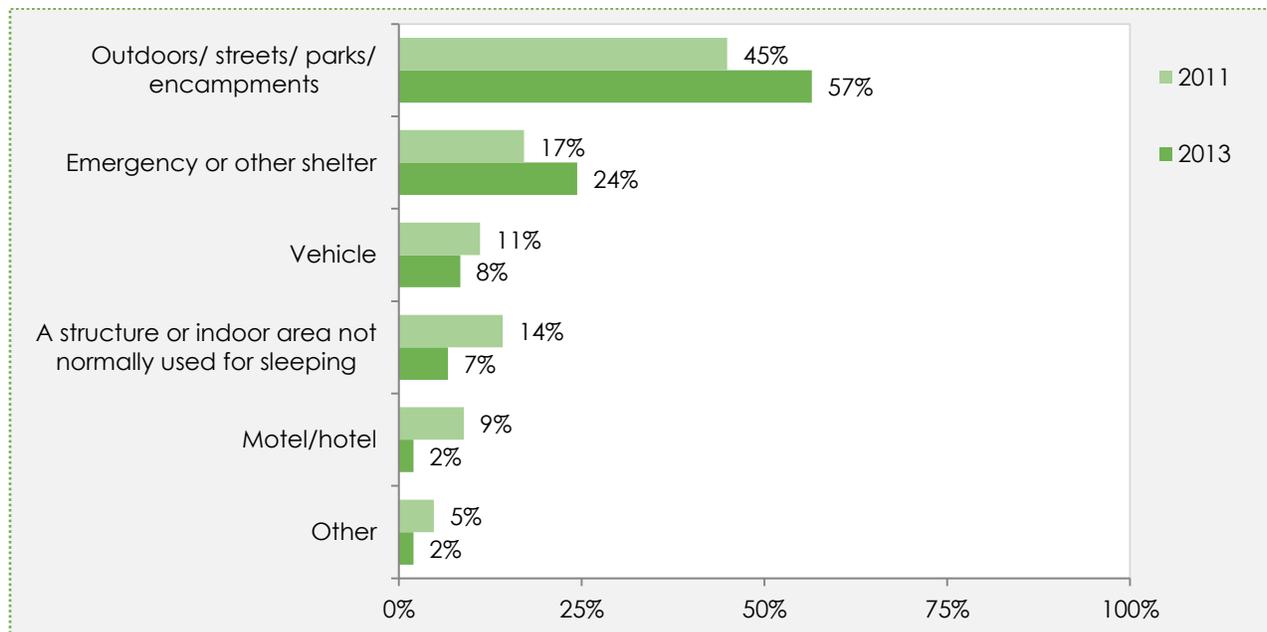
Government Assistance and Local Support Services for the Chronically Homeless

Thirty two percent (32%) of individuals experiencing chronic homelessness reported receiving no form of government assistance, similar to the non-chronic population. Of those receiving government assistance, 55% reported receiving \$200 or less.

Usual Sleeping Places of the Chronically Homeless

When looking at the usual sleeping places of those experiencing chronic homelessness over time, there was an increase from 35% sleeping outdoors/on the streets/in parks/and encampments in 2009, to 45% in 2011, and 57% in 2013.

WHERE RESPONDENTS USUALLY STAY AT NIGHT (CHRONICALLY HOMELESS INDIVIDUALS)



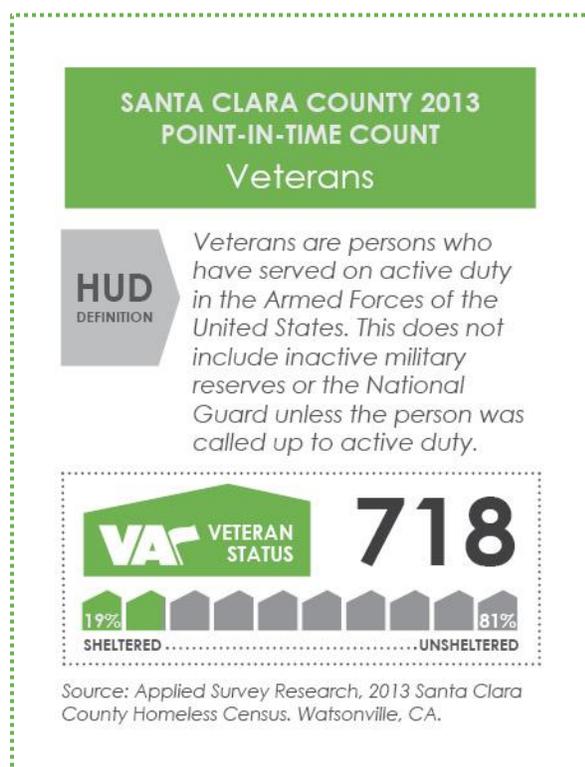
2013 N=299 2011 N=414

County Efforts to Solve Chronic Homelessness

Housing 1000 is a local campaign in Santa Clara County to house 1,000 chronically homeless men and women by 2013. The goal is to prioritize case management services for those people that have been on the streets the longest, are suffering from chronic health issues and are vulnerable to dying on the streets. Case managers work with Housing 1000 clients to develop a housing plan.

To date, nearly 3,000 surveys have been conducted in Santa Clara County. In 2013, 29% of all Santa Clara County Homeless Survey respondents, and 39% of chronically homeless respondents, reported they had been interviewed by Housing 1000.

Veteran Status



There are a number of factors that put U.S. veterans at an increased risk for homelessness. Veterans have higher rates of Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), traumatic brain injury, sexual assault and substance abuse. Veterans experiencing homelessness are more likely to live on the street than in shelters and often remain on the street for extended periods of time.¹³

The U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness and the Department of Veterans Affairs reported there were 62,619 homeless veterans nationally in 2012; or 13% of all homeless adults are veterans.¹⁴ The federal strategic plan to end homelessness includes a plan to end veteran homelessness by 2015 by increasing access to housing and health services.

Number of Homeless Veterans

During the 2013 Point-in-Time count in Santa Clara County, there were 718 veterans experiencing homelessness, more than in 2011 (667 veterans), but fewer than in 2009 with 866 veterans.

Demographics of Homeless Veterans

White or Caucasian veterans experiencing homelessness made up 43% of the survey population, while 21% identified themselves as Black/African-American, and 16% as Hispanic/Latino. There were 61 female veterans experiencing homelessness identified in the 2013 Point-in-Time count, 8% of the homeless veteran population. Fifty-eight percent (58%) of homeless veteran survey respondents were over the age of 50, a much higher percentage than the non-veteran population with 23% over the age of 50.

