SANTA CRUZ COUNTY



HOMELESS

POINT-IN-TIME CENSUS & SURVEY

COMPREHENSIVE REPORT 2015

REPORT PRODUCED BY ASR

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Applied Survey Research (ASR) is a nonprofit, social research firm dedicated to helping people build better communities by collecting meaningful data, facilitating information-based planning, and developing custom strategies. The firm was founded on the principle that community improvement, initiative sustainability, and program success are closely tied to assessment needs, evaluation of community goals, and development of appropriate responses.

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Introduction

Every two years, during the last 10 days of January, communities across the country conduct comprehensive counts of their homeless populations in order to measure the prevalence of homelessness in each community. Communities collect information on individuals and families sleeping in emergency shelters and transitional housing, as well as people sleeping on the streets, in cars, in abandoned properties, or in other places not meant for human habitation.

These biennial Point-in-Time counts of sheltered and unsheltered homeless persons are required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) of all Continuums of Care receiving federal funding to provide housing and services for homeless individuals and families.

Each community reports the findings of its Point-In-Time (PIT) counts in its annual funding applications to HUD, and the data collected helps the federal government better understand the nature and extent of homelessness nationwide. The biennial Point-in-Time counts are the primary source of nationwide data on sheltered and unsheltered homelessness.

In Santa Cruz County the PIT count is overseen by the Homeless Action Partnership (HAP), the coordinating body for homeless services in Santa Cruz County. The Homeless Action Partnership, with the support of local jurisdictions, partnered with Applied Survey Research to conduct the Point-In-Time Count.

HAP has worked in conjunction with Applied Survey Research (ASR) to conduct the 2015 Santa Cruz County Homeless Census & Survey. ASR is a non-profit social research firm with extensive experience in homeless enumeration and research.

The Santa Cruz County Homeless Count had two primary components: a Point-in-Time enumeration of unsheltered homeless individuals and families (those sleeping outdoors, on the street, in parks, in vehicles, etc.) and a Point-in-Time enumeration of homeless individuals and families who have temporary shelter (those staying in an emergency shelter, or transitional housing).

The 2015 Santa Cruz County Point-in-Time Count was a county-wide effort. With the support of community volunteers and homeless individuals led by the planning team, the entire county was canvassed between daybreak and 11 AM on January 22, 2015. This resulted in a visual count of unsheltered homeless individuals and families residing on the streets, in vehicles, makeshift shelters, encampments, and other places not meant for human habitation. Shelters and facilities reported the number of homeless individuals and families who occupied their facilities on the same evening.

Santa Cruz County also conducted a dedicated count of unaccompanied children and youth under the age of 25 years old on the afternoon of January 22, after the general unsheltered count. This dedicated count was part of a nation-wide effort, established and recommended by HUD, to understand the scope of youth homelessness. The youth count was conducted between the hours of 12 PM and 4 PM, later in the day when unaccompanied children and youth were more likely to be visible. The count was conducted by trained youth enumerators who were currently homeless or had recently experienced homelessness.[1]

In the weeks following the street count, an in-depth survey was administered to 344 unsheltered and sheltered homeless individuals of all ages throughout the county. The survey gathered basic demographic details as well as information on service needs and utilization.

This report provides data regarding the number and characteristics of people experiencing homelessness in Santa Cruz County on a single night. Special attention is given to specific subpopulations including chronically homeless, veterans, families, unaccompanied children under the age of 18, and unaccompanied youth between the ages of 18-24, also known as Transition Age Youth (TAY).

To better understand the dynamics of homelessness over time, results from previous years are provided where available and applicable.

PROJECT OVERVIEW AND GOALS

The 2015 Planning Committee identified several important 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 2013 Santa Cruz County Homeless Census & Survey, and to track progress toward ending homelessness and toward meeting the goals of strategic plan *All In: Toward a Home for Every Santa Cruz County Resident*;
- To increase public awareness of overall homeless issues and generate support for constructive solutions; and
- To assess the status of specific subpopulations including, veterans, families, unaccompanied children under 18, transitional age youth, and those who are chronically homeless.

This report is intended to assist service providers, policy makers, funders, and local, state, and federal government, helping them to gain a better understanding of the population currently experiencing homelessness, measure the impact of current policies and programming and plan for the future.

1 Significant deduplication efforts were made in 2015 to ensure unaccompanied children and youth were not captured in both the youth and general street count efforts. For more information on these efforts and the overall count methodology, please see Appendix 1.

FEDERAL DEFINITION OF HOMELESSNESS FOR POINT-IN-TIME COUNTS

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

- An individual or family living in a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangement (including congregate shelters, transitional housing, and hotels and motels paid for by charitable organizations or by federal, state, or local government programs for low-income individuals), or
- An individual or family 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]

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.

Point-In-Time Census

The 2015 Point-in-Time count enumerates unsheltered and publicly sheltered homeless persons in Santa Cruz County. The general street count was conducted on January 22, 2015, from daybreak to 11 a.m. and covered all accessible areas of Santa Cruz County. The shelter count profiled persons in HUD registered shelters the night of the count and included all individuals staying in: emergency shelters, transitional housing facilities, and domestic violence shelters. The general street count and shelter count methodology were similar to those used in 2013 and in previous years.

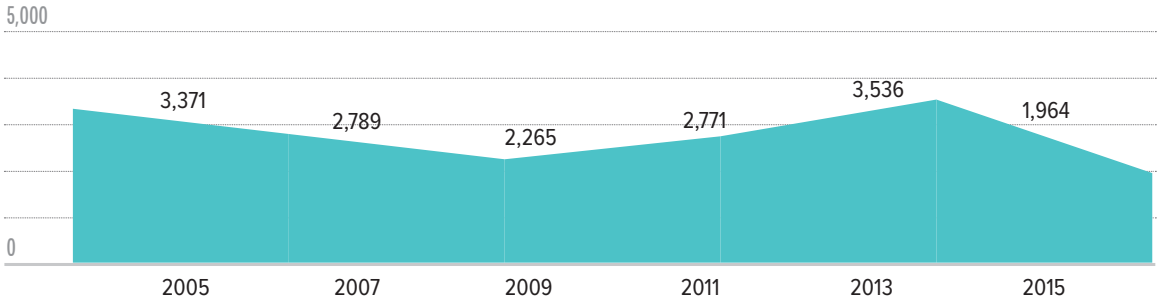
In a sustained effort to improve data on the extent of youth homelessness, Santa Cruz County conducted a dedicated youth count similar to those conducted in previous years (2009, 2011, 2013).

The focus of this study is to provide a "snapshot" of homelessness in Santa Cruz County. The 2015 count methodology continues to meet the evolving standards of HUD Point-in-Time counts. While this study provokes many interesting questions regarding changes to the County's homeless population, defining these causes goes beyond the scope of this report. It is hoped that the following data will be used to lead this discussion in the community.

NUMBER AND CHARACTERISTICS OF HOMELESS PERSONS IN SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

The number of individuals counted in the 2015 general street count and shelter count was 1,964. Compared to 2013, this was a decrease of 1,572 individuals, a 44% decline, and virtually all of this reduction came from unsheltered persons. A 10 year trend of comparable Point-in-Time data from general count efforts identified a 42% decrease in the number of persons experiencing homelessness in Santa Cruz County between 2005 and 2015. While the County has experienced significant changes in Point-in-Time counts before, the decline seen in 2015 is unprecedented. The previous low was in 2009 prior to many areas of the county experiencing the effects of the economic downturn.

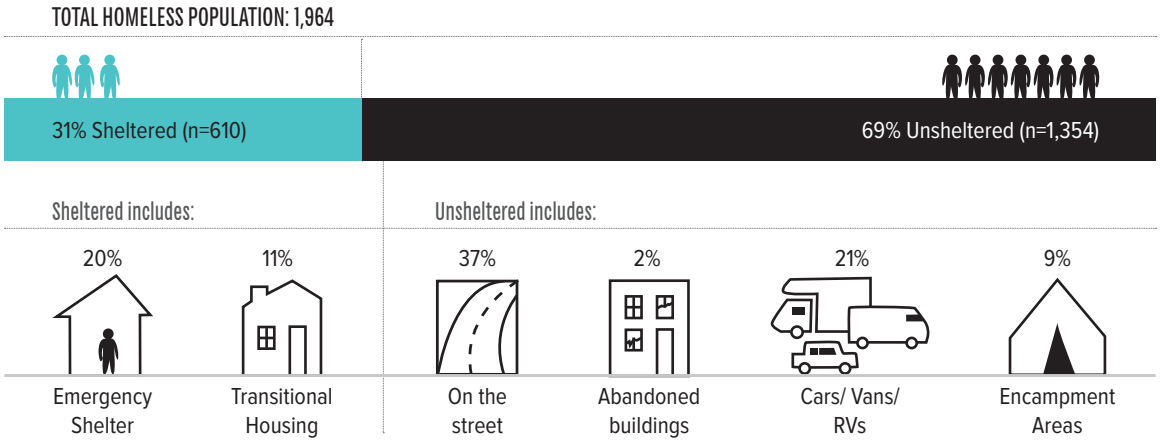
FIGURE 1. SANTA CRUZ COUNTY HOMELESS CENSUS 10-YEAR TREND



Source: Applied Survey Research. (2015). Santa Cruz County Homeless Census. Watsonville, CA.
Applied Survey Research. (2013). Santa Cruz County Homeless Census. Watsonville, CA.
Applied Survey Research. (2011). Santa Cruz County Homeless Census. Watsonville, CA.
Applied Survey Research. (2009). Santa Cruz County Homeless Census. Watsonville, CA.
Applied Survey Research. (2007). Santa Cruz County Homeless Census. Watsonville, CA.
Applied Survey Research. (2005). Santa Cruz County Homeless Census. Watsonville, CA.

Approximately 69% of all individuals counted in the 2015 Santa Cruz County Point-in-Time Count were unsheltered, a decrease from 82% in 2013. Twenty-one percent of the population was staying in a vehicle.

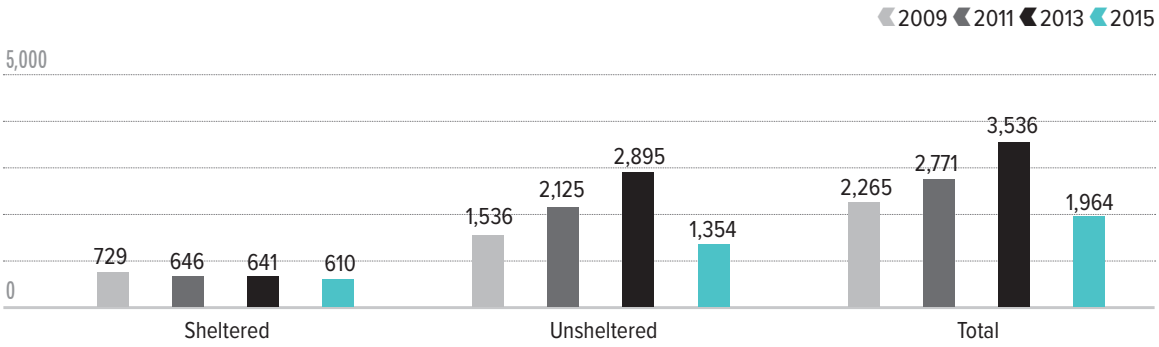
FIGURE 2. TOTAL NUMBER OF HOMELESS INDIVIDUALS ENUMERATED DURING THE POINT-IN-TIME HOMELESS CENSUS



Source: Applied Survey Research. (2015). Santa Cruz County Homeless Census. Watsonville, CA.

Of the 1,964 individuals enumerated in the count, 20% were staying in emergency shelter settings (an increase from 11% in 2013), while 11% were staying in transitional housing (an increase from 7% in 2013).

FIGURE 3. TOTAL NUMBER OF HOMELESS INDIVIDUALS ENUMERATED DURING THE POINT-IN-TIME HOMELESS COUNT BY SHELTER STATUS WITH TREND



Source: Applied Survey Research. (2015). Santa Cruz County Homeless Census. Watsonville, CA.
Applied Survey Research. (2013). Santa Cruz County Homeless Census. Watsonville, CA.
Applied Survey Research. (2011). Santa Cruz County Homeless Census. Watsonville, CA.
Applied Survey Research. (2009). Santa Cruz County Homeless Census. Watsonville, CA.

CENSUS DEMOGRAPHICS

People in families represented 24% of the overall homeless population in 2015. The vast majority of those experiencing homelessness were single individuals (76%). Ninety-two percent of unaccompanied children and youth (under age 25) were unsheltered in 2015.

FIGURE 4. HOMELESS CENSUS RESULTS BY HOUSEHOLD TYPE AND AGE GROUP

	STREET COUNT		EMERGENCY SHELTER COUNT		TRANSITIONAL HOUSING COUNT		TOTAL	
	2013	2015	2013	2015	2013	2015	2013	2015
Persons in Families	201	206	149	115	194	160	544	481
Under 18 years old	90	109	93	63	109	95	292	267
18-24 years old	48	14	10	5	10	13	68	32
25 years or older	63	83	46	47	75	52	184	182
Single Individuals	2,694	1,148	253	281	45	54	2,992	1,483
Under 18 years old	127	28	6	2	0	0	133	30
18-24 years old	790	221	9	11	15	10	814	242
25 years or older	1,777	899	238	268	30	44	2,045	1,211
Total	2,895	1,354	402	396	239	214	3,536	1,964

Source: Applied Survey Research. (2015). Santa Cruz County Homeless Census. Watsonville, CA.
Applied Survey Research. (2013). Santa Cruz County Homeless Census. Watsonville, CA.

Note: Total for 2015 does not include 30 children-only households. When including those 30 children, 2015 total population is 1,964 individuals.

TOTAL NUMBER OF UNSHELTERED AND SHELTERED HOMELESS PERSONS BY JURISDICTION

The 2015 Santa Cruz County Homeless Census data are presented below, organized by the 4 incorporated cities of Santa Cruz County as well as unincorporated areas of the county.

As in previous years, the City of Santa Cruz had the greatest number of unsheltered homeless individuals, followed by the City of Watsonville. However both cities experienced significant decreases between 2013 and 2015. The City of Watsonville saw a decrease of 200 individuals while the City of Santa Cruz saw a decrease of 520 people. Among the incorporated areas of the county, only the City of Capitola experienced an increase in identified unsheltered homeless persons with 1 individual identified in 2013 and 12 in 2015.

FIGURE 5. HOMELESS CENSUS POPULATION BY JURISDICTION

	UNSHELTERED			SHELTERED			TOTAL		
JURISDICTION	2013	2015	NET CHANGE	2013	2015	NET CHANGE	2013	2015	NET CHANGE
Total Incorporated	1,415	780	-819	602	517	-85	2,017	1,297	-720
City of Capitola	1	12	11	0	0	0	1	12	11
City of Santa Cruz	892	497	-395	459	334	-125	1,351	831	-520
City of Scotts Valley	25	14	-11	0	0	-	25	14	-11
City of Watsonville	497	257	-240	143	183	40	640	440	-200
Total Unincorporated/ Confidential Scattered Site	1,372	429	-943	39	93	54	1,411	522	-889
Total County Office of Education	108	145	37	0	0	0	108	145	37
Total	2,895	1,354	-1,541	641	610	-31	3,536	1,964	-1,572

Source: Applied Survey Research. (2015). Santa Cruz County Homeless Census. Watsonville, CA.
Applied Survey Research. (2013). Santa Cruz County Homeless Census. Watsonville, CA.

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

2015 was the second Point-in-Time count in which the Santa Cruz County Office of Education (COE) helped to identify families and unaccompanied children without shelter. This resulted in 145 individuals included in the count, an increase from 2013. The COE count is one of the primary methods for identifying unsheltered homeless families in Santa Cruz County. COE efforts helped to identify 70% of the County's unsheltered families in 2015.

