

2012 Annual Report on the State of Homelessness in Erie County

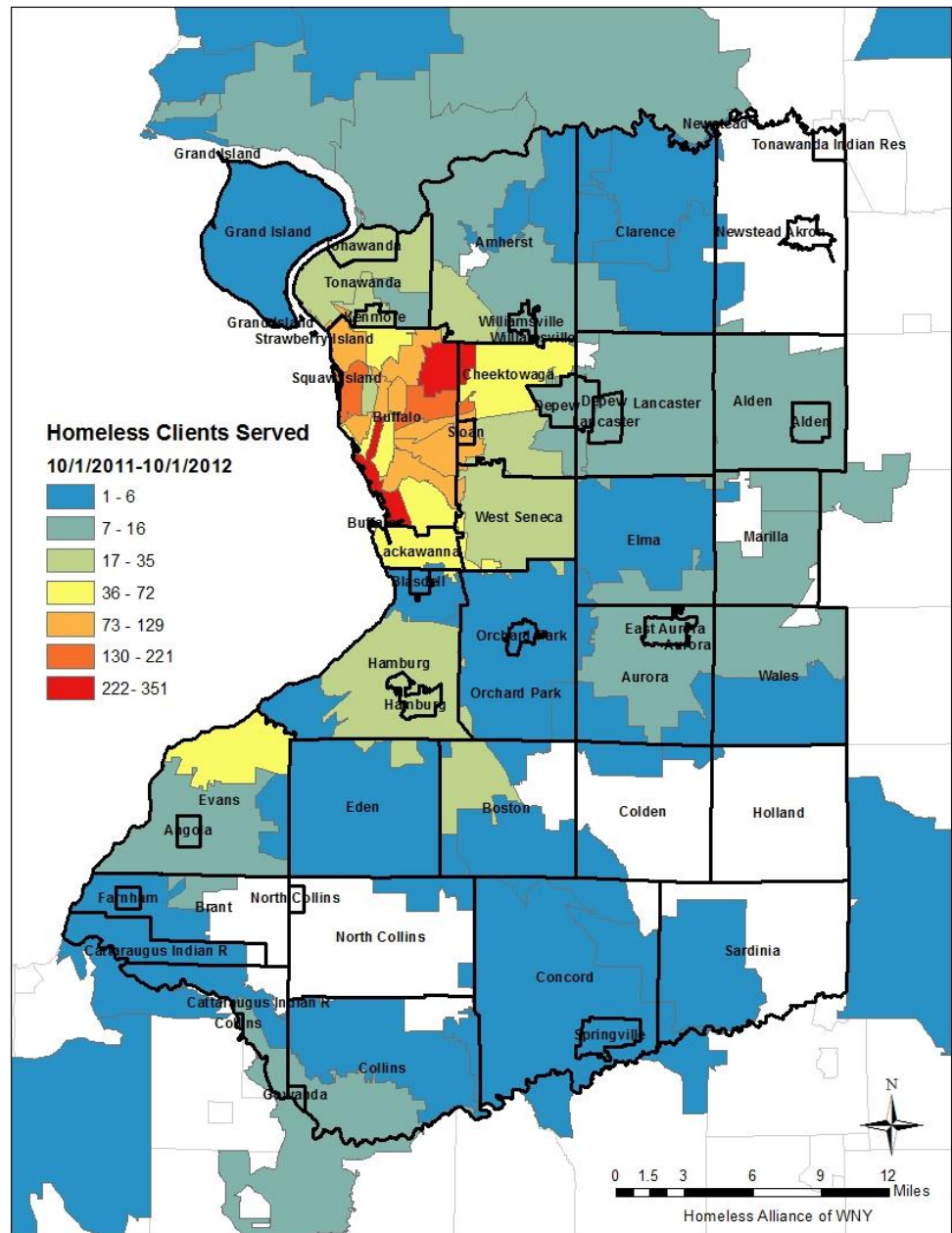


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Key Findings

- ▶ In 2012 there were an estimated **5,681** people who experienced homelessness in Erie County.
- ▶ On any given night there were approximately **1,000** people who experienced homelessness in Erie County.
- ▶ An estimated 2,017 people (in Emergency Shelter and Transitional Housing) in families experienced homelessness last year. This was a 15.5% increase from the previous year. 72% of the families who experienced homelessness were single female head of household.
- ▶ 32% of the children who experienced homelessness were under the age of 5; 68% were school-age children.
- ▶ 540 people spent at least part of the year sleeping in places not meant for human habitation such as homeless camps, under bridges, abandoned buildings, etc.
- ▶ 106 people were found to be living on the streets in January of 2012 and 131 in July, 2012. This number is likely to be under reported because it is difficult to encounter all of the unsheltered on any one day.
- ▶ There were 463 chronically homeless people entered into HMIS in 2012 a decrease of 20 people from 2011.
- ▶ Over 28 % of the homeless are children under the age of 18, with another 13% in the 18-24 age group. A total of 545 unaccompanied youth (age under 25) were experiencing homelessness.
- ▶ 55% of the homeless are African American, 39% are white and an estimated 15% are Latino.
- ▶ 32% of people experienced homelessness lived with family or friends prior to becoming homeless and 26% said family issues were the reason for their homelessness.
- ▶ 81% of homeless were new homeless and 19% of them were repeated homeless.
- ▶ 207 Veterans were homeless in 2012. 13% of the homeless veterans were female.

Recommendations

- There is tremendous need for safe affordable rental housing in the community. In addition to overall affordable housing, Erie County could use 500 single room occupancy units for individuals and 400 Housing First units for the chronically homeless.
- The number of homeless households with children continues to grow. Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) funds and CoC funds could be used for Rapid-Rehousing. National research has indicated this model is successful in working with homeless families as most people need only modest and short-term assistance. The HAWNY staff will continue to research cost effective prevention strategies.
- Expand the HMIS coverage rate and improve data quality to obtain a more comprehensive and reliable data system. The trend in decision making and planning is to base funding decisions on data. The more accurate and complete our data becomes the better planning and decision – making this community will have.
- Develop a Coordinated Entry/ Assessment system to effectively reduce homeless numbers and length of stay by directing homeless persons to the most appropriate service(s). Opening HMIS for interagency data sharing will be essential in this process.
- As funding is reduced, we need to better coordinate available resources from federal, state, local and the private sector to end homelessness. CDBG, HOME, general funds and tax credits must be utilized for homeless populations.

Introduction

The Homeless Alliance of Western New York is the designated Continuum of Care (CoC) agency for Erie County that is responsible for compiling the annual Continuum of Care grant from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). In 2011 this grant awarded **\$11.2 million** in funding for new and renewal projects to homeless agencies throughout Erie County.

Any agency awarded homeless funds from the Continuum of Care grant or through Emergency Solutions Grant funds awarded by Erie County, the City of Buffalo and the Town of Tonawanda are required to input client data into a centralized Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) that the Homeless Alliance of WNY maintains.

This report uses the 2012 Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) year (10/1/2011-10/1/2012) as the time frame and is mostly reliant on data from the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), known in Buffalo as Buffalo Area Service Network (BAS-Net). This timeframe is used because annual Erie County homeless data is submitted to HUD to produce a national homelessness report for this time period. However, not all agencies in the community are required to utilize this database and we, therefore, estimated some of the figures in this report. Additional data was gathered from the annual Point-in-Time count, Housing Inventory Chart, unsheltered street counts, and the Erie County Department of Social Services.

Definition of Key Terms

1. **Homeless Management Information System (HMIS):** HMIS is a software application designed to record and store client-level information on the characteristics and service needs of homeless persons. In Erie County, this system is also called Buffalo Area System Network (Bas-Net).
2. **Point-in-Time (PIT) Counts:** One-night counts of both sheltered and unsheltered homeless populations. The one-night counts are reported on CoC applications and reflect a single night during the last week in January.
3. **Children:** All persons under the age of 18.
4. **Unaccompanied Youth:** Unaccompanied individuals under the age of 25.
5. **Sheltered:** A homeless person who is in an emergency shelter, transitional housing or safe haven program for homeless persons.
6. **Unsheltered:** A homeless person who is living in a place not meant for human habitation, such as the streets, abandoned buildings, vehicles, parks, and train stations.
7. **Emergency Shelter (ES) -** Housing in which homeless persons can access shelter immediately and reside for up to 30 days. The primary function is to assist individuals in identifying causes of homelessness, accessing services and securing the next appropriate level of housing.
8. **Code Blue:** Seasonal shelter beds for days that are below 20 degree Fahrenheit.
9. **Transitional Housing (TH) -** Housing in which homeless persons can live for up to 24 months and receive supportive services that will enable them to move to permanent housing and to live independently. The program must include housing placement assistance.
10. **Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) -** Housing in which homeless persons with a disability live with no limit on the length of stay. Supportive services are provided and rent cannot exceed 30%

of a person's monthly income. Programs may be a single site, scattered sites, or clustered units and includes rental assistance programs (formerly known as Shelter Plus Care).

11. **Safe Haven (SH)** –Safe Havens are specialized housing programs for the very hard to serve homeless and chronically homeless who are seriously and persistently mentally ill. A SH can be either transitional or permanent housing and serve persons who may or may not be willing to engage in treatment.
12. **Chronic Homelessness:** A chronically homeless person is defined as a homeless adult (single or with family) with a disabling condition who has either been continually homeless for a year or more or who has had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past 3 years. To be considered chronically homeless, a person must have been on the streets or in emergency shelter (e.g. not in transitional or permanent housing) during these stays.
13. **Adult Only Household:** Single adult persons or adults with adult companions that do not had a child in their household.
14. **Household with Children and Adults:** A person in any household with at least one adult and one child present regardless of whether the child(ren) is present for the full program stay.
15. **Household with only Children:** A person in any household in which all persons are younger than age 18.
16. **Unknown Household Type:** Households that cannot be classified in cases when one or more persons are missing dates of birth. Note that in instances when the household already contains at least one known adult and one known child, the household type can be determined and categorized as a Household with Children and Adults.

Buffalo and Erie County Poverty Brief

Before we get into the detail of Buffalo and Erie County's homeless profile, below is some brief information to provide an overview of Buffalo and Erie County's state of poverty.

Poverty is the Root Cause of Homelessness

- ▶ 29.9% of the people in Buffalo and 14.2% of the people in the County live below the poverty level¹.
- ▶ Of persons aged 25 or above living in poverty, 27% didn't graduate from high school, 33% have a high school diploma/GED, 28% have some college or associate's degree, and 12% have a bachelor's degree or higher.
- ▶ 42.5% (11,052) of female head of households in Buffalo live below the poverty level, 30.4% (15,929) in Erie County. 3.5% (5,732) of two parent families live below the poverty level for Erie County and 10.1% (2,768) in Buffalo.
- ▶ Within all families who live below the poverty level, 23.5% were two parent families and 65% were female head of households in Buffalo; 17.8% were two parent families and 71.2% were female head of households in Erie County.
- ▶ 57.3% of the young children (age below 5) in Buffalo live below the poverty level, 53% in Erie County.

¹ Data shown in this section are from American Community Survey 2007-2011 5 years estimates

Table 1 illustrates the depth of poverty among women and children:

NUMBER OF RELATED CHILDREN UNDER 18 YEARS	Number of Female Head of Households	Percentage Below Poverty
No children	7,417	20.5%
1 or 2 children	14,450	46.3%
3 or 4 children	3,439	66.1%
5 or more children	589	86.4%

Table 1 Female household by number of children- ACS 2008-2010 3-year estimates for Buffalo

If there is one lesson learned from the Homeless Prevention and Rapid Re-housing (HPRP) program it is that too many of our residents are living paycheck to paycheck and even day-to-day in order to survive. One unexpected crisis such as being laid off from work or even having your hours reduced, one unexpected bill such as a high utility bill or car repair, can thrust a person over the brink and into homelessness.

Affordable Housing

- ▶ 58.5% (36,476) of renters in Buffalo pay more than 30% of their income for rent.
- ▶ 33.3% of the housing in Erie County was built before 1939 and 72.7 % before 1960.
- ▶ 65.4% of the housing in Buffalo was built before 1939 and 90.5% before 1960.

There are simply too many low income households paying too much of their income for rent in older housing units in Erie County and the City of Buffalo. The older units tend to be less energy efficient increasing the overall housing costs especially in the winter months when high utility bills can often lead to homelessness. In the HPRP program, utility payment assistance was the second largest need for the prevention of homelessness. When low income residents are spending a disproportionate amount of their income on housing costs, there is no safety net to account for unexpected expenses and certainly no ability to save money for a “rainy day.”

Chapter 1: Overview of Homelessness in Erie County

This chapter presents the 2012 estimates of homelessness and capacity of the homeless services for sheltering and housing homeless person in Erie County. The latest point in time count was conducted on January 30th, 2013. The annual count is based on HMIS data, with the estimation of non-participant data.

Point In Time Count (PIT)

HUD requires each CoC across the nation to conduct an annual point in time count of both the sheltered and unsheltered homeless during the last ten days of January. In addition to the HUD required PIT count of the unsheltered, additional unsheltered homeless count was conducted on July 26th, 2012. Homeless outreach workers and community volunteers went to soup kitchens, homeless encampments, under bridges and other places where the homeless are known to congregate to conduct the counts. The data collected was entered into HMIS to ensure an unduplicated count.

	Unsheltered Homeless Count	Sheltered Homeless Count	Total
January 26, 2011	178	760	938
October 26, 2011	135	N/A	N/A
January 26, 2012	106	804	910
July 26, 2012	131	N/A	N/A

Table 2 Point In Time Count within 2 years

Point in time numbers are a one day snapshot of the homeless population. Due to the severity of the weather conditions in the winter in Western New York, January is probably not the best time of the year to do a count in Erie County. The number of unsheltered homeless in January is most likely to be lower than during other times of the year. Knowing this, **it is estimated that there are approximately 1,000 homeless persons on any given night in Erie County.**

Annual Sheltered and Unsheltered Count

This chapter includes information entered into HMIS from Emergency Shelters, Transitional Housing programs, Safe Haven, Code Blue, Outreach program and programs that provide services only. The total unduplicated count of homeless persons entered into HMIS during this time period was 3,465. As discussed in the introduction, there are programs that do not enter data into HMIS. In order to get a total number of homeless in a given time period we have to estimate the numbers served by non-participating HMIS programs. The estimate is based on the assumption that the utilization rate of beds in non-participating HMIS programs is the same as those that do participate in HMIS. The final estimated count is then adjusted by 10.67% to account for homeless persons who are served by more than one program. **The total estimated unduplicated homeless count is 5,681.**

Program Type	2011 HMIS Count	2011 Estimated Total Count ²	2012 HMIS Count	2012 Estimated Total Count
Total Unique Homeless Persons	3399	5050	3465	5681
Emergency Shelter	2595	4282	2316	4558
Transitional Housing	546	662	642	768
Safe Haven	25	25	22	22
SSO	788	788	712	712
Outreach	139	139	137	137
Jan. and Jul. Unsheltered count	N/A	N/A	226	226

Table 3 Annual Homeless Count compared 2011 and 2012

Erie County Department of Social Service (DSS) made 2,198 placements into emergency housing in calendar year 2012, an increase of 14% from 2011. The chart above indicates that the overall number of homeless increased from 2011 to 2012 by 631 more people. However, we are hesitant to proclaim an actual increase in homelessness. Due to improved data collection this year we were able to provide numbers for unduplicated persons in street counts and supportive services only programs.

Comparison of Bed Inventory³

There are four types of housing programs in the Erie County Homeless Continuum of Care.

	Current Bed Inventory	HMIS coverage Rate	Dedicated Chronically Homeless Beds
ES	451	57.43%	N/A
TH	421	81.47%	N/A
PSH	902	80.38%	108
Safe Haven	16	100%	12
TOTAL	1790	75.03%	120

Table 4 Bed Inventory Comparison – HMIS Participation

² Estimated counts are mostly based on HUD Annual Homeless Assessment Report methodology, which assuming that beds located in programs that do not participate in HMIS are occupied at the same rate as beds located in HMIS- participating programs.

³ These are numbers of beds in the CoC by housing type; not a count of people. HMIS coverage is the percentage of beds that are entered into HMIS.

Chapter 2 Homeless Population

This chapter will first discuss the overall homeless population and their characteristics. The report we then presents the characteristics in two categories: Emergency Shelter and Transitional Housing. All the information presented is based on HMIS data, except the estimated number at the beginning of each section.

2.1. Homeless Population Characteristics

Program Type	2011 HMIS Count	2011 Estimated Total Count ⁴	2012 HMIS Count	2012 Estimated Total Count
Total Unique Homeless Persons	3399	5050	3465	5681
Emergency Shelter	2595	4282	2316	4558
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SSO	788	788	712	712
Outreach	139	139	137	137
Jan. and Jul. Unsheltered count	N/A	N/A	226	226

*Numbers for each program type are de-duplicated within the program. Total number of homeless is de-duplicated for all the homeless programs.

This chapter includes participant data from Emergency Shelters, Transitional Housing Programs, Safe Haven, Outreach Programs and Supportive Service Only Programs who participate in HMIS. Data from unsheltered counts is not included in this chapter due to the limited data collected. The total unduplicated count for this chapter would be 3,264, instead of 3,465.

Household Composition

The increase in “Children only” households is due to improved data collection and does not reflect the increase in this population.

