

# Youth Homelessness Needs Assessment

Austin/Travis County



Ending Community Homelessness Coalition

December 14, 2016



# I am from....

I am from my grandmother's calloused hands,  
from the crock pots of my family household kitchen.  
I am from my mother's smile,  
the way she works day in and day out from my daddy's mistakes,  
from my father's excuses, I am from a new day.

I am from forgiveness and I am from forgetfulness,  
I'm from the dirty alleyways  
and the street corners of my block,  
no place to sleep I was grateful under a bridge,  
passed out on a one-inch thick cardboard box.

I'm from the dirty pockets of drug dealers  
in front of the liquor store shooting dice with hoodies on and handguns,  
Cuz they don't think tomorrow will be any better or  
tomorrow doesn't make a difference.

I am from granny's front porch,  
I'm from the south side,  
where black and brown leaders were overlooked and  
were put down for their passion for standing up to oppression.

But where I'm from doesn't determine where I'm going  
and who you were doesn't defeat the fat facts of a better life you have today.  
You have to be the change you wish to see.

- Darrion Chi Borders – Youth Advisory Council Member, Austin, Texas

# About ECHO

The Ending Community Homelessness Coalition (ECHO) is a non-profit that plans, develops, prioritizes, and implements systemic, community-wide strategies to end homelessness in Austin and Travis County, Texas. Its work is grounded on collaborative partnerships, strategic and data-driven decision making, as well as innovation, bold thinking, and creativity.

ECHO is elected locally and recognized by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) as the Continuum of Care (CoC), the local leader in coordinating housing and services funding for persons experiencing homelessness. ECHO is also designated as the lead agency for the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), a system-wide database that tracks the needs of households experiencing homelessness, services received across the community and their outcomes.

## Acknowledgements

This report was created by staff at the Ending Community Homelessness Coalition (ECHO) in close collaboration with LifeWorks staff and other service providers in the community. We wish to extend our special appreciation to the youth who shared their experiences, needs, and aspirations through surveys, focus groups meetings, and interviews. We would also like to thank the community workers who shared their knowledge and their time completing surveys or participating in interviews.

# About this Report

ECHO conducted this needs assessment as a baseline for understanding the needs of youth experiencing homelessness in Austin/Travis County, Texas. The timing of this report is especially important, as our community is undertaking several important initiatives to accelerate efforts to end homelessness among young people. These efforts include participation in the University of Chicago - Chapin Hall's [Voices of Youth Count](#), the A Way Home America / Rapid Results Institute's [100-Day Challenge to #EndYouthHomelessness](#), and the submission of an application to HUD for its [Youth Homelessness Demonstration Program](#) to become a demonstration site and serve as a model for other communities to end youth homelessness.

We provide data and trends on local youth experiences to inform ongoing efforts for ending youth homelessness in our community. We see this document as a foundation that can be built upon as we continue to learn more about how to end youth homelessness. We intentionally present most of the information visually to engage readers and invite a wide audience to review, discuss, and act on the data. In particular, we invite stakeholders to use data in this report to inform policy, program design, and service delivery.

Specifically, this report includes:

- Methodology
- Trends and takeaways
- Factors contributing to youth homelessness
- The number and different characteristics of the homeless youth population
- Current needs
- Current capacity to address homelessness
- Currents gaps in services
- The voices of youth

# Methodology

To gain a well-rounded perspective of the needs of youth experiencing homelessness, we combined qualitative and quantitative data collection methods, using a human-centered approach through which youth themselves were principal actors in providing insights into their experiences and by providing ideas on improving our community response system to their needs.

## Quantitative Analysis

- Analysis of Point-in-Time (PIT) count data.  
The Point-in-Time count is an unduplicated count on a single night in January of the people in a community experiencing homelessness that includes both sheltered and unsheltered populations.
- Analysis of data from the Homelessness Management Information System (HMIS).  
HMIS is a system-wide database that tracks the needs of households experiencing homelessness, services received across the community and their outcomes.
- Analysis of VI-SPDAT data.  
The VI-SPDAT is triage tool currently used by providers in our community to assess the health and social needs of persons experiencing homelessness and match them with the most appropriate support and housing intervention.
- Analysis of *preliminary* data from the Voices of Youth Count.  
During the summer of 2016, the University of Chicago – Chapin Hall applied a youth-centered count methodology across 22 partner communities, including Travis County, to enumerate homeless and unstably housed youth between the ages of 13 and 25 years old. In this needs assessment, we share preliminary results of their youth surveys conducted. Their research extends beyond the youth surveys (it includes in-depth interviews, review of existing data, provider survey and youth count) and the results from their comprehensive work will be published in the coming months.
- Review of national study on youth homelessness.  
Review of the [Street Outreach Program study](#) published by the Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Children and Families in April 2016, that includes data from a program in Austin, Texas administered by LifeWorks.

# Methodology

## Qualitative Analysis

- Collection and review of surveys of 26 different service providers and stakeholder agencies completed in October 2016, for this needs assessment.
- Two focus groups discussions conducted on 10/06/2016 and 11/02/2016 of a total of 17 youth who were either experiencing homelessness or had previous lived experiences.
- Interviews of 10 different field experts and 1 youth experiencing homelessness.
- Field observations of youth experiencing homelessness on 10/06/2016.

# Youth Experiencing Homelessness

## Summary of Trends + Takeaways

1

Addressing youth homelessness requires a systems approach that prevents youth from becoming homeless in the first place, and for those who are currently homeless - facilitates their exit into safe, stable, and sustained housing and communities.

2

We need to improve and expand on services that address disparities among minority youth experiencing homelessness, including racial minorities, and the LGBTQ population.

3

We need more services that understand and are tailored to address youth-specific challenges.

4

We need flexible funding to provide different housing options for youth.

5

Integrating systems across sectors and at all levels is crucial to serving the needs of youth experiencing homelessness.

6

Considerably larger and more flexible public and private investments and resources are needed to effectively end youth homelessness in Austin.

7

We need to work with youth who have lived experiences of homelessness when designing and implementing solution sets.

# Youth Experiencing Homelessness Trends + Takeaways

The following are the trends and takeaways revealed by this youth needs assessment.

- 1. Addressing youth homelessness requires a systems approach that prevents youth from becoming homeless in the first place, and for those who are currently homeless - facilitates their exit into safe, stable, and sustained housing and communities.**
  - There are many causes or factors contributing to youth homelessness. Youth leaving institutional settings like foster care, correctional facilities and mental health hospitals without a housing plan often fall into homelessness. The limited Emergency shelters beds that exist (20 beds) are mostly used by youth who have exited foster care without housing options.
  - To bring about systemic change we need to 1) prevent youth from falling into homelessness in the first place, 2) more accurately identify and track youth experiencing homelessness in our community, 3) facilitate increased exits into safe, stable and sustained housing and communities, and 4) prevent youth from returning into homelessness once they are housed.
- 2. We need to improve and expand on services that address disparities among minority youth experiencing homelessness, including racial minorities, and the LGBTQ population.**
  - Racial minorities, particularly African American youth, are disproportionately represented among youth experiencing homelessness compared to the general population. Similarly, youth identifying as LGBTQ make up a significant proportion of the homeless youth population.
  - We need to improve and expand on services that are culturally aware and are equipped to address the unique needs of minority groups experiencing homelessness in Austin, bridging the equity gap.

# Youth Experiencing Homelessness

## Trends + Takeaways

### 3. We need more services that understand and are tailored to address youth-specific challenges.

- The systems that exist are overwhelming, cold and confusing for youth who are experiencing developmental delays and long histories of trauma. They yearn so deeply to have any sense of control over their lives and the existing system does nothing to provide that. Mainstream support services are often inaccessible for youth.
- We need to engage youth and support them in ways that are safe and comfortable for them. Even after affordable housing is identified, youth may not accept it or succeed in maintaining it without healthy supportive relationships before, during, and after their transition out of homelessness.
- Currently, the only emergency shelters available to homeless youth over the age of 18 are adult homeless shelters, which are not designed to meet the specific needs of youth. These shelters are often underused by transition aged youth experiencing homelessness due to their fear of adults experiencing homelessness. We need an emergency shelter for 18-24-year-old youths, so this population can have access to a shelter with youth-focused services, such as intensive case management, harm reduction practices, family reunification, education and employment support, and a focus on permanent housing stability and community connections.
- Youth need more direct housing assistance support and possibly longer rental support through rapid rehousing than the adult homeless population due to not having an employment history and experiencing living alone for the first time.

# Youth Experiencing Homelessness

## Trends + Takeaways

### 4. We need flexible funding to provide different housing options for youth.

- In 2014, Austin, Texas was the fastest growing large city in the country. Between 2010 and 2015, Travis County's population grew by 15%. These surges in population growth have created an unprecedented demand for rental units, led to rising housing costs, and stressed an already limited affordable housing stock. From 2010-2012, median gross rent in Austin grew from \$761 to \$1,604, an increase of 110%. The City of Austin's Comprehensive Housing Market Analysis found that 48,000 additional low-cost housing units are needed to meet the needs of households earning less than \$25,000 per year.
- We need flexible funding to work directly with landlords and property management companies and provide the right incentives to house the youth homeless population.
- Most youth experiencing homelessness are one-person households, therefore, the majority of housing needed are one-bedroom units or studios. However, with Austin's constrained housing market and the social needs or preferences of youth, other types of housing arrangements may work well (e.g. pairing youth to live together as roommates or having other shared living arrangements).