Jurisdictional data on the unsheltered population reveal that the highest population remains single individuals in the City of Santa Cruz.

FIGURE 6. UNSHELTERED HOMELESS CENSUS POPULATION BY JURISDICTION AND FAMILY STATUS

	INDIVIDUALS			PERSONS IN FAMILIES			TOTAL PERSONS			
JURISDICTION	2013	2015	NET CHANGE	2013	2015	NET CHANGE	2013	2015	NET CHANGE	PERCENT CHANGE
Total Incorporated	1,309	736	-573	106	44	-62	1,415	780	-635	-45%
City of Capitola	1	12	11	0	0	0	1	12	11	^
City of Santa Cruz	887	487	-400	5	10	5	892	497	-395	-44%
City of Scotts Valley	25	14	-11	0	0	0	25	14	-11	-44%
City of Watsonville	396	223	-173	101	34	-67	497	257	-240	-48%
Total Unincorporated	1,360	412	-948	12	17	5	1,372	429	-943	-69%
Aptos/Rio del Mar	218	13	-205	0	0	0	218	13	-205	^
Live Oak/Twin Lakes/Opal Cliffs	678	155	-523	9	7	-2	687	162	-525	-76%
North Coast	30	75	45	0	0	0	30	75	45	1%
San Lorenzo Valley	156	104	-52	3	2	-1	159	106	-53	-33%
Soquel/Santa Cruz Mountains	137	55	-82	0	8	8	137	63	-74	-54%
South County	141	10	-131	0	0	0	141	10	-131	^
Subtotal	2,669	1,148	-1,521	118	61	-57	2,787	1,209	-1,578	-57%
Total COE Data	25	0	-25	83	145	62	108	145	37	34%
North County	18	0	0	83	29	-54	101	29	-72	-71%
South County	7	0	0	0	116	116	7	116	109	^
Total	2,694	1,148	-1,546	201	206	5	2,895	1,354	-1,541	-53%

Source: Applied Survey Research. (2015). Santa Cruz County Homeless Census. Watsonville, CA. Applied Survey Research. (2013). Santa Cruz County Homeless Census. Watsonville, CA.

Note: The County Office of Education did not report Point-in-Time count data prior to 2013 a subtotal is provided in order to access comparable unsheltered count data.

Note: ^ indicates that the percent of change for these jurisdictions are not statistically significant due to low numbers or large changes.

Homeless Survey Findings

The methodology used for the 2015 homeless count is described by HUD as a "blitz count" in that it is conducted by numerous people over a very short period of time in an effort to avoid duplicate enumeration. As this method was conducted in Santa Cruz County, the result is an observation-based count of individuals and families who appear to be homeless. The count is followed by a face-to-face representative survey. The survey sample is then used to profile and estimate the condition and characteristics of Santa Cruz County's homeless population and subpopulations for the purposes of HUD reporting and local service delivery and strategic planning.

This section provides an overview of the findings generated from the 2015 Santa Cruz Homeless Survey. Surveys were administered to a randomized sample of homeless individuals between February and March, 2015. This effort resulted in 344 complete and unique surveys. Based on a Point-in-Time count of 1,964 homeless persons, with a randomized survey sampling process, these 344 valid surveys represent a confidence interval of +/- 5% with a 95% confidence level when generalizing the results of the survey to the estimated population of homeless individuals in Santa Cruz County. In other words, if the survey were conducted again, we can be confident that the results would be within 5 percentage points of the current results for countywide data.

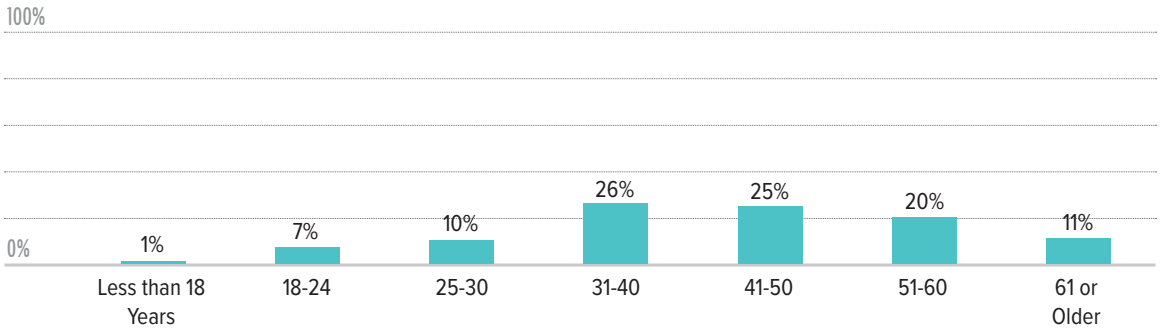
In order to ensure safety and comfort of those who participated, respondents were not required to complete all survey questions. Missing values have been intentionally omitted from the survey results; therefore, the total number of respondents for each question does not always equal the total number of surveys administered.

SURVEY DEMOGRAPHICS

In order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the experiences of homeless residents in Santa Cruz County, respondents were asked basic demographic information including age, gender, sexual orientation, and ethnicity.

AGE

FIGURE 7. AGE

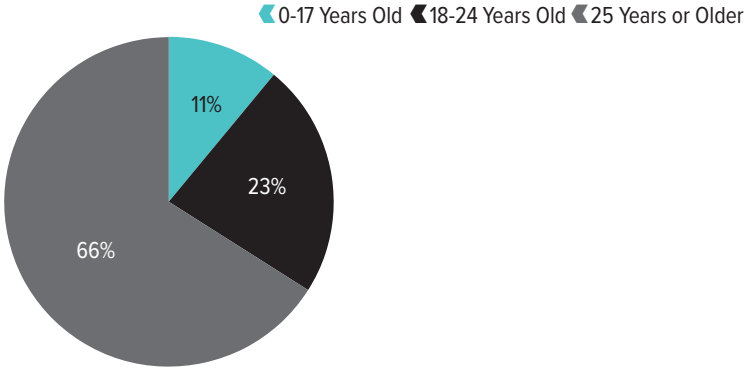


2015 n:344

Source: Applied Survey Research. (2015). Santa Cruz County Homeless Survey. Watsonville, CA.

When respondents were asked how old they were the first time they experienced homelessness, 11% reported they were under the age of 18; 23% reported they were between the ages of 18-24, and 66% reported they were over the age of 24.

FIGURE 8. AGE AT FIRST EXPERIENCE OF HOMELESSNESS



2015 n:336

Source: Applied Survey Research. (2015). Santa Cruz County Homeless Survey. Watsonville, CA.

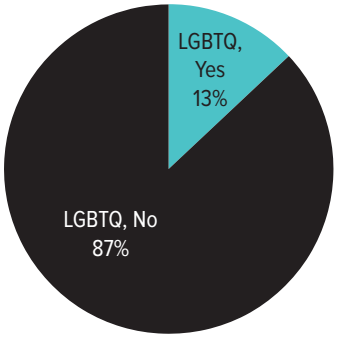
Gender and Sexual Orientation

Approximately one third of survey respondents (30%) identified as female, 69% identified as male, and fewer than one percent identified as transgender. While there are limited data on the number of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ) individuals experiencing homelessness, available data suggest LGBTQ individuals experience homelessness at higher rates, especially those under the age of 25.

Thirteen percent of homeless survey respondents identified as LGBTQ in 2015. Of those, 23% identified as bisexual, 21% gay, 9% lesbian, 7% transgender, 2% queer, and 43% other[3]. Sixty-two percent of LGBTQ respondents were male, lower than 70% of non LGBTQ respondents. 31% of LGBTQ respondents were female, about the same (30%) as non LGBTQ respondents.

Respondents who identified as LGBTQ were less likely to report they were experiencing homelessness for the first time (11%). They were more likely to have been without housing for a year or more (59%).

FIGURE 9. SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND LGBTQ IDENTITY



Breakout of Respondents Answering Yes	%	n
Gay	21%	9
Lesbian	9%	4
Queer	2%	1
Bisexual	23%	10
Transgender	7%	3
Other[3]	43%	19

LBGTQ n:344; Breakout n: 44 respondents offering 46 responses

Source: Applied Survey Research. (2015). Santa Cruz County Homeless Survey. Watsonville, CA.

Note: Multiple response question. Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

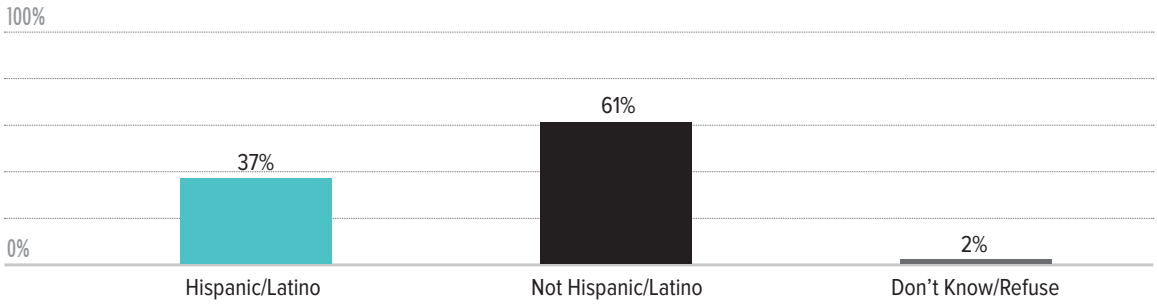
3 The "other" response option includes: pansexual, confused and asexual

Race/Ethnicity

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) gathers data on race and ethnicity in two separate questions, similar to the U.S. Census. When asked about their ethnicity 37% of homeless survey respondents reported they were Hispanic or Latino. In regard to race, 57% identified as White, 5% American Indian or Alaskan Native, 5% Black or African-American, 3% Asian, 1% Hawaiian or Pacific Islander and 28% multi-racial.

There are disparities between racial and ethnic groups as represented in the general population and those experiencing homelessness. In comparison to the general population of Santa Cruz County, a slightly higher percentage of respondents identified as Hispanic or Latino (37% compared to 33%). In terms of race, a much lower percentage of respondents identified as white compared to the general population (57% and 86%, respectively).

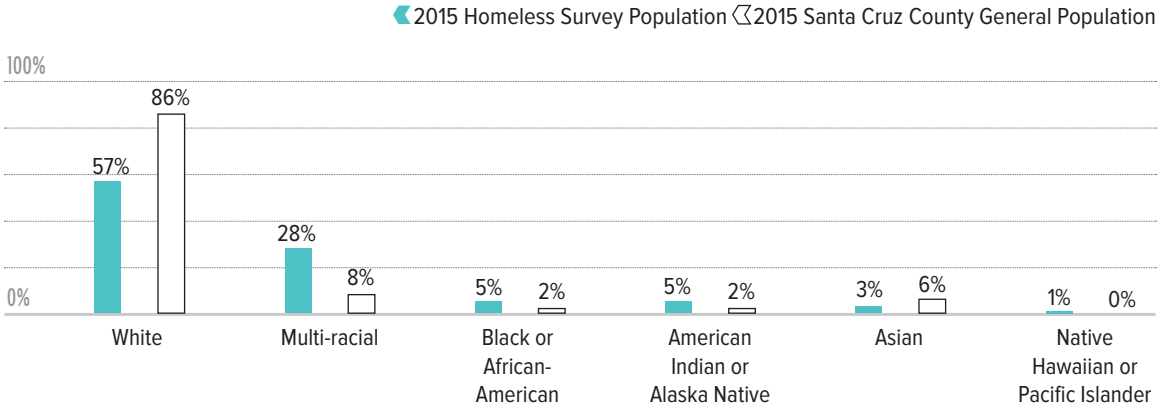
FIGURE 10. HISPANIC OR LATINO ETHNICITY



2015 n:342

Source: Applied Survey Research. (2015). Santa Cruz County Homeless Survey. Watsonville, CA.

FIGURE 11. RACE



2015 n:288

Source: Applied Survey Research. (2015). Santa Cruz County Homeless Survey. Watsonville, CA.
U.S. Census Bureau. (April 2015). American Community Survey 2011-2013 3-Year Estimates. Table DP05: ACS Demographic and Housing Estimates. Retrieved from http://factfinder2.census.gov.

Note: Multiple response question. Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Foster Care

It has been estimated that one in four former foster youth experience homelessness within four years of exiting the foster care system.[4] In the State of California, foster youth are now eligible to receive services beyond age 18. Transitional housing and supportive services for youth 18-24 are provided by two programs, Transitional Housing Placement-Foster Care for youth 18-21 and Transitional Housing Placement-Plus for youth ages 18-24. It is hoped that these additional supports, implemented since 2012, will assist foster youth with the transition to independence and prevent them from becoming homeless.

In 2015, 24% of respondents reported a history of foster care, significantly higher than in both 2013 and 2011 (15% and 12% respectively). Two percent of survey respondent's indicated that prior to becoming homeless, they were in foster care, while fewer than 1% of respondents stated that aging out of the foster care system was the primary event or condition that led to their homelessness.

FIGURE 12. HISTORY OF FOSTER CARE



2015 n:315

Source: Applied Survey Research. (2015). Santa Cruz County Homeless Survey. Watsonville, CA.

4 United States Interagency Council on Homelessness. (2012). Amendment 2012, Opening Doors: Federal strategic plan to prevent and end homelessness. Washington: D.C.

LIVING ACCOMMODATIONS

Survey respondents reported many different living accommodations prior to becoming homeless, although most lived in or around the Santa Cruz County area with friends, family, or on their own in a home or apartment.

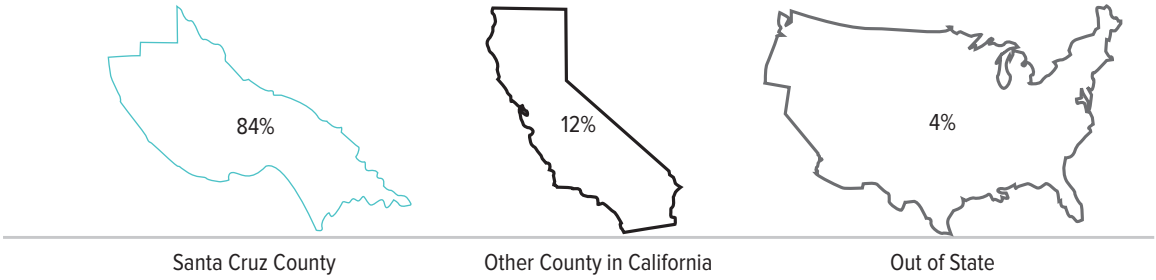
Place of Residence

Homeless persons may travel when they can afford to and often move to places where they have friends, family, or other social support networks and/or potential housing or employment opportunities. This is also true of the general population including youth, renters, and people in many trade industries.[5]

Eighty-four percent of homeless survey respondents reported they were living in Santa Cruz County at the time they most recently became homeless, an increase from 72% in 2013. Of those, over half (60%) had lived in Santa Cruz County for 10 years or more. Five percent had lived in Santa Cruz County for less than one year.

Four percent of respondents reported they were living out of state when they became homeless, and 12% reported they were living in a neighboring county.