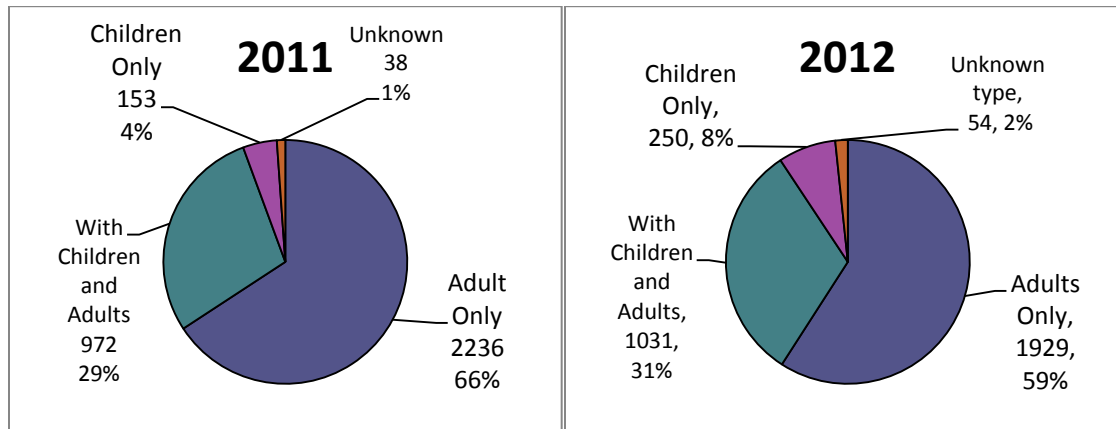


Figure 1 Homeless Persons by Household Type

⁴ Estimated counts are mostly based on HUD Annual Homeless Assessment Report methodology, which assuming that beds located in programs that do not participate in HMIS are occupied at the same rate as beds located in HMIS- participating programs.

Chapter 2 Homeless Population
2.1 Homeless Population Characteristics

Gender

Females were likely to be under counted because there are a significant number of beds that serve only women and/or female heads of households, i.e. – Domestic violence programs, that do not report into HMIS. The majority of homeless individual adults are males and the majority of homeless families are female heads of household.

	Total	%	Without Children	%	With Children and Adults	%
Male	1485	64%	1416	73%	68	17%
Female	834	36%	505	26%	329	83%
Transgendered	3	0%	3	0%	0	0%
Don't Know/Refused	5	0%	5	0%	0	0%
Subtotal	2327		1929		398	

Table 5 Homeless Adults—Gender

Age

27.3% (892) of the homeless population were children under the age of 18. 31.5% of the homeless children were young children less than 5 years old, 7.3% less than last year. The numbers of homeless adults aged 55 or above dramatically drop off, especially those 62 and over. This may be due to becoming eligible for social security benefits, senior and subsidized housing, or the increased likelihood of death on streets.

	Total	%	Households Without Children	%	Households With Children and Adults	%	Households With Only Children	%
Under 5	281	9%			281	26%	0	0%
5 - 12	293	9%			275	25%	18	7%
13 - 17	318	10%			86	8%	232	93%
18 - 24	423	13%	295	15%	128	12%		
25 - 34	547	17%	395	20%	152	14%		
35 - 44	468	14%	392	20%	76	7%		
45 - 54	593	18%	558	29%	35	3%		
55 - 61	216	7%	210	11%	6	1%		
62+	80	2%	79	4%	1	0%		
DK/Refused/Missing	45	1%	13	1%	32	3%	0	0%
Total	3264		1929		1085		250	

Table 6 Homeless population—Age by household types

Chapter 2 Homeless Population
2.1 Homeless Population Characteristics

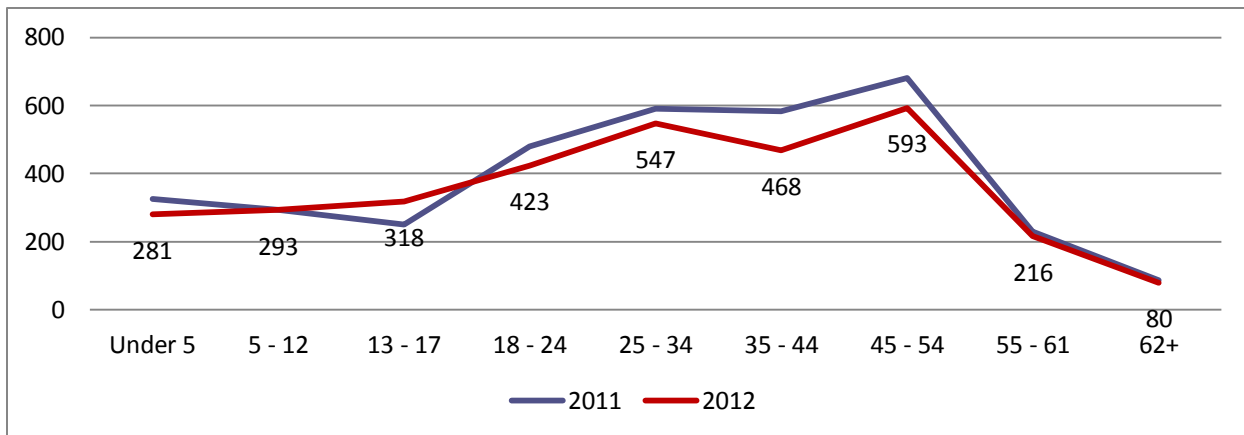


Figure 2 Homeless Population- Age (2011-2012 comparison)

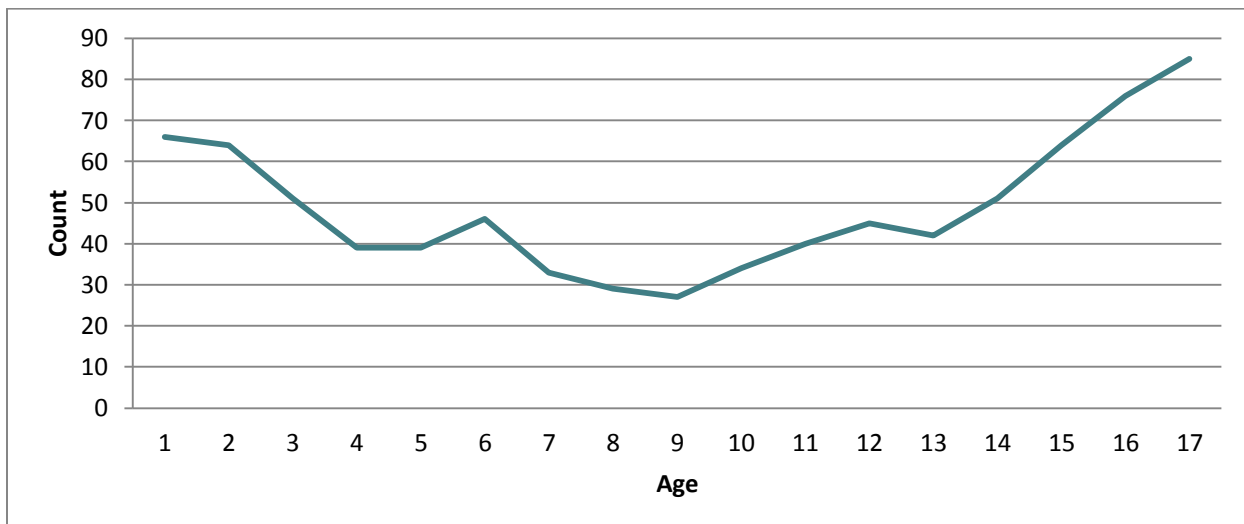


Figure 3 Homeless Population- Age distribution of children

Single adults or families with two adults were fairly evenly distributed; slightly leaning towards 45-54 age group. However, families with children were mostly likely to be young single mothers age between 18-34, with children under 12. School age children significantly drop, compared to the pre-school age. For unaccompanied youth, they were mostly 13-17 years old. Ages between 11-12 were 18% of this population.

Race

Racial composition for the total population who lives in Erie County is White: 82%, Black: 14%, Indian: 1%, Asian: 3%; for those living in Buffalo: white: 53%, Black: 41%, Indian: 2%, Asian: 4%.

Blacks or African Americans are over-represented in the homeless population.

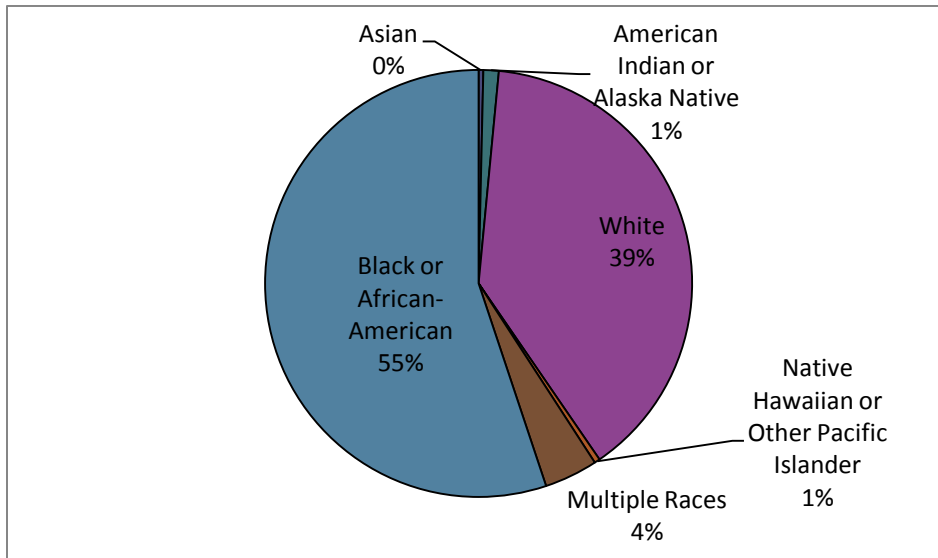


Figure 4 Homeless Population- Race
Note: Hispanic/ Latino is considered as a ethnicity, not a race

Ethnicity

Ethnicity composition for total population who live in Erie County is Hispanic: 5%; non-Hispanic: 95%; for those who live in Buffalo is Hispanic: 11%; non-Hispanic: 89%. Hispanics are over-represented in the homeless population.

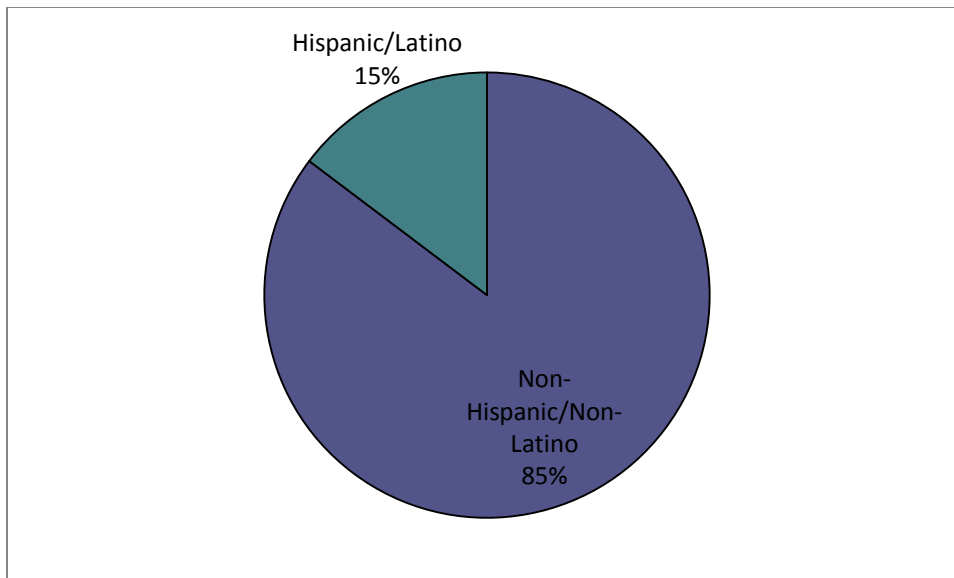


Figure 5 Homeless Population- Ethnicity

Prior Living Situation and Reasons of Homelessness

Reason of Homelessness	Count	Percentage
Family Issues: Household Disputes/ Domestic Violence /Conflict with Legal Guardian or Parent/Double up/Divorce or Separation/ Death of Family Member	492	26%
Health: Mental Health/ Health and safety/Medical Condition/Substance Abuse	492	26%
Economic Reasons: Loss of Job or income/ loss of public assistance/ loss of transportation/ mortgage foreclosure/ no affordable housing/unemployment/utility shutoff	296	16%
Eviction	240	13%
Other: Relocation/ Release from institution/Fire Disaster/ Criminal Activity*	386	20%

*the percentage doesn't include "missing data" this year.

Table 7 Homeless Population- Reason of Homelessness

Prior Living Situation	2011	Percentage	2012	Percentage
Double up	1245	33%	1173	32%
Emergency Shelter	634	17%	805	22%
Rental by Client	544	15%	639	18%
Place not meant for habitation	466	12%	366	10%
Institutions	475	13%	297	8%
Other	368	10%	335	9%

*Other includes: owned by client, permanent housing, transitional housing, don't know, refused and missing data.

Table 8 Homeless Population- Prior Living Situation

There is a 5% increase in the number of homeless clients whose prior living situation is an Emergency Shelters.

Disabling Conditions

Overall, 55% (1,786) of homeless persons have no disability and 42% (1,385) has one or more disabling conditions (3% data errors/missing). The most common disability types were mental illness at 62% and substance abuse at 55%.

Disability Types (N=1,385)	Counts	Percentage
Mental Illness	857	62%
Alcohol Abuse	353	25%
Drug Abuse	414	30%
Chronic Health Condition	46	3%

HIV/AIDS and Related Diseases	6	0%
Developmental Disability	186	13%
Physical Disability	341	25%

Table 9 Homeless Population- Disability Types

Zip Code of Last Permanent Address

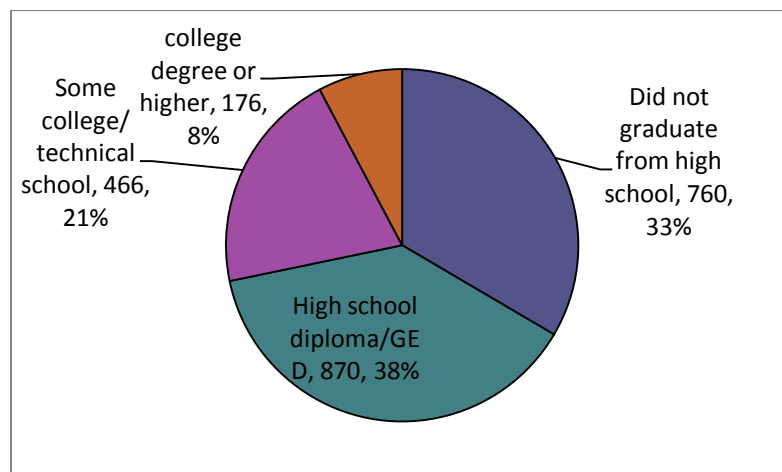
This is different from Prior Living Situation discussed above. Prior living situation means where the client slept the night before the client entered the program while the Zip code of their last permanent address means the last address where the client lived for more than 90 days. Maps reflect the homeless count based on Zip Code can be found in the Appendix Four-Map 1 and Map 2. Compared to last year, about 200 more clients were from the City of Buffalo. Clients from outside of Buffalo but within Erie County had significantly decreased, from 312 to 212.

Area	Homeless Client Served in 2011	Homeless Client Served in 2012	Homeless Client Percentage in 2012
Within the City of Buffalo	2205	2401	78%
Erie County (outside City of Buffalo)	312	212	7%
Outside of Erie County, but inside New York State	211	203	7%
Outside of New York State	257	249	8%
Total Valid Zip Codes Entered	2985	3065	

Table 10 Homeless population-client distribution based on Zip Code of last permanent address

Education

There are 2272 valid answers in HMIS for adults who answered their highest education level.



The percentage of education levels of homeless persons is similar to the general population (see Page 5). The lower the level of education, there is a slightly higher risk of becoming homeless.

Figure 6 Homeless Population- Adult highest education level

2.2. Emergency Shelter

	2011	2012
Total Clients Served in HMIS	2595	2316
• Adult only	1651	1331
• With Only Children	146	235
• With Children and Adults	760	720
• Unknown Type	38	30
Total Estimated Clients Served	4282	4558
• Estimated Adult only	2679	2686
• Estimated with only children	134	235
• Estimated children and adults	1469	1637

Emergency Shelter (ES) - Housing in which homeless persons can access shelter immediately and reside for up to 30 days. The primary function is to assist individuals in identifying causes of homelessness, accessing services and securing the next appropriate level of housing. Code Blue and Department of Social Service Hotel placements are included in this category.

Household with only children are almost double last year’s number due to improved data collection; the actual number of homeless children served stayed about the same.

We believe that the significant decrease in adult only category in HMIS participating shelters is due to changes in policies, for example, length of stay requirements for participants.

Most of the increase in the estimates was for households with children. Based on Department of Social Services reports on non-HMIS participating shelters, there was a 22% increase in families placements over last year. The utilization rate on the non-HMIS family shelters appear to be much different than for HMIS participating shelters; shorter lengths of stay resulted in a much higher rate of turnover. Because of this, a different methodology was used to calculate the total estimated persons in household with children.

All the demographic data below are based on the HMIS shelters and do not include non-HMIS shelter numbers.

Gender

Gender is very disproportionate among household types in Emergency Shelters. The majority of adult individuals are male while the majority of adults in families are female head of households.

	Total	Without Children	%	With Children and Adults	%
Male	1062	1009	76%	53	19%
Female	543	319	24%	214	81%
Don't Know/Refused	3	3	0%	0	0%
Subtotal	1608	1331		267	

Table 11 ES- Adult Gender Distribution

Age

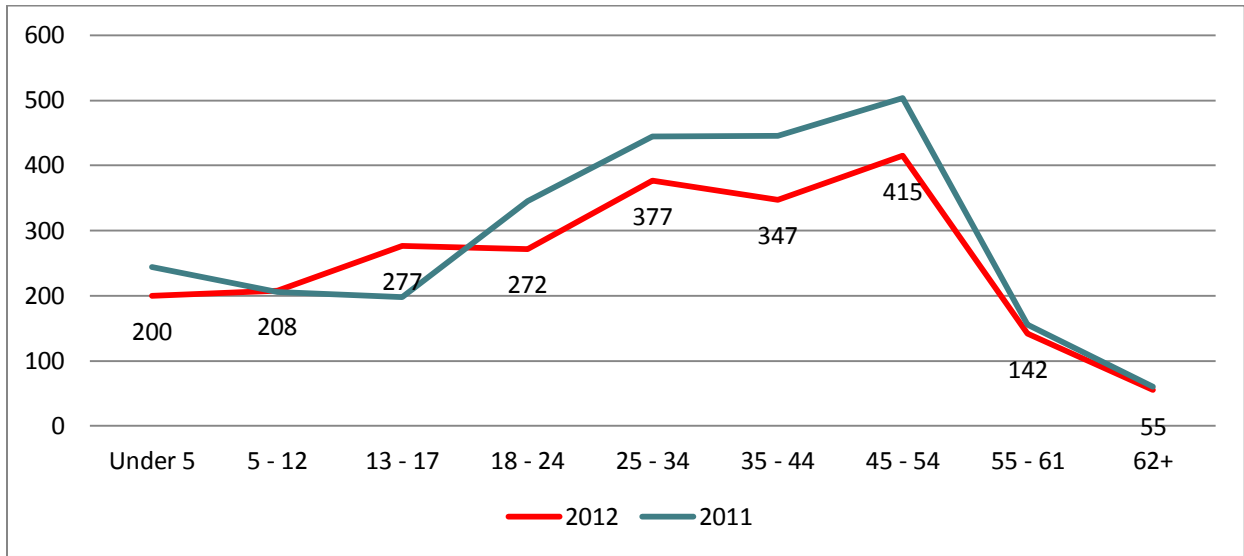


Figure 7 ES- Age Distribution comparison for 2011 and 2012

As stated earlier, improved data collection for unaccompanied youth is the major reason for the increase in the 13-17 age range.