Usual Sleeping Places, Prior Homelessness

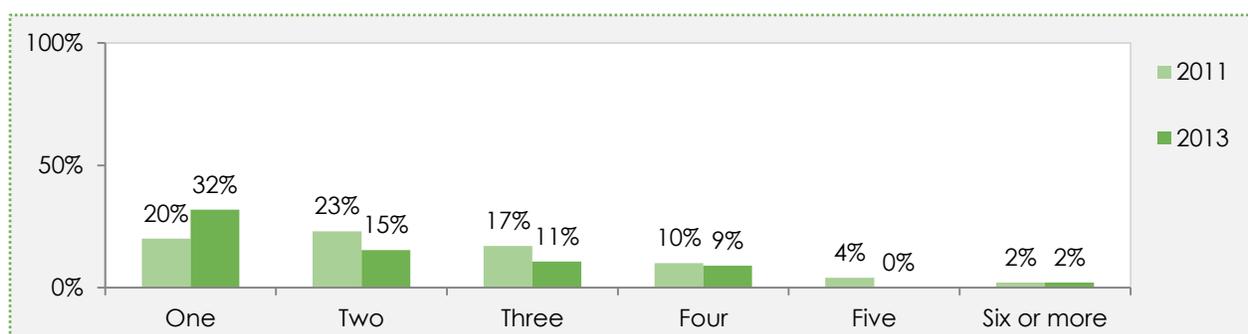
Eighty-four percent (84%) of veterans experiencing homelessness lived alone. When asked where they slept at night, 39% reported sleeping outdoors, on the streets or in parks, and in encampments, 35% slept in some form of public shelter and 13% slept in a vehicle.

Forty-two percent (42%) of veterans reported experiencing homelessness for the first time in 2013. Of those who had been homeless before, 71% had been homeless for more than a year and half (52%) reported being homeless for at least 4 times in the 3 years prior to the survey.

Disabling Conditions among Homeless Veterans

More than two-thirds (69%) of homeless veteran respondents were experiencing one or more disabling conditions including PTSD (33%), depression (31%), physical disabilities (21%), and other mental illnesses (18%). Forty-four percent (44%) reported they had been unable to receive needed health care since becoming homeless. This was slightly higher than the non-veteran homeless population (40%).

NUMBER OF DISABLING CONDITIONS AMONG HOMELESS VETERAN RESPONDENTS



2013 N=85 2011 N=100

Primary Cause of Homelessness for Veterans

When asked about the primary cause of their homelessness, the largest percentage of homeless veteran survey respondents cited the loss of a job (38%), followed by alcohol or drug use (19%). When asked what might have prevented their homelessness, 39% of respondents reported employment assistance, followed by rent or mortgage assistance (28%), and mental health services (24%).

Government Assistance for Homeless Veterans

All survey respondents were asked if they received any government assistance. Thirty-six percent (36%) of homeless veteran respondents said they were receiving no assistance. Twenty-four percent (24%) said they were receiving food stamps, 19% were receiving General Assistance, and 13% were receiving Veterans Disability Compensation.

Veterans were asked whether they received specific services only for veterans; the three most commonly used services were health services (71%), mental health services (33%), and drop-in centers (26%).

Homeless Families with Children



Homelessness among families most often affects families with younger children. The risk of homelessness is highest among families with children under the age of 6.¹⁵ Children in families experiencing homelessness have an increased incidence of illness and are more likely to have emotional and behavioral problems than children with consistent living accommodations.¹⁶

While many homeless subpopulations have decreased in recent years, the number of persons in families experiencing homelessness has increased.¹⁷ It was estimated that there were more than 239,403 persons in families experiencing homelessness nationally, in 2012.¹⁸

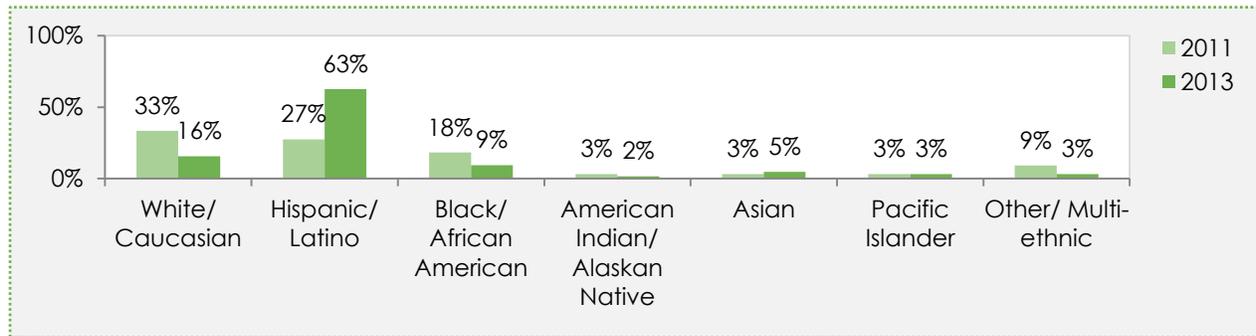
Number of Homeless Families with Children

According to the 2013 Point-in-Time count, there were 1,067 homeless individuals living in 349 families with at least on child under the age of 18 in Santa Clara County. Of those individuals in families, 520 (49%) were children under the age of 18.

Demographics of Homeless Families with Children

There were 62 surveys conducted with individuals in homeless families in the county. A majority (64%) of survey respondents in families reported they were between the ages of 31 and 50. Sixty-three percent (63%) were of Hispanic/Latino background, much higher than the 29% of survey respondents who were not in families.

RESPONDENTS WITH CHILDREN BY ETHNICITY



2013 N=64 2011 N=100

County of Residency

Ninety-one percent (91%) of homeless respondents in families reported living in Santa Clara County at the time that they became homeless, most of them in San Jose. Seventy percent (70%) of respondents had lived in the County for ten years or more. For over half of homeless respondents with families (56%), this was their first time experiencing homeless. Thirty-four percent (34%) of family respondents had been homeless for a year or more.

Government Assistance and Employment

Forty-six percent (46%) of homeless family respondents were unemployed. However, 33% indicated that they were not receiving any form of government assistance. The two most commonly used forms of assistance were food stamps (53%) and cash aid/CalWorks/TANF (31%). Of those receiving assistance, the total value for 41% of homeless family respondents receiving government assistance was \$500 or less a month, much lower than the 70% of non-family homeless respondents.