# Youth Experiencing Homelessness Trends + Takeaways

## **5. Integrating systems across sectors and at all levels is crucial to serving the needs of youth experiencing homelessness.**

- Youth homelessness is the manifestation of multiple personal and structural causes, and is a systemic public policy problem that touches numerous sectors, including many government agencies and service providers. Addressing youth homelessness is beyond the scope of any one sector, and requires the participation of multiple policymakers, service providers and stakeholders, including the child welfare systems, correctional services, and behavioral and health services.
- We need to develop a comprehensive youth homelessness prevention and housing strategy that coordinates work between the homelessness sector and mainstream services like the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS), Child Protective Services (CPS), Independent School Districts (ISDs), the juvenile justice, family support services, and behavioral and healthcare institutions.
- As foster care involvement is a key indicator of risk of homelessness among youth aged 18-24, we need to further understand the current capacity and limitations of CPS and its implications on local homeless service resources.

## **6. Considerably larger and more flexible public and private investments and resources are needed to effectively end youth homelessness in Austin.**

To effectively end youth homelessness we need:

- Flexible funding to provide services to youth across services and sectors and holistically address the unique needs of each youth.
- Dedicated staff from different sectors to break the silos across organizations and serve as the “backbone” of cross-sectoral work.
- Increased youth shelters capacity.
- Increased funding to scale up programs that work such as Permanent Supportive Housing and Rapid Re-housing that offer units that are low-barrier, affordable and accessible.

# Youth Experiencing Homelessness Trends + Takeaways

## **7. We need to work with youth who have lived experiences of homelessness when designing and implementing solution sets.**

- Youth with lived experiences of homelessness know better than anyone the needs they would like to meet. They know how to approach other youth and can come up with solutions other stakeholders can not. We need to engage and work with youth to be part of the planning, implementation and evaluation of solutions, and be at the center of all our work. We need to empower youth to be part of the community wide response system to end youth homelessness.
- Our community recently formed a Youth Advisory Council, and their insights have already transformed the approaches we are taking to end youth homelessness. We need to engage more youth and integrate them to be part of the solution working along with peers and helping them navigate their path to stable housing and communities.

# 1

**Addressing youth homelessness requires a systems approach that prevents youth from becoming homeless in the first place, and for those who are currently homeless - facilitates their exit into safe, stable, and sustained housing and communities.**

# The Many Factors Contributing to Youth Homelessness



## Family/Support Network

- Unstable environments
- Lack of support systems
- Domestic violence or abuse
- Rejection by parent or guardian due to sexual orientation, gender identity, or pregnancy
- Parental substance abuse
- Mental health issues



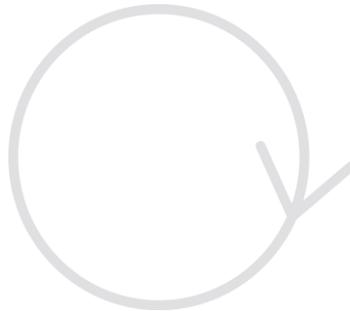
## Community/Environment

- High barriers to limited affordable housing
- Limited access to jobs and housing after incarceration
- Lack of jobs with living wages
- Difficulty acquiring documentation for housing (birth certificates, social security cards, or state IDs)
- Displacement from housing due to natural disasters



## Financial Security

- Unstable jobs
- Insufficient wages
- Lack of medical insurance
- Lack of transportation



## Supportive Services

- Inadequate welfare benefits
- Exit from foster care with no housing or income support
- Lack of coordination between service providers
- Lack of centralized/easily accessible resources guide
- Difficulty obtaining the necessary resources (e.g. can't get a P.O. Box without an ID, can't get an ID without an address)
- Lack of support to help youth stay in school
- Lack of formal education
- Lack of job skills



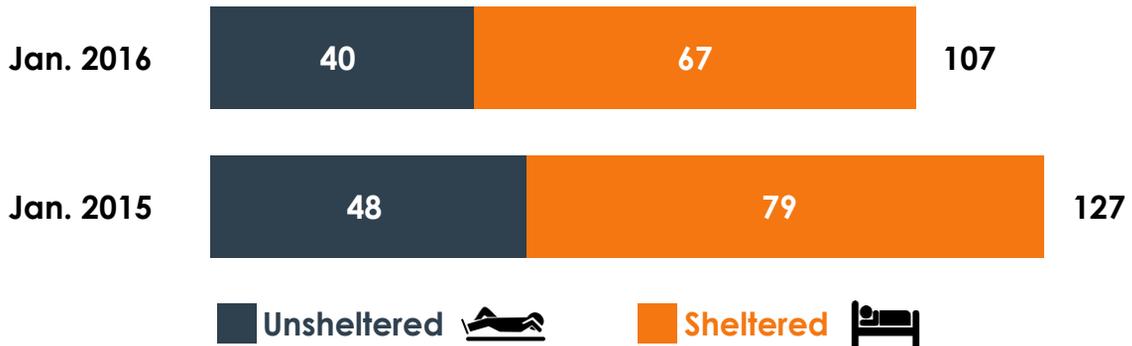
## Criminal Justice

- Criminal justice system involvement
- Racial discrimination
- Accumulation of court costs (with no address, courts bills are not received, leading to increased fees)
- Victimization through identity theft

• Factors per survey provider results, input from field staff and youth experiencing homelessness.

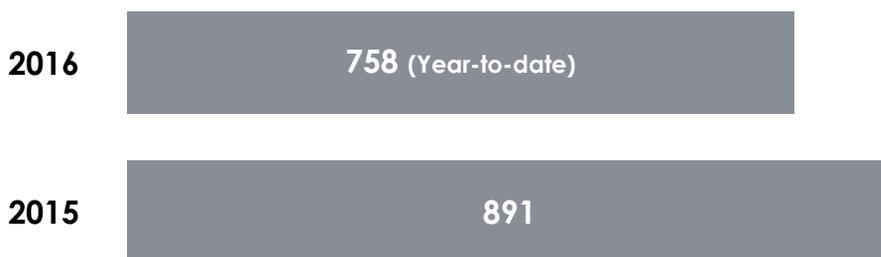
# Youth Experiencing Homelessness Literally Homeless Population

## Youth counted experiencing homelessness in a given day



The numbers above are considered to be an undercount of youth experiencing homelessness in a given day, given the limitations associated with the regular Point-in-Time counts. Our community will have a better approximation of youth experiencing homelessness in a given day once the Voices of Youth count numbers are published in the coming months.

## Youth experiencing homelessness in a given year



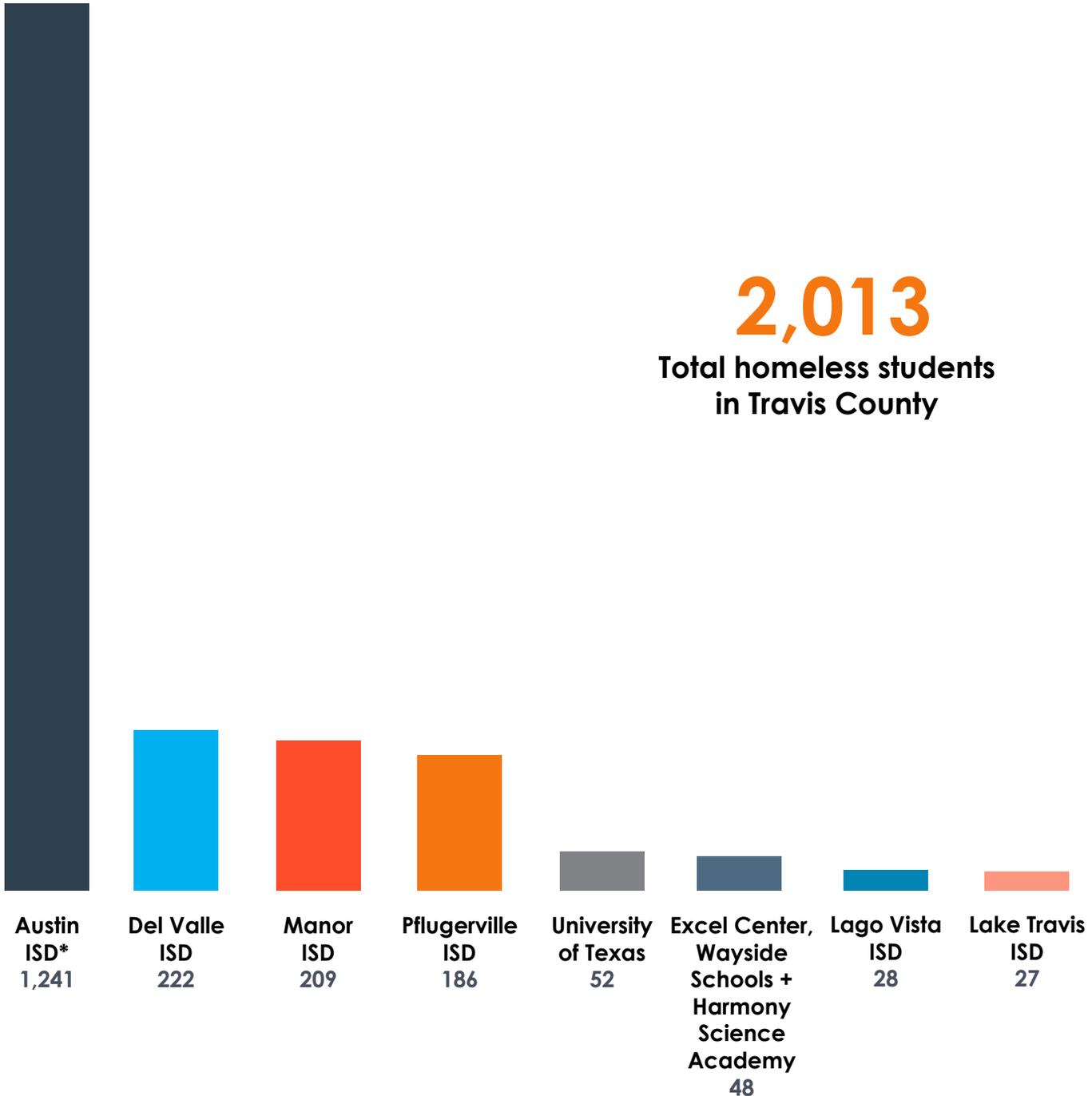
## Youth identified as needing housing as of October 2016: **290 youth**

- 2015 and 2016 "in a given day" numbers are based on official PIT counts conducted by the CoC. The "sheltered homeless" in a given day includes those in transitional housing per PIT guidelines.
- The annual number of youth experiencing homelessness is based on system level HMIS data of youth served by our CoC and reported in HMIS. The 2016 annual numbers are for the January-October period.
- Youth identified as needing housing per October 2016 is based on a Coordinated Assessment by-name list. This number will fluctuate over time as outreach efforts increase, new youth are identified and youth are housed.