Race

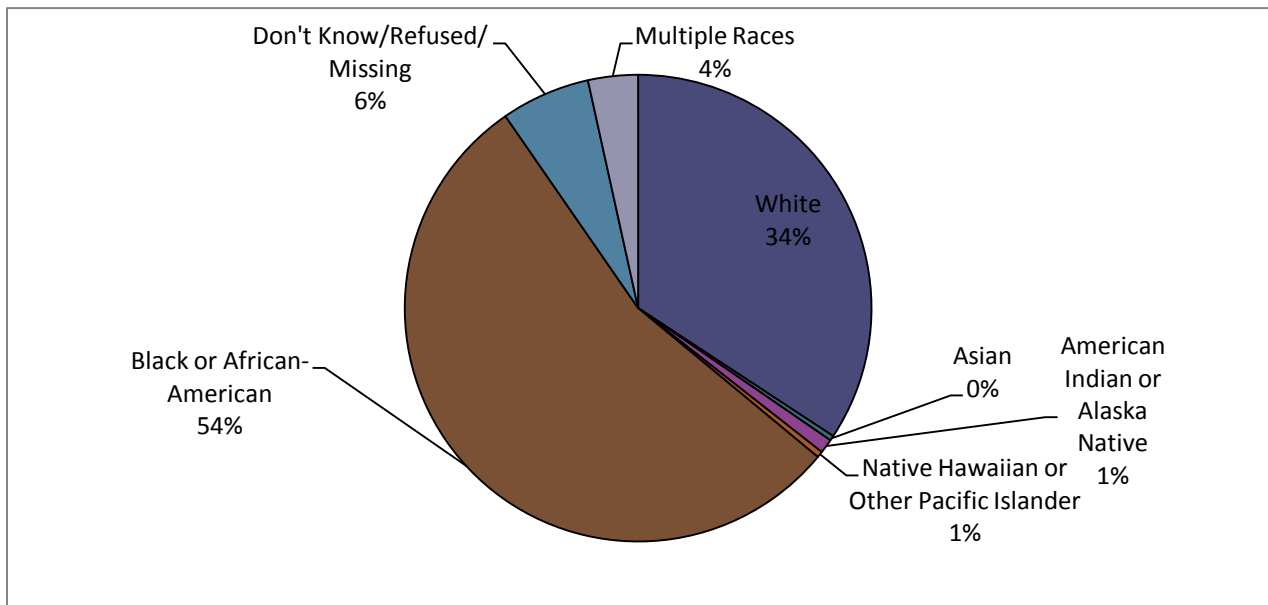


Figure 8 ES-Race

Ethnicity

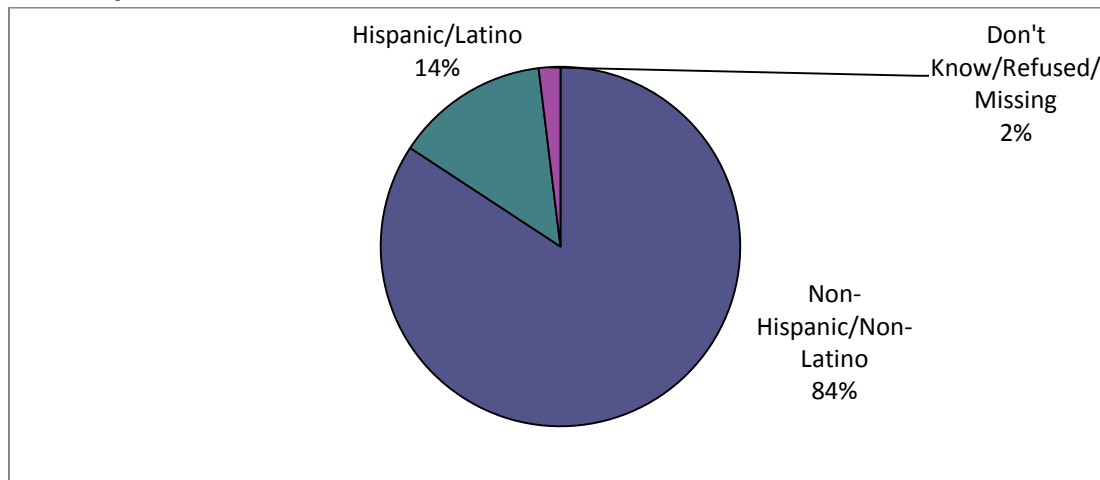


Figure 9 ES-Ethnicity

Disabilities

62% of the clients who stayed in emergency shelters have no disability and 35% have at least one long term disability. For those who have disability, 36% have two or more conditions. Mental illness is the most common disability at 51%.

Disability Type	Count	Percentage
Mental Illness	404	51%
Alcohol Abuse	121	16%
Drug Abuse	140	18%
Chronic Health Condition	31	4%
HIV/AIDS and Related Diseases	1	0%
Developmental Disability	115	14%
Physical Disability	219	27%
Total client who has one or more disability	817	

Table 12 ES- Disability types

Prior living situations

Rental by client increased 4% compared to last year.

Prior Living Situation	2011	Percentage	2012	Percentage
Double up	1,141	42%	962	40%
Rental by Client	506	19%	549	23%
Institutions	324	12%	201	8%
Emergency Shelter	287	11%	270	11%
Place not meant for habitation	178	7%	119	5%
Other	159	11%	293	12%

Table 13 ES- Prior living situations

Length of Stay

The majority of clients who stayed in Emergency Shelters remained for less than 30 days (62%). A coordinated entry /assessment system could direct homeless households to the most appropriate level of assistance which would reduce the length of stay even further.

	Average Length	Median Length
Clients who left the program at the end of the report period	36	19
Clients who stay in the program at the end of the report period	63	30

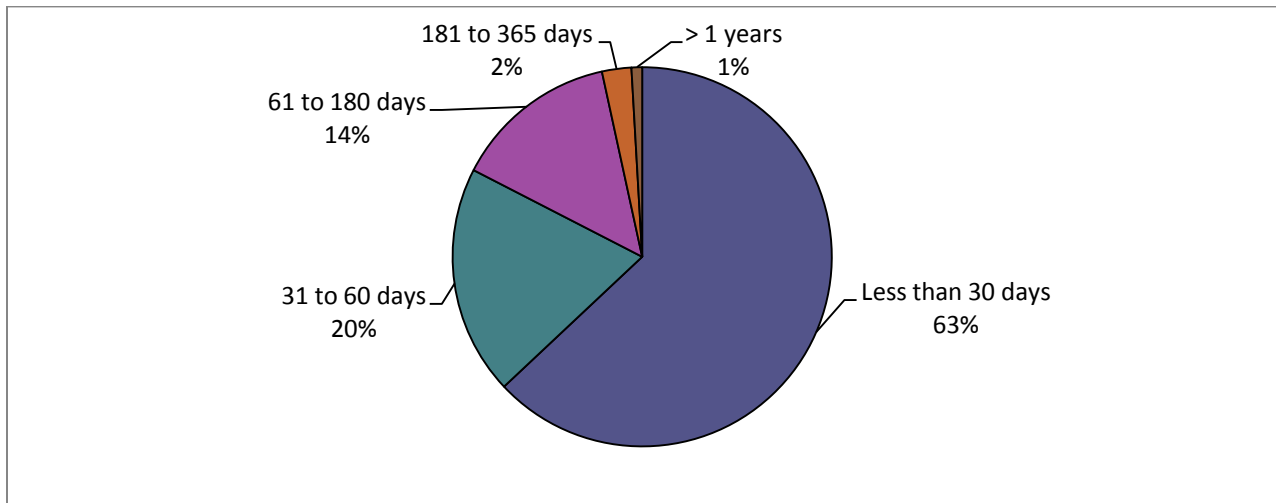


Figure 10 ES- Length of Stay

Destinations

Compared to last year, we have less “other destinations” (other, deceased, don’t know, refused) and have more identified destinations. Permanent housing destinations increased by 5%, temporary destinations increased by 8%. 34% of the temporary destinations are to transitional housing for homeless persons, which is still a positive outcome for clients. However, much work still needs to be done. It is difficult to determine a benchmark for Emergency Shelter discharge to permanent housing when we do not know the destination of 41% who exited.

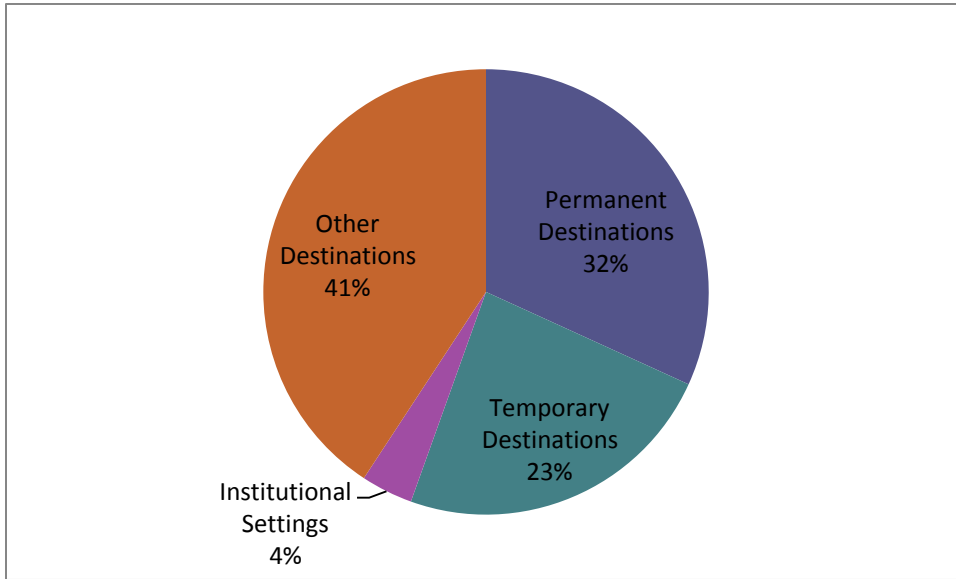


Figure 11 ES-Destinations

2.3. Transitional Housing

	2011	2012
Total Clients Served in HMIS	546	642
• Adult Only	265	289
• With Only Children	20	38
• With Children and Adults	261	306
Total Estimated Clients Served	662	768
• Estimated Adult only	365	350
• Estimated with only children	20	38
• Estimated children and adults	277	380

Transitional Housing (TH) - Housing in which homeless persons can live for up to 24 months and receive supportive services that will enable them to move to permanent housing and to live more independently. A TH program must include housing placement assistance.

This year transitional housing programs who participating in HMIS served 96 more clients than last year. This is due to increased HMIS bed coverage for TH and ES beds that were re-classified as TH beds.

Gender

Overall the gender of transitional housing participants was fairly evenly distributed: 52% were males and 47% were female. However, if we only look at adults, the distribution is similar to Emergency Shelters. For adults in families, 89.4% are female head of households; for individuals 66% were males and 33% were female.

	Total	Without Children	%	With Children and Adults	%
Male	203	191	66.1%	12	10.6%
Female	199	97	33.6%	101	89.4%
Transgendered	1	1	0.3%	0	0%
Subtotal	403	289		113	

Table 14 Transitional Housing Adult Gender

Age

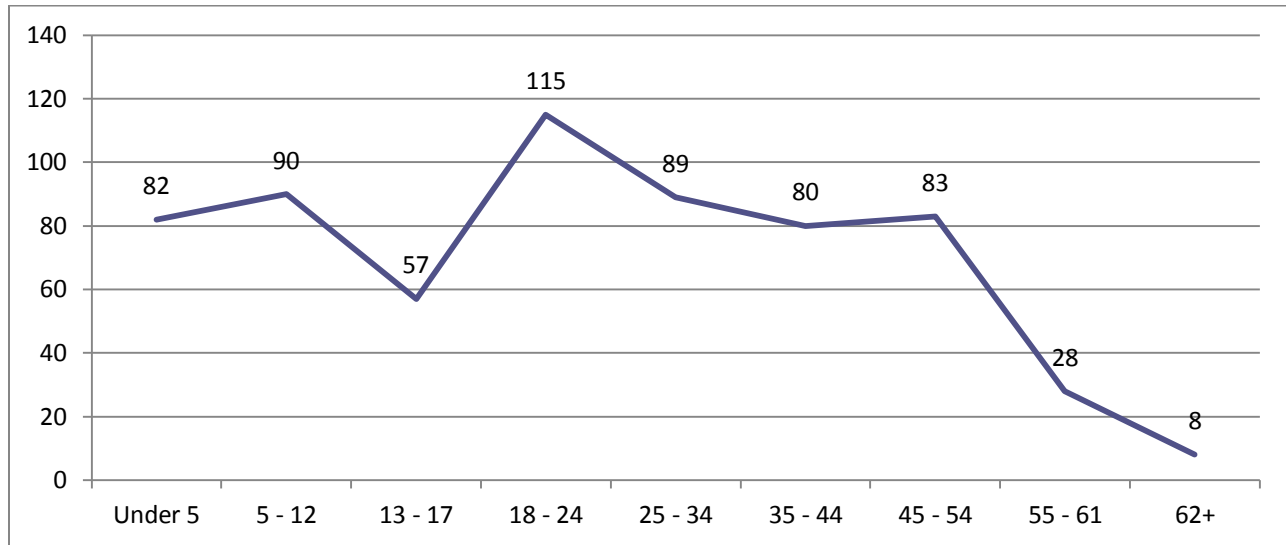


Figure 12 TH-Age Distribution

	Total	%	Without Children	%	With Children and Adults	%	With Only Children	%	Unknown HH Type
Under 5	82	13%			81	26%	0	0%	0
5 - 12	90	14%			90	29%	0	0%	0
13 - 17	57	9%			20	7%	37	100%	0
18 - 24	115	18%	77	27%	37	12%			1
25 - 34	89	14%	38	13%	51	17%			0
35 - 44	80	12%	60	21%	20	7%			0
45 - 54	83	13%	79	27%	4	1%			0
55 - 61	28	4%	27	9%	1	0%			0
62+	8	1%	8	3%	0	0%			0
Don't Know/Refused	9	1%	0	0%	1	0%	0	0%	8
Information Missing	1	0%	0	0%	1	0%	0	0%	0
Total	642		289		306		37		9

Table 15 TH-Age by household Type

Individuals aged 18 to 24 represented 18% of the population in TH, now considered as unaccompanied youth by HUD and the CoC.

Race

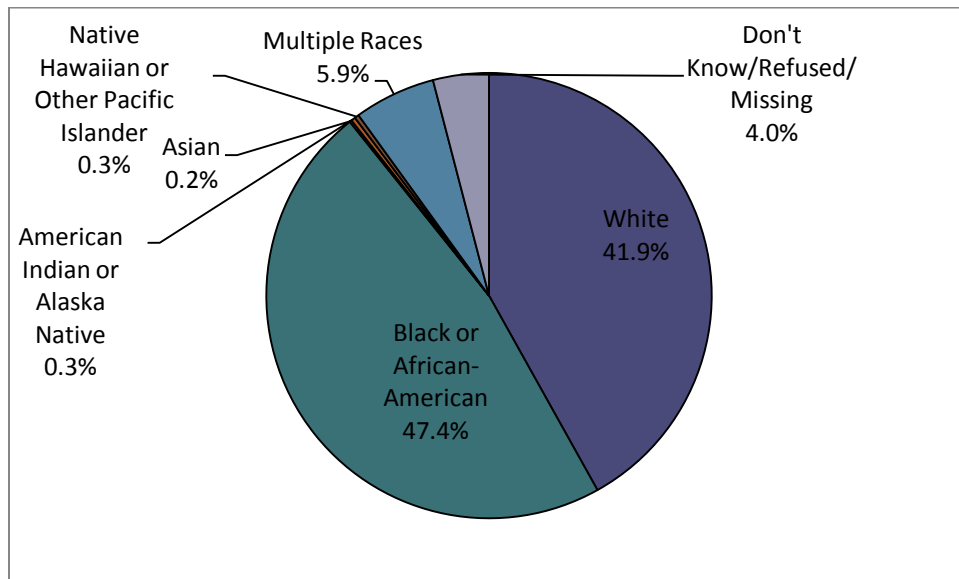


Figure 13 TH-Race

Ethnicity

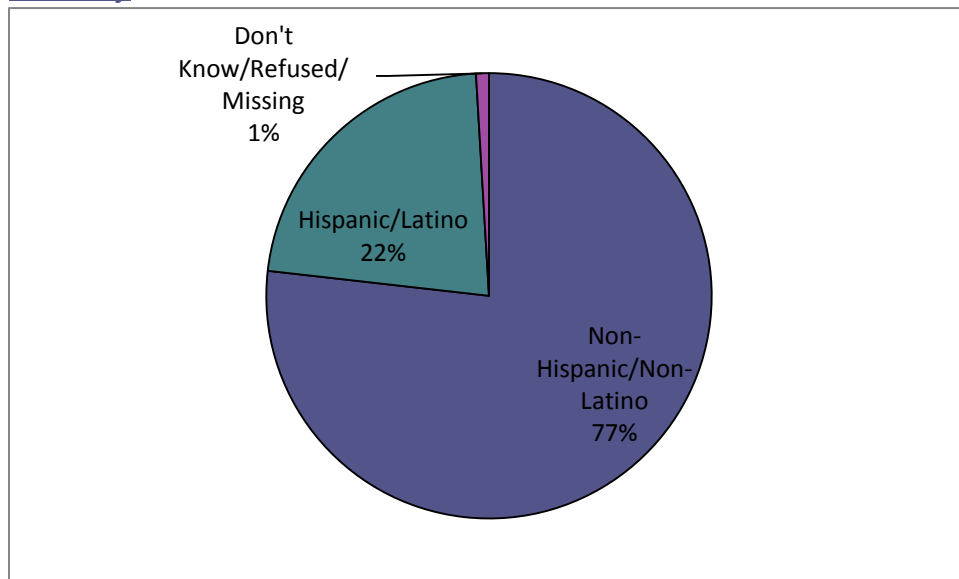


Figure 14 TH-Ethnicity

Disabilities

66% of adult TH participants had no disability, and 32% have one or more disabling condition(s). The percentage of clients who have a disability seems low for Transitional Housing programs that provide more intense supportive services. Among those with disabilities, 76% had substance abuse issues and 67% had a mental illness.