FIGURE 13. PLACE OF RESIDENCE AT TIME OF HOUSING LOSS



2015 n:343

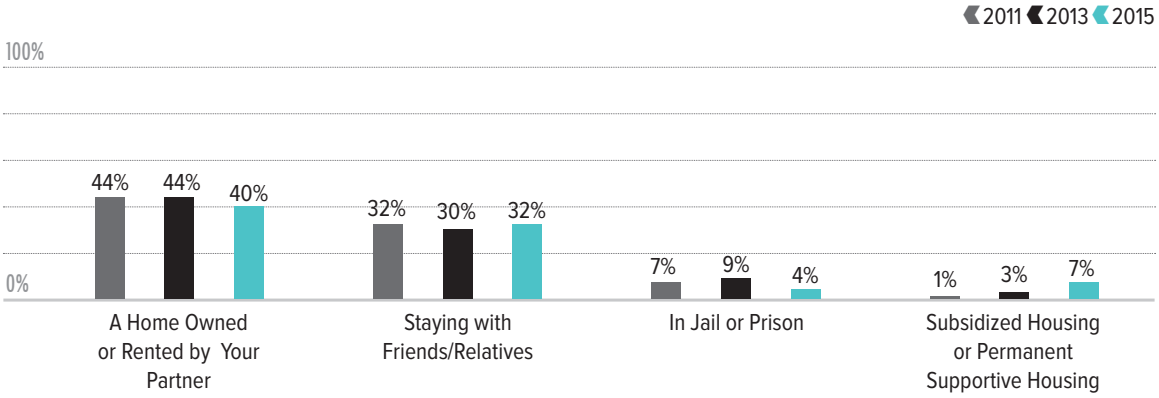
Source: Applied Survey Research. (2015). Santa Cruz County Homeless Survey. Watsonville, CA.

5 U.S. Census. (2015). Tables 3 & 25: Geographic Mobility 2013 to 2014. Retrieved 2015 from www.census.gov.

Prior Living Arrangements

Forty percent of respondents reported staying in a home they or their partner owned or rented immediately prior to becoming homeless. Thirty-two percent reported living in a home owned or rented by friends or relatives. Seven percent were staying at a motel or hotel. Seven percent of homeless survey respondents reported living in a subsidized housing or permanent supportive housing units. Four percent of respondents reported they were in a jail/prison facility immediately prior to becoming homeless. Two percent were in a hospital or treatment facility, and 2% were in foster care.

FIGURE 14. LIVING ARRANGEMENTS IMMEDIATELY PRIOR TO BECOMING HOMELESS THIS TIME (TOP FOUR RESPONSES)



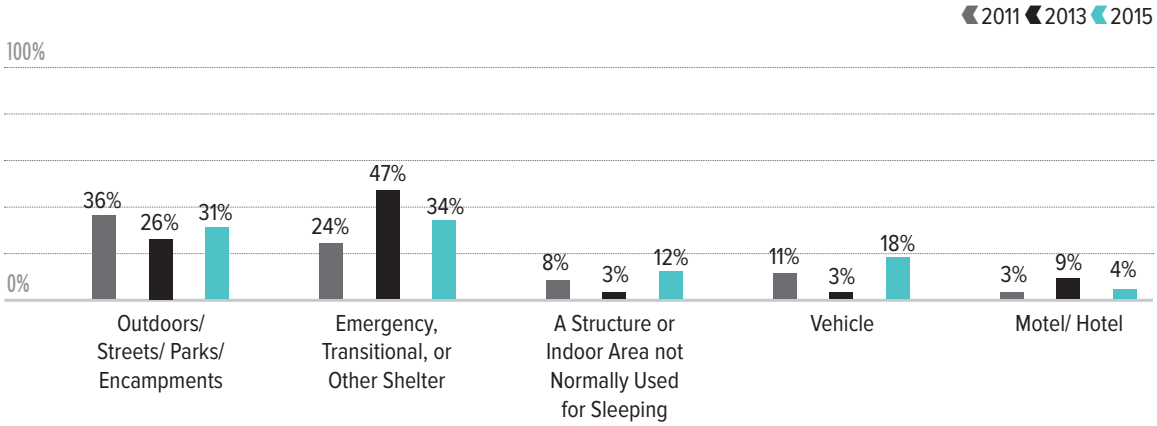
2011 n:497; 2013 n:358; 2015 n:332

Source: Applied Survey Research. (2015). Santa Cruz County Homeless Survey. Watsonville, CA.
Applied Survey Research. (2013). Santa Cruz County Homeless Survey. Watsonville, CA.
Applied Survey Research. (2011). Santa Cruz County Homeless Survey. Watsonville, CA.

Current Living Arrangements

Nearly a third (31%) of survey respondents reported currently living outdoors, on the streets, in parks, or in encampment areas. Thirty-four percent of respondents reported staying in a public shelter (emergency shelter, transitional housing facility or alternative shelter environment). Twelve percent of respondents reported they were sleeping in public buildings, foyers, hallways or other indoor areas not meant for human habitation. Eighteen percent reported staying in their vehicles.[6]

FIGURE 15. USUAL PLACES TO SLEEP AT NIGHT



2011 n:498; 2013 n:369; 2015 n:317

Source: Applied Survey Research. (2015). Santa Cruz County Homeless Survey. Watsonville, CA.
Applied Survey Research. (2013). Santa Cruz County Homeless Survey. Watsonville, CA.
Applied Survey Research. (2011). Santa Cruz County Homeless Survey. Watsonville, CA.

6 Accessing individuals residing in vehicles for the Santa Cruz County Homeless Census and Survey has been a challenge of this project. In 2015, surveyors were asked to outreach to individuals in vehicles, however this outreach resulted in a small number of completed surveys.

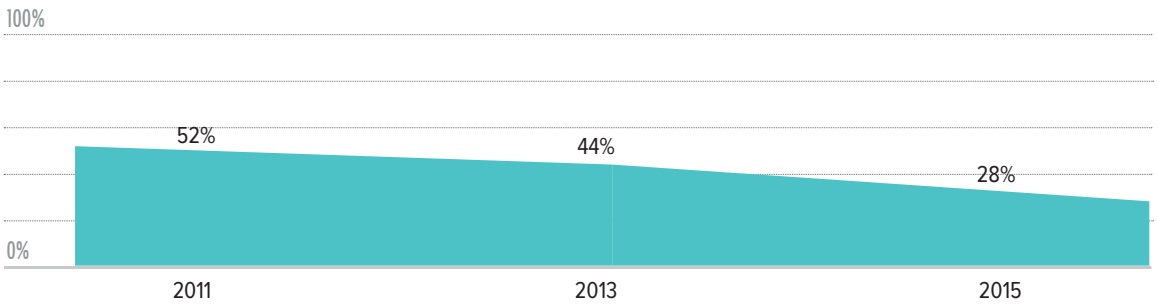
DURATION AND RECURRENCE OF HOMELESSNESS

Unstable living conditions often lead to individuals falling in and out of homelessness. Almost three out of four survey respondents reported they had experienced homelessness previously. For many, the experience of homelessness is part of a long and recurring history of housing instability.

Duration of Homelessness

More than half (56%) of survey respondents reported they had been homeless for a year or more, a slight increase from 2013 (51%) but similar to 2011 (54%). Eight percent of respondents reported that they had been homeless for less than one month, slightly higher than in 2013 (6%).

FIGURE 16. PERCENT EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS FOR THE FIRST TIME (RESPONDENTS ANSWERING "YES'")



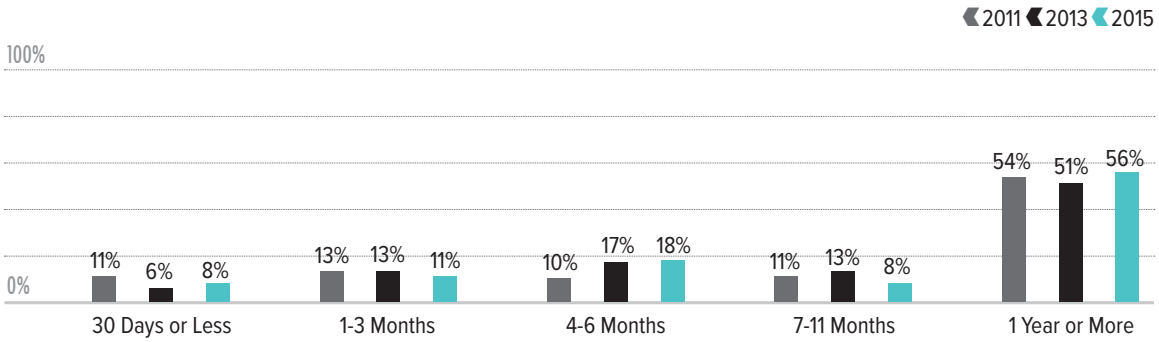
2011 n:496; 2013 n:369; 2015 n:343

Source: Applied Survey Research. (2015). Santa Cruz County Homeless Survey. Watsonville, CA.
Applied Survey Research. (2013). Santa Cruz County Homeless Survey. Watsonville, CA.
Applied Survey Research. (2011). Santa Cruz County Homeless Survey. Watsonville, CA.

Recurrence of Homelessness

One percent of respondents reported they had experienced homelessness four or more times in the past year. This was much lower than in 2013, when 17% of respondents reported 4 incidents or more of homelessness in the previous year. When asked how many times they had been homeless in the past three years, 26% reported they had been homeless 4 or more times, compared to 22% in 2013.

FIGURE 17. LENGTH OF CURRENT EPISODE OF HOMELESSNESS



2011 n:496; 2013 n:360; 2015 n:342

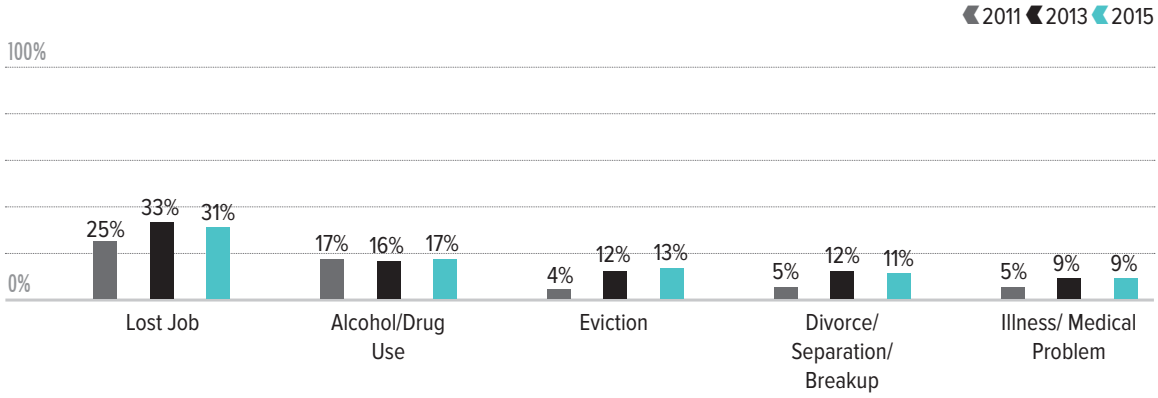
Source: Applied Survey Research. (2015). Santa Cruz County Homeless Survey. Watsonville, CA.
Applied Survey Research. (2013). Santa Cruz County Homeless Survey. Watsonville, CA.
Applied Survey Research. (2011). Santa Cruz County Homeless Survey. Watsonville, CA.

PRIMARY CAUSE OF HOMELESSNESS

The primary cause of an individual's homelessness is not always clear. It is difficult to identify as it is often the result of multiple and compounding factors.

Nearly a third (31%) of respondents reported job loss as the primary cause of their homelessness. Seventeen percent reported the main causes as drugs or alcohol. Eleven percent reported a divorce, separation, or break up, while 9% reported an argument with family or friend who asked them to leave as a primary event that led to their homelessness. Thirteen percent of respondents reported eviction was the primary cause of their homelessness, 6% reported that their landlord raised rent, and 3% reported foreclosure.

FIGURE 18. PRIMARY CAUSE OF HOMELESSNESS (TOP FIVE RESPONSES)



2011 n:493 respondents;2013 n:359 respondents; 2015 n:336 respondents offering 404 responses

Source: Applied Survey Research. (2015). Santa Cruz County Homeless Survey. Watsonville, CA.
Applied Survey Research. (2013). Santa Cruz County Homeless Survey. Watsonville, CA.
Applied Survey Research. (2011). Santa Cruz County Homeless Survey. Watsonville, CA.

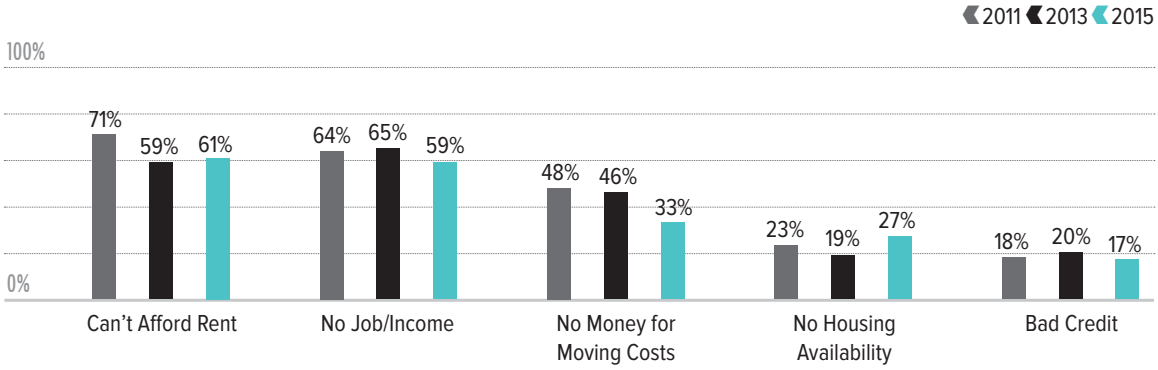
Note: Multiple response question (Years 2013, 2015). Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Note: Caution should be used when comparing data across years due to changes in question format.

Obstacles to Obtaining Permanent Housing

Respondents were also asked what prevented them from obtaining housing. The greatest percentage (61%) reported they could not afford rent. Most other respondents reported a mixture of other income or access-related issues, such as a lack of income (59%), no money for moving costs (33%), and bad credit (17%). A lack of housing availability continues to be a barrier to permanent housing. Twenty-seven percent of respondents indicated that a lack of housing availability was keeping them from getting permanent housing.

FIGURE 19. OBSTACLES TO OBTAINING PERMANENT HOUSING (TOP FIVE RESPONSES)



2011 n:491 respondents giving 1,331 responses; 2013 n:347 respondents giving 913 responses; 2015 n:335 respondents giving 904 responses

Source: Applied Survey Research. (2015). Santa Cruz County Homeless Survey. Watsonville, CA.
Applied Survey Research. (2013). Santa Cruz County Homeless Survey. Watsonville, CA.
Applied Survey Research. (2011). Santa Cruz County Homeless Survey. Watsonville, CA.

Note: Multiple response question. Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

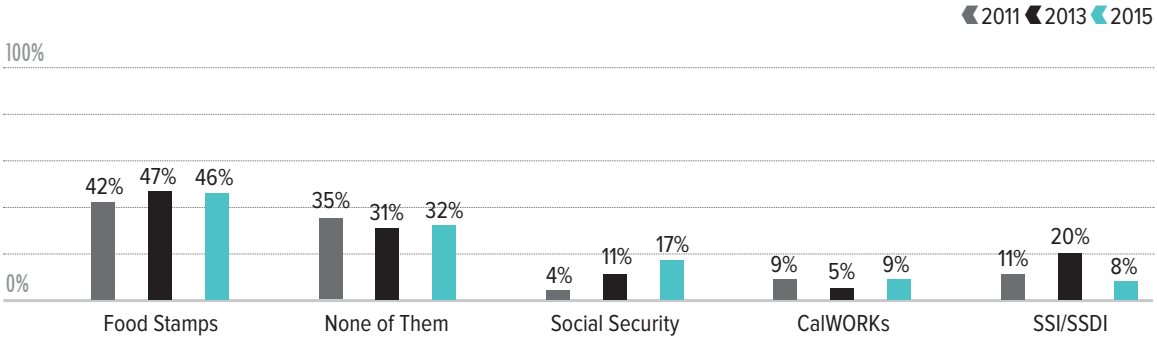
SERVICES AND ASSISTANCE

In Santa Cruz County, government and non-profit agencies provide services and assistance to those currently experiencing homelessness through federal and local programs. Government assistance and homeless services work to enable individuals and families obtain benefits and support. However, many individuals and families do not apply for services. Many believe that they do not qualify or are ineligible for assistance. Connecting homeless individuals and families to these support services helps them create the bridge to mainstream support services and helps to prevent future housing instability.