# Homeless Student Population 2015-2016 School Year

**2,013**

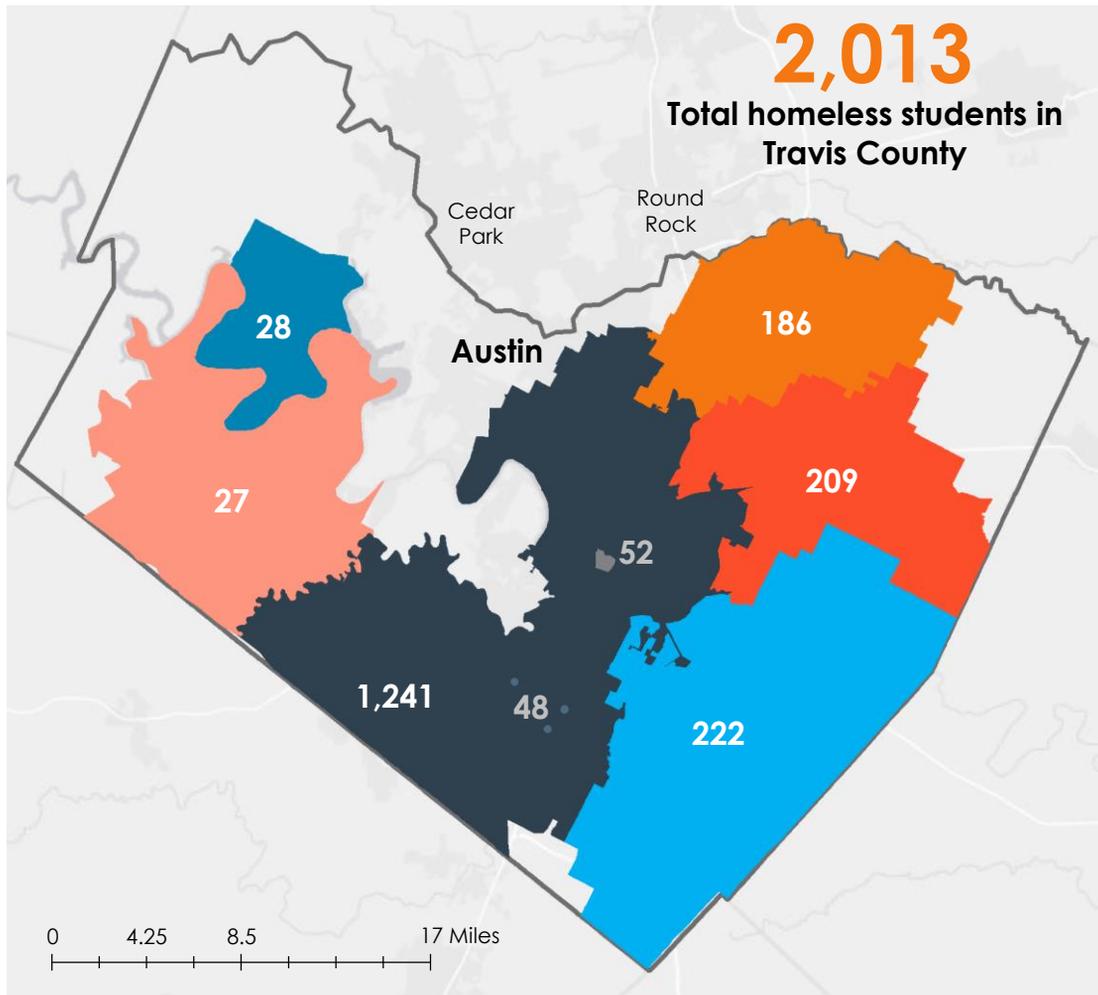
**Total homeless students  
in Travis County**



- \*ISD stands for Independent School District
- Data provided by the Texas Education Agency on 10/21/16 as part of a Public Information Request.
- The definition of homeless students include youth who are unstably housed and may be "doubling-up" or staying with friends or family and children and staying in shelters and unsheltered situations.

# Homeless Student Population 2015-2016 School Year

## Students experiencing homelessness in Travis County

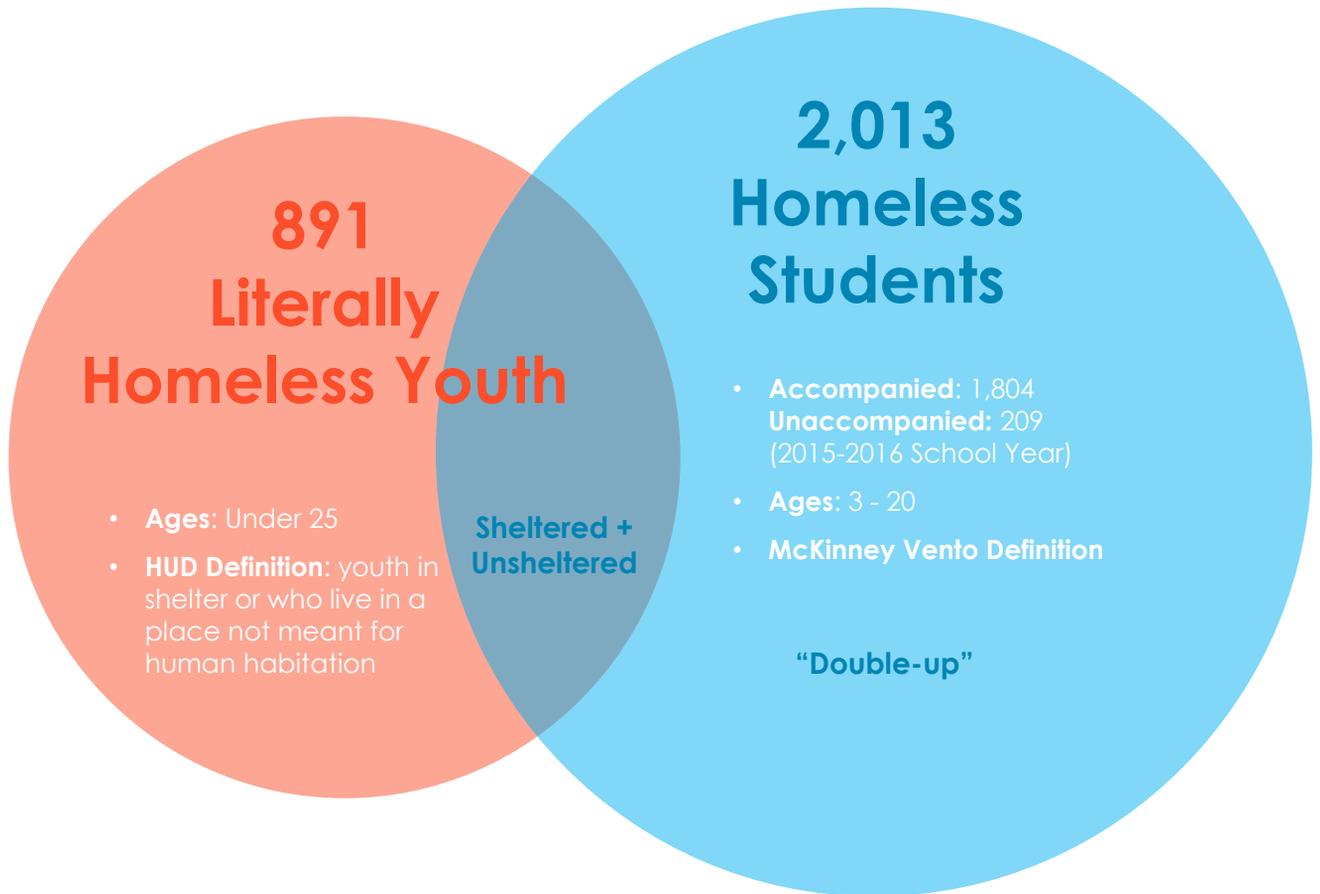


- Austin ISD
- Del Valle ISD
- Manor ISD
- Pflugerville ISD
- Lago Vista ISD
- Lake Travis ISD
- University of Texas
- Excel Center, Wayside Schools + Harmony Science Academy

- \*ISD stands for Independent School District
- Data provided by the Texas Education Agency on 10/21/16 as part of a Public Information Request. The definition of homeless students include youth who are unstably housed and may be "doubling-up" or staying with friends or family and children and staying in shelters and unsheltered situations.

# Number of Youth Experiencing Homelessness In a Given Year

The definitions of homeless youth vary across different systems.