Disability Types	Count	%
Mental Illness	136	67%
Alcohol Abuse	73	36%
Drug Abuse	82	40%
Chronic Health Condition	6	3%
HIV/AIDS and Related Diseases	0	0%
Developmental Disability	34	17%
Physical Disability	30	15%
Total client who has one/more disability(ies)	204	

Table 16 TH-Disabilities

Prior Living Situations

	2011	%	2012	%
Emergency Shelter	230	42%	246	37%
Double Up	126	23%	232	36%
Rental by client	15	2%	68	10%
Others	183	33%	102	16%

Table 17 TH-Prior Living Situations

There needs to be further discussion regarding the large number of TH participants who do not come from the homeless system.

Length of Stay

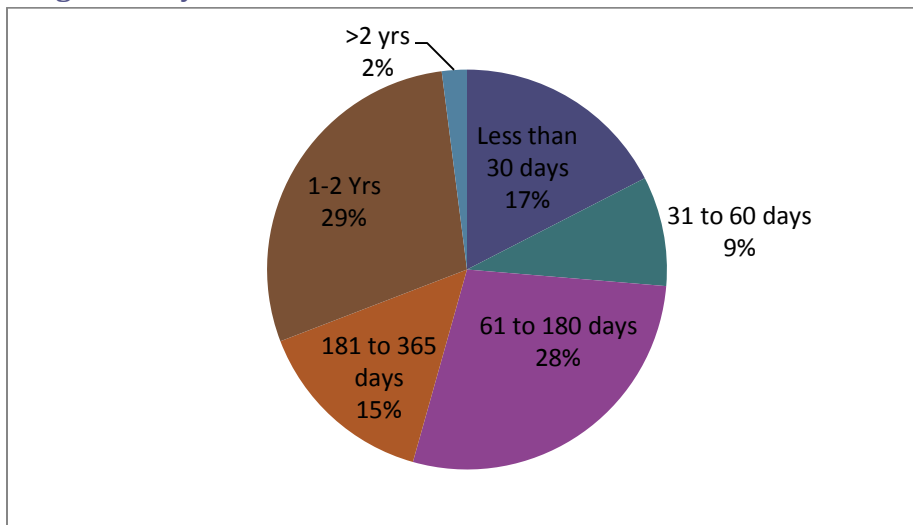


Figure 15 TH-Length of Stay for all clients

	Average Length	Median Length
Leavers	267	173
Stayers	230	165

Destinations

Compared to 2011 data, there was improvement on exit to permanent housing, from 53% to 57%. However, this is still significantly below the HUD national benchmark of 66%. “Other Destinations” which includes “Don’t know” still remains 22% this year.

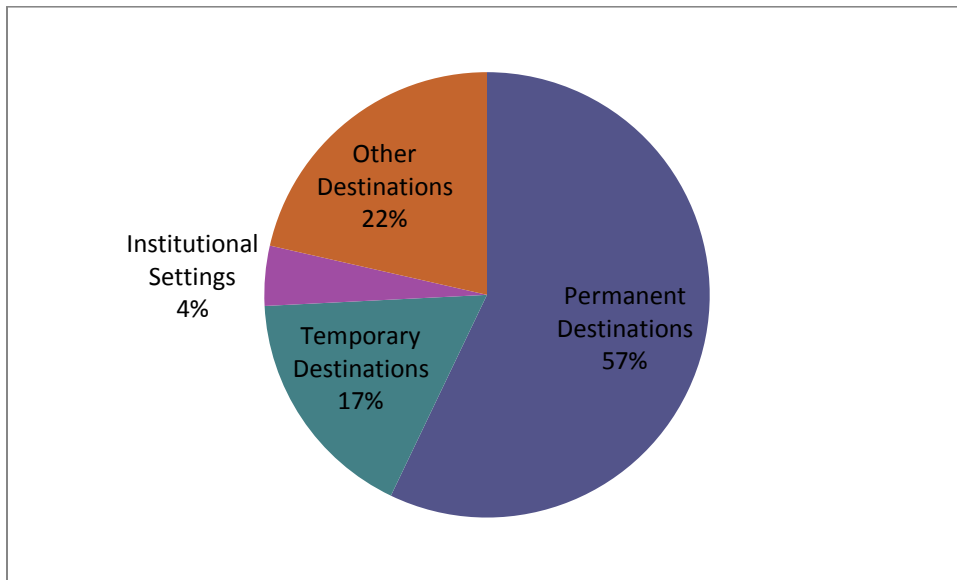


Figure 16 TH-Destinations

Chapter 3 Permanent Supportive Housing

	2011	2012
Total Clients Served in HMIS	824	876
• Adult Only	750	748
• With Children and Adults	73	124
Total Estimated Clients Served	1059	1100
• Estimated Adult Only	986	884
• Estimated with Children and Adults	73	216

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) - Housing in which homeless persons with a disability live with no limit on the length of stay. Supportive services are provided and rent cannot exceed 30% of a person's monthly income. Programs may be a single site, scattered sites, or clustered units and includes rental assistance programs (formerly known as Shelter Plus Care).

Most of the PSH grants are designed and funded as programs for individuals, but do provide the flexibility for clients who reunite with their family members. In the past, not all agencies were putting the family members in HMIS. With the emphasis on putting family members in HMIS, this year's persons in families were increased.

Gender

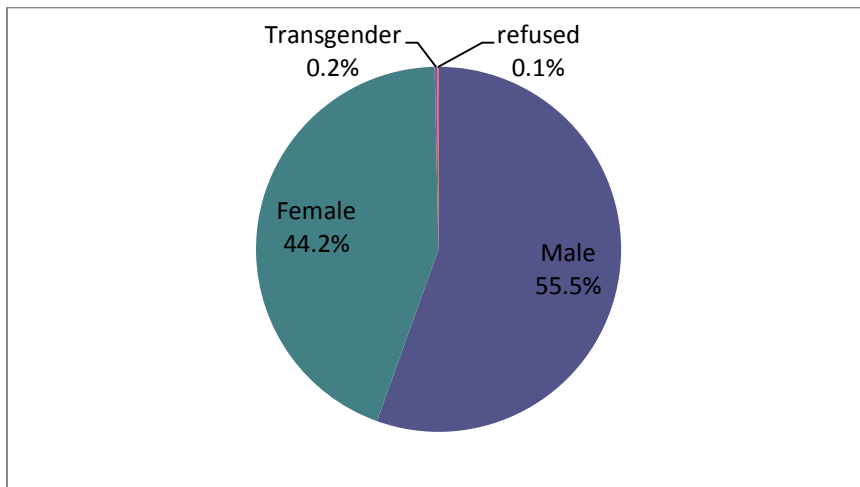


Figure 17 PSH-Gender

Age

The age of homeless individuals is concentrated between the age of 45-54 and drops quickly after 55.

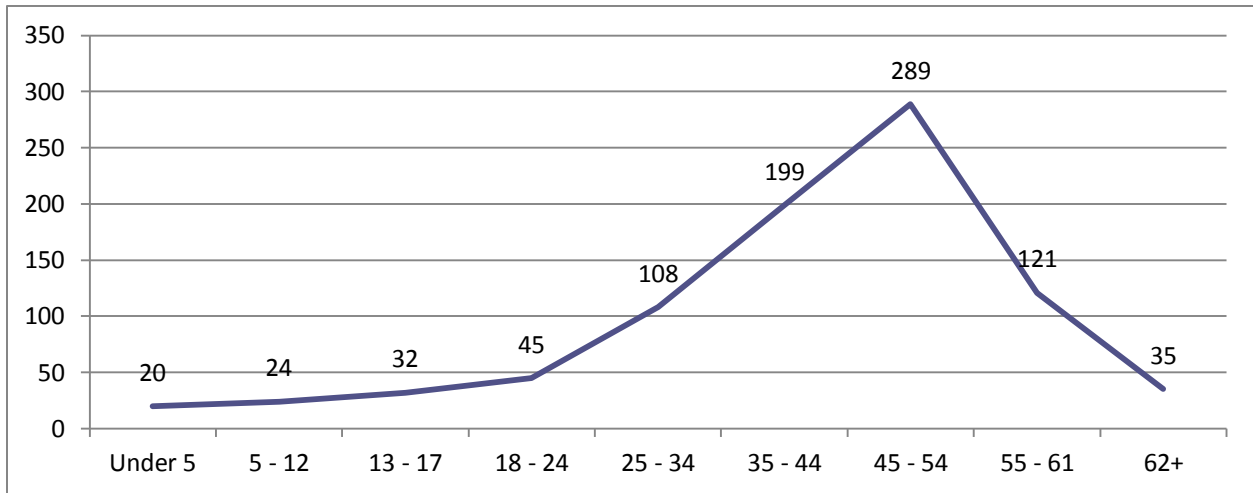


Figure 18 PSH-Age

Race and Ethnicity

The majority of participants are white (50%), while in ES and TH the majority are non-white.

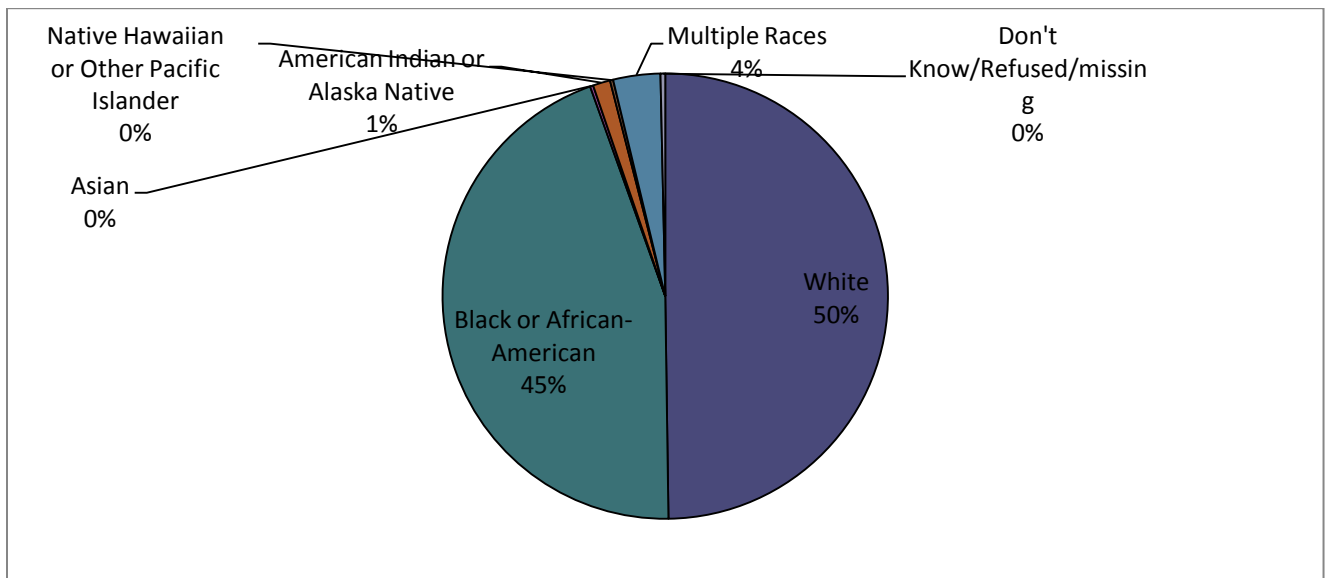


Figure 19 PSH – Race

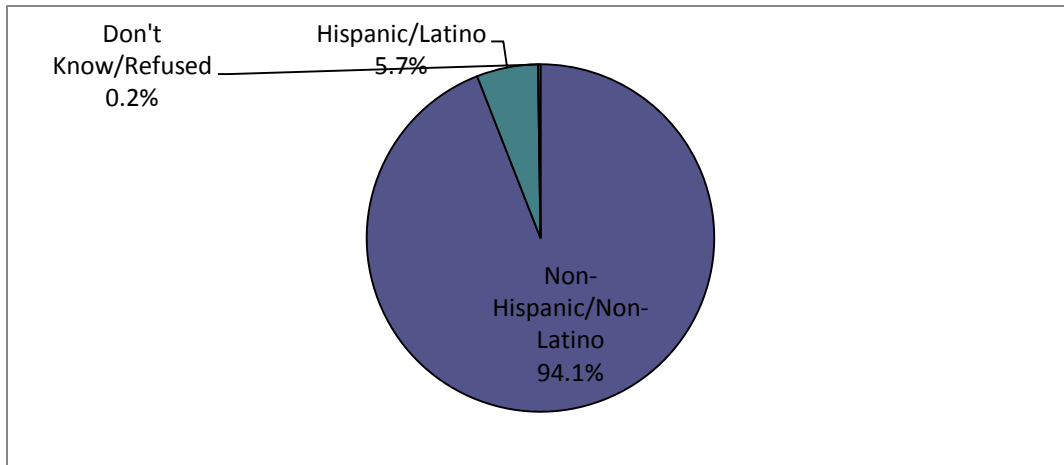


Figure 20 PSH- Ethnicity

Disabling Condition

To be eligible for PSH, the participant must have a diagnosed disability. Of the 11% with no disability, 75% are children that are living with an adult who has one or more disability. The remaining adults who are shown to have no disability are either the result of data errors or the spouse/ grown up children of the clients who are disabled. 40% of the participants have 3 or more disabilities. 90% of the participants have mental illness and 85% have substance abuse issues.

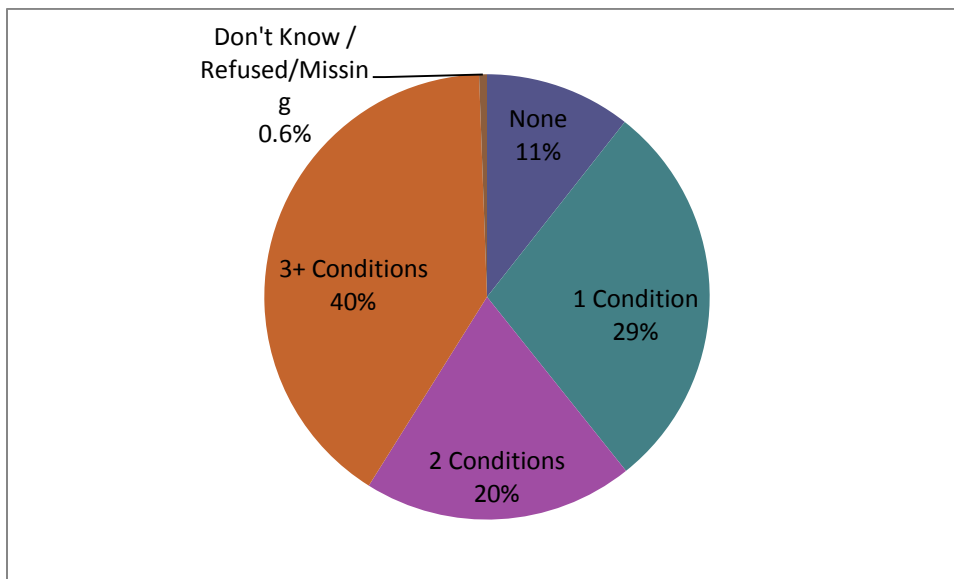


Figure 21 PSH- Disabling Condition

	Total	Percentage
Mental Illness	702	90%
Drug Abuse	333	43%
Alcohol Abuse	329	42%
Physical Disability	136	17%
Developmental Disability	20	3%
Chronic Health Condition	19	2%
HIV/AIDS and Related Diseases	6	1%

Table 18 PSH-Disability Type

Prior Living Situation

The majority of PSH participants (77%) were either in emergency shelters or unsheltered before coming into permanent supportive housing. Places not meant for human habitation include the streets, abandoned houses/buildings, cars, under bridges, etc.

The fact that 86 unsheltered persons were able to be placed directly into PSH is a tremendous accomplishment. It supports the need for additional PSH housing units that embrace Housing First strategies and Harm Reduction philosophies.

Prior Living Situation	Count	Percentage
Emergency Shelter	527	66%
Place not meant for habitation	86	11%
Transitional Housing for homeless persons	76	10%
Institutional settings	26	3%
Hotel/Motel	20	3%
Others	63	8%

Table 19 PSH- Prior Living Situation

Income or Non-Cash Benefit

95% of the adults who left PSH during this report period had cash income when they left. Cash income includes earned income, SSI, SSDI, general assistance etc. 39% of the participants who had cash income were receiving SSI. Only 6% had earned income. For clients who stayed in the program, 93% had cash income and the percentage who were working was slightly higher, at 8%.

About 45% of the participants received/are receiving Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (Food Stamps) and Medicaid Health Insurance.

Length of Stay for Leavers

181 participants exited permanent supportive housing during 2012 and 695 remained in PSH. 92% of participants who exited a PSH program during this time period stayed more than six months, exceeding the HUD benchmark of 78% of PSH participants remaining in permanent housing for more than six months. PSH programs had great success in stabilizing participants in housing.