Government Assistance

More than two-thirds (68%) of respondents in 2015 reported they were receiving some form of government assistance. The largest percentage (46%) reported receiving CalFresh (food stamps).

FIGURE 20. GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE RECEIVED (TOP FIVE RESPONSES)



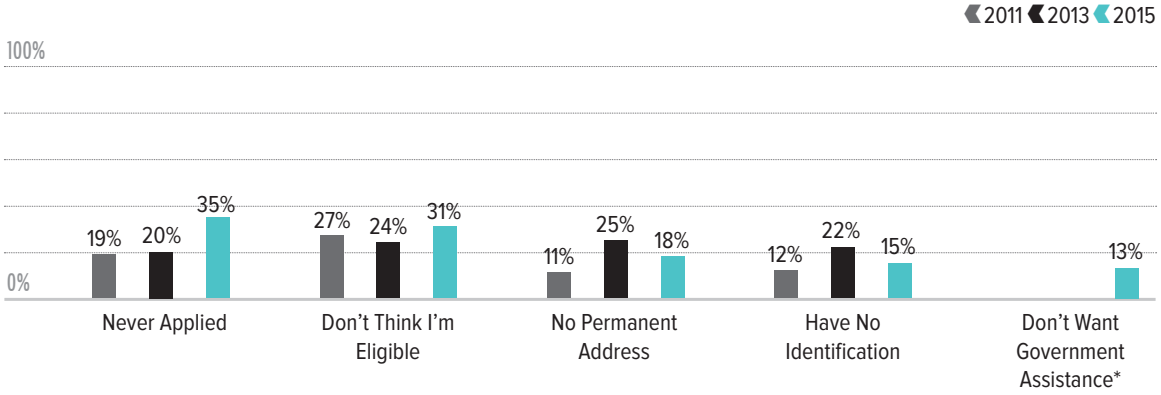
2011 n:496 respondents offering 692 responses; 2013 n:254 respondents offering 441 responses; 2015 n:310 respondents offering 357 responses

Source: Applied Survey Research. (2015). Santa Cruz County Homeless Survey. Watsonville, CA.
Applied Survey Research. (2013). Santa Cruz County Homeless Survey. Watsonville, CA.
Applied Survey Research. (2011). Santa Cruz County Homeless Survey. Watsonville, CA.

Note: Multiple response question. Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Of those who reported they were not receiving any form of government support, the greatest percentage stated they did not apply (35%). Respondents also reported challenges applying for services: 15% reported they did not have required identification, 18% reported no permanent address to use on applications, and 6% reported the paperwork was too difficult. Almost 10% reported they did not know where to go to seek assistance.

FIGURE 21. REASONS FOR NOT RECEIVING GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE (TOP FIVE RESPONSES)



2011 n:157 respondents offering 239 responses; 2013 n:110 respondents offering 190 responses; 2015 n:91 respondents offering 148 responses

Source: Applied Survey Research. (2015). Santa Cruz County Homeless Survey. Watsonville, CA.
Applied Survey Research. (2013). Santa Cruz County Homeless Survey. Watsonville, CA.
Applied Survey Research. (2011). Santa Cruz County Homeless Survey. Watsonville, CA.

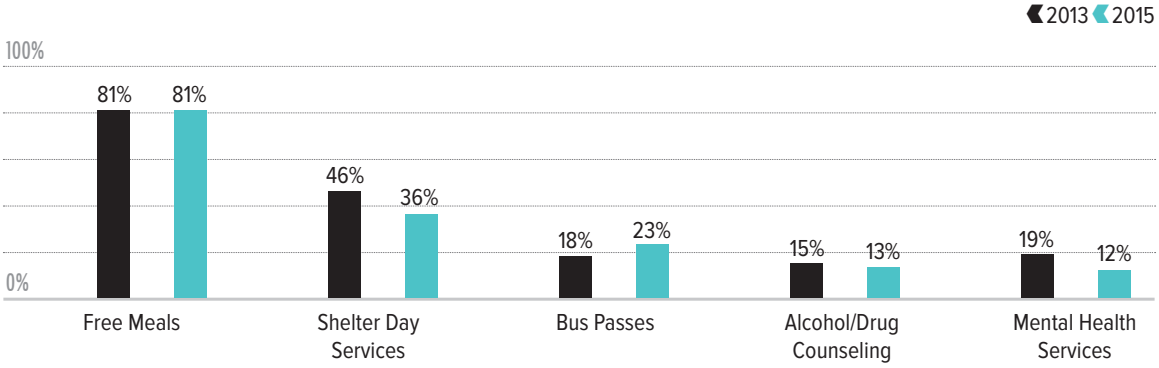
Note: Multiple response question. Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Note: Response option changed in 2015 from "don't need" to "don't want."

Services and Programs

A large majority of respondents reported using meal services (81%). Thirty-six percent used shelter day services. Bus passes (23%) and alcohol/drug counseling (13%) were also cited. Eight percent of respondents indicated that they were not currently using any services available to them.

FIGURE 22. SERVICES OR ASSISTANCE (TOP FIVE RESPONSES)



2013 n:352 respondents offering 1,035 responses; 2015 n:298 respondents offering 604 responses

Source: Applied Survey Research. (2015). Santa Cruz County Homeless Survey. Watsonville, CA.

EMPLOYMENT AND INCOME

While the majority of homeless survey respondents reported being unemployed, some had part-time or full-time work. Many were receiving an income, either public or private, although often not enough to meet basic needs.

Employment

The overall unemployment rate in Santa Cruz County in January 2015 was 10%, down from 14%, in 2013.[7] However, labor market data show current labor trends in the Bay Area favoring high-end technical employment. It is also important to recognize that the unemployment rate represents only those who are unemployed and actively seeking employment, not all joblessness. The unemployment rate for homeless respondents was 74%, down slightly from 79% in 2013.

Of those who were unemployed 47% of respondents were looking for work, 40% reported that they were unable to work, and 14% were not looking for work. Twenty-six percent of respondents reported working at full-time, part-time, seasonal, temporary, or casual employment.

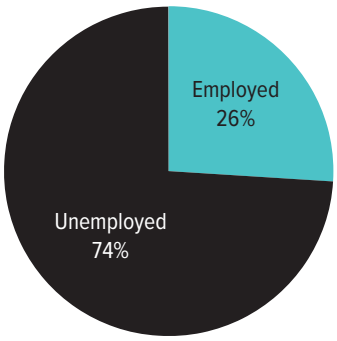
7 State of California Employment Development Department. (2013). Unemployment Rates (Labor Force). Retrieved 2013 from http://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov

Income

Among those who were employed, over three-quarters (78%) made less than $750 per month. The incomes of those who were unemployed came from a variety of sources, including social security disability or retirement benefits, recycling, or panhandling.

FIGURE 23. EMPLOYMENT AND MEAN MONTHLY INCOME

	EMPLOYED		UNEMPLOYED	
	%	n	%	n
$0-$99	1%	1	17%	20
$100-$449	41%	31	30%	35
$450-$749	36%	27	14%	17
$750-$1,099	8%	6	28%	33
$1,100-$1,499	5%	4	7%	8
$1,500-$3,000	9%	7	4%	5
More than $3,000	0%	0	0%	0



2015 employment status n:326; Income employed n:76; Income unemployed n:118

Source: Applied Survey Research. (2015). Santa Cruz County Homeless Survey. Watsonville, CA.

HEALTH

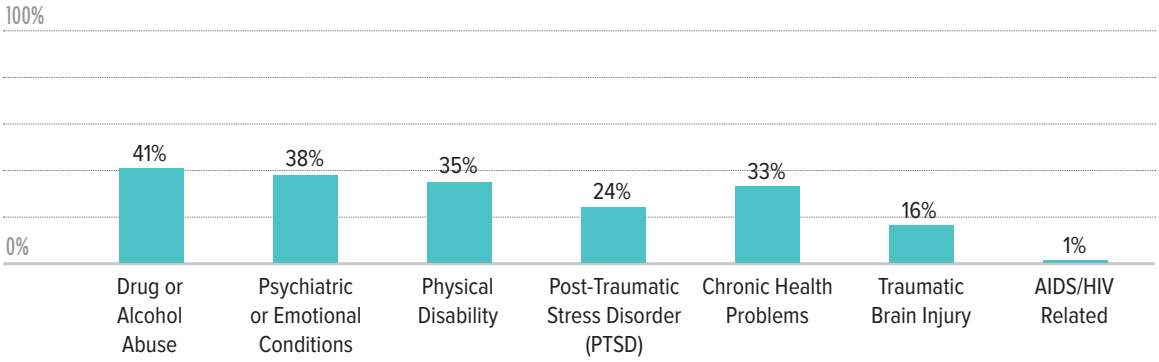
The average life expectancy for individuals experiencing homelessness is 25 years less than those in stable housing. Without regular access to health care, individuals experience preventable illness and often endure longer and repeated hospitalizations. It is estimated that those experiencing homelessness stay four days (or 36%) longer per hospital admission than non-homeless patients.[8]

Physical Illness and Disabilities

Seventy-four percent of persons surveyed reported one or more health conditions. These conditions included physical disabilities, chronic substance abuse and severe mental health conditions.

The most frequently reported health condition was drug or alcohol abuse (41%), followed by psychiatric or emotional conditions (38%). Thirty-five percent reported a physical disability. Twenty-four percent of respondents reported experiencing Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.

FIGURE 24. HEALTH CONDITIONS



Drug or alcohol abuse n:334; Psychiatric or emotional conditions n:335; Physical disability n:327; Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) n:333; Chronic health problems n:334; Traumatic Brain Injury n:327; AIDS/HIV related n:328

Source: Applied Survey Research. (2015). Santa Cruz County Homeless Survey. Watsonville, CA.

Note: Multiple response question. Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Food Security

Food insecurity is associated with adverse health outcomes. It is associated with the increased prevalence of chronic health conditions, and prevents those already ill from improving health outcomes. Respondents were asked if they usually get enough to eat. Twenty-eight percent of respondents reported that they do not usually get enough to eat.

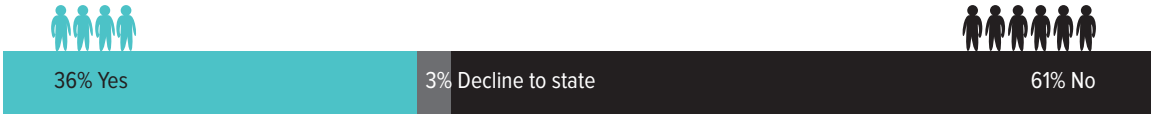
8 Sharon A. Salit, M. E. (1998). Hospitalization Costs Associated with Homelessness in New York City. New England Journal of Medicine, 338, 1734-1740.

DOMESTIC/PARTNER VIOLENCE OR ABUSE

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) recommends asking about physical, emotional, or sexual abuse over a lifetime. In addition to asking about current experiences of domestic violence or abuse, eight percent of all survey respondents reported they were currently experiencing domestic/partner violence or abuse, an increase from 6% in 2013. HUD has clarified the definition of domestic/partner violence or abuse to include persons who have *ever* been victims, rather than documenting current abuse. Thirty-six percent stated they had experienced physical, emotional, or sexual abuse over their lifetime.

Domestic violence varied by gender, with 57% of female respondents reporting having experienced domestic violence in their lifetime, compared to 26% of men. Of the respondents who have been physically, emotionally, or sexually abused, 7% indicated that family/domestic violence was the primary event that led to their homelessness.

FIGURE 25. HISTORY OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE



2015 n:326

Source: Applied Survey Research. (2015). Santa Cruz County Homeless Survey. Watsonville, CA.

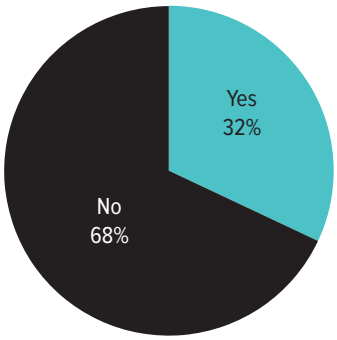
CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM

Individuals recently released from the criminal justice system often face housing challenges that may contribute to their homelessness.

Incarceration

Nineteen percent of respondents reported they were on probation or parole at the time of the survey, up from 15% in 2013. Fifteen percent of respondents indicated that they were on probation or parole at the time they most recently became homeless. Thirty-two percent of respondents reported that they had spent a night in jail in the last 12 months.

FIGURE 26. SPENT A NIGHT IN JAIL OR PRISON IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS



2015 n:329

Source: Applied Survey Research. (2015). Santa Cruz County Homeless Survey. Watsonville, CA.

Homeless Subpopulations

Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness outlines national objectives and evaluative measures for ending homelessness in the United States. In order to adequately address the diversity within the population experiencing homelessness, the federal government identified four subpopulations with particular challenges or needs: persons experiencing chronic homelessness, homeless veterans, families with children, and unaccompanied children and transition-age youth.

The following section details the number and characteristics of individuals included in the Santa Cruz County Point-in-Time Count and Survey who meet the definition of each subpopulation.

Of the 344 surveys completed in 2015, the results represent 114 chronically homeless individuals, 36 by homeless veterans, 43 individuals in homeless families,[9] and 22 by unaccompanied children and transition age youth. Surveys were completed in unsheltered environments and Transitional Housing settings. Emergency shelter respondents were interviewed in a street setting.

9 Homeless families continue to be underrepresented in Santa Cruz County Homeless Survey data. The majority of homeless families in Santa Cruz County are currently residing in shelters and transitional housing facilities. As a result homeless families are difficult to reach.

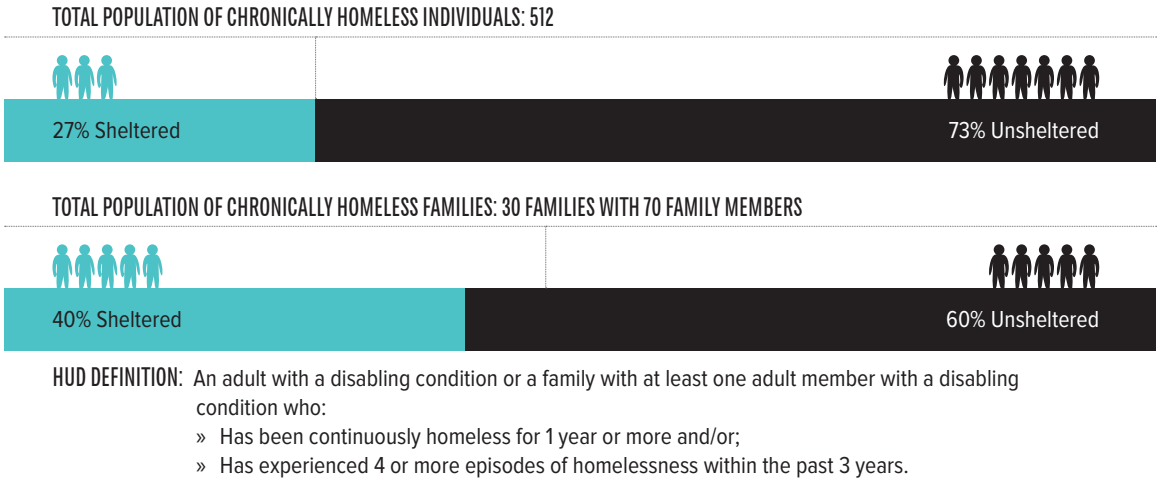
CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines a chronically homeless individual as someone who has experienced homelessness for a year or longer, or who has experienced at least four episodes of homelessness in the last three years, and also has a disabling condition that prevents them from maintaining work or housing.