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- The annual number of literally homeless youth is based on system level HMIS data of youth served by our CoC and reported in HMIS for the 2015 year. The number of homeless students is for the 2015-2016 school year for Travis County as provided by the Texas Education Agency.
  - McKinney Vento definition of unaccompanied youth: youth not in the physical custody of a parent or guardian," including those living on their own and those staying with someone who does not have legal guardianship

# At a System's Level, What Does it Take to End Homelessness Among Youth?

To adopt a systems approach to addressing youth homelessness we need to:

1. Stop the inflow of youth into homelessness
2. Increase outflow into safe, stable and sustained housing and community

## Inflow

### System Feeders

- Foster Care
- Criminal Justice
- Mental Health
- Family/Environment

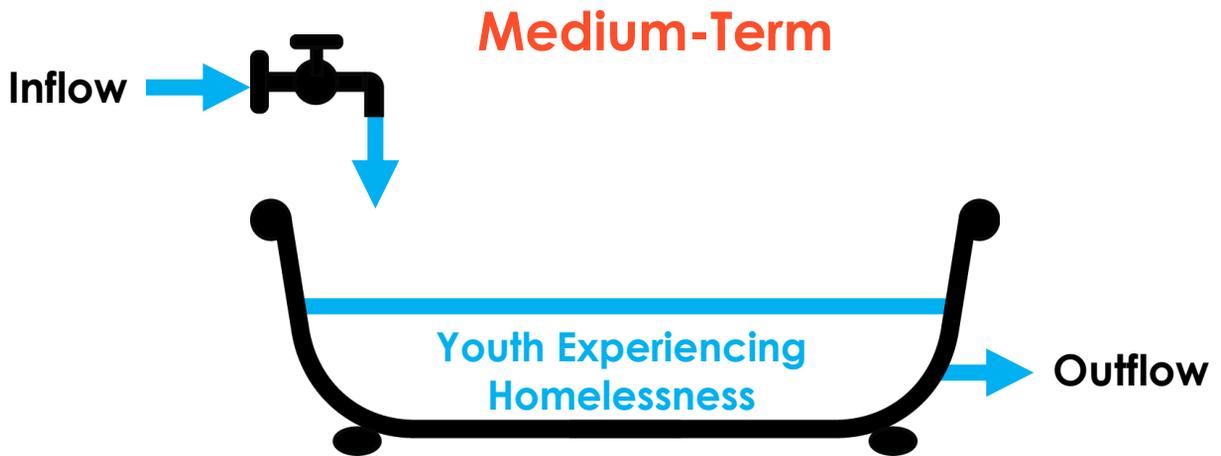


## Goals

- **Decrease inflow** – prevent youth from entering into homelessness, address root causes, work with other systems, prevent returns to homelessness
- **Increase outflow** - reduce time to housing, rapidly re-house youth
- Create a system where **inflow = outflow**

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- Graph informed by our experience as a community on creating our system to house veterans experiencing homelessness.

# At a System's Level, What Does it Take to End Homelessness Among Youth?

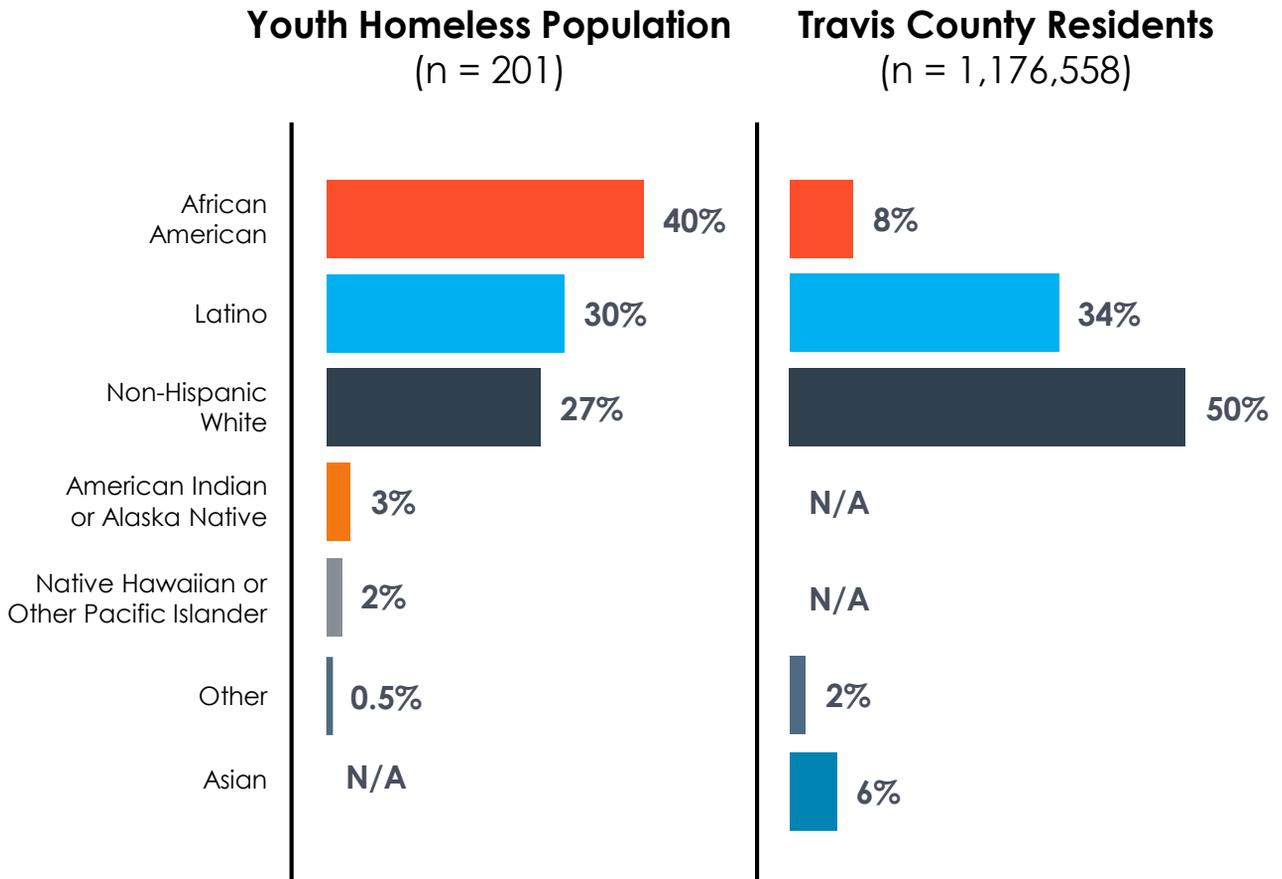


# 2

**We need to improve and expand on services that address disparities among minority youth experiencing homelessness, including racial minorities, and the LGBTQ population**

# Youth Experiencing Homelessness

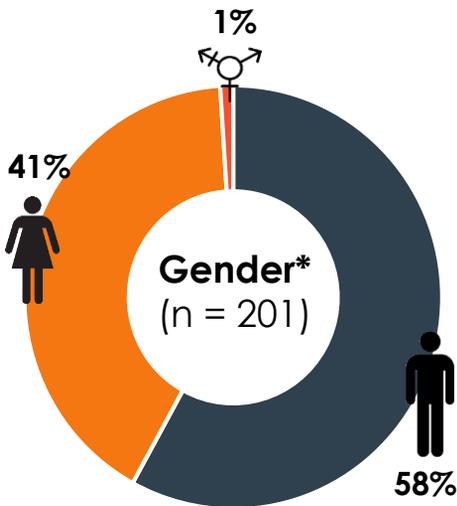
## Race + Ethnicity



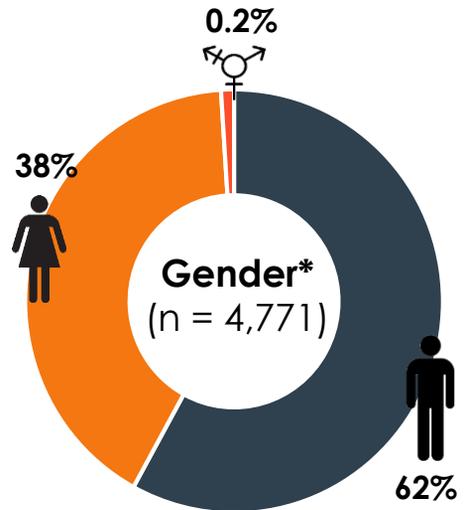
- Race and ethnicity for entire youth population based on Coordinated Assessment surveys of 201 youth per 09/30/16.
- Travis County Residents: Travis County Snapshot from the American Community Survey 2014.