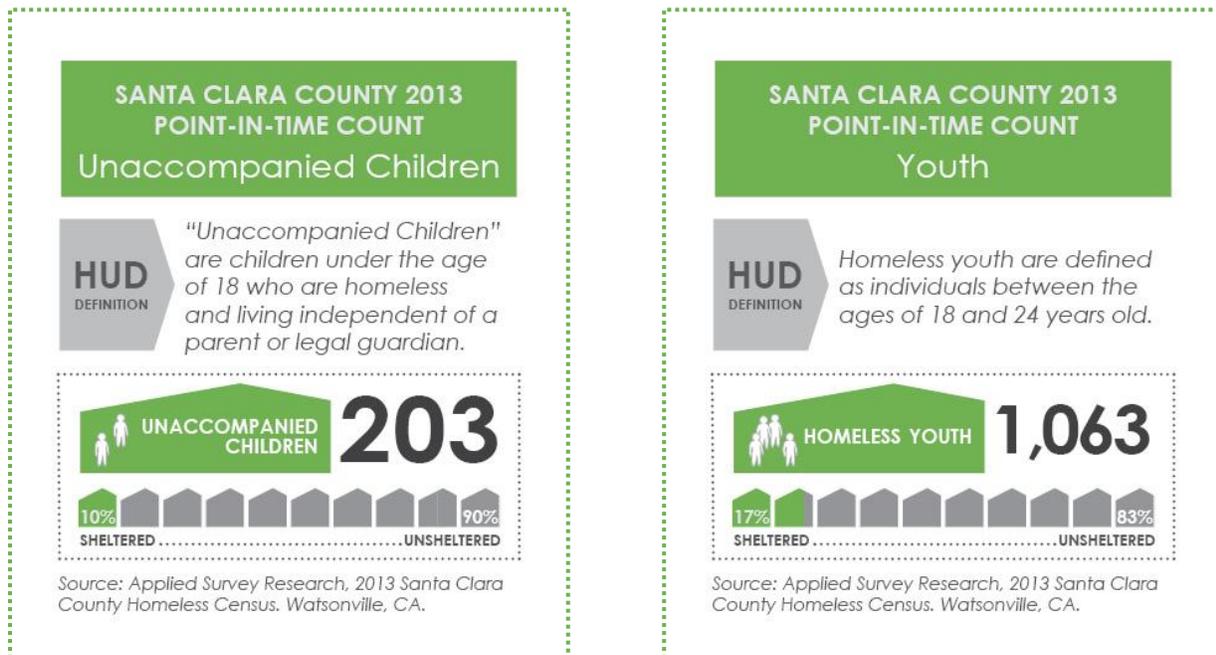
Usual Sleeping Places of Homeless Families

Seventy percent (70%) of homeless family respondents indicated that they usually slept at a shelter (emergency shelter or transitional housing) and 13% slept in a vehicle.

Primary Causes of Homelessness among Families

Thirty-eight percent (38%) of respondents in families reported job loss as the primary cause of their homelessness. This was followed by family/domestic violence (22%) and landlord raised the rent (20%).

Unaccompanied Homeless Children and Youth



Data on unaccompanied homeless children (under 18) and transition age youth (TAY) (18-24) are extremely limited at both the local and national level. The data that are available suggest that the negative effects of homelessness on children are high. Homeless youth have a harder time accessing services, including shelter, medical care, and employment.¹⁹

In 2012, the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness amended the federal strategic plan to end homelessness to include specific strategies and supports to address the needs of unaccompanied homeless children and transition age youth. As part of this effort, HUD placed increased interest on gathering data on unaccompanied homeless children and youth during the 2013 Point-in-Time Count.

Santa Clara County has made great strides in collecting quantitative and qualitative data on homeless children and youth by conducting a specialized study of these subpopulations in 2009, 2011 and again in 2013. Data were gathered through homeless peers who conducted a specialized street count and survey.

Prevalence of Unaccompanied Youth and Children

There were 1,266 unaccompanied youth under the age of 25 identified in the Point-in-Time count in 2013, representing 17% of the homeless population in Santa Clara County. There were a total of 210 unaccompanied children and youth surveyed for this project. Of those, 87% were between the ages of 18 and 24, while the remainder (13%) was under the age of 18.

Demographics

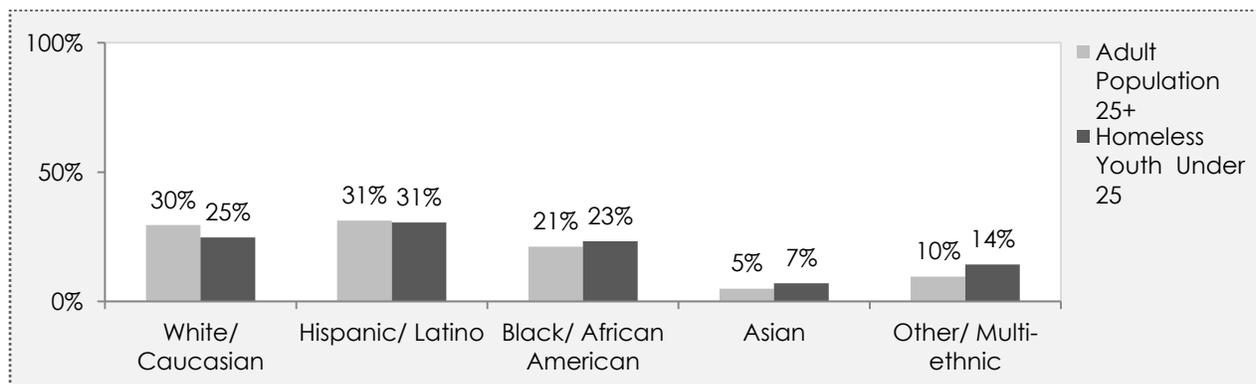
While the majority of youth surveyed were over the age of 18, 16% had experienced homelessness for the first time prior to the age of 13, and 47% between age 14 and 18.

There was a greater percentage of female youth respondents (37%) than female adult respondents (29%). Four percent (4%) of youth respondents identified as transgender, also greater than the 2% of adults who identified as transgender or “other”. A greater percentage of homeless youth respondents identified as LGBTQ than their adult counterparts (29% of homeless youth respondents compared to 10% of adult respondents).

A greater percentage of homeless youth survey respondents had been in foster care than adult respondents, 33% compared to 10%, respectively.

The race/ethnic identities reported by youth respondents was similar to that of adult respondents. Twenty-five percent (25%) of unaccompanied children and youth identified as White/Caucasian, 31% as Hispanic/Latino, and 23% as Black/African American.

HOMELESS POPULATION BY ETHNICITY AND AGE (2013)



Homeless Youth N=210 Adult N=617

Education and School Enrollment

Nineteen percent (19%) of unaccompanied children and youth reported being in school at the time of the survey, similar to 2011 when 18% were in school. Seventy-nine percent (79%) said they would like to further their education. Over half (52%) had not completed high school.