The chronically homeless population represents one of the most vulnerable populations on the street. The mortality rate for those experiencing chronic homelessness is four to nine times higher than the general population. Data from communities across the country have shown that public costs incurred by those experiencing extended periods of homelessness include emergency room visits, interactions with law enforcement, incarceration, and regular access to social supports and homeless services. These combined costs are often significantly higher than the cost of providing individuals with permanent housing and supportive services.

The United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) reported that roughly 15% of the national homeless population was chronically homeless in 2014 or 84,291 chronically homeless individuals.[10] Chronic homelessness has been on the decline in recent years, as communities across the country increase the capacity of permanent supportive housing programs and prioritize those with the greatest barriers to housing stability. While the decrease in national chronic homelessness seems promising, federal budget constraints have limited the amount of money available to support housing programs and services. As a result, *Opening Doors*, which began with a goal of ending chronic homelessness by 2015, has extended the plan to 2017.[11]

FIGURE 27. CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS POPULATION ESTIMATES



Source: Applied Survey Research. (2015). Santa Cruz County Homeless Census & Survey. Watsonville, CA.

10 U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness. (2015). Annual Update 2014. Retrieved 2013 from http://www.usich.gov/
11 Cavallaro, E. (2015). Ending Chronic Homelessness, Now in 2017. National Alliance to End Homelessness. Retrieved 2015 from http://www.endhomelessness.org

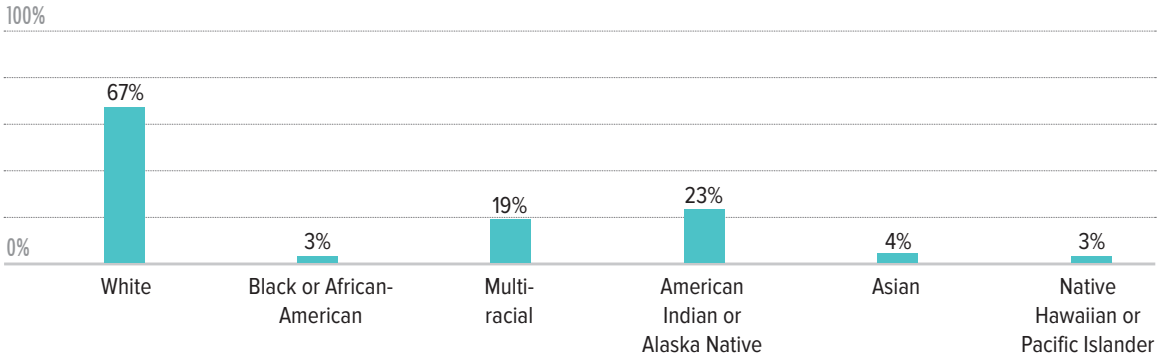
Prevalence of Chronic Homelessness

The number of chronically homeless individuals and families in Santa Cruz County continues to decline. Based on the 2015 Point-in-Time Count, there were 512 chronic homeless individuals and 30 chronically homeless families with 70 family members. This represents a slight decline, from 28% chronically homeless in 2013 to 26% in 2015.

Demographics of Chronically Homelessness Individuals

Three quarters of chronically homeless individuals were male, slightly higher than the non-chronically homeless population at 66%. Thirty-three percent of chronically homeless respondents identified as Hispanic or Latino, and the majority identified as White (67%). Thirteen percent of chronically homeless respondents identified as veterans.

FIGURE 28. RACE AMONG THOSE EXPERIENCING CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS



2015 n:97

Source: Applied Survey Research. (2015).Santa Cruz County Homeless Survey. Watsonville, CA.

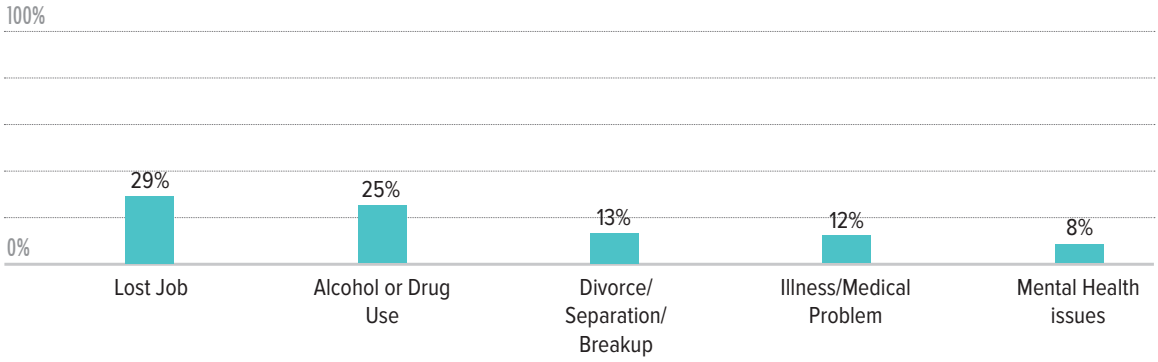
Note: Multiple response question. Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Primary Cause of Homelessness Among Those Experiencing Chronic Homelessness

Twenty-nine percent of chronically homeless respondents reported the loss of a job was the primary cause of their homelessness, and 25% stated it was the use of alcohol or drugs that was the primary cause.

When asked what was preventing them from obtaining permanent housing, there were similar responses for the chronically homeless and the non-chronically homeless population. Fifty-nine percent of the chronically homeless respondents cited a lack of employment and 57% stated they could not afford rent. Twenty-six percent of chronically homeless individuals reported that medical and health issues were preventing them from securing permanent housing.

FIGURE 29. PRIMARY CAUSE OF HOMELESSNESS (TOP FIVE RESPONSES) AMONG THOSE EXPERIENCING CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS



2015 n:114 respondents offering 142 responses

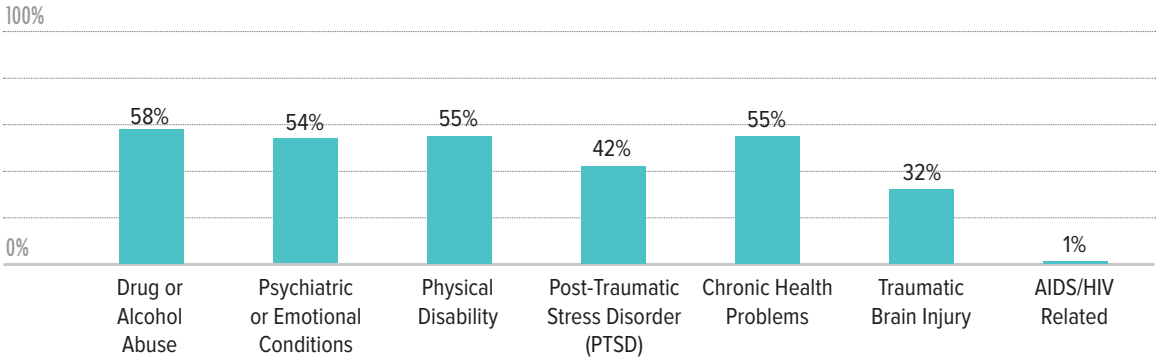
Source: Applied Survey Research. (2015). Santa Cruz County Homeless Survey. Watsonville, CA.

Note: Multiple response question. Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Health Conditions Among Those Experiencing Chronic Homelessness

Of the chronically homeless respondents in 2015, 58% reported experiencing alcohol or substance abuse and 55% reported suffering from a chronic health problem or medical condition. Fifty-five percent live with a physical disability, and 54% of chronically homeless respondents suffer from a psychiatric or emotional condition.

FIGURE 30. HEALTH CONDITIONS AMONG THOSE EXPERIENCING CHRONIC HOMELESSNESS



Drug or alcohol abuse n:113; Psychiatric or emotional conditions n:113; Physical disability n:106; Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) n:111; Chronic health problems n:112; Traumatic Brain Injury n:110; AIDS/HIV related n:108

Source: Applied Survey Research. (2015). Santa Cruz County Homeless Survey. Watsonville, CA.

Access to Services Among Those Experiencing Chronic Homelessness

Ninety-three percent of the chronically homeless survey respondents reported using some sort of local homeless service. There were a higher percentage of chronically homeless respondents than non-chronically homeless respondents who reported using shelter day services (47% and 29%, respectively) and for mental health services (20% and 8%). Eighty-eight percent of people experiencing chronic homelessness are receiving free meals, and 24% have access to free bus passes.

Twenty-four percent of chronically homeless respondents reported they were not receiving any form of government assistance, which is consistent with the proportion of respondents who were not receiving government assistance (23%) in 2013. Thirty-nine percent reported receiving food stamps; followed by 29% who were receiving SSI/SSDI. Of those not receiving services, 32% had never applied. The other common reasons for the chronically homeless not receiving services were no permanent address (23%), not knowing where to go (23%), and not wanting government assistance (23%).

Incarceration Among Those Experiencing Chronic Homelessness

A higher percentage of chronically homeless respondents reported they had spent one or more nights in jail or prison in the 12 months prior to the survey (40% compared to 28% of non-chronically homeless respondents). Eighteen percent of chronically homeless respondents were on probation or parole at the time they most recently became homeless.

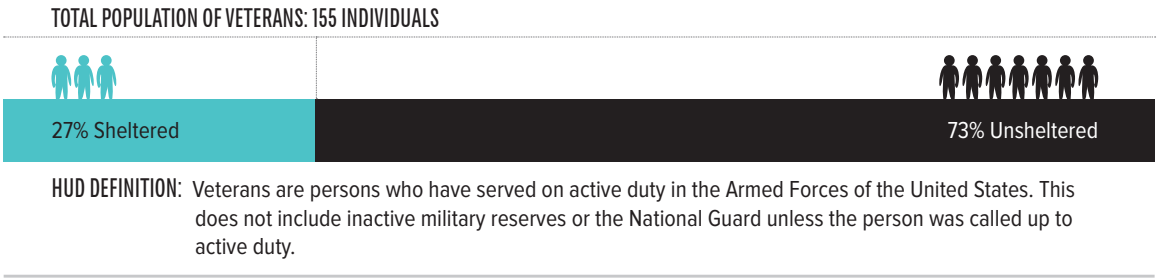
HOMELESS VETERAN STATUS

Many U.S. veterans experience conditions that place them at increased risk for homelessness. Veterans have higher rates of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), 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.

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) provides a broad range of benefits and services to veterans of the U.S. Armed Forces. These benefits can include different forms of financial assistance, including monthly cash payments to disabled veterans, health care, education, and housing benefits. In addition to these supports, the VA and HUD have partnered to provide additional housing and support services to veterans currently experiencing homelessness or in danger of becoming homeless.

At the national level, there has been a 33 percent decrease in the number of homeless veterans between 2009-2014. According to data collected during the national 2014 Point-in-Time Count, 49,933 veterans experienced homelessness on a single night in January 2014.[12]

FIGURE 31. HOMELESS VETERAN POPULATION ESTIMATES



Source: Applied Survey Research. (2015). Santa Cruz County Homeless Census & Survey. Watsonville, CA.

NUMBER OF HOMELESS VETERANS

The estimated number of homeless veterans in Santa Cruz County decreased between 2013 and 2015. There were an estimated 155 homeless veterans in Santa Cruz County in 2015, compared to 395 in the 2013 count. This represents a significant decrease and is partially the result of newly available Veteran housing subsidies and services and Veteran housing assistance. Veterans represent approximately 8% of the total homeless population, one of the lowest figures in many years; the 2013 veteran percentage was 11%.

12 Department of Housing and Urban Development. (2015). Annual Assessment Report to Congress. Retrieved 2015 from https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/2014-AHAR-Part1.pdf

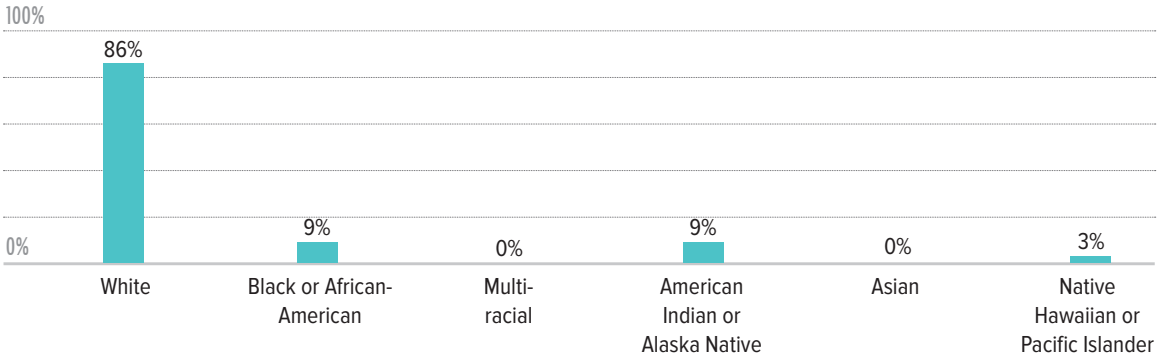
Demographics of Homeless Veterans

Ninety-two percent of the homeless veterans in Santa Cruz County were male. When asked which racial group homeless veterans identified with, 86% stated they were White, 9% were Black or African-American, and 9% American Indian or Alaska Native. Six percent of homeless veterans identified as Hispanic or Latino.

Eighty-one percent of homeless veterans were living in Santa Cruz County at the time they most recently became homeless, similar to the non-veteran population at 85%.

The greatest percentage of veterans reported they had been living in a home owned or rented by themselves or a partner (33%) before becoming homeless, lower than the non-veteran population (41%). Fourteen percent stated they had been living in a motel or hotel, compared to 6% of non-veterans.

FIGURE 32. RACE OF HOMELESS VETERANS



2015 n:35

Source: Applied Survey Research. (2015).Santa Cruz County Homeless Survey. Watsonville, CA.

Note: Multiple response question. Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

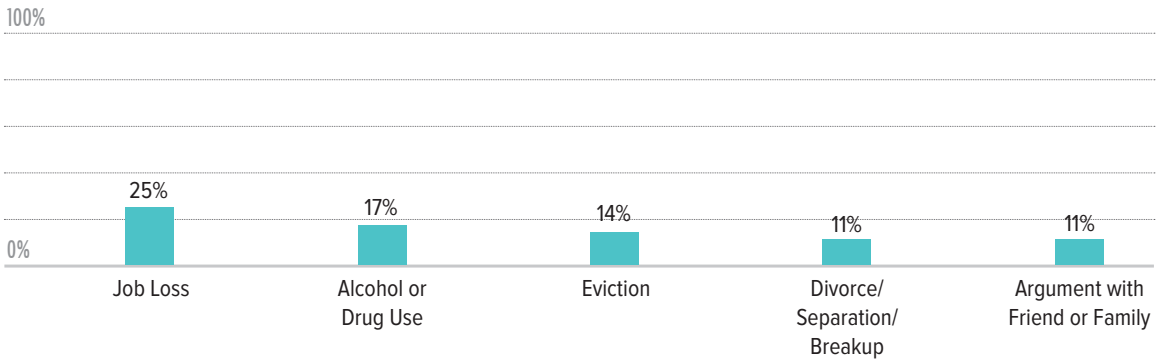
Length of Homelessness among Homeless Veterans

Twenty-two percent of homeless veteran respondents indicated this was their first time experiencing homelessness. When asked about the length of their current episode of homelessness, none reported they had been on the street for a week or less. Sixty-one percent reported they had been on the street continuously for a year or more.