# Youth Experiencing Homelessness Gender Identity + Sexual Orientation

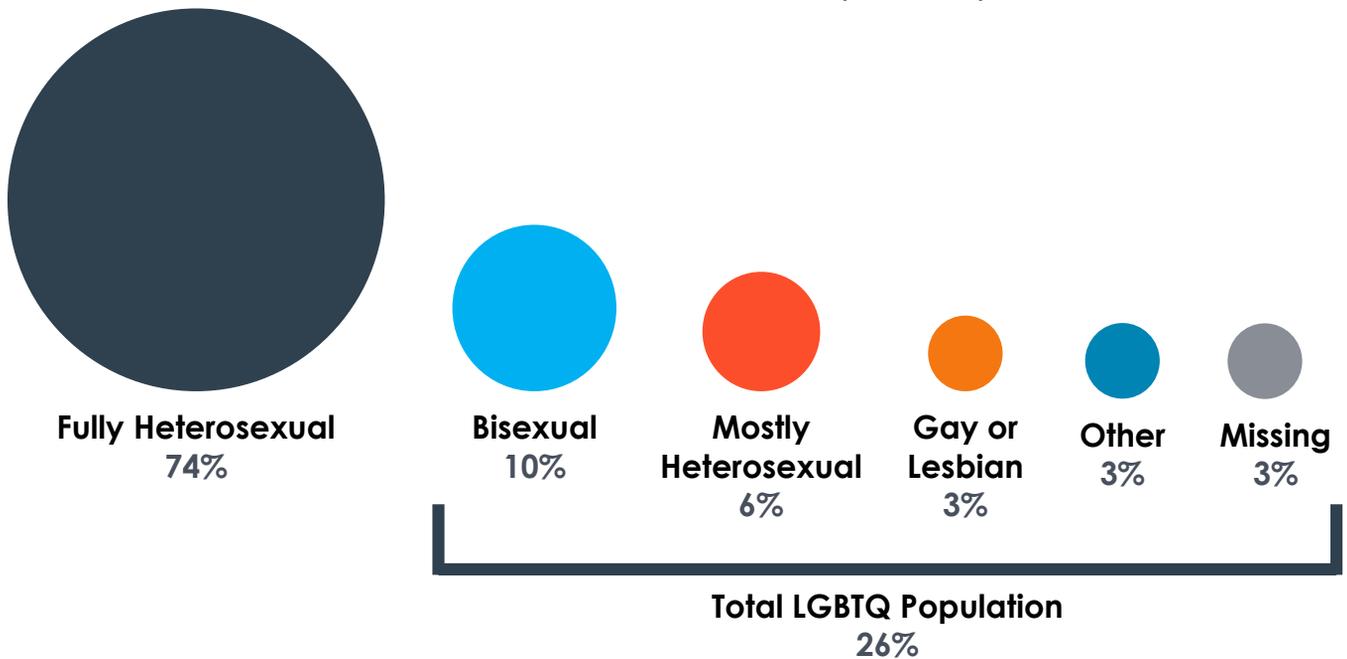
**Youth Population**



**Entire Homeless Population**



**Sexual Orientation of Youth (n = 133)**



- Gender for entire homeless population based on Coordinated Assessment surveys of 4,771 persons per 01/29/2016.
- Gender for entire youth population based on Coordinated Assessment surveys of 201 youth per 09/30/16.
- Sexual Orientation based on the preliminary results of Voices of Youth surveys of 133 youth conducted on 06/07/16.
- Transgender population may be an undercount since the individual may identify as female or male after transitioning.

# 3

**We need more services that understand and are tailored to address youth-specific challenges.**

# Youth Experiencing Homelessness Where the Youth Sleep

Places Where Youth Sleep or Rest (n = 208)

## Places meant for Human Habitation



**20%** Shelter

## Places NOT meant for Human Habitation



**29%** Street, sidewalk, or doorway



**23%** Car, van, or RV



**16%** Beach, riverbed, or park



**9%** Other (e.g. bridges, abandoned buildings)



**3%** Bus or subway

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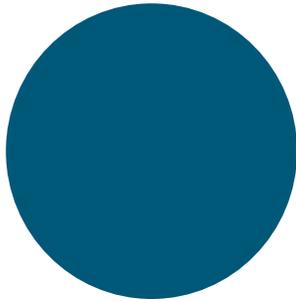
**100%**

- Percentages based on Coordinated Assessment surveys of 201 youth households 09/30/16.
- The percentages for the people staying in "shelter" does not include those staying in transitional housing.

# Youth Experiencing Homelessness Health

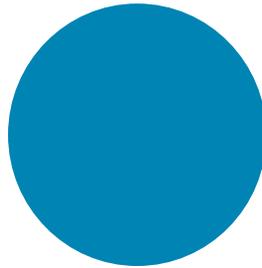
A large majority of youth experiencing homelessness have been exposed to some form of trauma, and/or have mental health challenges

## Mental Health (n = 208)



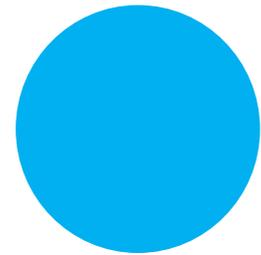
**63%**

Report having **problems concentrating and/or remembering** things



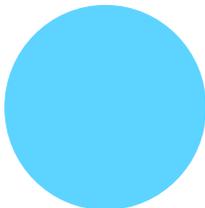
**56%**

Report experiencing an emotional, physical, psychological, sexual, or other type of **abuse or trauma** in their life



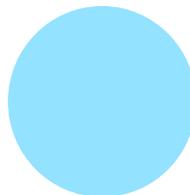
**53%**

Report having **no planned activities that bring them happiness or fulfillment**



**44%**

Report that they were told they **have a learning or developmental disability**



**41%**

Report **speaking to a mental health professional** in the past 6 months



**33%**

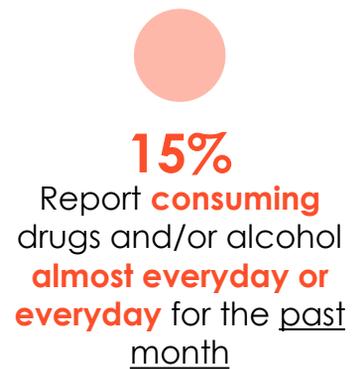
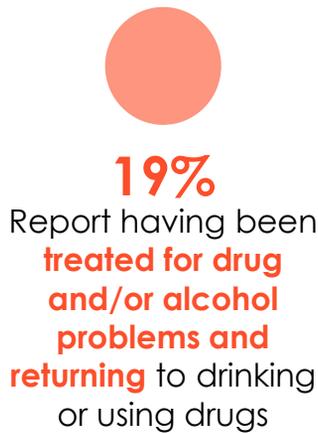
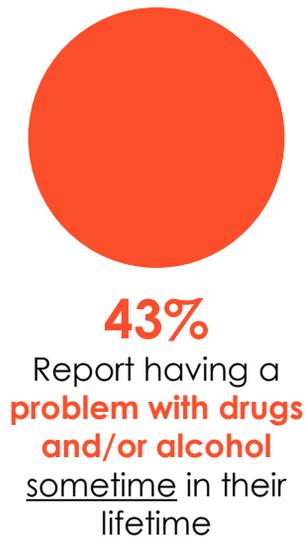
Report having **gone to the emergency room** because they **weren't feeling well emotionally** or because of their **nerves**

- Categories not mutually exclusive.
- Percentages based on Coordinated Assessment surveys of 201 youth households 09/30/16.

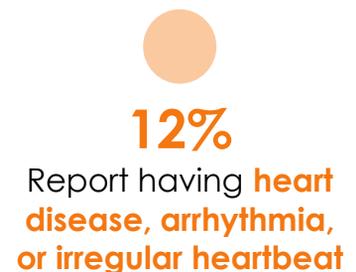
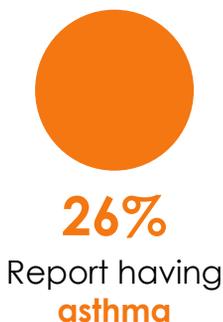
# Youth Experiencing Homelessness Health

A significant number of youth experiencing homelessness have engaged in drug or alcohol abuse sometime in their past and have chronic health conditions related to living outside

## Drugs + Alcohol (n = 208)



## Chronic Conditions (n = 209)

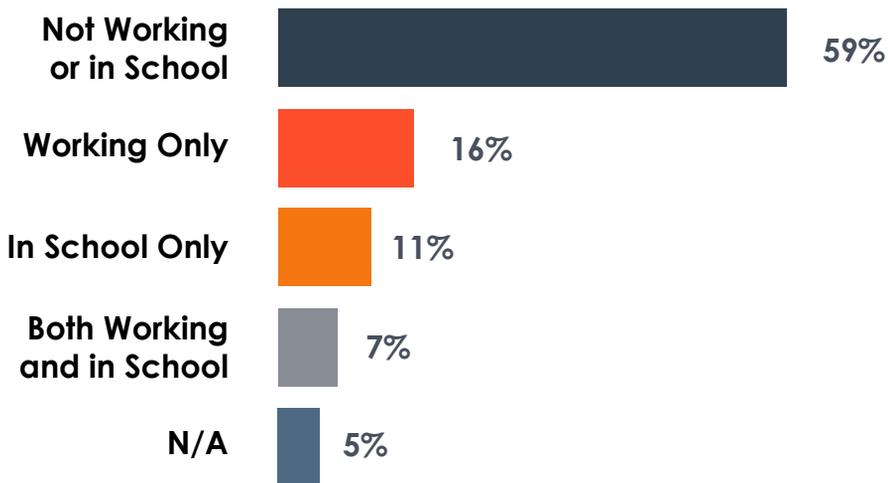


- Categories not mutually exclusive.
- Percentages based on Coordinated Assessment surveys of 201 youth households 09/30/16.