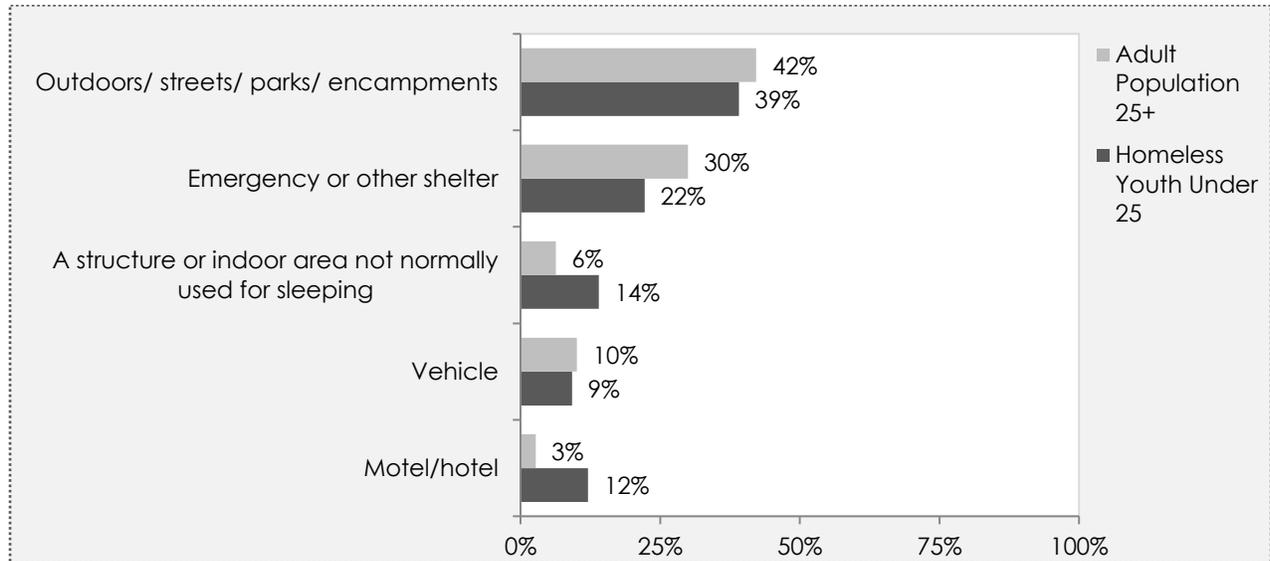
County of Residency

A lower percentage of unaccompanied homeless children and youth reported living in Santa Clara County before they were homeless, 80% of youth compared to 89% of adults. More than two-thirds (68%) of unaccompanied homeless children and youth reported living in the City of San Jose.

Usual Sleeping Places

Sleeping outdoors, on the streets, in parks or encampments was the most common sleeping locations reported by unaccompanied homeless children and youth (39%). They were less likely to have slept in a shelter than their adult counterparts (22% compared to 30%). Less than one third (32%) of unaccompanied homeless children and youth respondents reported feeling very safe in their current living conditions. In addition, 33% reported trading drugs or sex for a place to sleep at night.

WHERE RESPONDENTS USUALLY STAY AT NIGHT (2013)

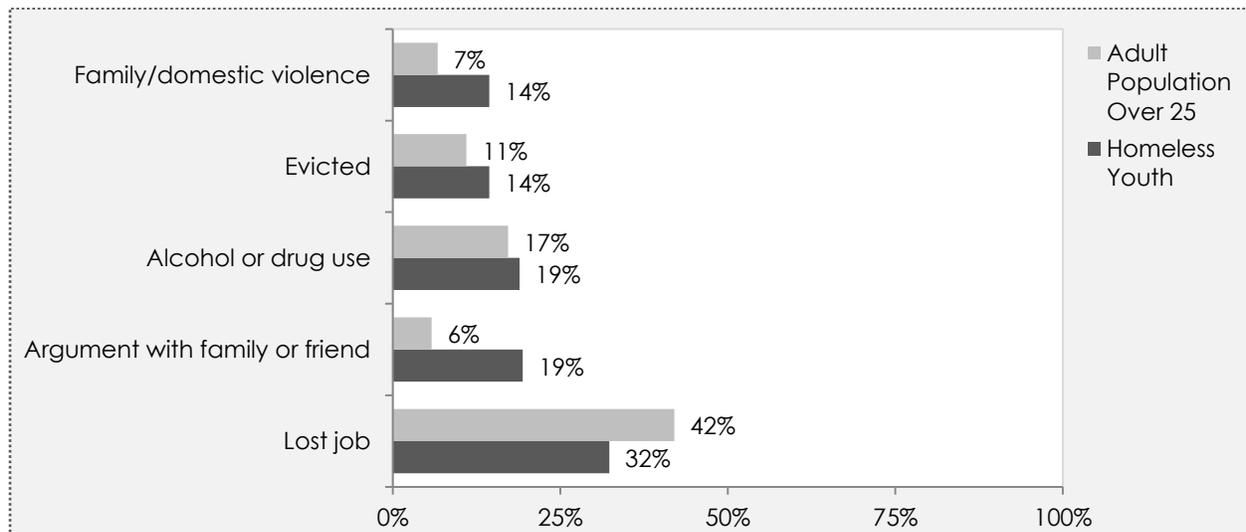


Homeless Youth N=207 Adult N=623

Primary Cause of Homelessness

Loss of a job was the most common cause of homelessness reported by unaccompanied children and youth survey respondents (32%). Unaccompanied children and youth were far more likely (19%) than adults 25 years and older (6%) to cite an argument with a family or friend as the primary cause of their homelessness. When asked follow up questions about the contributing factors of their homelessness, 30% of unaccompanied youth under 25 said that a fight with their parents/guardians was a cause of their homelessness and 25% said emotional abuse.

PRIMARY CAUSE OF HOMELESSNESS (TOP 5 RESPONSES)



Homeless Youth N=201 Adult N=600

Utilization of Government Assistance and Homeless Services

Half (50%) of unaccompanied children and youth survey respondents said they were not receiving any forms of government assistance, much higher than the 32% of adult respondents. When asked why they weren't receiving any government assistance, 37% replied that it was because they didn't think they were eligible, much higher than homeless adult individuals (15%). About one-third (34%) of unaccompanied children and youth survey respondents reported never accessing youth-specific services, while only 11% reported their age was affecting the way they accessed services. When asked what their current needs were, the top responses were food (66%), shelter (62%) and clothing (61%).

Social Support Networks

Fifty-four percent (54%) of unaccompanied children and youth survey respondents reported not having someone they could rely on in a time of crisis. Forty-three percent (43%) reported their safety had been threatened at least once in the last 30 days. Of the 54% who had someone to rely on, almost half reported (45%) having only one person. When asked about their relationship with their family, 55% of respondents reported having no contact with their parents or family and 26% reported trying to move back in with their parents.

Physical Health and Wellbeing

Of unaccompanied children and youth survey respondents, 72% said their physical health was good or very good. However, 18% reported being unable to receive medical care when they needed it in the last year.