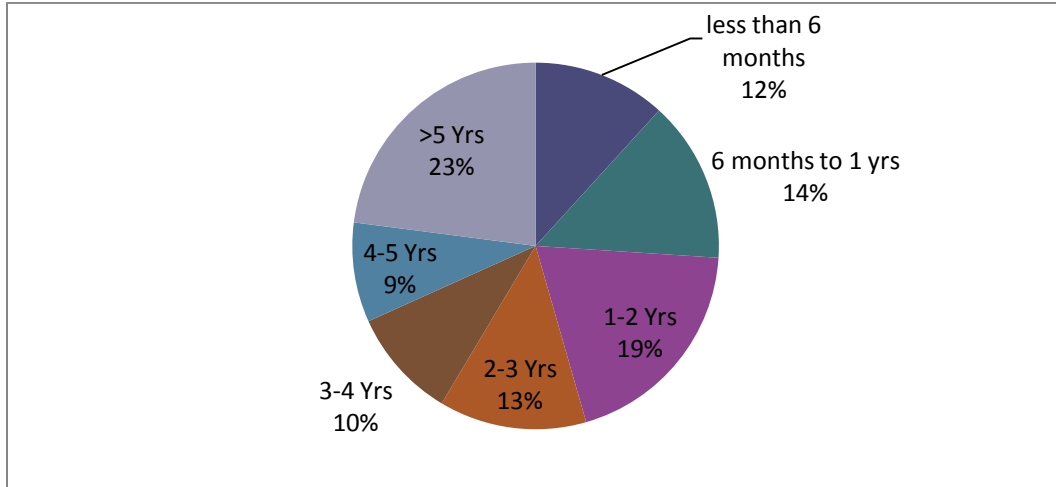


Figure 22 PSH- Length of Stay

Destinations

58% of the clients who exited permanent supportive housing programs left successfully for other permanent housing destinations, an increase of 13% from last year. Due to the increased emphasis on performance, and the efforts to improve accuracy of the annual performance report (APR), the percentage of “Other destinations” is much lower this year, from 35% to 18%.

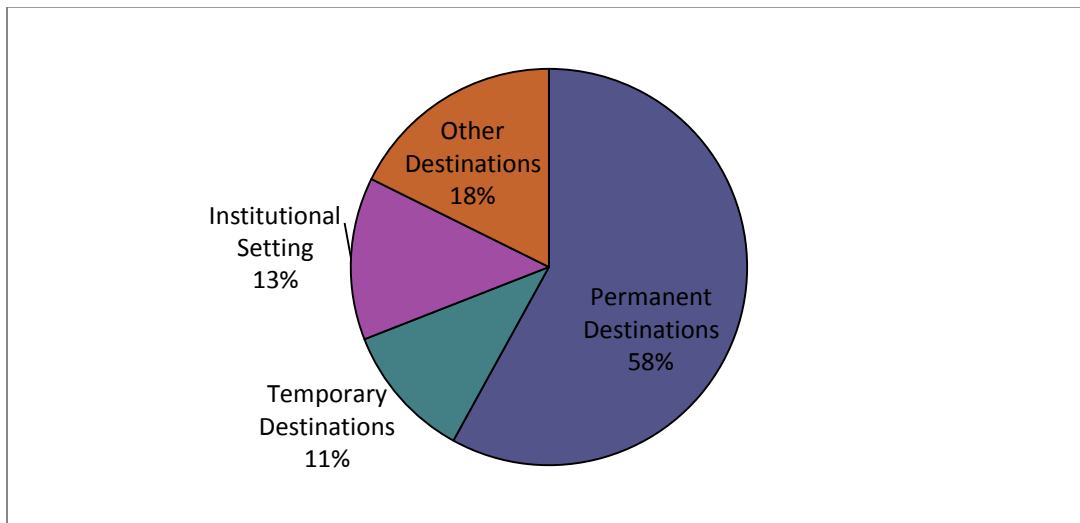


Figure 23 PSH-Destinations

Chapter 4 Subpopulation

This chapter will cover subpopulations listed below,

- Chronically Homeless
- Unsheltered homeless
- Homeless Pattern- Repeated Homeless, New Homeless and Length of Stay of Homeless System
- Unsheltered Population
- Homeless Veterans
- Victims of Domestic Violence
- Homeless Families
- Homeless unaccompanied youth (age 24 or under) and school Aged Homeless

4.1. Chronically Homeless

The definition of chronically homeless expanded in 2010 from only unaccompanied individuals to include homeless families where at least one adult member has met all the other chronically homeless standards. Such standards include:

- must has a disabling condition
- has either been continuously homeless for a year or more
OR has had at least four (4) episodes of homelessness in the past three (3) years

The proposed new chronically homeless definition has recently been released. Each homeless episode has to be at least 15 days. The cumulative days of the homeless episodes need to be at least one year.

There are 463 unique clients that answered “Yes” to the question “Are you chronically homeless?” Chronically homeless represents 13.4% of the total homeless population based on the annual number. Based on the Point in Time number, there were 132 chronically homeless, which account for 15.6% of the total population. Nationally, there were 99,894 people who were chronically homeless, representing just fewer than 16% of all homeless people⁵.

Gender

The majority of the chronically homeless population is male (75%).

⁵ Volume 1 of the 2012 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress
https://www.onecpd.info/resources/documents/2012AHAR_PITestimates.pdf

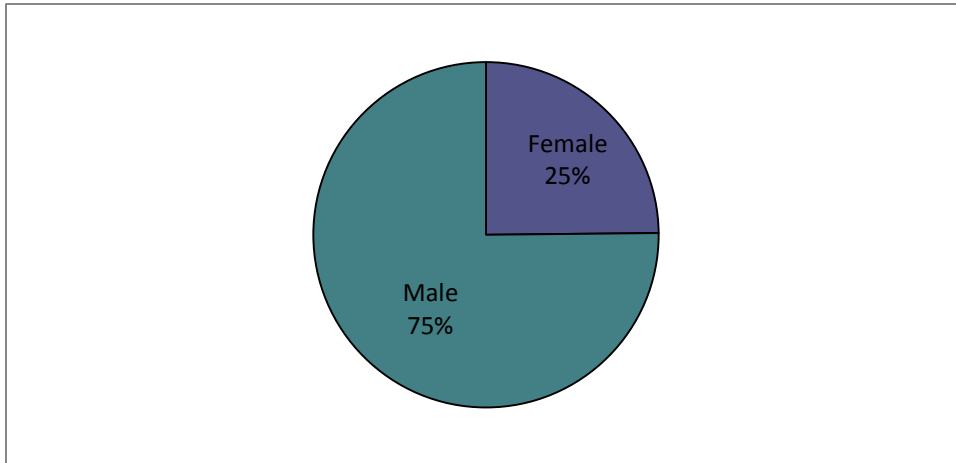


Figure 24 Chronically homeless- Gender

Age

The age distribution in the chronically homeless group is similar to clients in permanent supportive housing. The strongest concentration occurs between the age of 45 to 54.

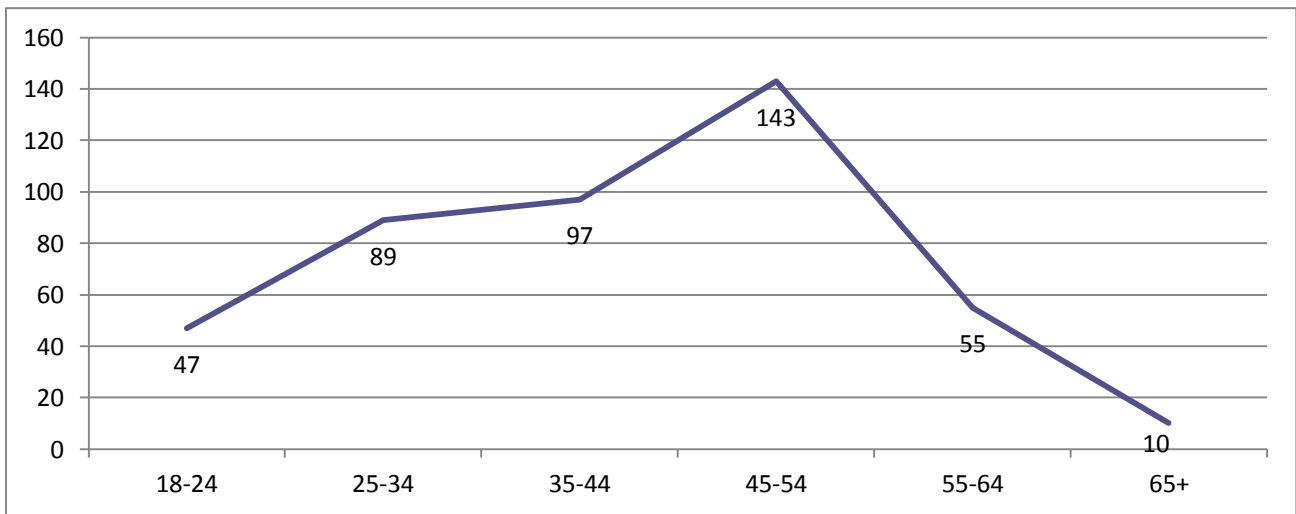
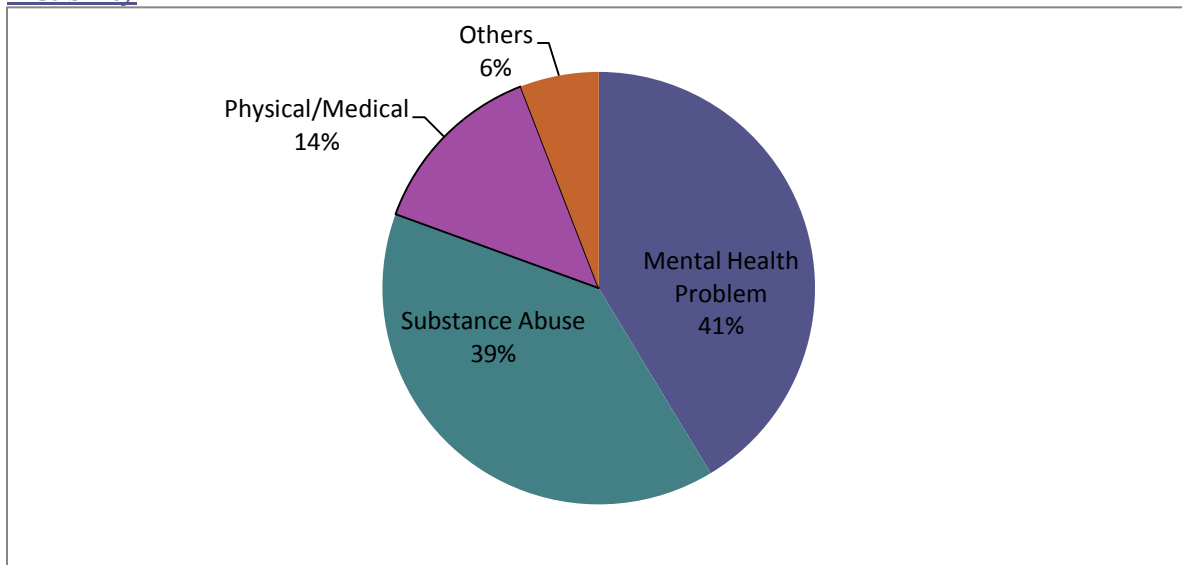


Figure 25 Chronically homeless- Age Distribution

Disability



*Others include developmental, chronic health condition and HIV/AIDS

Figure 26 Chronically Homeless- Disabling Conditions

Challenges of identifying chronically homeless in HMIS

In the process of identifying chronically homeless using HMIS, we found that the data for chronically homeless is not always consistent. Possible reasons could be the high turnover of case workers, lack of knowledge about the definition of chronically homeless, and the difficulty of inputting dynamic data in HMIS. In the HMIS, there are five questions that reflect the standards above:

1. Is client homeless? –Yes
2. Extent of homelessness? – Chronic: 4 times in past 3 years; Chronic: 1 year or more (added 2011); Long term: 2 year or more (deleted in 2011)
3. Chronically homeless?—Yes
4. Disabling condition of long duration?— Yes and type(s) of the disability(ies)
5. Age > 18

Unfortunately, the system itself is not able to identify the relationship between these questions. It won't flag users if answers are conflicting. **There are only 261 who clients fit all the criteria above.** We will continually put effort into educating and training case workers on how to correctly input data in HMIS. We will also regularly review definitions and modify some data already in the system in order to record the most accurate data.

4.2. Homeless Pattern

With full implementation of the HEARTH Act, there will be new system wide performance measurements used. It is expected that the HUD benchmark for recidivism will be that less than 5% of homeless persons will have more than one homeless episode within a two (2) year time period. Organizations who are not participating in HMIS present the biggest challenge to tracking recidivism.

HMIS bed and service coverage rate is crucial to the accuracy of tracking homeless persons.

Understanding homeless patterns is one way to understand this population and is an important tool for planning services and targeting sub-populations. Research shows that a majority of homeless clients stay in the system for a short period of time and never come back. Only a small percentage of families experience multiple episodes. Families with a head of household who is younger usually tend to have shorter lengths of stay. For singles, about 15% of the clients are chronically homeless who stay longer in the system, or are in and out the system multiple times⁶.

HUD has been emphasizing capturing homeless data in these three aspects: recidivism, first time homeless, and length of stay. Definitions from HUD are not yet released, but across the country, CoCs are using these concepts for planning purposes. In this report, we will provide the most meaningful method that we believe can help our planning process.

Please be aware of that data in this section might not include any outreach or unsheltered data. The following data reflects only clients that stayed in homeless programs: Emergency Shelter, Transitional Housing, or Safe Haven. The timeframe used in this section is specific to the concept. Please review them carefully.

4.2.1. Repeated Homeless

Repeated homeless in this report means that a person has been homeless during the prior two years (10/1/2009-9/30/2011), and entered the homeless system again within this report period.

Between 10/1/2011-09/30/2012, there were 2,305 un-duplicated homeless clients who entered ES, TH or SH, and 444 of them had entered during the prior two years (10/1/2009-09/30/2011). The recidivism rate is 19%

	Household with Adult and Children	Household with only adults	Household with only children
Persons	65	350	31
Households	32	350	31

⁶ Dennis P. Culhane, Stephen Metraux, Jung Min Park, Maryanne Schretzman, and Jesse Valente. "Testing a Typology of Family Homelessness Based on Patterns of Public Shelter Utilization in Four U.S. Jurisdictions: Implications for Policy and Program Planning" *Departmental Papers (SPP)* (2007).

Dennis P. Culhane and Randall Kuhn. "Patterns and Determinants of Public Shelter Utilization among Homeless Adults in Philadelphia and New York City" *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management* 17.1 (1998): 23-43.

Households with Adult and Children: 28 out of 32 (89%) homeless families with multiple episodes of homelessness have a female head of household. The rest are two parent families. Both the age of the head of household and children are widely distributed.

Households with Only Children: All unaccompanied youth age between the age of 13 and 17.

Households with only adults:

Homeless individuals have the highest rate of recidivism.

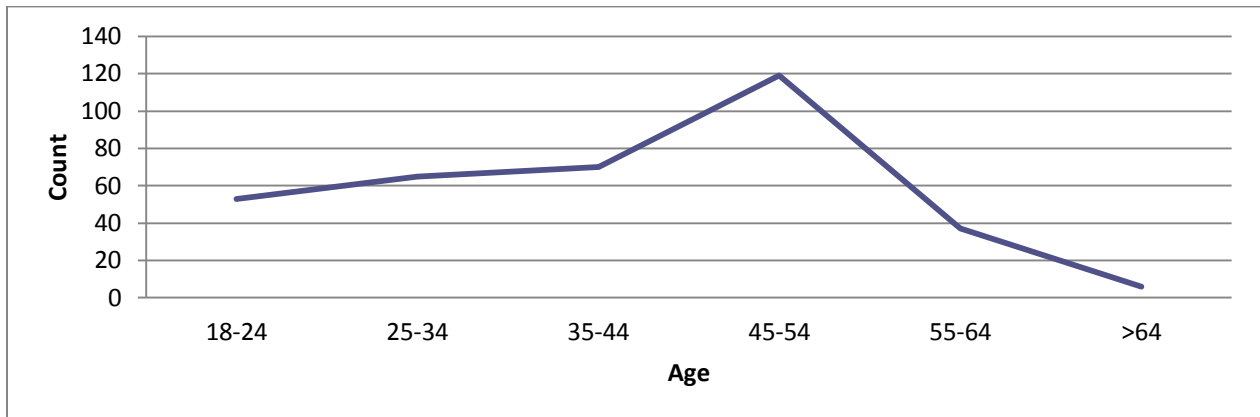


Figure 27 Repeated Homeless- Age distribution of household with only adults

Gender

Age distribution matches neither the general homeless population nor the chronically homeless population.