# Youth Experiencing Homelessness Education, Employment, + Income

A large majority of youth experiencing homelessness do not have enough money to get by and are not working or in school

## Number of Youth (Ages 18-25) Working and/or in School (n = 129)



## Financial Stability for Youth (n = 208)

**89%** Report **not having enough money** to meet **all** of their expenses on a monthly basis

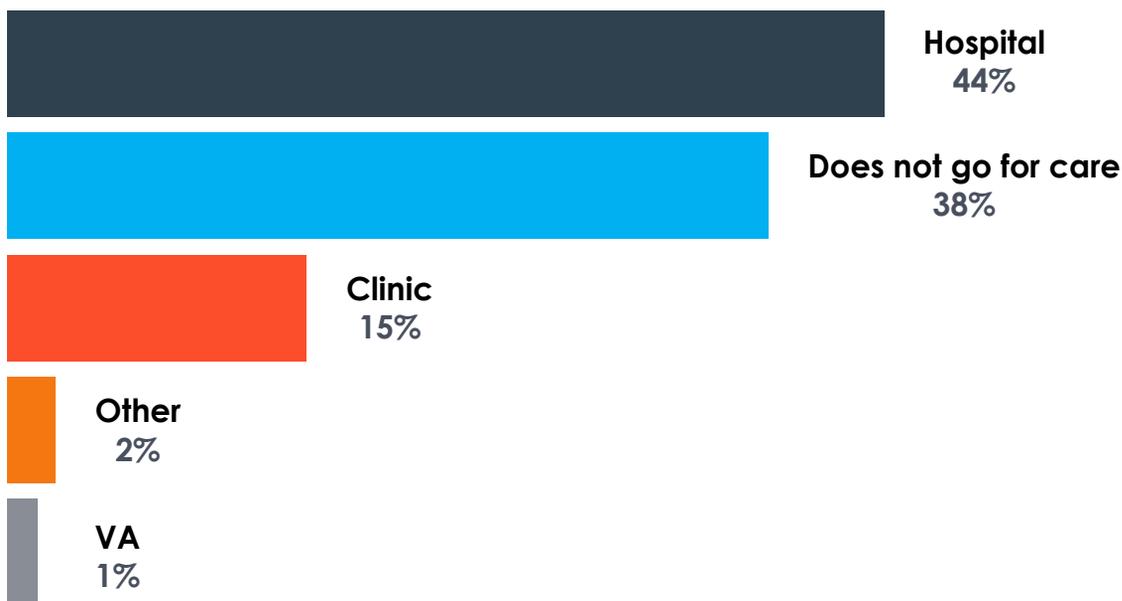
**35%** Report **having money coming in on a regular basis** from a job, a government benefit, working under the table, binning (bottle collecting), sex work, odd jobs, or day labor

- 
- Education + Employment based on the preliminary results of the Voices of Youth surveys of 133 youth conducted on 06/07/16.
  - Financial Stability for Youth data based on Coordinated Assessment surveys of 201 youth households 09/30/16.

# Youth Experiencing Homelessness Health

An overwhelming majority of youth experiencing homelessness use hospitals when they are not feeling well, or do not go to care at all

## Where do Youth Report Going to When They're not Feeling Well? (n = 209)



## How Youth Use Healthcare Services (n = 209)



**62%**

Report having been to the **emergency room** in the past 6 months



**40%**

Report having been taken to the hospital in an **ambulance** in the past 6 months



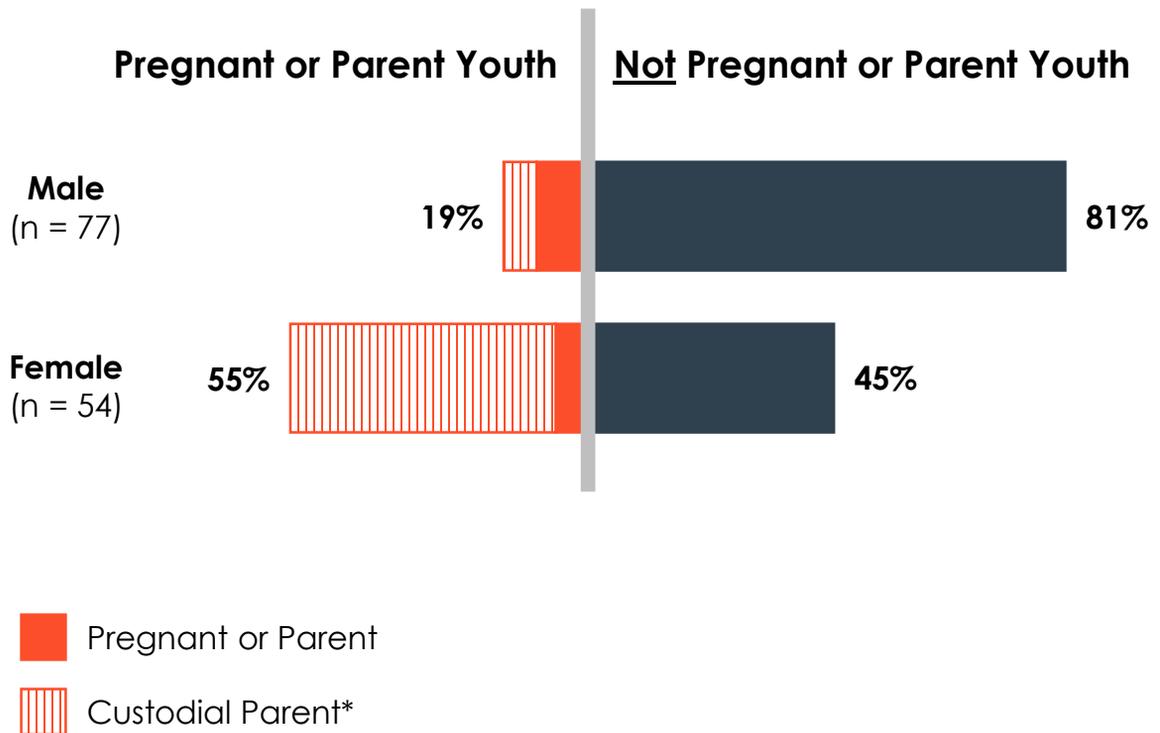
**27%**

Report having been **hospitalized** in the past 6 months

- Categories not mutually exclusive.
- Percentages based on Coordinated Assessment surveys of 201 youth households 09/30/16.

# Youth Experiencing Homelessness Pregnancy + Parenthood

Becoming pregnant or a parent disproportionately affects many female youth, the majority of whom have custody over their children compared to male youth.



- Pregnancy and parent percentages based on the preliminary results of the Voices of Youth surveys of 133 youth conducted on 06/07/16.
- \*Only includes youth who reported being pregnant or a parent.

# Youth Experiencing Homelessness Life in the Streets

## Physical Safety of Youth (n = 208)

**44%**

Report having been **attacked or beaten up** since becoming homeless.

**29%**

Report having **threatened to or tried to harm themselves or anyone else** in the past year.

**12%**

Report having **used a crisis service, including distress centers and suicide prevention hotlines** in the past 6 months.

## Social Circles of Youth (n = 208)

**42%**

Report having friends, family, or other **people in their life out of convenience or necessity, but they do not like their company.**

**38%**

Report having friends, family, or other **people in their life who take their money, borrow cigarettes, use their dugs, or drink their alcohol.**

**38%**

Report that they **know someone who thinks they owe them money.**

## Risky Behavior on the Street for Youth (n = 208)

**23%**

Report having **done things that may be considered risky** like exchanging sex for money, running drugs for someone, having unprotected sex with someone they don't really know, or sharing a needle.

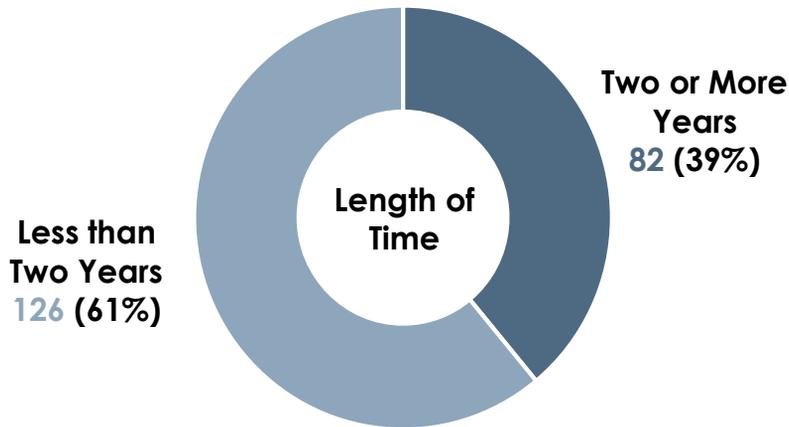
**19%**

Report that **someone forces or tricks them into doing things they do not want to do.**

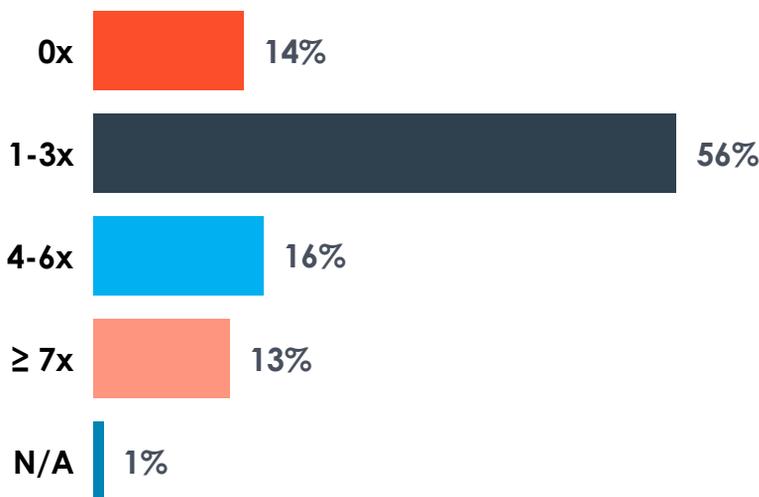
- Percentages based on Coordinated Assessment surveys of 201 youth households per 09/30/16.