Mental Health and Wellbeing

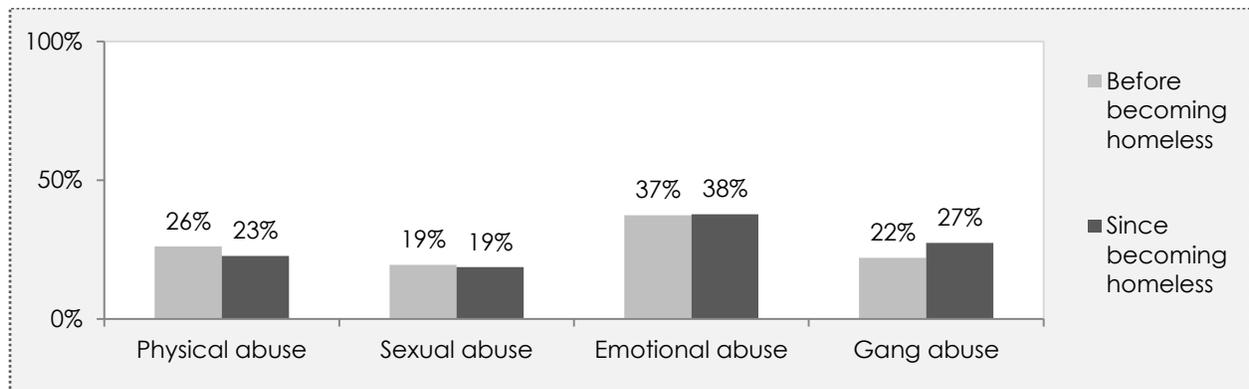
Sixty-two percent (62%) of unaccompanied children and youth homeless survey respondents reported their mental health was good or very good, while 38% said it was poor or fair. Forty percent (40%) of respondents reported suffering from chronic depression, and 15% reported experiencing another mental illness or PTSD. Fourteen percent (14%) had reported mental illness as a contributing factor in their homelessness and 23% said counseling and mental health care was a current need.

Experiences with Violence

Unaccompanied youth under 25 reported common encounters with violence and crime; 33% had been burglarized, 28% robbed, 34% had been assaulted, and 35% had been victims of other crimes. Thirty-four percent (34%) reported their last interaction a police officer or sheriff was not positive, while 12% reported it had been a positive interaction. Fifty-four percent (54%) reported having been harassed by law enforcement.

Children and youth were asked about their experiences with violence before and after becoming homeless. There were similar percentages of abuse before and after homelessness, including emotional abuse (37% before and 38% after), physical abuse (26% before and 23% after), and sexual abuse (both at 19%). Gang abuse showed the biggest change at 22% before homelessness and 27% after homelessness.

EXPERIENCES WITH VIOLENCE PRIOR TO AND SINCE BECOMING HOMELESS



Physical abuse: before N= 218, after N= 216; Sexual abuse: before N= 217, after N= 215; Emotional abuse: before N= 219, after N= 215; Gang abuse: before N= 214, after N= 212.

Drug and Alcohol Abuse

When asked about their drug use, 74% of unaccompanied youth survey respondents reported using some form of drugs or alcohol. Of those, 53% reported using drugs because they enjoyed them. Yet, 39% percent reported using drugs or alcohol to decrease pain, 36% to decrease anxiety, 36% to self-medicate, and 35% reported using drugs or alcohol to make it through the day.

Conclusion

The 2013 Santa Clara County Homeless Census and Survey was a community-wide effort with two distinct phases: 1. A Point-in-Time Count that showed a total of 7,631 homeless individuals counted on Jan. 29th and 30th 2013; and 2. a survey of 856 people conducted by trained homeless individuals between February 1st and March 19th.

The Point-in-Time Count shows an increase from 7,067 individuals experiencing homelessness in 2011, to 7,631 in 2013.

Survey Demographics

- » About two-thirds of survey respondents were male (67%)
- » There were nearly equal percentages of respondents who were under the age of 25, 25-40 years old, 41-50 years old, and over 51 years old
- » There were similar percentages of White (28%) and Hispanic/Latinos (31%)
- » There was a disproportionately high percentage of Black/African Americans (22%) when compared to the overall Santa Clara County population at 3% Black/ African-American
- » 16% reported having been in the foster care system
- » Nine percent of women and 5% of men were currently experiencing domestic/family violence

Prior and Current Accommodations

- » The vast majority of homeless individuals (87%) had lived in Santa Clara County at the time they most recently became homeless, and about half had been living in San Jose
- » Forty-two percent reported usually sleeping outdoors, on the street and in parks or encampment areas - up from 34% in 2011
- » Thirty-three percent reported that they usually slept in an emergency shelter, transitional housing facility or other shelter
- » 10% slept in a vehicle

Length of Homelessness

- » Nearly half of homeless individuals in the county (46%) said they were experiencing homelessness for the first time in their lives
- » However, more than half (56%) had been without housing for a year or more

Primary Cause of Homelessness

- » Job loss (46%) up from 27% in 2011
- » Alcohol and drug use (17%)

- » Eviction (12%) up from 5% in 2011

Health

- » 64% reported having one or more disabling conditions
- » 35% reported having chronic depression, 17% had PTSD, and 16% had another form of mental illness
- » 39% did not receive needed health care
- » About half of all respondents reported having used the emergency room one or more times in the 12 months prior to the survey

Employment and Government Assistance

- » 74% were unemployed in 2013
- » The average income from government sources was \$426 a month
- » The average income for those in the private sector (without government sources) was \$933 a month

Subpopulations

Chronically Homeless

There were 2,518 chronically homeless individuals and persons in families identified in the homeless Point-in-Time Count, similar to 2011 (2,520).

The chronically homeless individuals differed from the non-chronically homeless individuals in many ways. They were:

- » More likely to be men
- » Tended to be older
- » More likely to sleep outdoors
- » Had much higher rates of chronic depression
- » Higher usage of the emergency room
- » Less able to access needed health care since becoming homeless

Veterans

There were 718 veterans identified in the Point-in-Time Count, up from 667 in 2011. Homeless veterans were:

- » More likely to be men
- » Tended to be older
- » More likely to have children

- » Experiencing longer episodes of homelessness
- » Less able to access health care when they needed it
- » Had much higher rates of PTSD and physical disabilities, but similar rates of depression

Homeless Families with Children

There were 914 homeless individuals in families in the homeless Point-in-Time Count in 2013, up from 833 persons in 2011. Individuals in families were:

- » More likely to be women
- » More likely to be Latino/Hispanic
- » More likely to have lived longer in the county
- » Reporting higher rates of domestic violence as their primary reason for becoming homeless

Unaccompanied Children and Youth

There were 203 unaccompanied children under 18 years old and 958 youth (18 years old to 25) identified in the Point-in-Time Count, based on census and survey data.

There were a large number of differences between the unaccompanied homeless children and youth under 25, and homeless adults over 25 years old. The unaccompanied homeless children and youth tended to be:

- » Both boys/men (59%) and girls/women (37%)
- » More likely to identify as transgender (4%)
- » More likely to identify as LGBTQ (29%) as compared to 10% for those 25 years and older
- » Much more likely to have been in foster care
- » Not very likely to be in school (19% in school)
- » Less likely to use any government assistance

Unaccompanied homeless children and youth under the age of 25 were asked about additional areas, not asked of those 25 and older, therefore comparison data are not available. These youth specific questions showed:

- » One in three had traded sex or drugs for a place to stay at night
- » More than one in three had fair or poor mental health
- » One in five (19%) had experienced sexual abuse prior to and since becoming homeless
- » High levels of violence including being attacked/assaulted (34%), burglarized (33%), robbed (28%), or being a victim of gang violence (27%)

Appendix I: Homeless Census & Survey Methodology

Overview

The purpose of the 2013 Santa Clara County Homeless Census and Survey was to produce a Point-in-Time (PIT) estimate of the number of people in Santa Clara County who experience homelessness. The results of the street count were combined with the results from the shelter count to produce the total number of homeless people in Santa Clara County at one point in time. A more detailed description of the methodology used for the homeless census and survey follows.