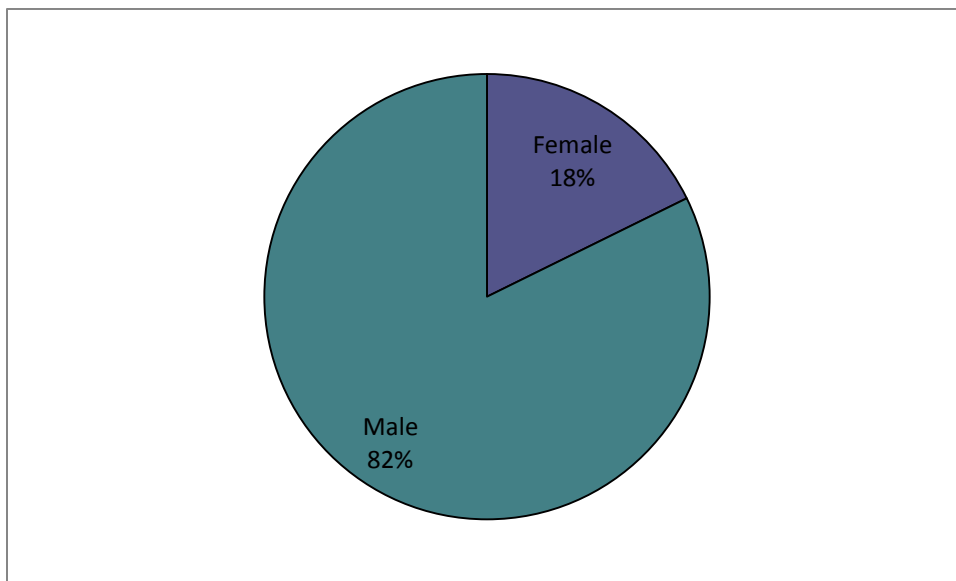


Figure 28 Repeated Homeless- Gender of households with only adults

Race

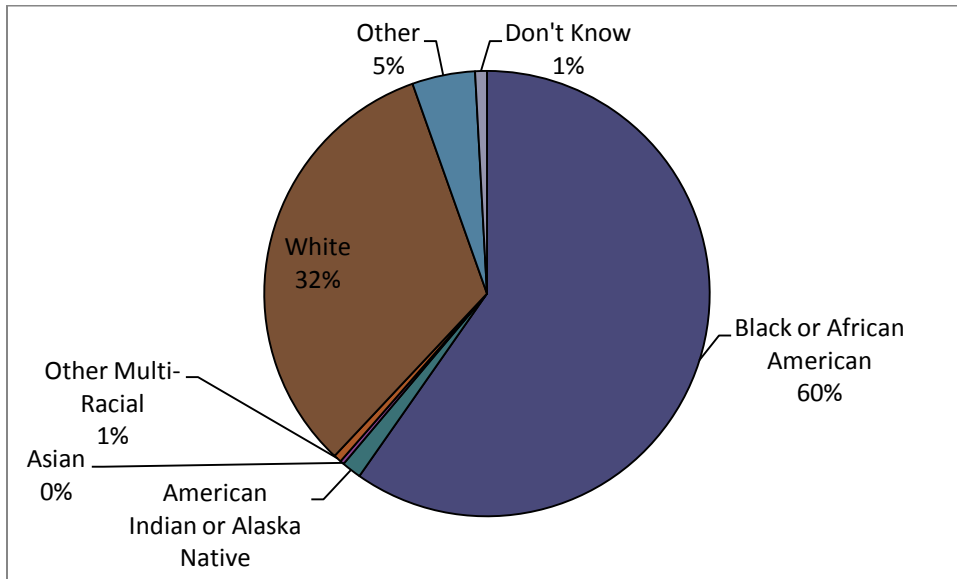


Figure 29 Repeated homeless- Race of households with only adults

Prior Living situation

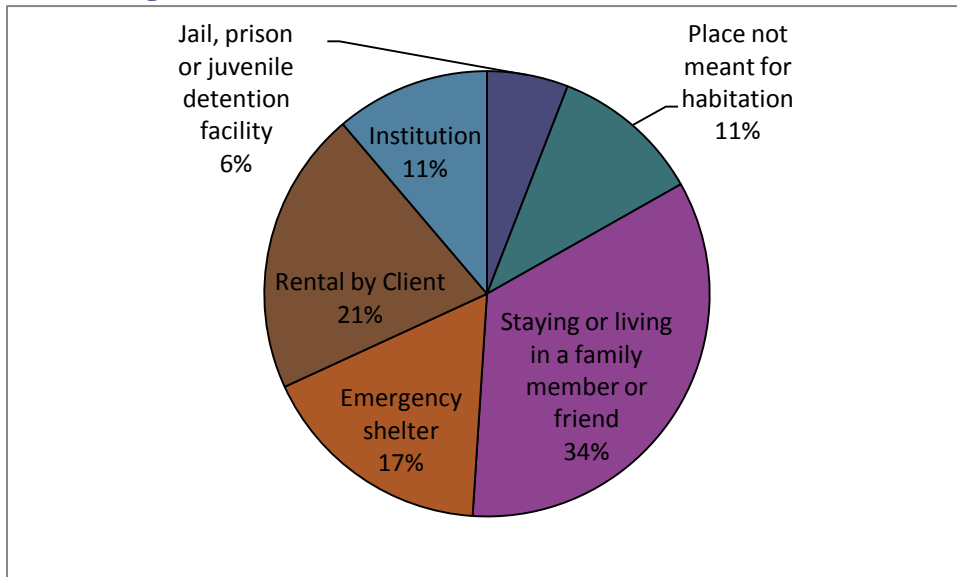


Figure 30 Repeated homeless- prior living situation of households with only adults

Disability

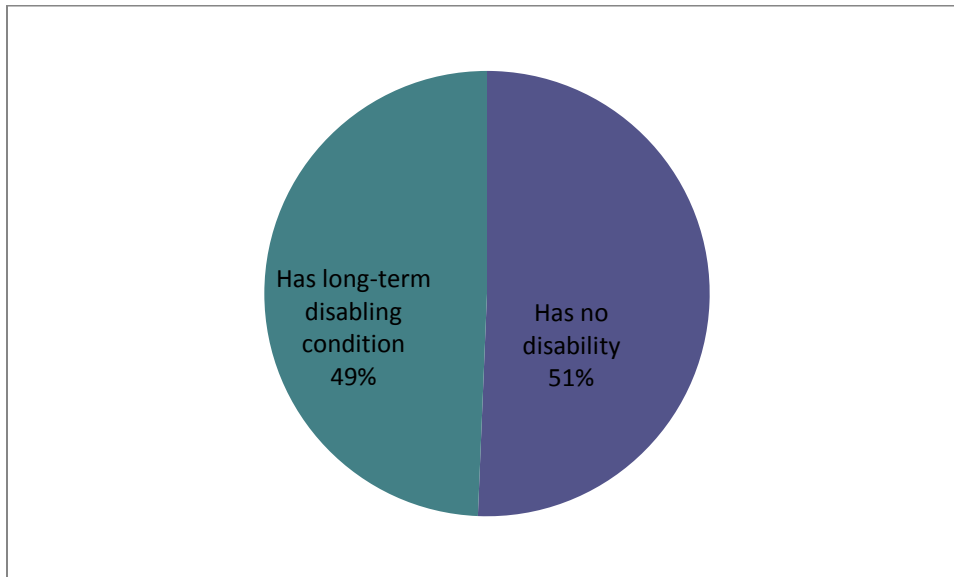


Figure 31 Repeated homeless- disability of households with only adults

We might expect to see a higher rate of disability in individuals with repeat episodes of homelessness. Staying only for short periods of time at shelters might be one reason that case workers cannot identify a client’s disabling condition; resulting in a low disability rate.

4.2.2. New Homeless

New homeless doesn’t mean the person was never homeless before. In this report, it means that for the **two years prior to this report period** (10/1/2011-10/1/2012), there was no entry in any of the homeless programs who participated in HMIS.

1,861 un-duplicated new homeless persons were entered in HMIS this year (81%).

	Household with children	Household with only adults	Household with only children
Persons	718	930	217
Households	236	921	217

Persons in Households with children

The majority of households are female single parents, 76%. This group makes up 39% of total new homeless. Newly homeless two parent families occurred at a relatively high frequency compared to their constituent proportion of those living at or below the poverty level.

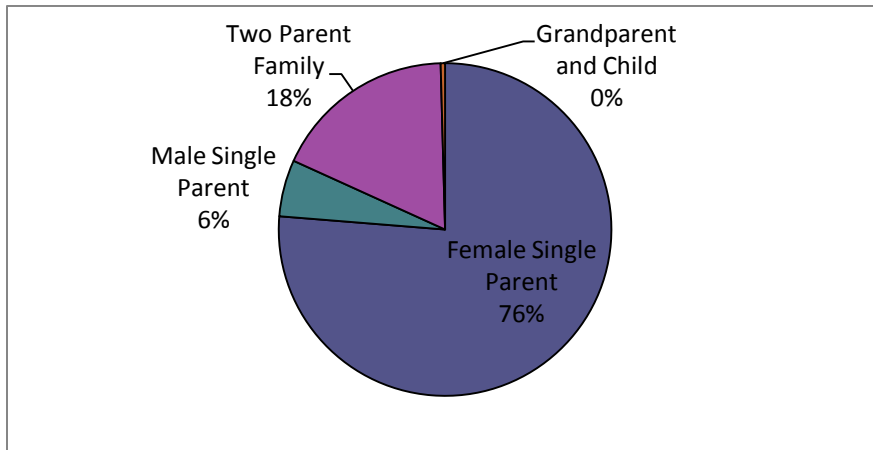


Figure 32 New Homeless- household with children by household types

44% of the children in these families are under 5 years old. 32% of the parents in this group are between 18-24 years of age. Single parents with a pre-school age child have a much higher chance of becoming homeless.

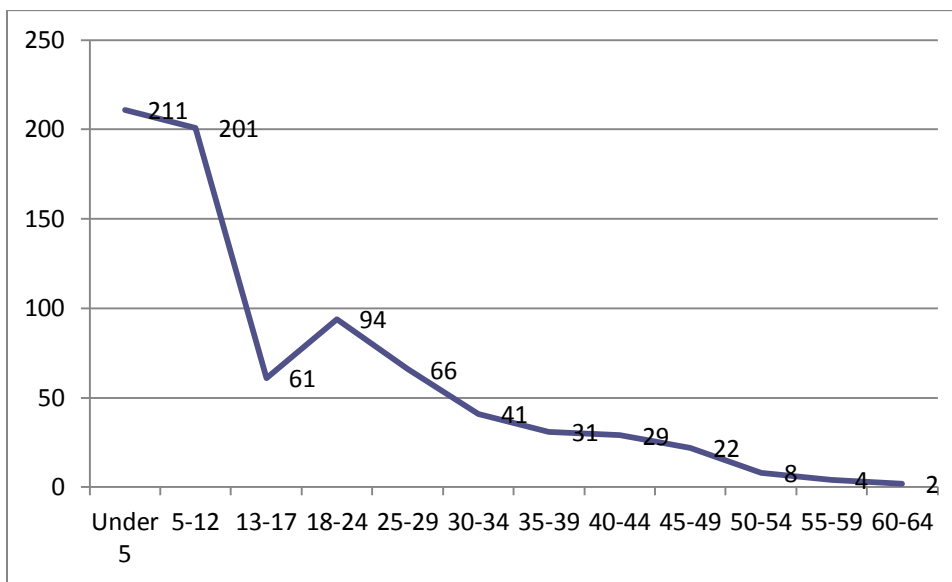


Figure 33 New homeless- Household with children by age distribution

Household with only adults

There are 12 couples with no children in this group. Others are all homeless individuals. The majority of adult only households are male 72.5% and 27.4% are female.

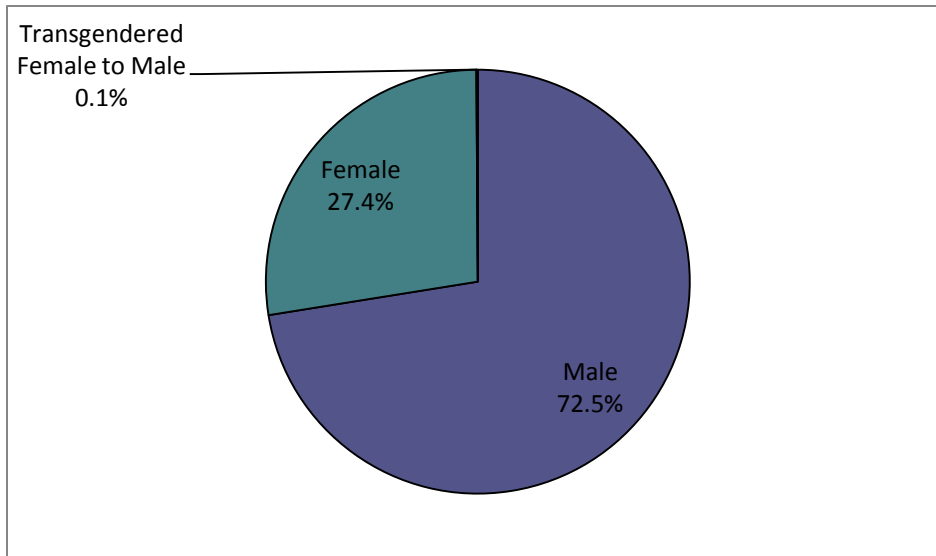


Figure 34 New Homeless- Household with only adults by genders

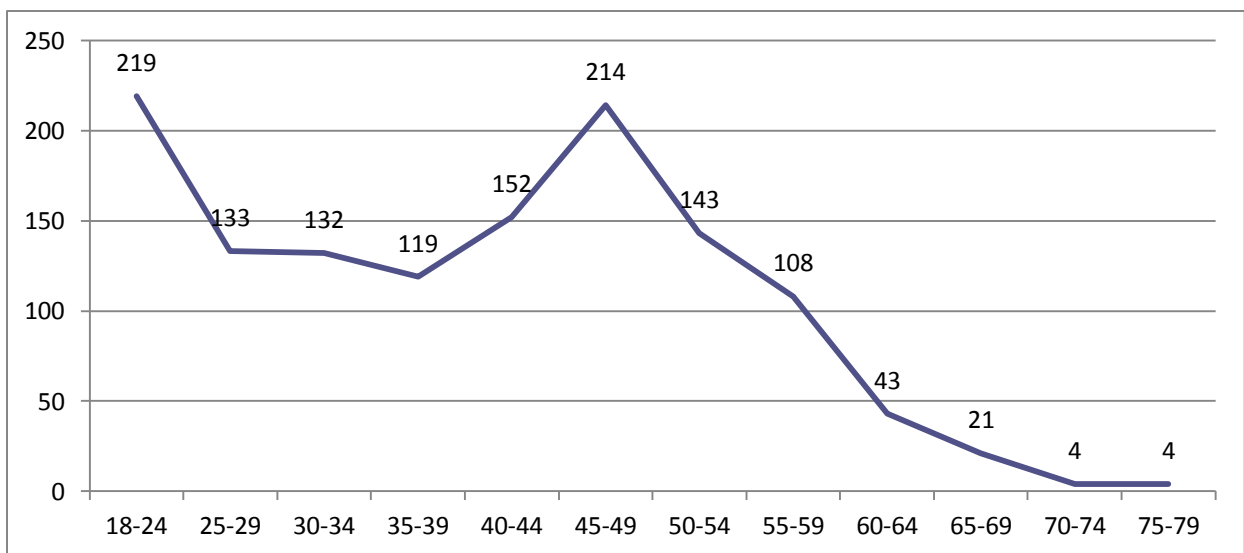


Figure 35 New Homeless-Household with only adults by age distribution

Two age peaks for the household with only adults, one is age 18-24, the other is 45-49.

Household with only children

They all unaccompanied children between ages 11-17.

Summary for New Homeless Persons:

The populations below are most at risk of becoming new homeless:

- Single female heads of household with children under the age of 12 (412)
- Persons who have children or single individuals aged 18-24 (313)

- Children between the age of 11-17, unaccompanied by an adult (217)
- Individuals between the ages 45-49 (214)

In general, people who have been homeless have a higher chance of becoming homeless again. Although they are new homeless, they might have accessed the homeless system prior to 2009.

4.2.3. Length of Stay in Homeless System

HUD is emphasizing decreasing the length of stay in the homeless system by directing the right candidates to permanent housing as soon as possible. A Coordinated Entry/assessment system could play an important role in this process by directing clients to the most appropriate placement including rapid re-housing services.

The average length of stay for persons who exited Emergency Shelter (ES), Transitional Housing (TH) and Safe Haven (SH) is 72 days, and the median length of stay is 21 days. This means that a small portion of the clients stay a lot longer than others. The average length of stay for these programs' stayers (persons who are still in programs) is 173 days and median length of stay is 82 days. Large differences between length of stay for stayers and persons who exited may also indicate some data quality issue. For example some clients might have already exited the program but no one has exited them in HMIS. Research shows that program policy plays a big role on length of stay⁷. There needs to be discussion with programs and collaborative efforts to reduce overall length of stay in the near future.

HUD's benchmark is likely to be 20 days or 10% shorter than the previous year. *The 2010 Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress* shows that median length of stay nationally for emergency shelters was 20 days and 135 days for transitional housing. Locally, ES was 19 days and 193 days for TH.

⁷ Culhane, Dennis P et al. "Testing a typology of family homelessness based on patterns of public shelter utilization in four US jurisdictions: Implications for policy and program planning." *Housing Policy Debate* 18.1 (2007): 1-28.

4.3. Unsheltered Population

Last year, the unsheltered count was based on certain program types. This year more data on unsheltered persons is available. Outreach workers conducted two unsheltered point in time counts (January 26, 2012 and July 26, 2012). We also used client records with “prior living situation” as “Places not meant for habitation” to get a direct count of this population.

January 26, 2012	106
July 26,2012	131

The total de-duplicated clients in these two times of unsheltered point in time count are 226. We understand that there are some anonymous clients in these counts. But surprisingly there were only about 20 clients in common identified in these two counts.

335 clients entering the homeless system this year recorded their prior living situation as places not meant for habitation, which means that before they come into the programs, they were living on the street. Please note that the unsheltered population is very unstable. In this report, we are only showing the number of persons who experienced living on the street, or in a place not meant for habitation during the course of the year. It doesn't mean they are all living on the street for the whole year.

Based on the information above, it is estimated that about 540 people spent at least a part of the year sleeping in places not meant for human habitation such as homeless camps, under bridges, and abandoned buildings etc.

4.4. Homeless Veterans

Data regarding the homeless veteran population is limited because the agencies associated with the Veterans Administration (VA) use a database called HOMES (VA Homeless Operation Management Evaluation System) rather than HMIS. Locally, 121 Veteran Households (157 persons) had VASH (Veteran Affairs Supportive Housing Program) vouchers for rent subsidies. In this section we will only present veterans that have been served by HMIS participating homeless providers.