# Youth Experiencing Homelessness Life in the Streets

Total Length of Time Living on the Streets or in Shelters (n = 208)



Number of Times Youth Have Reverted to Homelessness After Being Housed in the Past 3 Years (n = 209)



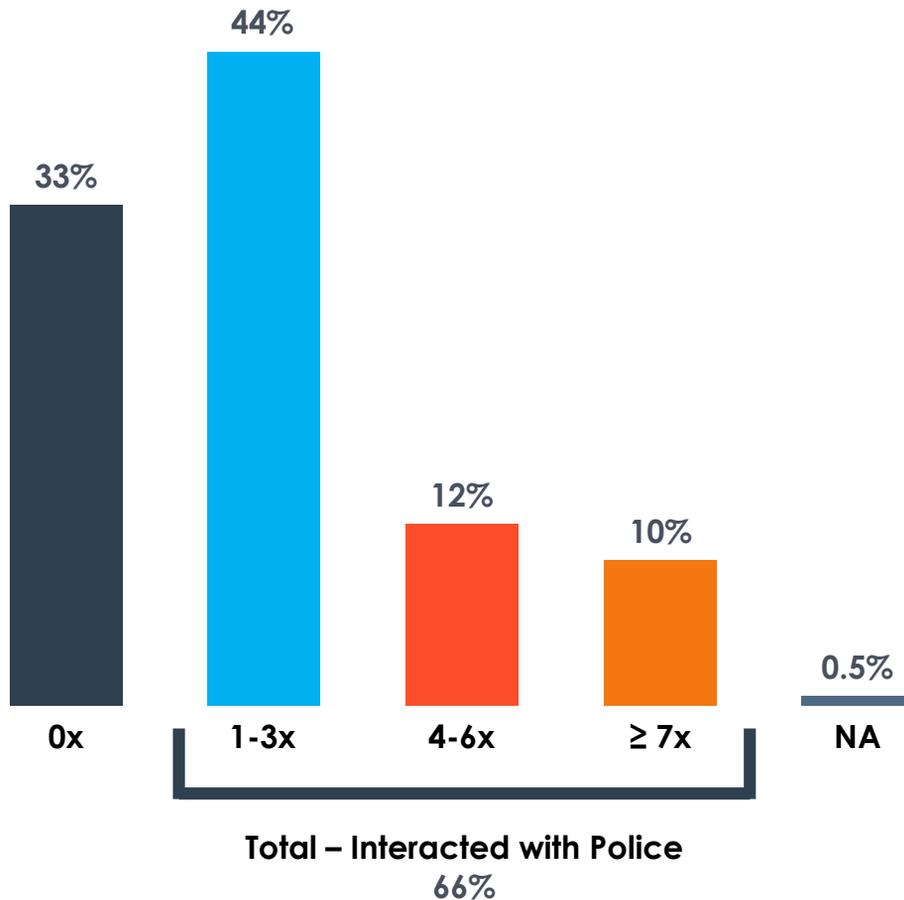
Youth in Foster Care Services (n = 133)

**35%** Report having ever been **in foster care**

- Percentages based on Coordinated Assessment surveys of 201 youth households 09/30/16.
- Foster care percentage based on preliminary results of Voices of Youth surveys of programs serving youth conducted on 06/07/16

# Youth Experiencing Homelessness Justice Systems Involvement

Number of Times Youth Have Interacted with Police in the past 6 months (n = 209)



## Criminal System Involvement for Youth

**61%** Report having **ever spent time in detention, jail, or prison** (n = 133).

**33%** Report having **legal stuff** going on **that may result in them being locked up or having to pay fines** (n = 208).

- Percentages based on Coordinated Assessment surveys of 201 youth households 09/30/16.
- “Ever spent time” percentage based on preliminary results of Voices of Youth surveys of programs serving youth conducted on 06/07/16.

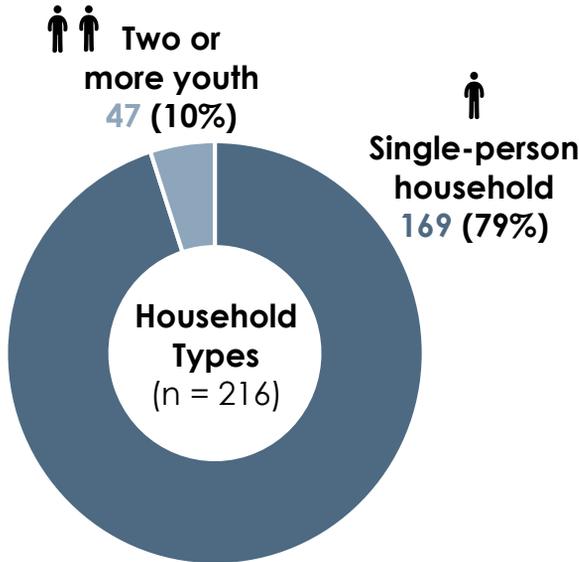
# 4

**We need flexible funding to provide  
different housing options for youth**

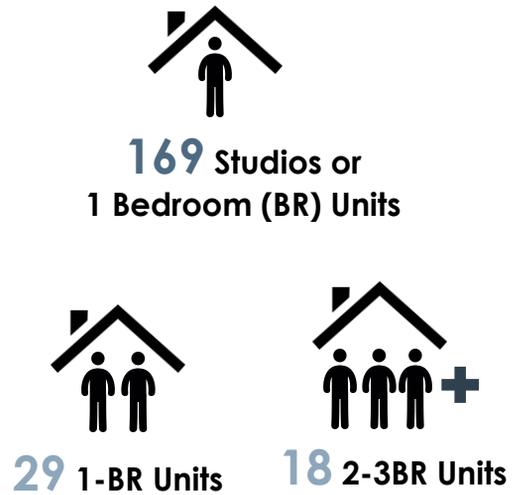
# Youth Experiencing Homelessness

## Current Housing Needs for Youth Households

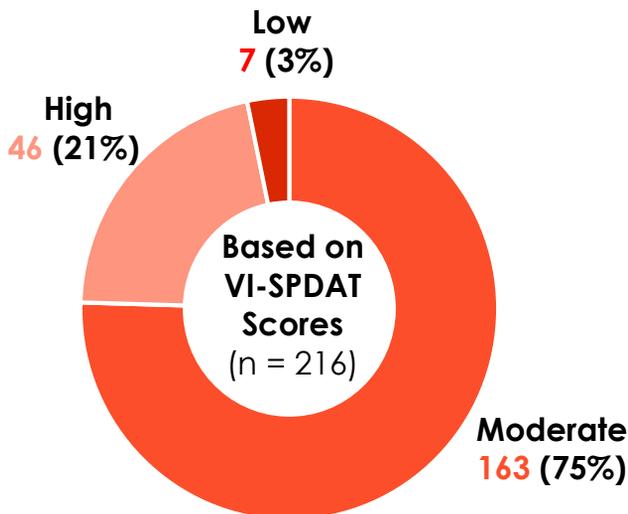
### Household (HH) Type



### Affordable + Low Barrier Housing Units Needed



### Vulnerability



### Recommended Intervention



- Household types based on Coordinated Assessment surveys/by-name list of 216 youth households (290 youth) per 10/26/16.
- Vulnerability is based on VI-SPDAT Scores, an assessment tool to assess a person's current needs.

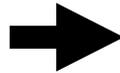
# Youth Experiencing Homelessness

## Frequent Rental Housing Barriers

### Lack of Documentation



**Lack of documentation**  
(birth certificates, state IDs,  
social security cards)

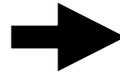


**Can't apply for housing or  
find employment** without  
those documents

### Criminal Background Discrimination



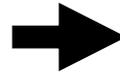
**Misdemeanor** charges



**Ineligible** for rent if it  
happened **recently**



**Felony** charges

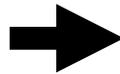


**Ineligible** for rent

### Source of Income Discrimination



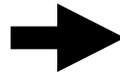
**Low or no** income



**Ineligible** for rent, **even if  
benefit program covers**  
income



Use of **housing choice  
vouchers**



**Some** landlords **do not  
accept** vouchers

- Barriers identified per interviews with housing placement staff working to find housing for persons experiencing homelessness.