Components of the Homeless Count Method

The census methodology had two components:

- » The street count: an enumeration of unsheltered homeless individuals
- » The shelter and institution count: an enumeration of sheltered homeless individuals

Street Count Methodology

Definition

For the purposes of this study, the HUD definition of unsheltered homeless persons was used:

- » Individuals and families with a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or camping ground.

Research Design

Santa Clara County covers approximately 1,291 square miles.²⁰ The logistics for conducting a PIT street count of homeless people in a county this large and densely populated required the enumeration to take place over a two-day period. The unsheltered and sheltered homeless counts were coordinated to occur within the same time period in order to minimize potential duplicate counting of homeless persons.

Volunteer and Worker Recruitment

An enumeration effort of this magnitude can only be successful with the assistance of those who possess an intimate knowledge of the activities and locations of homeless people. Therefore, the recruitment and training of homeless persons to work as enumerators was an essential part of the street count methodology. Previous research has shown that homeless people, teamed with staff members from homeless service agencies, can be part of a productive and reliable work force.

To work on the street count, prospective enumerators were required to attend a 1-hour information and training session. Training sessions were held at multiple locations throughout Santa Clara County during the week prior to the street count. These sessions were attended primarily by homeless persons, staff from homeless service agencies, and staff from the County of Santa Clara, the City of San Jose, and the City of Palo Alto.

Homeless persons who completed the required training session were paid \$10.00 on the morning they reported to work for the street count. Homeless workers were also paid \$10.00 per hour for their work on the count, and were reimbursed for any expenses (mainly transportation costs) they incurred during the hours they worked.

Street Count Teams

On the mornings of the census, two-person teams were created to enumerate designated areas of the county for the street count. A team was ideally composed of one volunteer and one homeless person who had attended a training and information session. Street count teams were provided with census tract maps of their assigned areas, census tally sheets, a review of the census training documents and techniques, and other supplies. Prior to deployment, volunteers and workers were provided with a reminder of how to enumerate thoroughly without disturbing homeless people or anyone else encountered during the street census. Over the two-day census period, all 341 census tracts in Santa Clara County were enumerated.

Safety Precautions

Every effort was made to minimize potentially hazardous situations. Precautions were taken to prepare a safe environment in all deployment centers. Law enforcement districts were notified of pending street count activity in their jurisdictions. No official reports were received in regards to unsafe or at-risk situations occurring during the street census in any area of the county.

Street Count Deployment

Since it was necessary to conduct the enumeration over a period of two days, January 29 and 30, 2013, Santa Clara County was divided into two areas: the area to the east of Highway 17 and Interstate 880 and the area to the west of these freeways. On January 29, the cities of Gilroy and Morgan Hill, portions of the cities of Campbell, Los Gatos, Milpitas, San Jose, and the unincorporated areas in the eastern and southwestern parts of the county were enumerated. The following morning, January 30, remaining portions of the cities of Campbell, Milpitas, Los Gatos, and San Jose; the cities of Cupertino, Monte Sereno, Mountain View, Los Altos, Los Altos Hills, Palo Alto, Saratoga, Sunnyvale, Santa Clara, and the unincorporated areas in the northwestern part of the county were enumerated.

The two-day enumeration effort was conducted between the hours of 5:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. This early morning enumeration strategy was selected in order to avoid duplicate counting of sheltered homeless persons and to increase the visibility of the street homeless.

All accessible streets, roads, and highways in the enumerated tracts were traveled by foot, bike, or car. Homeless enumerators were also instructed to include themselves on their tally sheets for the street count, if they were not going to be counted by a shelter or institutional census.

Upon their return, teams turned in their census tally forms and were debriefed by the deployment captains. Observational comments and the integrity of the enumeration effort were reviewed and assessed. This review was primarily done to check for double-counting and to verify that every accessible road within the assigned area was enumerated.

No direct contact with enumerated homeless people was made during the census enumeration.

Targeted Street Outreach -Youth

Unaccompanied youth tend to be difficult to enumerate in the morning census, since they do not usually co-mingle with the adult homeless population. For this reason, special youth enumeration teams consisting of homeless youth and formerly homeless youth were formed to conduct the targeted count. Youth enumerators were deployed from the Bill Wilson Drop-In Center and were given a general geographical area in Santa Clara County to count rather than specific census tract maps. These teams counted between 3:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. when homeless youth are most likely to be visible on the streets and were assigned to specific areas to minimize duplication. They enumerated unaccompanied homeless children under age 18 and youth 18 to 24 years old.

Targeted Street Outreach –Encampments

The City of San Jose and Santa Clara County have explored numerous service and outreach initiatives related to the burgeoning growth of encampments in urban locations near waterways, public works, and other general urban open space areas. The City of San Jose, in particular, funds a homeless outreach and engagement program with Outreach Worker staff dedicated to linking encamped homeless to services and housing. These teams frequent encampments and build relationships that encourage participation in local homeless service initiatives, whether it is housing or other supportive services.

Larger encampment areas in the City of San Jose were identified prior to the census count and special teams of Outreach Workers, familiar with these areas, were organized to count those residing in these larger encampments on the dates of the count. Targeted encampment areas were identified on general street count maps and those homeless persons residing in those encampments were counted by the Outreach Workers rather than the census street teams. The result was the most comprehensive profile of homeless encampments in San Jose that has been done to date.

Targeted Street Outreach –Vehicles

Identifying individuals residing in vehicles is difficult during the morning hours of the census count. By the time the sun rises, those residing in vehicles have often moved on to more remote locations or have found places where they blend in. North Santa Clara County recognized the need for targeted outreach and provided a dedicated outreach worker to enumerate vehicles prior to sunrise. All enumeration teams, including North County outreach, were asked to gather the first 4 digits of license plates to ensure vehicles were not double counted.

Shelter and Institution Count Methodology

Goal

The goal of the shelter count was to gain an accurate count of the number of homeless persons who were being temporarily housed in shelters and other institutions across Santa Clara County.

Data Collection

The basic approach was to identify and contact agencies that temporarily house homeless people and request that those agencies send ASR a count of the number of homeless persons housed in their programs on the night of January 29, 2013. In 2013, the participating shelters were determined by those listed on the Housing Inventory Chart reported to HUD. Participating agencies included:

- » Emergency Shelters
- » Transitional Housing Facilities
- » Safe Havens

Shelter facilities reported their occupancies for the night prior to the first day of enumeration to Applied Survey Research (ASR) by an online survey, paper survey, or telephone call.