Gender

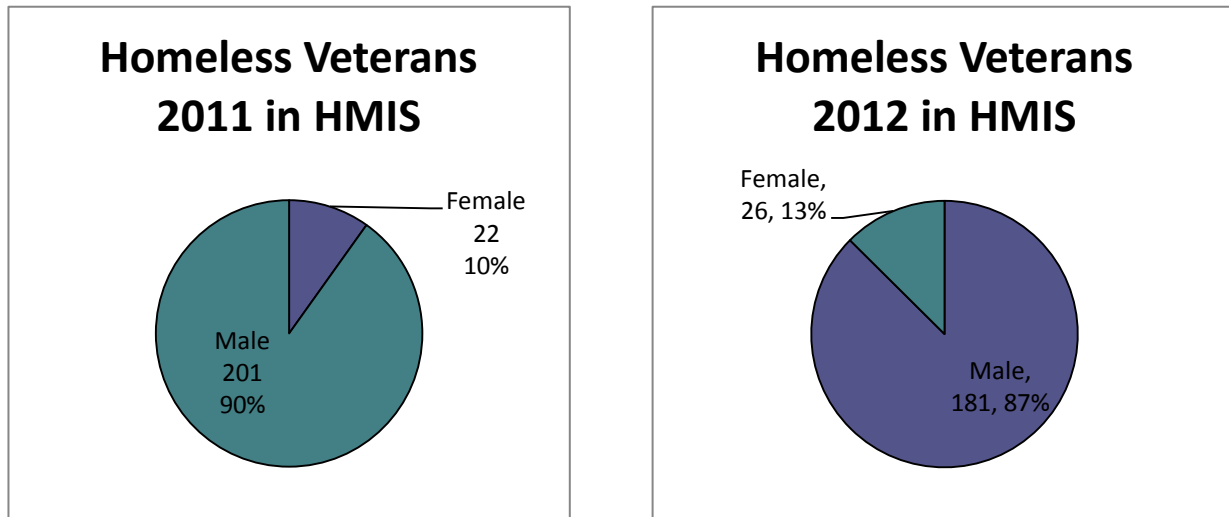


Figure 36 Homeless Veterans by Gender in HMIS

HMIS data on veterans shows that, of the 207 veterans entered into the database, 26 were female veterans and 181 were male veterans. These total numbers are slightly down from 2011, but more female veterans were identified this year, 3% increase.

Prior living situation

Compared to the homeless population, this group has a different composition of prior living situations. There are more renters, people from shelters, and from street clients, less doubled up or from institutional settings.

Prior Living Situations	Count	Percentage
Emergency Shelter	53	26%
Rental by clients	51	25%
Doubled up	42	20%
Place not meant for habitation	38	18%
Institutional settings	15	7%
Others	8	4%

Table 20 Homeless-Veterans- Prior Living Situations

Household type

Among all the veterans, there are 191 single adults or two adult families without children and 16 with children and adult families.

4.5. Victims of Domestic Violence (DV)

The Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) prohibits programs that serve victims of Domestic Violence that receive VAWA funding from entering client data into HMIS. Because of this regulation, DV victims are under-represented in HMIS data. There are four DV programs in Erie County, one emergency shelter and three transitional housing programs.

“Are you a domestic violence victim” is a required question in HMIS only for adults and unaccompanied youth.

Household Type

A total of 419 households (523 persons) were DV victims. 147 children were in households affected by domestic violence.

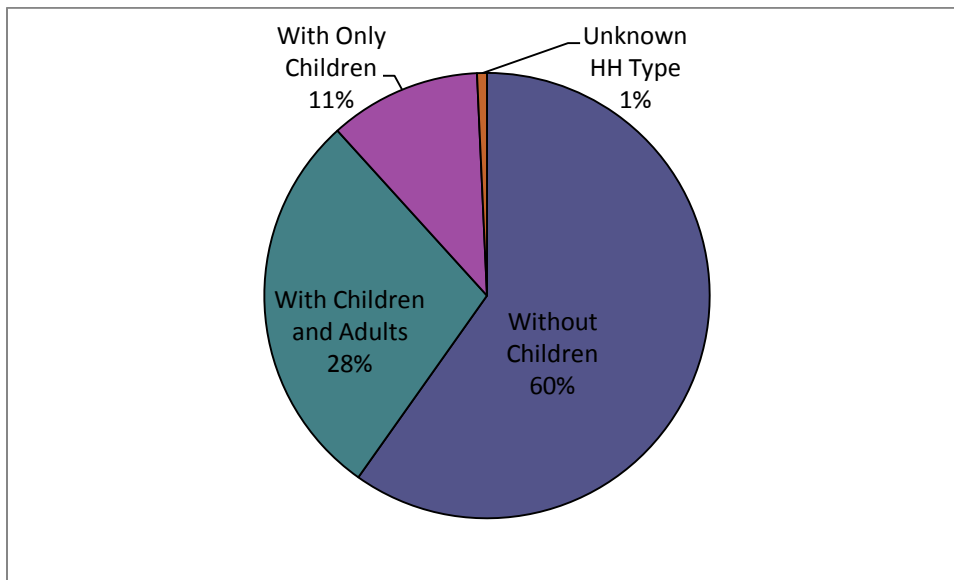


Figure 37 Homeless Victims of Domestic Violence by household type

Gender

The majority (78%) of DV adult victims were female, especially those with children, 97% were female with children.

	Total	Without Children	With Children and Adults	Unknown HH Type
Male	80	74	6	0
Female	292	176	113	3

Table 21 Homeless Adults Victims of Domestic Violence by gender

4.6. Homeless Families (Households with Adult and Children)

The average household size is 3. There are 385 adults and 642 children (4 persons can't identify age). 281 of the children are under the age of 5. This a slight decrease from 2011.

Household Size	Households	# of Persons
2	131	262
3	106	318
4	48	192
5	20	100
6	11	66
7	11	77
8	2	16
Total	329	1031

Table 22 Homeless Families- Household Size

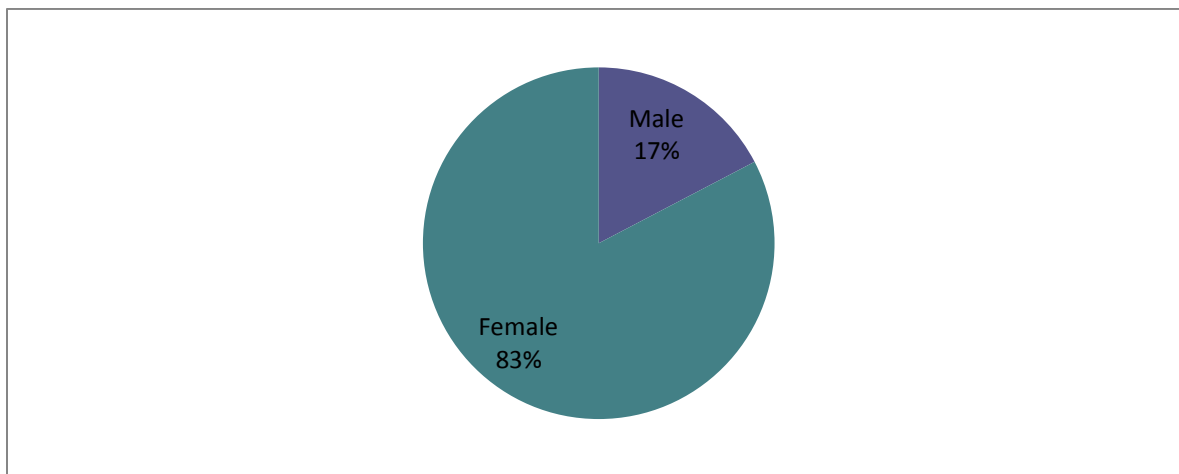


Figure 38 Homeless Families- Adult Gender

Chapter 4 Subpopulation
4.6 Homeless Families (Households with Adult and Children)

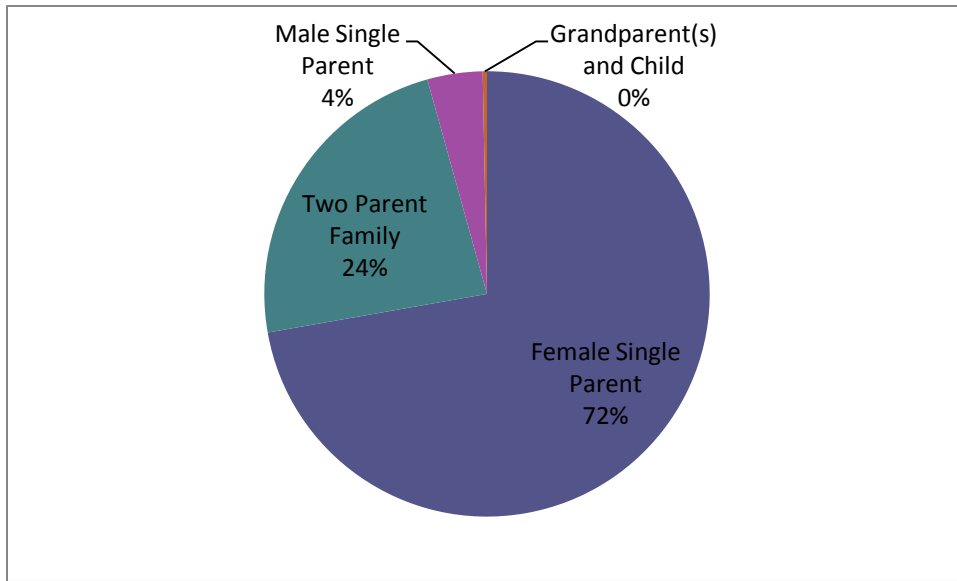


Figure 39 Homeless Families- Family type

The number of two parent families is surprisingly high. Compared to the population who live in poverty, the percentage is actually pretty similar, which shows that people who live in poverty are more likely to become homeless.

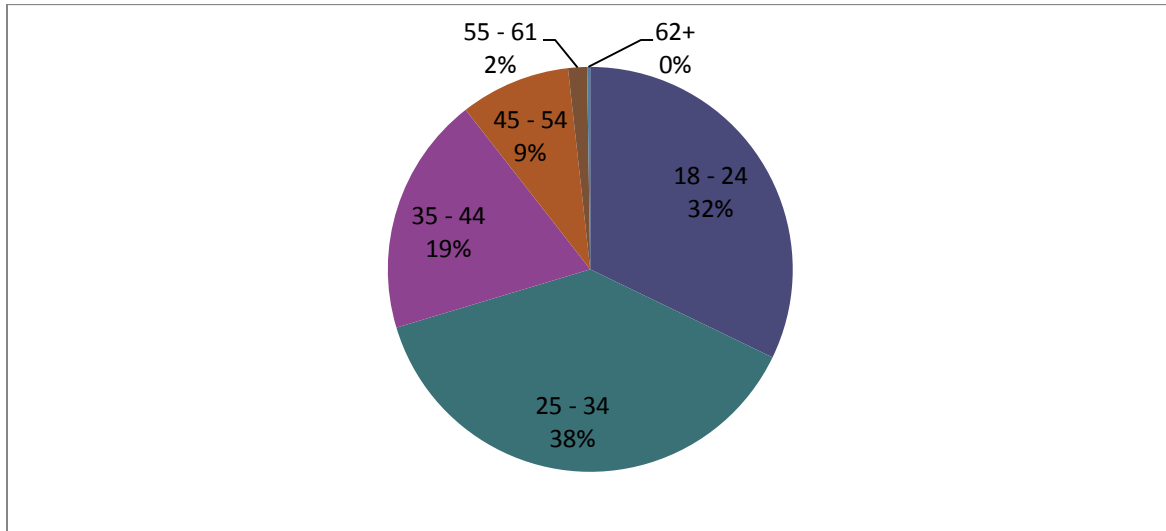


Figure 40 Homeless Families-Adult Age

Chapter 4 Subpopulation
4.6 Homeless Families (Households with Adult and Children)

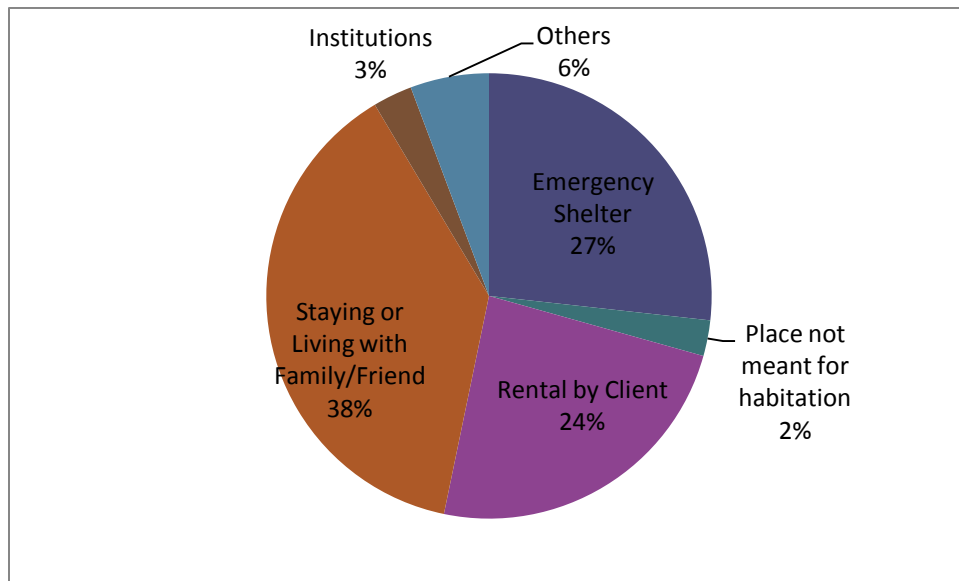


Figure 41 Homeless Families- Prior living Situation

Adults in families are very different from adult individuals. They are mostly female (83%). Ages compared to single adults are a lot younger. 70% of this population falls between ages 18-34, versus only 41% of the single adults. Very few families experienced living in places not meant for habitation or institutions.

4.7. Homeless Unaccompanied Youth

HUD defines homeless youth as persons who are under the age of 25 and are not accompanied by a person that is 18 or older. 545 youth fit this definition in 2012.

	2011	2012
10-17	149	250
18-24	374	295
Total	523	545

Table 23 Unaccompanied Youth

Last year data on homeless youth under 18 was under reported due to data entry issues. Based on the shelter reports, there was no increase in this group.

4.8. Homeless or At Risk Homeless Children in School

The Department of Education tracks both at risk of homeless and homeless students. Most statistics from the Department of Education did not separate these two populations. For this section, “homeless” includes “at risk”. School districts do not enter data into HMIS. Therefore, there may be some duplicate numbers if a child/parent has shared their homeless status with the school and is staying in a shelter that participates in HMIS.

Table 24 below shows homeless or at risk homeless students enrolled in Erie County School Districts across past 3 years. This data was collected by the New York State Education Department in the Student Information Repository System (SIRS). The Buffalo City School District has the highest number of homeless children, 1033. 845 of them were doubled up or couch surfing, 162 were living in shelters, and 26 were in a hotel/motel. The Buffalo school district also indicated that, about 200-250 were unaccompanied homeless youth. John Crabbe, the supervisor of attendance services, indicated that the increased number of homeless students in Buffalo might be due to better training of staff on identifying homeless students.

School District	09-10	10-11	11-12
AKRON CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT	2	4	2
ALDEN CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT	6	0	0
AMHERST CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT	5	10	13
BUFFALO CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT	697	810	1033
CHEEKTOWAGA CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT	11	32	37
CHEEKTOWAGA-MARYVALE UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT	7	16	20
CHEEKTOWAGA-SLOAN UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT	6	2	10
CLARENCE CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT	1	15	12
CLEVELAND HILL UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT	5	18	23
DEPEW UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT	7	23	12
EAST AURORA UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT	1	0	0
EDEN CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT	9	20	10
EVANS-BRANT CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT (LAKE SHORE)	27	25	22

Chapter 4 Subpopulation
4.8 Homeless or At Risk Homeless Children in School

FRONTIER CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT	15	23	9
GRAND ISLAND CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT	0	3	2
HAMBURG CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT	8	3	1
HOLLAND CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT	5	5	11
HOPEVALE UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT AT HAMBURG	0	0	0
IROQUOIS CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT	2	6	7
KENMORE-TONAWANDA UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT	222	122	131
LACKAWANNA CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT	0	2	7
LANCASTER CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT	7	3	16
NORTH COLLINS CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT	2	0	0
ORCHARD PARK CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT	28	28	21
SPRINGVILLE-GRIFFITH INSTITUTE CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT	15	12	6
SWEET HOME CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT	8	8	7
TONAWANDA CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT	7	10	19
WEST SENECA CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT	24	53	66
WILLIAMSVILLE CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT	11	11	7

Table 24 Homeless or At Risk Homeless Children by School Districts

Appendix One: HMIS

What is HMIS?

A Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) is a software application designed to record and store client-level information on the characteristics and service needs of homeless persons. HMIS is typically a web-based software application that homeless assistance providers use to record client and program level data, coordinate client services, and to manage their operations, to better serve the homeless. In Buffalo and Erie County, HMIS is also referred to as BAS-Net (Buffalo Area Services Network). BAS-Net was launched in 2005 by the Homeless Alliance of WNY (HAWNY), who is tasked with managing the system, and is funded by a grant from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Erie County chose to use a web-based solution, Service Point for HMIS. Any homeless service provider (except domestic violence shelters) receiving funding through HUD's Continuum of Care (CoC) Homeless Assistance Programs and the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) program is required to enter information into BAS-Net. Further, HUD requires that certain data elements are collected (and entered) by all programs using HMIS. HAWNY, the lead agency for the CoC in Erie County is mandated to submit reports to HUD using HMIS as the data source. All client information is collected only with client permission that data may be used for research purposes without releasing personal information.

A core value of BAS-Net is informed consent. Client level data is only entered into HMIS when there is a signed release of information form in the client file that permits both data collection and use for research purposes as aggregate data. An unwillingness to sign the release of information form cannot be used as grounds to refuse housing or services to a person for which they would otherwise be eligible.

Can HMIS provide a number of homeless persons without duplication? How are clients counted?

Yes, an unduplicated count is possible. The system automatically assigns a unique ID number for each new person that is created. The system allows users from different agencies to search for a client by their ID, name, or Social Security Number (SSN). If the client is already in the system, only the name, the last 4 digits of the SSN and the date of birth will appear on the screen; information will be updated, but a new unique ID number will not be created. In this report, all the client counts are based on the unique ID and only counted once unless otherwise noted. Each time a person, enters a program or exits a program, case workers have the responsibility to record the entry and exit dates as well as other HUD required data elements needed to update the record.