# 5

**Considerably larger public and private investments are needed to effectively end youth homelessness in Austin**

# Youth Experiencing Homelessness

## Current Community Assets

### Services Offered by Programs Assisting Runaway and Homeless Youth

# Providers	Services Offered
4	Street Outreach
4	Emergency Shelter
2	Transitional Housing
2	Supportive Housing
1	Rapid Rehousing

### Special Target Populations Served by RHY Providers (n = 6)

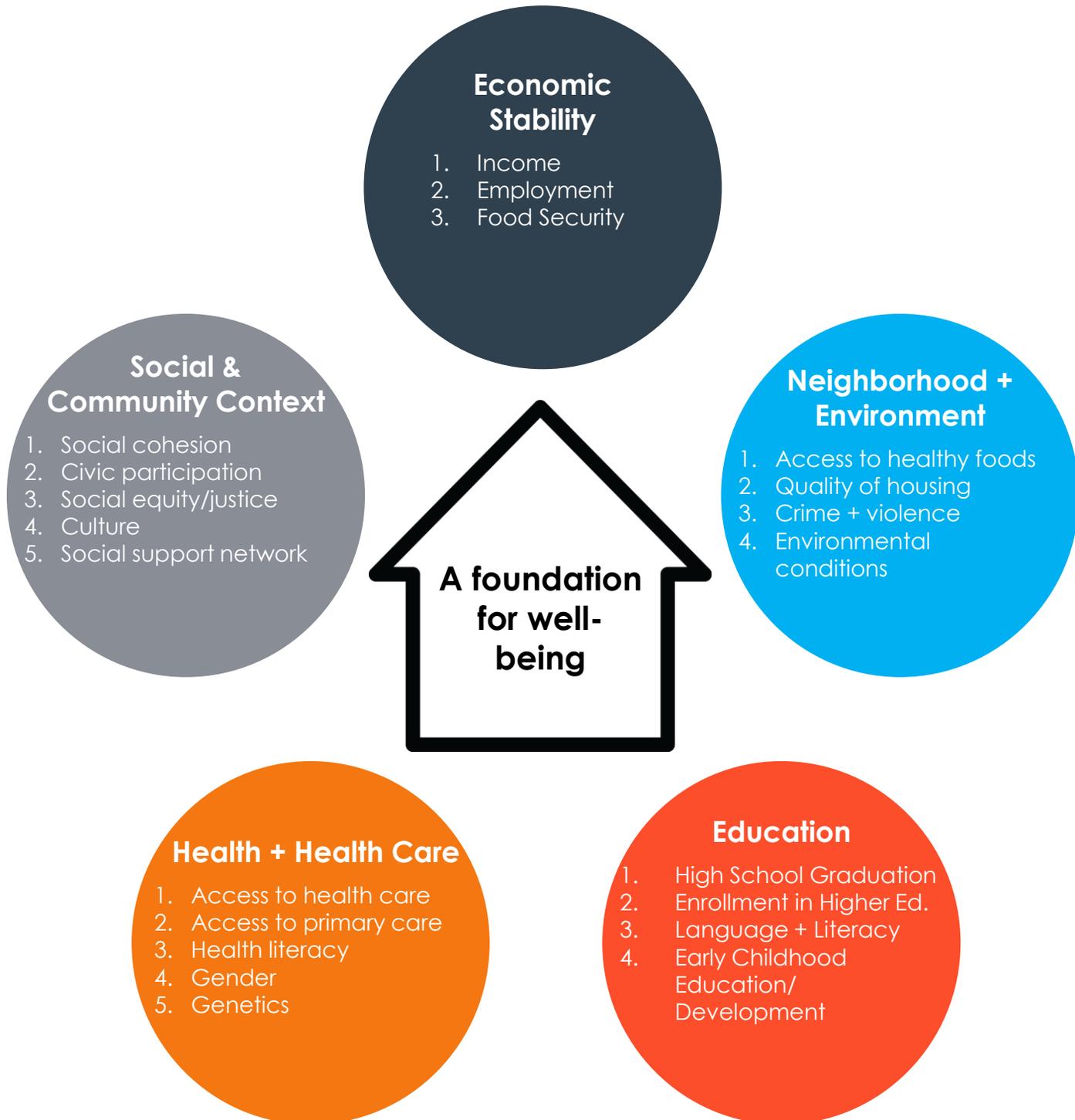
# RHY Providers	Populations Served
3	<b>Parenting</b> youth
3	Youth who identify as <b>LGBTQ</b>
3	Former <b>foster</b> youth
2	<b>Pregnant</b> youth
2	Youth with a <b>history of juvenile/criminal justice involvement</b>
2	Youth who are <b>victims of human trafficking</b>
2	Youth with serious <b>mental illness</b>
2	Youth who <b>abuse substances</b>
1	Youth Living with <b>HIV/AIDS</b>

• Data based on the on the preliminary results of Voices of Youth surveys of programs serving youth conducted on 06/07/16

# Determinants of Health

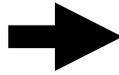
## A path for youth to achieve their full potential

Using housing and community to serve as the foundation to revert all the factors contributing to youth homelessness



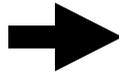
# Youth Experiencing Homelessness Service Gaps + Needs

There is a **shortage of youth-specific shelters**. Once those fill up, the only other options are adult shelters, which youth do not feel comfortable using.



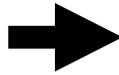
We need additional funding to **increase shelter capacity for youth**.

**Many youth do not engage in services** because the services seem overwhelming, the youth are afraid that they will get lost in the system, or they have a general mistrust of providers.



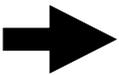
We need increased funding to **employ youth with lived experiences of homelessness** who can help navigate youth through services.

**Minority groups are disproportionately represented** in the homeless population, including African Americans and youth identifying as LGBTQ.



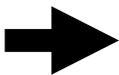
We need to **expand and improve on programs that are culturally trained** to address the **unique needs** of minority youth.

There are **limited housing programs** to help youth exit homelessness.



We need flexible **funding for service providers to work with landlords to alleviate** the **perceived risks** of housing youth exiting homelessness.

**Many service providers are operating at or over capacity** and may not be properly trained to address the unique needs of youth they serve.



We need **increased staff capacity** (e.g. through training opportunities) to help staff feel more confident addressing different situations.

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• Percentages based on Coordinated Assessment surveys of 201 youth 09/30/16.

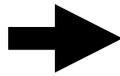
# 6

**Integrating systems across sectors and at all levels is crucial to serving the needs of youth experiencing homelessness.**

# Youth Experiencing Homelessness

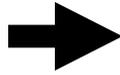
## Service Gaps + Needs

Many **services serving youth are siloed across different sectors**, making navigating the system confusing and time-consuming for youth.



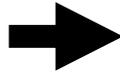
We need to add **staff across sectors who can bridge** services and create a more cohesive, coordinated system.

**More youth are entering the system from a variety of sources** (e.g. criminal justice, foster, or mental health services) **than exiting**.



We need increased resources to **improve homelessness prevention** at each source of entry.

Each youth household experiencing homelessness has unique needs, but **many programs are limited by their funding source or program requirements in the types of services** they can offer youth.



We need **flexible funding that can support holistic programs** that can better address the unique needs of each youth household.

- 
- Percentages based on Coordinated Assessment surveys of 201 youth 09/30/16.

# 7

**We need to work with youth who have lived experiences of homelessness when designing and implementing solution sets.**

# Voices of Youth Experiencing Homelessness

## On the criminal justice system...



“The first time I went to jail was for criminal trespassing while in a warehouse! All so I could stay out of the cold and wet!”

“Because of Austin’s city laws, I had to do whatever it take to survive. Because of that, and their lack of sympathy for those in need, I accumulated a criminal record, which is now hindering me to move forward with my future.”

“A challenge for me is paying off credit so I can get an apartment. It’s hard to find a job when some of my disability makes it hard for me to maintain a job.”

“I still struggle to keep housing - as a gay man it’s difficult for people to take you seriously! People judge the way you dress.”

## On housing barriers...



## On service barriers...



“Getting WIC and food stamps took 4 months. They want documents sent in which is very challenging without a printer, fax machine, or even a stamp. Medicaid also took 4 months. Lots of services feel unsafe. Worried about if I’ll be able to leave a service provider when I enter.”

“There are feedings that are at odd times. Some are at 4am at 13 and Lavaca. There are hard times to get food stamps and WIC. Also when it is cold out they have some places you can sleep. It is hard they have certain hours that you have to get there and get up. Then getting on lists to get services and having to wait.”

“In the future I want to be in a more stable housing. I want to be able to have a nice place for me and my child. I want me and my child and my boyfriend to be in a good place. I want to have a job or be in school. I want to be more stable and have a better life. I want my child to be happy and healthy.”

“I want a place and kids in the future also to be a model and a children’s illustrator.”

“In the future I would like to get a job pay off my debt and save up to get a car and apartment get done with school go to college and play football.”

“What do I want in my future?...I am not even sure what my future holds. If you was to ask me that I guess I would say I want everyone to be in a permanent place to live. I also wish and want people in Washington to walk a mile in my shoes.”

## On future goals...



- Quotes from participants of youth focus group conducted on 10/06/2016

# Our Vision for Everyone

Community



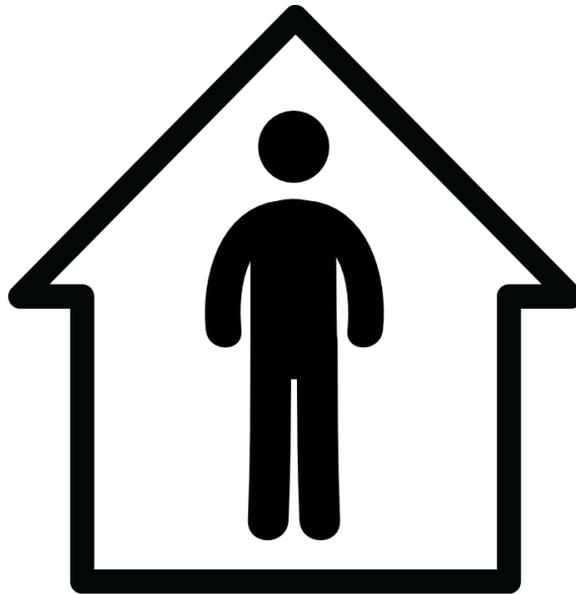
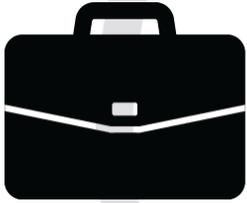
Schools



Grocery Stores



Jobs

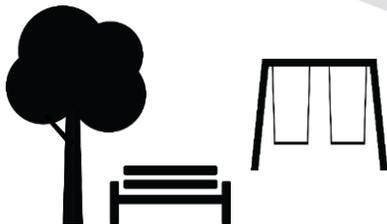


Housing

Transportation



Parks +  
Playgrounds



**Your Thoughts?**

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## Questions or Comments?

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