Homeless Census Challenges and Assumptions

Challenges

There are many challenges in any homeless enumeration, especially when implemented in a community as diverse and large as Santa Clara County. While homeless populations are usually concentrated around city emergency shelters and homeless service facilities, homeless individuals and families can also be found in suburbs, commercial districts, and outlying county areas that are not easily accessed by enumerators. Homeless populations include many difficult-to-count subsets such as:

- » Chronically homeless persons who may or may not access social, health, or shelter services;
- » Persons living in vehicles who relocate every few days;

- » Persons who have children and therefore stay “under the radar” for fear of Child Protective Services;
- » Homeless youth, who tend to keep themselves less visible than homeless adults;
- » Homeless people who live in isolated rural areas; and
- » Homeless people who sleep in unfit structures

Census Undercount

For a variety of reasons, homeless persons generally do not want to be seen, and make concerted efforts to avoid detection. Regardless of how successful the outreach effort is, an undercount of the homeless population will result, especially of hard-to-reach subpopulations such as unaccompanied youth and families.

In a non-intrusive visual homeless enumeration, the methods employed, while academically sound, have inherent biases and shortcomings. Even with the assistance of dedicated homeless service providers and currently or previously homeless census enumerators, the methodology cannot guarantee 100% accuracy.

By counting the minimum number of homeless persons on the streets at a given Point-in-Time, the homeless census methodology is conservative and therefore most likely results in an undercount of homeless persons with immigration issues, the working homeless, families, and street youth. This conservative approach is necessary to preserve the integrity of the data collected. Even though the census is most likely to be an undercount of the homeless population, the methodology employed, coupled with the homeless survey, is the most comprehensive approach available and does provide valuable data for local and federal service agencies.

Efforts to Include School District Data

The Santa Clara County Office of Education (SCCOE) gathers data the number of children receiving services through their homeless assistance programs. However, this data employs a broader definition of homelessness in its recordkeeping.

In 2013, efforts were made by the Santa Clara County Office of Education (SCCOE) to confirm the total number of children, and family members, meeting the Point-in-Time definition of homelessness on January 29th and 30th. These efforts proved more challenging than expected and participation was limited. The 2013 efforts did not result in the inclusion of any additional children or families included in the Point-in-Time Count, however, inroads were made and all parties will work to improve this process in 2015.

Annualization Methodology

A Point-in-Time (PIT) homeless enumeration has an inherent bias of not capturing homeless persons who experience short episodes of homelessness during other times of the year. More people experience homelessness annually than can be counted at any given point-in-time, as people cycle in and out of homelessness. Counting only those persons found in a January census could under-represent those experiencing homelessness in the other months of the year.

Therefore, based on the survey responses of the 2013 survey, ASR used the annualization formula detailed by the Corporation for Supportive Housing²¹ to calculate an annual estimate of the number of homeless persons in Santa Clara County over the course of a year. This approach is the HUD-approved method for calculating the annual estimate of homeless persons based on the PIT count. The following is an explanation of the annualization calculation.

Three factors were used to determine the annual estimate:

- » A = The PIT count of currently homeless people (found in the street and shelter count);
- » B = The number of currently homeless people who became homeless within the last 7 days or who entered the county within the last 7 days; and
- » C = The proportion of currently homeless people who have experienced a previous homeless episode within the past 12 months.

The equation for calculating the annual estimate: $A + [(B \times 51) \times (1 - C)] = \text{Annual estimate}$

Prior to 2013, the annualization formula did not include respondents who had moved to Santa Clara County within the last seven days.

Assumptions of Annual Estimation

The calculations used to project an annual estimate of homelessness are based on two very important assumptions.

- » The information gathered by the homeless survey is indicative of responses that would have been given at any other time during the year and is representative of the general diversity of the study area's homeless population.
- » The Point-in-Time census count is reasonably indicative of a count that would have been obtained at any other time during the year.

Service providers have supported these assumptions by indicating that the demand for services stayed relatively consistent over time. The total number of homeless individuals accessing services does not fluctuate to a great degree, although the proportion of sheltered versus unsheltered homeless does vary with the seasons.

Estimates of the number of people who experience homelessness in a given year are important for planning purposes and HUD reporting requirements. Because many homeless experiences are relatively short-term (i.e., less than a year), it is important to account for this phenomenon when determining the annual demand for homeless services.

Given the size of the survey sample (856 persons), the statistical reliability of the projections, the undercount inherent in any homeless census, as well as the use of a HUD-approved annualization calculation, the project committee and ASR have determined that this methodology was the most complete and accurate of all available approaches.

Survey Methodology

Planning and Implementation

The survey of 856 homeless persons was conducted in order to yield qualitative data about the homeless community in Santa Clara County. The survey elicited information such as gender, family status, military service, length and recurrence of homelessness, usual nighttime accommodations, causes of homelessness, and access to services through open-ended, closed-ended, and multiple response questions. The survey data bring greater perspective to current issues of homelessness and to the provision and delivery of services. The survey findings also provide a measure of the changes in the composition of the homeless population since 2011.

In addition to the general survey, youth under the age of 25 were given an additional 38 questions, which asked specifically about their experience as homeless children and youth. In total, 208 of the 856 surveys were conducted with youth. These surveys were conducted by other homeless youth workers in order to maintain the peer-to-peer protocol. The overall protocol for youth surveys was similar to the general survey. However youth under the age of 18 were asked to sign an informed consent document and were given the option of filling out surveys on their own.

Surveys were conducted by homeless workers and service provider volunteers who were trained by ASR. Training sessions led potential interviewers through a comprehensive orientation that included project background information and detailed instruction on respondent eligibility, interviewing protocol, and confidentiality. Because of confidentiality and privacy issues, service providers typically conducted the surveys administered within shelters. No self-administered surveys were accepted from individuals over the age of 18 in order to maintain a standardized and consistent protocol. Homeless workers were compensated at a rate of \$5.00 per completed survey.

It was determined that survey data would be more easily collected if an incentive gift was offered to respondents in appreciation for their time and participation. Socks were selected as an incentive to

participate in the survey. These socks were easy to obtain and distribute, were thought to have wide appeal, and could be provided within the project budget.

Survey Sampling

In order to select a random sample of respondents, survey workers were trained to employ a randomized “every third encounter” survey approach. Survey workers were instructed to approach the third person they encountered whom they considered to be an eligible survey respondent.²² If the person declined to take the survey, the survey worker could approach the next eligible person they encountered. After completing a survey, the randomized approach was resumed.

Strategic attempts were made to reach individuals in various geographic locations and of various subset groups such as homeless youth, minority ethnic groups, military veterans, domestic violence victims, and families, including recruiting survey workers from these subset groups.

Trained peer interviewers administered surveys to homeless individuals on the “street.” Surveys were also administered in shelters and transitional housing programs. In order to assure the representation of transitional housing residents, who can be underrepresented in a street-based survey, survey quotas were created to reach individuals and heads of family households living in these programs.

Data Collection

Care was taken by interviewers to ensure that respondents felt comfortable regardless of the street or shelter location where the survey occurred. During the interviews, respondents were encouraged to be candid in their responses and were informed that these responses would be framed as general findings, would be kept confidential, and would not be traceable to any one individual.