Primary Cause of Homelessness Among Homeless Veterans

The most frequently cited cause of homelessness among veterans was job loss (25%), which was also the most commonly cited cause for the non-veteran survey respondents. Seventeen percent of veteran respondents attributed their homelessness to the use of drugs or alcohol, and 14% reported it was due to being evicted.

FIGURE 33. PRIMARY CAUSE OF HOMELESSNESS (TOP FIVE RESPONSES) AMONG HOMELESS VETERANS



2015 n:36 respondents offering 41 responses

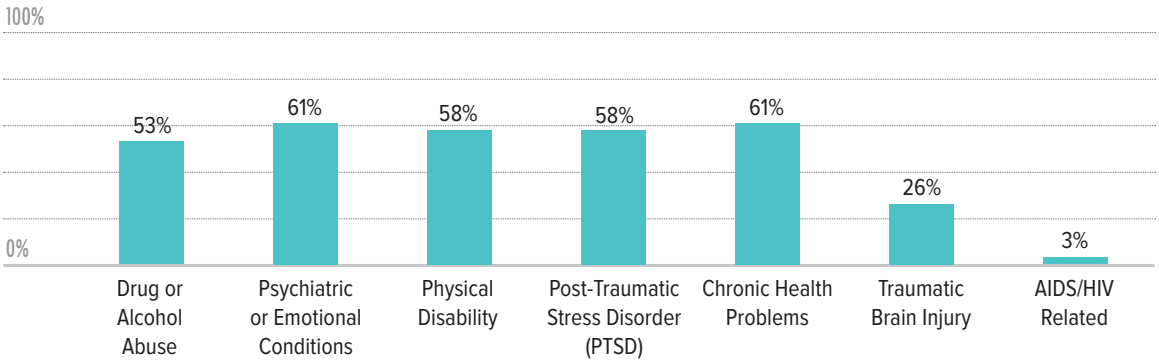
Source: Applied Survey Research. (2015). Santa Cruz County Homeless Survey. Watsonville, CA.

Note: Multiple response question. Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Health Conditions among Homeless Veterans

A higher percentage of veteran than non-veteran respondents reported having one or more disabling conditions (78% compared to 50% of non-veterans). Sixty-one percent of veteran respondents reported suffering from a psychiatric or emotional condition, compared to 35% of non-veterans. Of the veteran survey respondents, 61% reported chronic health problems, 58% reported PTSD, and 53% reported using alcohol or drugs. A little over one quarter of veterans (26%) reported suffering from a Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), compared to 15% of non-veterans.

FIGURE 34. HEALTH CONDITIONS AMONG HOMELESS VETERANS



Drug or alcohol abuse n:36; Psychiatric or emotional conditions n:36; Physical disability n:36; Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) n:36; Chronic health problems n:36; Traumatic Brain Injury n:35; AIDS/HIV related n:36

Source: Applied Survey Research. (2015). Santa Cruz County Homeless Survey. Watsonville, CA.

Note: Multiple response question. Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

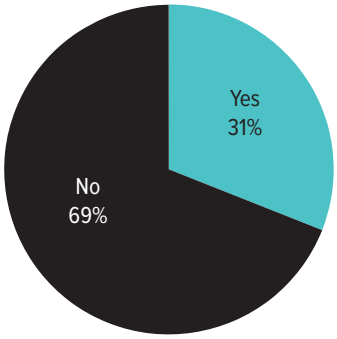
Access to Services Among Homeless Veterans

Among homeless veterans, 86% were receiving some sort of government assistance; the most common assistance received was food stamps at 36%, followed by VA Benefits (33%). Thirty-one percent of veteran respondents were receiving social security benefits. Of the local services offered in Santa Cruz County, the most commonly accessed were free meals (91%). Fifty-six percent of veteran homeless respondents had access to shelter day services, 27% to mental health services, and 24% were receiving free bus passes.

Incarceration Among Homeless Veterans

Veteran homeless respondents had spent at *least* one night in jail in the last 12 months at about the same rate as non-veteran respondents, 31% compared to 32%, respectively.

FIGURE 35. A NIGHT SPENT IN JAIL OR PRISON IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS AMONG HOMELESS VETERANS



2015 n:36

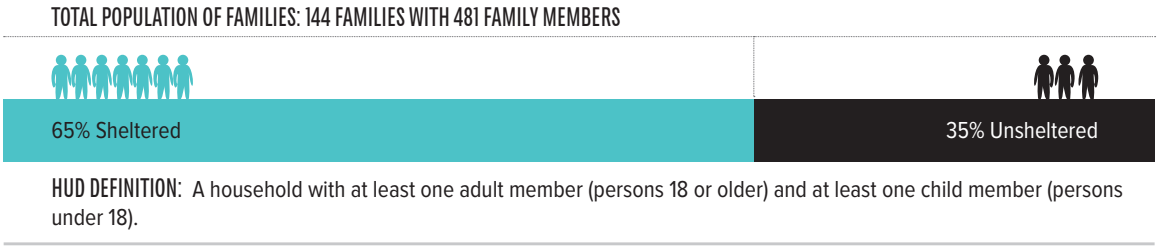
Source: Applied Survey Research. (2015). Santa Cruz County Homeless Survey. Watsonville, CA.

HOMELESS FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN

National data from 2014 suggest that 37% of all people experiencing homelessness are persons in families. The majority of families with children experiencing homelessness are sheltered. Public shelters serve 90% of homeless families in the United States, a significantly higher proportion of the population compared to other subpopulations, including unaccompanied youth. Data on homeless families suggest that they are not much different from families in poverty.

The risk of homelessness is highest among single female-headed households and families with children under the age of 6.[13] Children in families experiencing homelessness have increased incidence of illness and are more likely to have emotional and behavioral problems than children with consistent living accommodations.[14]

FIGURE 36. HOMELESS FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN POPULATION ESTIMATES



Source: Applied Survey Research. (2015). Santa Cruz County Homeless Census & Survey. Watsonville, CA.

13 U. S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2007). Characteristics and Dynamics of Homeless Families with Children. Retrieved 2013 from http://aspe.hhs.gov/

14 U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness. (2013). Opening Doors. Retrieved 2013 from http://www.usich.gov/

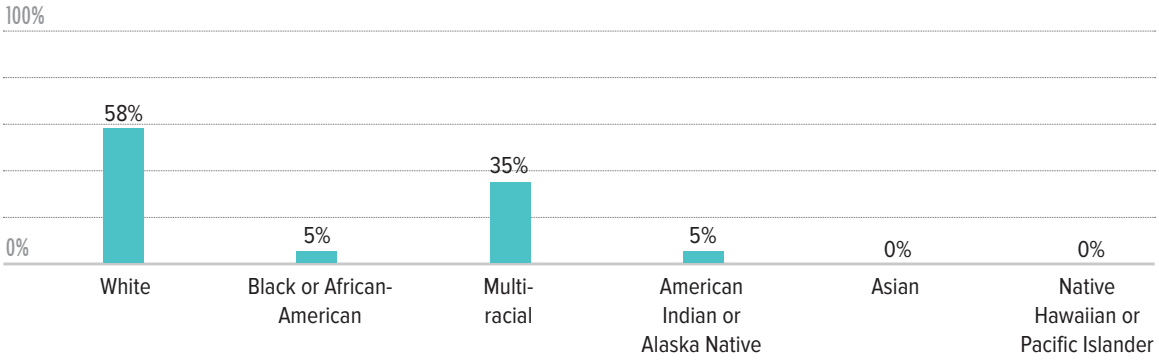
Number of Homeless Families with Children

Data from the Santa Cruz County Point-in-Time Count showed a decrease in the number of homeless individuals in families. In 2015 there were 144 homeless households with 481 persons (this represents almost 25% of all homeless persons in Santa Cruz County), while in 2013 there were 165 homeless families with 544 individual persons. Thirty-five percent of the homeless families in 2015 were unsheltered, which is a slight decrease from the 37% who were unsheltered in 2013.

Demographics of Homeless Families with Children

Seventy percent of survey respondents in families were female, much higher than the survey respondents not in families (25%). Of the survey respondents in families, 54% identified as Hispanic or Latino.

FIGURE 37. RACE OF HOMELESS FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN



2015 n:40

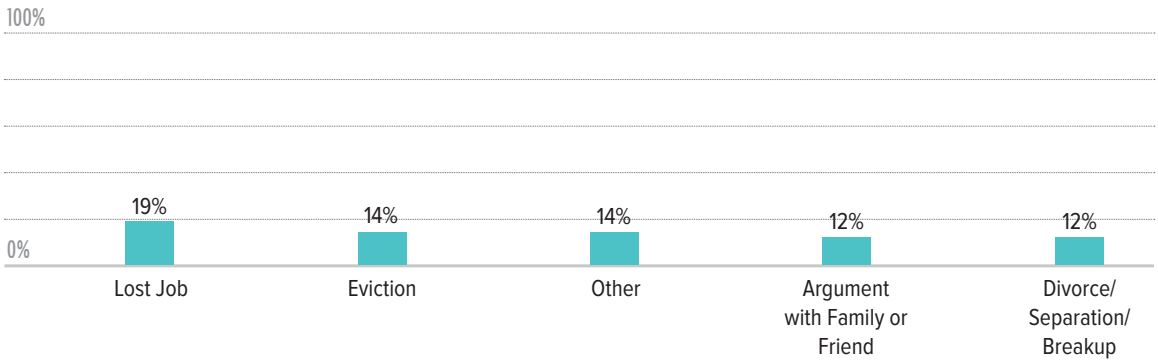
Source: Applied Survey Research. (2015).Santa Cruz County Homeless Survey. Watsonville, CA.

Note: Multiple response question. Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Primary Cause of Homeless Families with Children

Nineteen percent of respondents in families with children reported the primary cause of their homeless was loss of a job, and 14% cited eviction. The other common causes were an illness or medical problem (12%), divorce or separation (12%), or an argument with a friend or family member who asked them to leave (12%).

FIGURE 38. PRIMARY CAUSE OF HOMELESSNESS (TOP FIVE RESPONSES) AMONG HOMELESS FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN



2015 n:42 respondents offering 46 responses

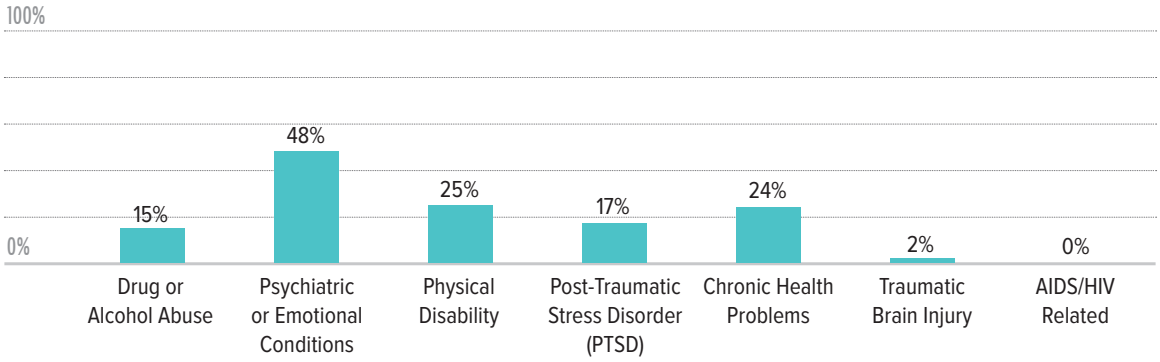
Source: Applied Survey Research. (2015). Santa Cruz County Homeless Survey. Watsonville, CA.

Note: Multiple response question. Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Health Conditions among Families with Children

Of the survey respondents in families, the most common health condition experienced was psychiatric or emotional conditions (48%). This was followed by a physical disability (25%) and chronic health problems (24%).

FIGURE 39. HEALTH CONDITIONS AMONG HOMELESS FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN



Drug or alcohol abuse n:41; Psychiatric or emotional conditions n:42; Physical disability n:40; Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) n:42; Chronic health problems n:41; Traumatic Brain Injury n:41; AIDS/HIV related n:41

Source: Applied Survey Research. (2015). Santa Cruz County Homeless Survey. Watsonville, CA.

Length of Homeless among Families with Children

Forty-seven percent of survey respondents in families reported they were experiencing homelessness for the first time, compared to 26% of single individuals. Forty-four percent of respondents in families had been without housing for 6 months or more. Nearly half of respondents reported they were living in a home they or a partner owned when they became homeless (48%), and 36% were living in a home owned or rented by a family member or friend.

Government Assistance for Homeless Families with Children

Eighty-five percent of respondents in families reported receiving some sort of government assistance. Over three-quarters (76%) were receiving Food Stamps, and 39% were receiving CalWorks/TANF.

UNACCOMPANIED CHILDREN AND TRANSITION-AGE YOUTH

There are limited data available on homelessness among unaccompanied children and youth nationally and locally. Current federal estimates suggest there are 45,205 children and youth on the streets and in public shelters.[15] Homeless youth have a harder time accessing services, including shelter, medical care, and employment.[16]

In 2012, the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness amended the federal strategic plan to end homelessness to include specific strategies and support to address the needs of unaccompanied homeless children and transition age youth. As part of this effort, the Department of Housing and Urban Development placed increased emphasis on gathering data on unaccompanied homeless children and youth during Point-in-Time counts.

The County of Santa Cruz implemented a dedicated youth count and survey starting in 2009 to improve data on unaccompanied children and youth in the County. These efforts have been replicated each count, with minor improvements. The following section provides an overview of the 2015 findings. There were a small number of unaccompanied children and youth who participated in the Santa Cruz County Survey (n:22).[17]

FIGURE 40. UNACCOMPANIED CHILDREN AND TRANSITION-AGE YOUTH POPULATION ESTIMATES



HUD DEFINITION: "Unaccompanied Children" are children under the age of 18 who are homeless and living independent of a parent or legal guardian.

15 Department of Housing and Urban Development. (2015). Annual Assessment Report to Congress. Retrieved 2015 from https://www.hudexchange.info/resources/documents/2014-AHAR-Part1.pdf

16 National Coalition for the Homeless. (2011). Homeless Youth Fact Sheet. Retrieved 2011 from http://www.nationalhomeless.org.

17 Caution should be used when interpreting these data, due to the small number of surveys conducted with unaccompanied children and youth.



Source: Applied Survey Research. (2015). Santa Cruz County Homeless Census & Survey. Watsonville, CA.