Overall, the interviewers experienced excellent cooperation from respondents. This was likely influenced by the fact that nearly all of the street interviewers were homeless workers who had previously been, or were currently, fellow members of the homeless community. Another reason for interview cooperation may have been the incentive gift, which was given to respondents upon the completion of the interview.

Data Analysis

Survey Administration Details

In order to avoid potential duplication of respondents, the survey requested respondents’ initials and date of birth, so that duplication could be avoided without compromising the respondents’ anonymity. Upon completion of the survey effort, an extensive verification process was conducted to eliminate duplicates. This process examined respondents’ date of birth, initials, gender, ethnicity, and length of homelessness, and consistencies in patterns of responses to other questions on the survey. This left 856 valid surveys for analysis. Due to the sensitive nature of the survey, respondents were not required to answer every survey

question and respondents were asked to skip questions that were not applicable. For this reason, the number of respondents for each survey questions may not total 856.

Survey Challenges and Limitations

The 2013 Santa Clara County Homeless Survey did not include an equal representation of all homeless experiences. However, as mentioned previously, based on a Point-in-Time estimate of 7,631 homeless persons, the 856 valid surveys represent a confidence interval of +/- 3.35% with a 95% confidence level when generalizing the results of the survey to the estimated homeless population in Santa Clara County. These confidences can be applied to the survey findings because the survey was randomly administered.

There may be some variance in the data that the homeless individuals would have self-reported. In self-reporting survey research, there is always some room for misrepresentation. However, using a peer interviewing methodology is believed to allow the respondents to be more candid with their answers, and may help reduce the uneasiness of revealing personal information. Further, service providers and county staff members recommended individuals who would be the best to conduct interviews and they received comprehensive training about how to conduct interviews. The service providers and city staff also reviewed the surveys to ensure quality responses. Surveys that were considered incomplete or containing false responses were not accepted.

Appendix II: Definitions and Abbreviations

Chronic homelessness is defined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs as "an unaccompanied homeless individual with a disabling condition who has either been continuously homeless for a year or more, or has had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years."

Disabling condition, for the purposes of this study, is defined as a physical disability, mental illness, depression, alcohol or drug abuse, chronic health problems, HIV/AIDS, Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), or a developmental disability.

Emergency shelter is the provision of a safe alternative to the streets, either in a shelter facility, or through the use of stabilization rooms. Emergency shelter is short-term, usually for 90 days or fewer. Domestic violence shelters are typically considered a type of emergency shelter, as they provide safe, immediate housing for victims and their children.

Family is defined by HUD as either an adult couple or a single adult with one or more minor children present.

Homeless under the category 1 definition of homelessness in the HEARTH Act, includes individuals and families living in a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangements, or with a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used

as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or camping ground.

HUD is the abbreviation for the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Sheltered homeless individuals are those homeless individuals who are living in emergency shelters or transitional housing programs.

Single individual refers to an unaccompanied adult or youth.

Transitional Age Youth (TAY) refers to an unaccompanied youth ages 18-24 years old.

Transitional housing facilitates the movement of homeless individuals and families to permanent housing. It is housing in which homeless individuals may live up to 24 months and receive supportive services that enable them to live more independently. Supportive services - which help promote residential stability, increased skill level or income, and greater self-determination - may be provided by the organization managing the housing, or coordinated by that organization and provided by other public or private agencies. Transitional housing can be provided in one structure or several structures at one site, or in multiple structures at scattered sites.

Unaccompanied Children refers to children under the age of 18 who do not have a parent or guardian present.

Appendix III: Footnotes

- ¹ The U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness. (2010). *Opening doors: Federal strategic plan to prevent and end homelessness*. Washington, D.C.
- ² U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. (December 2012). *Housing Inventory Count and Point-in-Time count of Homeless Persons: Data Collection Guidance Version 1.1*.
- ³ While many other data sources, including HMIS and County Office of Education data show much larger number of homeless families, many of these families are “doubled up” and excluded from the PIT definition of homelessness per HUD.
- ⁴ Additional information regarding the Santa Clara County Homeless Census & Survey can be found in the appendices, including: the homeless survey Methodology.
- ⁵ National Alliance to End Homelessness. (2013). *Issues LGBTQ Youth*. Retrieved on April 25, 2013 from: <http://www.endhomelessness.org/pages/LGBTQ-youth>.
- ⁶ Uzo Anucha, P. D. (2005). *Conceptualizing Homeless Exits and Returns: The Case for a Multidimensional Response to Episodic Homelessness*. *Critical Social Work*.
- ⁷ SAMHSA. (n.d.). *Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration*. Retrieved January 2013, from Homeless Resource Center: <http://homeless.samhsa.gov>
- ⁸ Federal Register, Vol. 78, No. 16, Jan. 24, 2013, pp. 5182-5183
- ⁹ Income from government sources is excluded from poverty guideline calculations. Health and Human Services Federal Poverty Guidelines do not consider non-cash government benefits (such as food stamps or housing subsidies) as income when determining the poverty levels for each fiscal year.
- ¹⁰ Metraux, S. et al. (2007). *Incarceration and Homelessness*. 2007 National Symposium on Homelessness Research. Retrieved 2013 from <http://works.bepress.com/>
- ¹¹ Sharon A. Salit, M. E. (1998). *Hospitalization Costs Associated with Homelessness in New York City*. *New England Journal of Medicine*, 338, 1734-1740.
- ¹² National Institute of Justice and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2000). *Extend, Nature and Consequences of Intimate Partner Violence: Findings from the National Violence Against Women Survey*. Atlanta, Georgia.
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- ¹⁴ UICH. (2013). *Annual Update 2012*. Retrieved 2013 from <http://www.usich.gov/>
- ¹⁵ U. S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2007). *Characteristics and Dynamics of Homeless Families with Children*. Retrieved 2013 from <http://aspe.hhs.gov/>
- ¹⁶ U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness. (2013). *Opening Doors*. Retrieved 2013 from <http://www.usich.gov/>
- ¹⁷ USUIC Council on Homelessness. (2013). *Opening Doors: Families with Children*. Retrieved 2013 from <http://www.usich.gov/>
- ¹⁸ USICHU. (2013). *Annual Update 2012*. Retrieved 2013 from <http://www.usich.gov/>
- ¹⁹ National Coalition for the Homeless. (2011). *Homeless Youth Fact Sheet*. Retrieved 2011 from <http://www.nationalhomeless.org>.
- ²⁰ U.S. Census Bureau. (2009). *State and County Quick Facts*.
- ²¹ Corporation for Supportive Housing. (2007). *Estimating Need*. Retrieved 2013 from <http://www.csh.org/resources/estimating-the-need/>
- ²² The survey method of systematically interviewing every n^{th} person encountered in a location is recommended by HUD in their publication, *A Guide to Counting Unsheltered Homeless People*, Second Revision, January 2008, p. 37.