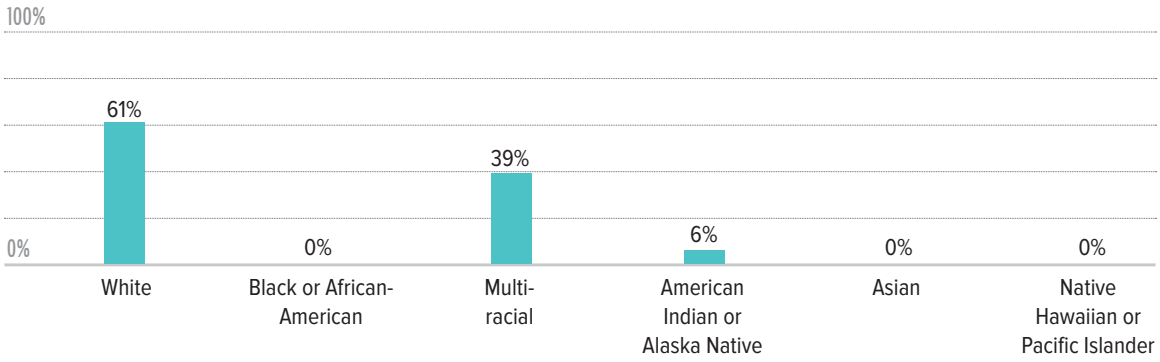
Prevalence of Unaccompanied Homeless Children and Transition-Age Youth

The number of unaccompanied children and youth identified in the 2015 Point-in-Time count decreased from previous years. In 2015 there were 30 unaccompanied children (under 18) and 242 transition-aged youth (18-24). In 2013 there were 133 unaccompanied children and 814 transition-aged youth. Variation in the youth population may be a result of the outreach and deduplication efforts implemented in 2015.[18]

Demographics of Unaccompanied Homeless Children and Transition-Age Youth

Of the population of youth respondents under age 25, 14 were male and 7 were female.[19] Five out of 22 youth respondents identified as LGBTQ. Half of the respondents (11) identified as Hispanic/Latino. Almost all of the youth respondents were living in Santa Cruz County when they became homeless (20 out of 22).

FIGURE 41. RACE AMONG UNACCOMPANIED CHILDREN AND TRANSITION-AGE YOUTH



2015 n:18

Source: Applied Survey Research. (2015).Santa Cruz County Homeless Survey. Watsonville, CA.

Note: Multiple response question. Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

18 For additional information on youth count methods and deduplication efforts please see Appendix A.
19 Each respondent left some survey questions blank, so not every section will add up to 22.

Institutional Involvement Among Unaccompanied Children and Transition-Age Youth

Five youth respondents reported that they had been in the foster care system, but only one respondent felt aging out of foster care was the primary cause of their homelessness.

Seven of the youth reported they had spent at least one night in jail in the last 12 months, and 6 respondents are currently on probation. Five respondents stated their criminal record was preventing them from permanent housing.

FIGURE 42. HISTORY OF FOSTER CARE AMONG UNACCOMPANIED CHILDREN AND TRANSITION-AGE YOUTH



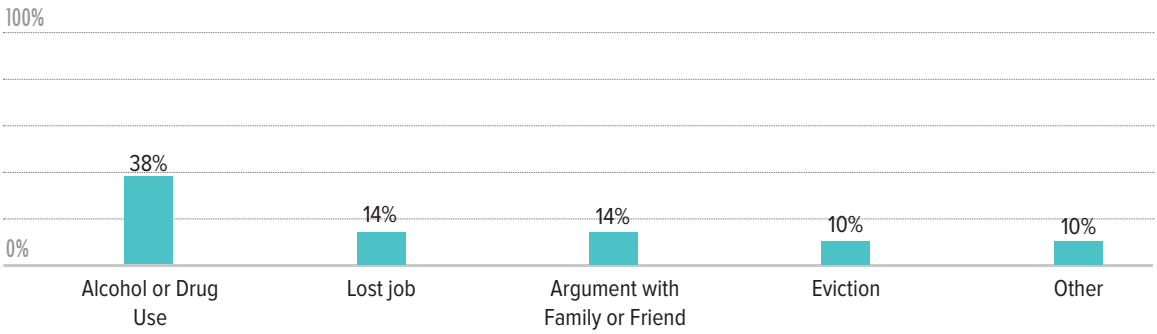
2015 n:21

Source: Applied Survey Research. (2015).Santa Cruz County Homeless Survey. Watsonville, CA.

Primary Cause of Homelessness Among Unaccompanied Children and Transition-Age Youth

Homeless youth survey respondents reported similar causes of homelessness to those 25 and older. Fourteen percent of youth reported an argument with a family or friend who asked them to leave. A higher percentage of youth respondents (5%) reported domestic violence as the primary cause of their homelessness, as compared to those ages 25 and older (3%).

FIGURE 43. PRIMARY CAUSE OF HOMELESSNESS (TOP FIVE RESPONSES) AMONG UNACCOMPANIED CHILDREN AND TRANSITION-AGE YOUTH



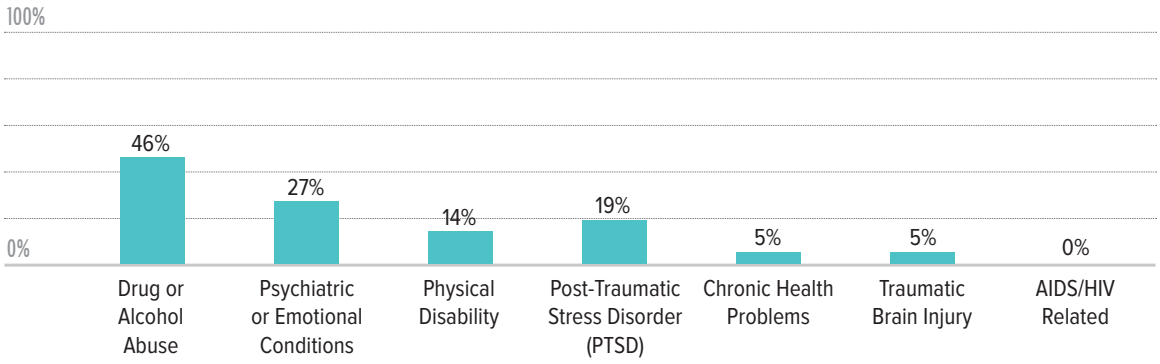
2015 n:21 respondents offering 24 responses

Source: Applied Survey Research. (2015). Santa Cruz County Homeless Survey. Watsonville, CA.

Note: Multiple response question. Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.

Health Conditions Among Unaccompanied Homeless Children and Transition-Age Youth

FIGURE 44. HEALTH CONDITIONS AMONG UNACCOMPANIED CHILDREN AND TRANSITION-AGE YOUTH



Drug or alcohol abuse n:22; Psychiatric or emotional conditions n:22; Physical disability n:21; Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) n:21; Chronic health problems n:22; Traumatic Brain Injury n:21; AIDS/HIV related n:20

Source: Applied Survey Research. (2015).Santa Cruz County Homeless Survey. Watsonville, CA.

Services and Social Support Networks Among Unaccompanied Children and Transition-Age Youth

All but two of the youth survey respondents were using local support services; the most commonly accessed service by 14 respondents was free meals. Almost half of the respondents did not have access to any government assistance program, but 9 were receiving Food Stamps.

Conclusion

The decline in overall homeless census results from 3,536 persons in 2013 to 1,964 persons in 2015 in Santa Cruz County is remarkable. Available 2015 Point-in-Time count data from other Bay Area/Central Coast communities (Santa Clara, San Mateo, Monterey, Solano, and San Luis Obispo) showed decreases from their 2013 results, yet some communities in Southern California have shown significant increases (Los Angeles, Orange County and San Diego).

Homelessness is a complex phenomenon and is affected by many factors– employment, housing affordability/availability, physical/mental/behavioral health, service/support networks, public services/institutional support, community will/capacity and many other factors. Each of these factors significantly contributes to the number of homeless in Santa Cruz County, yet they are many other less tangible factors that are important as well.

Since 2013 there has been considerable activity in the Santa Cruz community regarding homeless planning and community involvement. Notable are the efforts of the Homeless Action Partnership (HAP) in coordinating a countywide response to homelessness, the role of many housing providers in increasing the stock of year-round homeless beds from 728 in 2007 to 1,172 in 2015 (these providers, such as Shelter Plus Care, MATCH, VASH, and DMV vouchers, provided the beds used by Project 180 and many others), the close coordination and joint planning between the County departments and cities, the increase year-by-year in CoC funds that support more housing and services, and the launch of major VA initiatives in Santa Cruz County, including VASH and SSVF.

Major initiatives worked on in the last 2 years also include the countywide Smart Solutions to Homelessness strategic planning efforts, the success of our Housing First initiative 180/180, the impact of the Affordable Care Act for homeless healthcare and wellness, the Downtown Accountability Program in Santa Cruz, Project Homeless Connect in Santa Cruz and Watsonville, Association of Faith Communities mobile shelter, general outreach efforts and many other local and neighborhood community responses. There is no question that these efforts have all contributed to the reduction of homelessness.

Survey responses indicate a number of characteristics of the homeless experience in Santa Cruz County:

- Veteran homelessness decreased from 395 persons in 2013 to 155 in 2015
- Chronic homelessness decreased from 989 persons in 2013 to 512 in 2015
- Unaccompanied homeless children and young adults (<25) decreased from 947 in 2013 to 272 in 2015
- 69% are unsheltered
- 21% live in vehicles
- 24% have a foster care experience
- 84% were housed in Santa Cruz when they became homeless
- 53% have a disabling condition
- 86% said 'yes' to wanting safe, affordable and permanent housing

With a 44% reduction in the homeless census from 2013 to 2015, the scale of decreases in the jurisdictions and unincorporated areas is significant everywhere. Shelter capacity decreased by just under 5%, but unsheltered reductions in most of the cities in Santa Cruz County were down by 40%-50% with only Capitola increasing from a single person in 2013 to 12 persons in 2015. The unincorporated areas decreased by almost 70% in total with the Aptos area, Live Oak and South County showing a combined decrease of over 82%. There is no question that there has been a significant geographic and demographic shift in homelessness in Santa Cruz County.

It is hoped that the data presented in this report will be used as a reference tool for continued efforts to end homelessness in Santa Cruz County and create more responsive programs and solutions to achieve this goal. Consistent with all of the work done in the community wide planning to end homelessness has been the importance of the continued development of quality data and the imperative that we have to educate and involve our community about homelessness and how to prevent and end it. This report is, in part, dedicated to this effort.

Appendix 1: Methodology

Overview

The purpose of the 2015 Santa Cruz County Homeless Point-in-Time Census & Survey was to produce a Point-in-Time estimate of people who experience homelessness in Santa Cruz County. The results of the street count were combined with the results from the shelter and institution count to produce the total estimated number of persons experiencing homelessness in Santa Cruz County on a given night. The subsequent, in-depth qualitative survey was used to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the experiences and demographics of those counted. A more detailed description of the methodology follows.

Components of the Homeless Census Method

The Point-in-Time count methodology had three primary components:

- The general street count between daybreak and 10 AM – an enumeration of unsheltered homeless individuals;
- The youth street count between 12 PM and 4 PM – a targeted enumeration of unsheltered youth under the age of 25;
- The shelter count for the night of the street count – an enumeration of sheltered homeless individuals registered with HUD's Housing Inventory Chart.

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.

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

FIGURE 45. SURVEY AND CENSUS POPULATIONS

	CENSUS POPULATION	SURVEY POPULATION
24 and younger	29%	8%
Families	24%	13%
Sheltered	31%	32%
Total	1,964	344

Source: Applied Survey Research. (2015). Santa Cruz County Homeless Census and Survey. Watsonville, CA.

The Planning Process

To ensure the success of the count, many county and community agencies collaborated in community outreach, volunteer recruitment, logistical planning, methodological decision-making, and interagency coordination efforts. Applied Survey Research (ASR), a non-profit social research firm, provided technical assistance with these aspects of the planning process. ASR has over 16 years of experience conducting homeless counts and surveys throughout California and across the nation. Their work is featured as a best practice in HUD's publication: *A Guide to Counting Unsheltered Homeless People*.

Community Involvement

Local homeless service providers and advocates have been active and valued partners in the planning and implementation of this and previous homeless counts. Applied Survey Research invited feedback and discussion on the methodology in order to have a county-wide endorsement of the count.

STREET COUNT METHODOLOGY

Definition

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

- An individual or family 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.

Methodological Improvements

The 2015 street count methodology followed a mature, HUD approved methodology used since the first Santa Cruz County report conducted by Applied Survey Research in 2001. Through 2011 all areas of the county were fully canvassed by adult community volunteers and service providers, with no additional outreach to youth. In 2013, the dedicated youth outreach helped to develop a clearer picture of the extent of youth homelessness. Changes were made to the youth count in 2015 in order to have a more comprehensive profile of youth homelessness in Santa Cruz County. A clearer picture of the youth count methodology can be found in a following section.

The 2015 count made a greater effort to cover some of the harder to reach regions from previous counts. Special outreach teams were created ahead of time with advocates who had access to special populations where quality enumeration required optimal timing, location, experience and sensitivity. The following were the special areas that were canvassed by outreach teams: South County in the levy areas with members of the Brown Berets, former homeless and expert guides, Mid County in the Aptos camping areas, Live Oak encampments including vehicle persons, West Side in the areas around Natural Bridges and Homeless Garden Project, UC Santa Cruz around the Empire Grade and areas above the campus, and there were also countywide vehicle assessments.

Volunteer and Guide Recruitment and Training

Many individuals who live and/or work in Santa Cruz County turned out to support the County's effort to enumerate local individuals experiencing homelessness. To have a successful enumeration effort of this magnitude, it is crucial to have volunteer and homeless persons who have an intimate knowledge of the local areas. Approximately 45 homeless individuals and 70 community volunteers participated in the 2015 general street count. Outreach efforts were conducted, targeting local nonprofits that serve the homeless and local volunteer programs. Local shelters and service providers recruited the most knowledgeable and reliable homeless individuals to participate in the count. Homeless persons were paid $10 an hour for the training and they were also paid $10 for each hour they spent out on the day of the count.

All homeless individuals and volunteers who participated in the count were asked to attend a one hour training prior to the day of the count. Trainings were held in multiple locations throughout the county. This training covered all aspects in the count, including the definition of homeless and how to recognize homeless individuals, potential locations homeless individuals may be located at and how to safely and respectfully approach them, and how to use the tally sheets and maps to ensure the entirety of the assigned area was covered.

Safety Precautions

Every effort was made to minimize potentially hazardous situations. Every volunteer participated in a training session that educated individuals on how to enumerate the homeless without any contact. High-volume areas and encampments were covered by specifically trained teams who were comfortable with the areas. Enumeration teams were advised to take all safety precautions possible, including bringing along flashlights and maintaining distance from those they were counting. The local law enforcement was made aware of the count but they were not brought in to participate. No official reports were received with regard to unsafe or at-risk situations occurring during the street count in any area of the county.

Street Count Dispatch Centers

To achieve complete coverage of Santa Cruz County within the four-hour timeframe, the planning team identified two areas for the placement of deployment centers on the night of the count in Watsonville and Santa Cruz. Volunteers selected their dispatch center at the time of registration, based on familiarity with the area or convenience. The planning team divided up the enumeration routes and assigned them to the deployment center closest or most central to the coverage area to facilitate the timely deployment of enumeration teams into the field.

Logistics of Enumeration

On the morning of the street count, two or more person teams were created to enumerate designated areas of the county for the street count. Each team was typically composed of one trained volunteer and one trained homeless guide, and they were provided with their assigned census tract map area, tally sheet, training guidelines and other supplies. All accessible streets, roads, and highways in the enumerated tracts were traveled by foot or car. No direct contact with enumerated homeless people was made during the census enumeration. 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 the shelter count. Deployment center volunteers provided each team with tally sheets to record the number of homeless persons observed and basic demographic and location information. Deployment center volunteers also verified that at least one person on each team had a cell phone available for their use during the count and recorded the number on the volunteer deployment log sheet. Teams were asked to cover the entirety of their assigned areas, staying out for as long as it took to cover every part of the census tract.

Point-in-Time 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 outreach efforts are, an undercount of the homeless population will result, especially of hard-to-reach subpopulations such as families and youth. Also, persons in "double-up" living situations, "couch surfers," and non-vouchered hotels/motels are excluded from the count.

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 the methodology cannot guarantee 100% accuracy. Many factors may contribute to missed opportunities, for example:

- It is difficult to identify homeless persons who may be sleeping in vans, cars, recreational vehicles, abandoned buildings or structures unfit for human habitation.
- Homeless families with children often seek opportunities to stay on private property, rather than sleep on the streets, in vehicles, or makeshift shelters.

Even though the Point-in-Time Count 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.

YOUTH STREET COUNT METHODOLOGY

Goal

The goal of the 2015 dedicated youth count was similar to that of the initial 2013 youth count. The count was developed in order to be more inclusive of homeless children and youth, under the age of 25. Many homeless children and youth do not use homeless services, are unrecognizable to adult street count volunteers, and may be in unsheltered locations that are difficult to find. Therefore, traditional street count efforts are not as effective in reaching youth. In 2015, the goal was to not only reproduce the work that was accomplished in 2013 but to improve upon the process.

Research Design

As in 2013, planning for the 2015 supplemental youth count included youth homeless service providers. Local providers identified locations where homeless youth were known to congregate. Local service providers also identified youth currently experiencing homelessness with knowledge of where to locate and enumerate youth experiencing homelessness.

It has been recognized by the Department of Housing and Urban Development as well as the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness that youth do not commonly comingle with homeless adults and are not easily identified by non-youth. For this reason, they have accepted and recommended that communities count youth at times when they can be seen, rather than during general outreach times. The youth street count was conducted out of a deployment center in downtown Santa Cruz.

Applied Survey Research worked with the Transition Age Youth Services Program of Encompass Community Services to recruit youth in Santa Cruz County who have experienced homelessness to help with the count. There was a planning and training meeting a couple of weeks before the count to identify areas where homeless youth were likely to be during the hours of the count of January 22, 2015. On the day of the count the youth arrived to the deployment center in downtown Santa Cruz and split up the areas for enumeration. There were three separate teams; one team covered the downtown and Santa Cruz beach areas, one team covered from downtown to the Capitola Mall, and the third team had a volunteer driver which enabled them to cover the Capitola Mall all the way down to Watsonville. The teams were instructed to count only youth who were under the age of 25 and were given tally sheets and some guidelines to reference while out enumerating. Youth workers were paid $10 per hour for their time, including the training conducted prior to the count. Youth were trained on where and how to identify homeless youth as well as how to record the data.

Data Collection

It was determined that homeless youth would be more prominent on the street during late morning/early afternoon hours, rather than in the early morning when the general count was conducted. The youth count was conducted from approximately 12 PM to 4 PM on January 22, 2015.

SHELTER COUNT METHODOLOGY

Goal

The goal of the shelter and institution count was to gain an accurate count of persons temporarily housed in shelters and other institutions across Santa Cruz County. These data were vital to gaining an accurate overall count of the homeless population and understanding where homeless persons received shelter.

Definition

- An individual or family living in a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangement (including congregate shelters, transitional housing, and hotels and motels paid for by charitable organizations or by federal, state, or local government programs for low-income individuals).

Research Design

Most shelter data were reported through the HMIS system by Community Technology Alliance (CTA). In addition there were some shelters not included in the HMIS whose data was collected by Applied Survey Research. Only shelters registered with HUD in the current Housing Inventory Chart (HIC) can be included in the report. The shelter report was developed with review by the Continuum of Care consultant who prepares the HIC.

SURVEY METHODOLOGY

Planning and Implementation

The survey of 344 homeless persons was conducted in order to yield qualitative data about the homeless community in Santa Cruz County. These data are used for the McKinney-Vento Continuum of Care Homeless Assistance funding application and are important for future program development and planning. 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.

Surveys were conducted by homeless workers and shelter team members, who were trained by Applied Survey Research. Training sessions led potential interviewers through a comprehensive orientation that included project background information and detailed instruction on respondent eligibility, interviewing protocol, and confidentiality. Homeless workers were compensated at a rate of $5 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 given as an incentive for participating in the 2015 homeless survey. The socks were easy to obtain and distribute, were thought to have wide appeal, and could be provided within the project budget. This approach enabled surveys to be conducted at any time during the day. The gift proved to be a great incentive and was widely accepted among survey respondents.

Survey Administration Details

- The 2015 Santa Cruz County Homeless Survey was administered by the trained survey team between February 10, 2015 and March 25, 2015.
- In all, the survey team collected 344 unique surveys.

Survey Sampling

Based on the Point-in-Time count of homeless persons with all attempts at a randomized survey sampling process, the 344 valid surveys represent a confidence interval of +/- 5% with a 95% confidence level when generalizing the results of the survey to the estimated population of homeless individuals in Santa Cruz County.

The 2015 survey was administered in both transitional housing facilities and in unsheltered locations. Emergency shelter and unsheltered quotas were met by selecting respondents from general street locations throughout the County. Transitional housing residents were selected by shelter staff and only heads of family households living in these programs were profiled.

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. One way to increase the participation of these groups was to recruit peer survey workers. The 2013 and 2015 survey also prioritized a peer-to-peer approach to data collection by increasing the number of currently homeless surveyors.

In order to ensure diverse sample respondents, survey workers were trained to employ an "every third encounter" survey approach. Survey workers were instructed to approach every third person they encountered whom they considered to be an eligible survey respondent. 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. It is important to recognize that while efforts are made to randomize respondent selection, it is not truly a random sample methodology.

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 presented as general findings, would be kept confidential, and would not be traceable to any one individual.

Data Analysis

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.

Survey Challenges and Limitations

The 2015 Santa Cruz County Survey did not include an equal representation of all homeless experiences because it is difficult to access all of the different groups of people experiencing homelessness. There was an increased number of respondents living in families and provided a more comprehensive understanding of the overall population.

Responses from youth were less than desired. This group, in particular, was reluctant to participate in the survey. Surveyors noted significantly greater difficulty in finding willing respondents. The reason for this seems to be mistrust and concerns about the purpose of the survey. There were also reports of survey "wear out" from other community surveys.

There may be some variance in the data that the homeless individuals self-reported. 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 also reviewed the surveys to ensure quality responses. Surveys that were considered incomplete or containing false responses were not accepted.

One of the benefits of a consistent methodology and service to the County is our ability to work with informed and embedded participants of the PIT count, many of whom have worked on the effort for years. There were consistent reports of known encampments areas being empty though evidence of prior activity, anecdotal reports of persons moving deeper into more remote areas, and generally significantly more paranoia by those who are unsheltered. Survey administration was more challenging this year as well, as many respondents were very concerned about the privacy concerns and did not want to take the time to respond to our survey requests despite the response incentive offered. This was especially true for youth and young adults who, despite our good effort in the census and dedicated youth teams, chose not to participate in our survey to sufficiently represent their condition.

Appendix 2: Definitions & 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 as a household with at least one adult and one child under 18.
- ***Homeless*** under the category 1 definition of homelessness in the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (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.
- ***Transition-Age Youth (TAY)*** refers to an unaccompanied youth aged 18-24 years.
- ***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*** refers to children under the age of 18 who do not have a parent or guardian present.
- ***Unsheltered homeless individuals*** are those homeless individuals who are living on the streets, in abandoned buildings, storage structures, vehicles, encampments, or any other place unfit for human habitation.

Appendix 3: Homeless Data Exchange (HDX)

Each year the Santa Cruz County Continuum of Care, the Housing Action Partnership (HAP), submits the Point-in-Time count data to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) via the Homeless Data Exchange (HDX). The following data are the general Point-in-Time count data, including information on identified subpopulations in Santa Cruz County and is a key component of the biennial study.

ALL HOUSEHOLDS					
HOUSEHOLDS WITH AT LEAST ONE ADULT AND ONE CHILD					
	SHELTERED				
	ES	TH	SH	UNSHELTERED	TOTAL
Total number of households	41	52	0	51	144
Total number of persons	115	160	0	206	481
Number under 18 years	63	95	0	109	267
Number 18 to 24 years	5	13	0	14	32
Number 25 year or older	47	52	0	83	182
GENDER	ES	TH	SH	UNSHELTERED	TOTAL
Female	70	104	0	99	273
Male	45	56	0	105	206
Transgender: male to female	0	0	0	1	1
Transgender: female to make	0	0	0	1	1
ETHNICITY	ES	TH	SH	UNSHELTERED	TOTAL
Non-Hispanic/Non-Latino	58	66	0	85	209
Hispanic-Latino	57	94	0	121	272
RACE	ES	TH	SH	UNSHELTERED	TOTAL
White	91	117	0	113	321
Black or African American	8	8	0	9	25
Asian	1	0	0	6	7
American Indian or Alaskan Native	10	30	0	15	55
Native Hawaiian of Other Pacific Islander	0	0	0	3	3
Multiple Races	5	5	0	60	70
HOUSEHOLDS WITHOUT CHILDREN					
	SHELTERED				
	ES	TH	SH	UNSHELTERED	TOTAL
Total number of households	279	54	0	1,100	1,433
Total number of persons	279	54	0	1,120	1,453
Number 18 to 24 years	11	10	0	221	242
Number 25 year or older	268	44	0	899	1,211
GENDER	ES	TH	SH	UNSHELTERED	TOTAL
Female	99	21	0	253	373
Male	177	32	0	865	107
Transgender: male to female	2	0	0	2	4
Transgender: female to male	1	1	0	0	2

ETHNICITY	ES	TH	SH	UNSHELTERED	TOTAL
Non-Hispanic/Non-Latino	193	48	0	754	995
Hispanic-Latino	86	6	0	366	458
RACE	ES	TH	SH	UNSHELTERED	TOTAL
White	206	46	0	664	916
Black or African American	18	3	0	69	90
Asian	1	0	0	40	41
American Indian or Alaskan Native	28	1	0	58	87
Native Hawaiian of Other Pacific Islander	4	0	0	17	21
Multiple Races	22	4	0	271	297

HOUSEHOLDS WITH ONLY CHILDREN

	SHELTERED				
	ES	TH	SH	UNSHELTERED	TOTAL
Total number of households	1	0	0	22	23
Total number of children under age 18	2	0	0	28	30
GENDER	ES	TH	SH	UNSHELTERED	TOTAL
Female	2	0	0	10	12
Male	0	0	0	18	18
Transgender: male to female	0	0	0	0	0
Transgender: female to make	0	0	0	0	0
ETHNICITY	ES	TH	SH	UNSHELTERED	TOTAL
Non-Hispanic/Non-Latino	0	0	0	15	15
Hispanic-Latino	2	0	0	13	15
RACE	ES	TH	SH	UNSHELTERED	TOTAL
White	2	0	0	14	16
Black or African American	0	0	0	0	0
Asian	0	0	0	0	0
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0	0	0	0	0
Native Hawaiian of Other Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0	0
Multiple Races	0	0	0	14	14

TOTAL 2015 POINT-IN-TIME COUNT DATA

	SHELTERED				
	ES	TH	SH	UNSHELTERED	TOTAL
Total Number of Persons (adults & children)	396	214	0	1,354	1,964

VETERAN HOUSEHOLDS					
HOUSEHOLDS WITH AT LEAST ONE ADULT AND ONE CHILD					
	SHELTERED				
	ES	TH	SH	UNSHELTERED	TOTAL
Total number of households	1	0	0	0	1
Total number of persons	5	0	0	0	5
Total number of veterans	1	0	0	0	1
GENDER	ES	TH	SH	UNSHELTERED	TOTAL
Female	0	0	0	0	0
Male	1	0	0	0	1
Transgender: male to female	0	0	0	0	0
Transgender: female to make	0	0	0	0	0
ETHNICITY	ES	TH	SH	UNSHELTERED	TOTAL
Non-Hispanic/Non-Latino	1	0	0	0	1
Hispanic-Latino	0	0	0	0	0
RACE	ES	TH	SH	UNSHELTERED	TOTAL
White	1	0	0	0	1
Black or African American	0	0	0	0	0
Asian	0	0	0	0	0
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0	0	0	0	0
Native Hawaiian of Other Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0	0
Multiple Races	0	0	0	0	0
HOUSEHOLDS WITHOUT CHILDREN					
	SHELTERED				
	ES	TH	SH	UNSHELTERED	TOTAL
Total number of households	35	2	0	86	123
Total number of persons	35	2	0	113	150
Number 18 to 24 years	0	0	0	10	10
Number 25 year or older	35	2	0	103	140
GENDER	ES	TH	SH	UNSHELTERED	TOTAL
Female	2	0	0	5	7
Male	32	2	0	108	142
Transgender: male to female	1	0	0	0	1
Transgender: female to make	0	0	0	0	0
ETHNICITY	ES	TH	SH	UNSHELTERED	TOTAL
Non-Hispanic/Non-Latino	33	2	0	103	138
Hispanic-Latino	2	0	0	10	12

RACE	ES	TH	SH	UNSHELTERED	TOTAL
White	31	2	0	81	114
Black or African American	2	0	0	11	13
Asian	0	0	0	0	0
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0	0	0	5	5
Native Hawaiian of Other Pacific Islander	2	0	0	5	7
Multiple Races	0	0	0	11	11

YOUTH HOUSEHOLDS

HOUSEHOLDS WITH ONLY CHILDREN AND YOUTH

	SHELTERED				
	ES	TH	SH	UNSHELTERED	TOTAL
Total number of households	12	18	0	263	293
Number of parenting youth households	1	9	0	14	24
Number of unaccompanied youth households	11	9	0	249	269
Total number of persons	13	31	0	263	307
Total of persons in parenting youth households	2	22	0	14	38
Total of unaccompanied youth	11	9	0	249	269
Total of parenting youth	1	10	0	14	25
Parenting youth under 18	0	0	0	0	0
Parenting youth over 18	1	10	0	14	25
Number of children with parents who are over age 18	1	12	0	21	34
Number of unaccompanied youth	11	9	0	249	269
Number of unaccompanied children under 18	0	0	0	28	28
Number of unaccompanied youth adults (18-24)	11	9	0	221	241
GENDER (YOUTH PARENTS AND UNACCOMPANIED ONLY)	ES	TH	SH	UNSHELTERED	TOTAL
Female	3	14	0	83	100
Male	9	5	0	186	200
Transgender: male to female	0	0	0	0	0
Transgender: female to make	0	0	0	0	0
ETHNICITY (YOUTH PARENTS AND UNACCOMPANIED ONLY)	ES	TH	SH	UNSHELTERED	TOTAL
Non-Hispanic/Non-Latino	6	6	0	151	163
Hispanic-Latino	6	13	0	118	137

RACE (YOUTH PARENTS AND UNACCOMPANIED ONLY)	ES	TH	SH	UNSHELTERED	TOTAL
White	8	19	0	142	169
Black or African American	1	0	0	0	1
Asian	0	0	0	0	0
American Indian or Alaskan Native	2	0	0	0	2
Native Hawaiian of Other Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0	0
Multiple Races	1	0	0	127	128

HOMELESS SUBPOPULATIONS					
	SHELTERED			UNSHELTERED	TOTAL
	ES	TH	SH		
Chronically Homeless Individuals	137	0		375	512
Chronically Homeless Families	14	0		16	30
Persons in Chronically Homeless Families	28	0		42	70
Chronically Homeless Veteran Individuals	14	0		46	60
Chronically Homeless Veteran Families	0	0		0	0
Persons in Chronically Homeless Veteran Families	0	0		0	0
	SHELTERED			UNSHELTERED	TOTAL
	ES	TH	SH		
Adults with a Serious Mental Illness	203	0	73	869	1145
Adults with a Substance Use Disorder	115	0	41	544	700
Adults with HIV/AIDS	4	0	0	16	20
Victims of Domestic Violence (optional)	132	0	39	487	658

SANTA CRUZ COUNTY

HOMELESS

POINT-IN-TIME CENSUS & SURVEY

COMPREHENSIVE REPORT 2015

ASR