A data quality report is run periodically to identify any records that appear to be duplicates. The de-duplication process is used when two unique ID numbers have been assigned to the same person. This usually means merging the two records into one record if in both records the client's name, SSN and other demographic information are exactly the same. However, if the Social Security Numbers are slightly different but the name and other information are matched, the records won't be merged until it is certain which one is the real SSN.

- ***Data export methodology--De-duplicated count with exception***

Data exported for this report is mostly from the answers input when clients entered a program. If there are different answers in different entries, only the latest answer will be included in this report. For example, client A had a source of income when he first came into an emergency shelter, but six months later he was accepted to a transitional housing program no longer with an income. Client A will then be only counted twice in both categories and only information from the transitional housing program will be presented in All Homeless section.

What are the challenges of using HMIS data?

As with any database, if good data is entered then good data will come out for reporting purposes. Data entered into BAS-Net is physically entered by service providers and is most often self-reported by the client. Homelessness is often a disorienting experience and important dates and information may unintentionally be inaccurate or vague. We highlight this only to emphasize that HMIS is administrative data that is self-reported and subject to human error. HAWNY is continuously improving its data quality activities to ensure that HMIS data is as complete and error-free as possible. HAWNY expects HMIS users to meet the HUD benchmark for data quality – data for 95% of HUD required data elements is entered completely and accurately.

Appendix Two: Estimated Homeless Count Methodology

Step	Description	Source	Persons in FAM in TH	Adults in ES	Adults in TH	Children only in ES	Children only in TH	
1	Unduplicated number of persons participating in HMIS	HMIS data from providers that participate in HMIS	306	1331	289	235	38	Persons
2	Number of emergency, year-round equivalent beds in HMIS (i.e., bed capacity for participating providers)	SuperNO FA Housing Inventory Chart	178	144	158	13	7	Beds
3	Average number of clients served per bed	Step 1 /Step 2	1.72	9.24	1.83	18.08	5.43	Persons per bed
4	Number of year-round equivalent beds for not participating in HMIS (i.e., bed capacity for non-participating providers)	SuperNO FA Housing Inventory Chart	44	149	34	0	0	Beds
5	Estimated unduplicated number of persons served by providers that do not participate in HMIS	Step 3 x Step 4	75.64	1377.22	62.19	0.00	0.00	Persons
6	Estimated number of persons served by participating and non-participating Providers. Note that this estimate double counts people who use	Step 1 + Step 5	381.64	2708.22	351.19	235.00	38.00	Persons

Appendix Two: Estimated Homeless Count Methodology

	participating and non-participating providers. This double count will be eliminated by the overlap adjustment below.							
7	Overlap factor is the square of [(Bed capacity for HMIS non-participating providers)/ (Bed capacity for HMIS participating providers)]	(Step 4 /Step 2) x (Step 4 /Step 2)	0.06	1.07	0.05	0.00	0.00	is overlap factor
8	Number of persons who used more than one HMIS participating provider in the category	HMIS data from providers that participate in HMIS	21	21	21	21	21	Persons
9	Estimated number of persons in families that used both participating and non-participating providers	Step 7 x Step 8	1.28	22.48	0.97	0.00	0.00	is overlap adjustment
10	Total estimate of number persons that used either HMIS participating or non-participating Emergency Shelter	Step 6- Step 9	380	2686	350	235	38	Persons
11	Extrapolation Factor for non-participating providers: This is the factor applied to calculations that are based	Step 10 /Step 1	1.24	2.02	1.21	1.00	1.00	is the extrapolation factor for non

Appendix Two: Estimated Homeless Count Methodology

	only on participating providers. It is used to estimate total number of persons served by participating and non-participating providers.							participating providers
12	HMIS bed coverage rate	Step 2 / (Step 2 + Step 4)	80%	49%	82%	100%	100%	% of beds participating in the HMIS
13	Point-In-Time Extrapolation Factor. This is the factor applied to calculations that are based only on participating providers. It is used to estimate total number of persons served by participating and non-participating providers for values that report Point-in-time numbers. In contrast to the standard "Extrapolation Factor," the point-in-time Extrapolation factor does not include an adjustment for persons using multiple providers.	Step 6 / Step 1	1.25	2.03	1.22	1.00	1.00	is the extrapolation factor for point-in-time counts.

Appendix Three: List of Providers

Emergency Shelters

Participating in HMIS

- Buffalo City Mission
- Buffalo City Mission Code Blue
- Code Blue Cornerstone
- Compass House Emergency Shelter
- Cornerstone-Emergency shelter
- Family Promise
- Salvation Army - Emergency Family Shelter
- TSI Emergency Housing Service

Not Participating in HMIS

- Altamont House
- Faith Based Fellowship
- Haven House – DV Emergency Shelter
- Little Portion Friary
- St. Luke's Mission of Mercy
- Temple of Christ – My Place Home
- Crisis Service after hour program

Transitional Housing Programs

Participating in HMIS

- American Red Cross
- Buffalo City Mission Discipleship Program
- Cazenovia Visions Place Expanded MICA
- Cazenovia Visions Place Supportive Housing Program II
- Cornerstone-Transitional
- Community Services for the Developmentally Disabled
- DePaul - HUD Transitional-Supportive Housing Program IV
- Franciscan Center Transitional Housing
- Gerard Place
- Hispanic United of Buffalo
- Teaching and Restoring Youth (TRY)
- United Church Home, Inc
- YWCA of WNY – Scattered Sites
- YWCA of WNY- Amherst

Not Participating in HMIS

- Altamont House – Veterans GPD Program
- Haven House
- YWCA of Tonawanda

Safe Haven – Participate in HMIS

- Lake Shore Safe Haven

Outreach Homeless – Participate in HMIS

- Matt Urban Outreach

SSO –Participate in HMIS

- NLS Homeless Task Force
- Harbor house

Permanent Supportive Housing

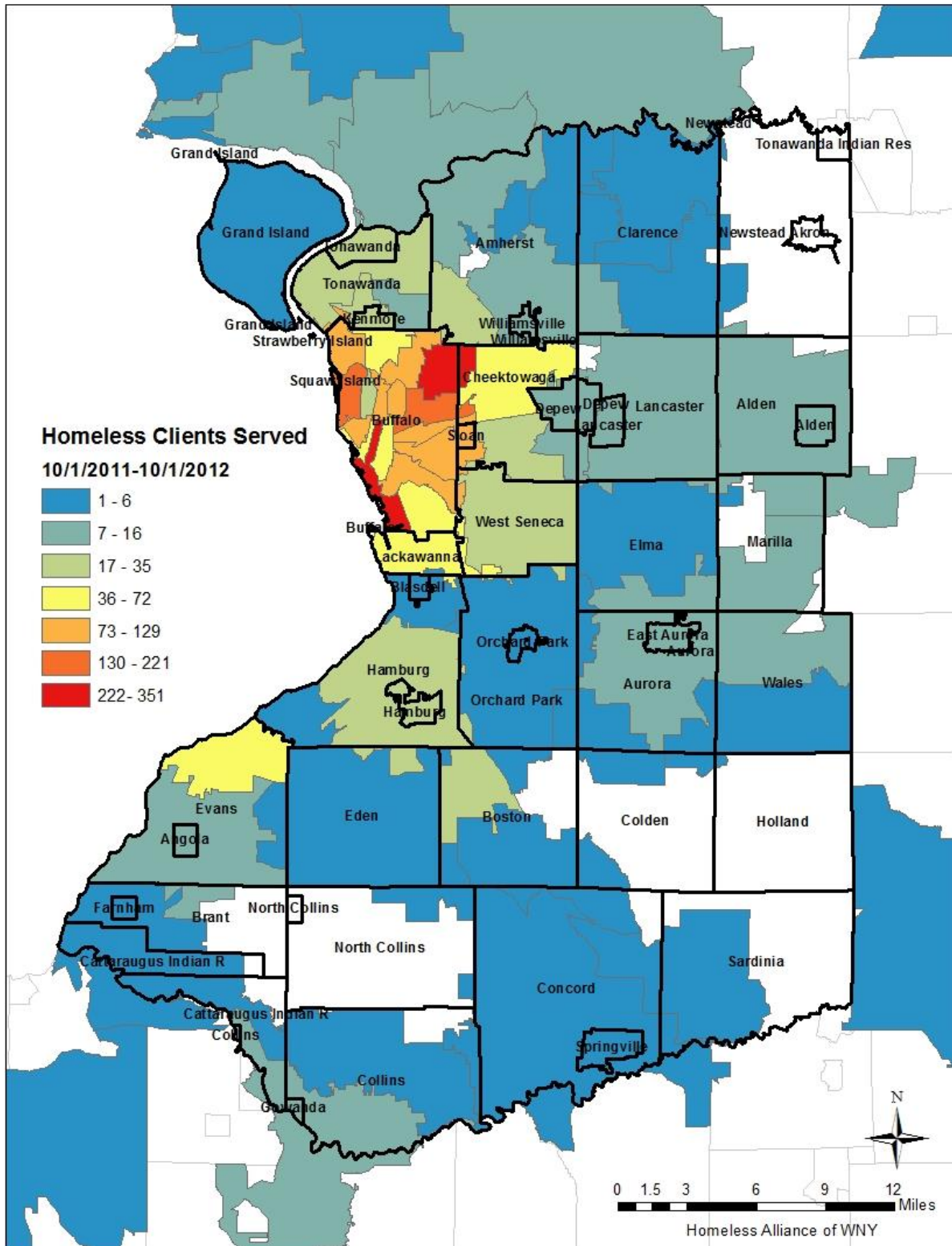
Participate in HMIS

- Buffalo Federation of Neighborhood Centers Shelter Plus Care II & III
- Buffalo Federation of Neighborhood Centers Shelter Plus Care IV
- Cazenovia Chronic Homeless Program
- Cazenovia Supportive Housing Program VI
- Cazenovia Supportive Living II
- Cazenovia Supportive Housing Program VIII
- Gerard Place Housing First
- Housing Options Made Easy Shelter Plus Care I
- Housing Options Made Easy Shelter Plus Care V
- Housing Options Made Easy Supportive Housing Program I
- Lake Shore Shelter Plus Care I
- Lake Shore Shelter Plus Care II and III
- Lake Shore Supportive Housing Program VII
- DePaul McKinley Square Supportive Housing Program IX
- DePaul Shelter Plus Care I
- DePaul Shelter Plus Care II and III
- DePaul Shelter Plus Care IV
- Matt Urban Housing First
- Restoration Society Supportive Housing Program III
- Southern Tier Environments for Living Shelter Plus Care III
- Spectrum Supportive Housing Program V
- Spectrum Supportive Housing VI
- TSI Shelter Plus Care I
- TSI Supportive Housing Program I
- TSI Supportive Housing Program VIII
- WNY Veterans Housing Coalition S+C VI

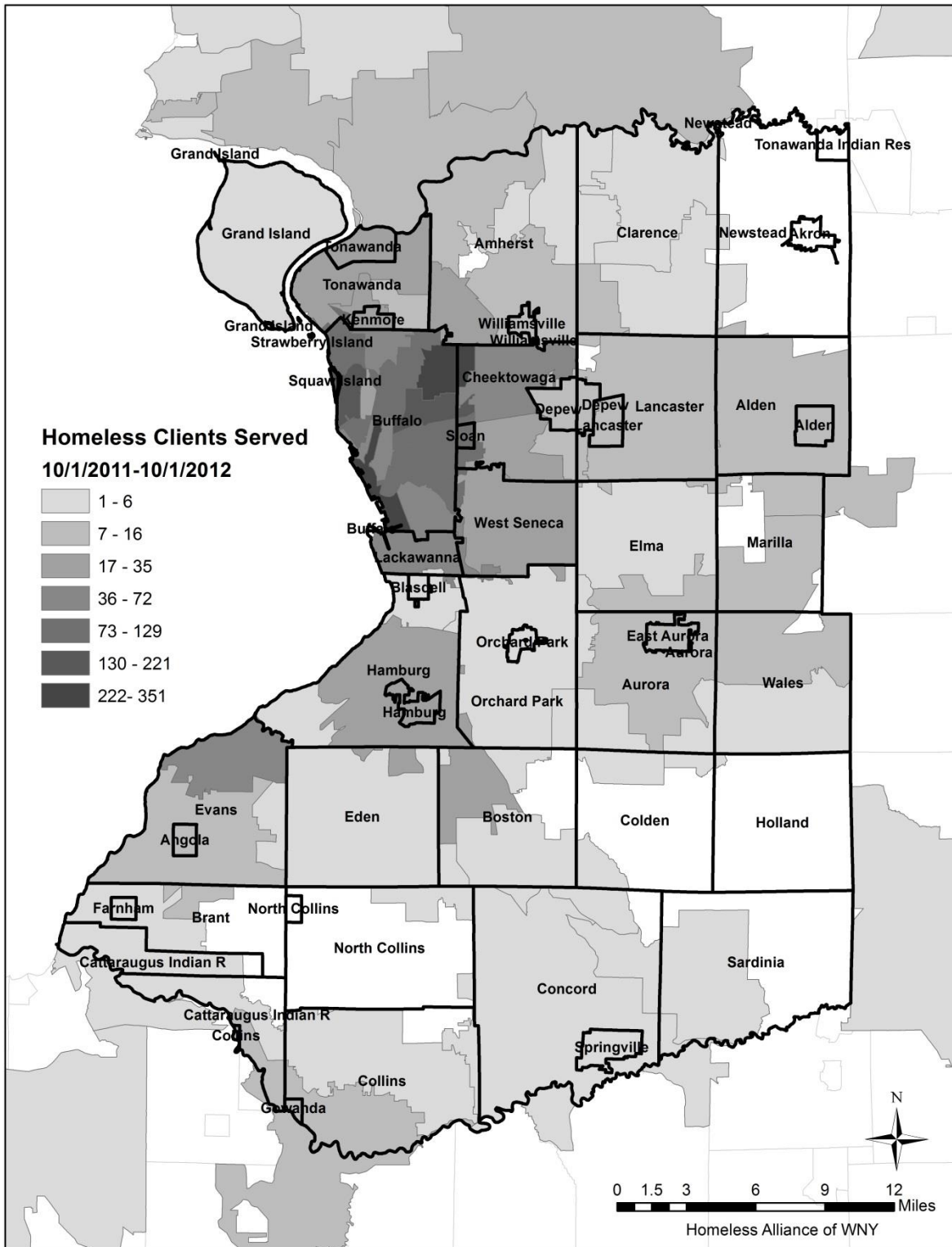
Do Not Participate in HMIS

- VA - Homeless Veterans - VASH

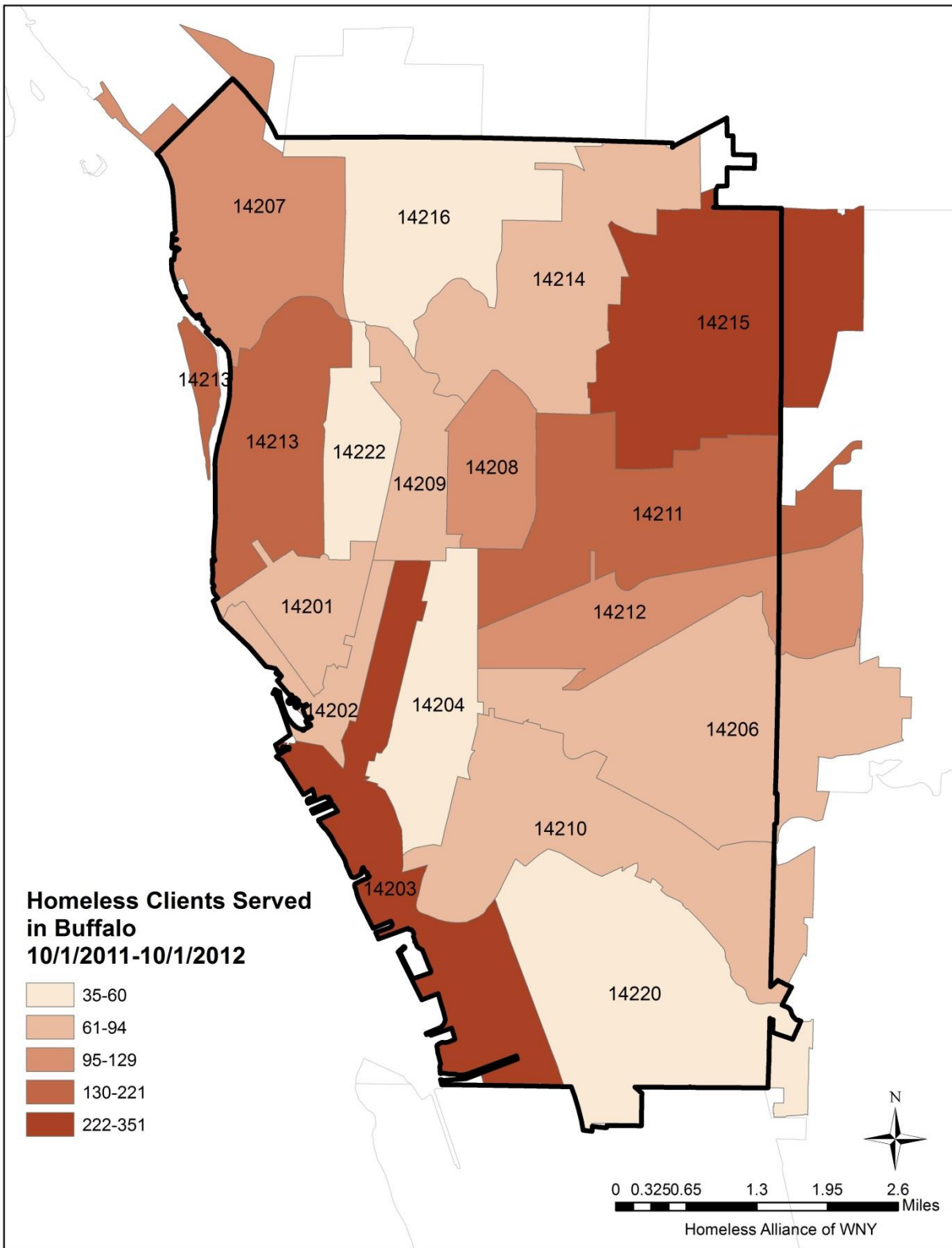
Appendix Four: Maps



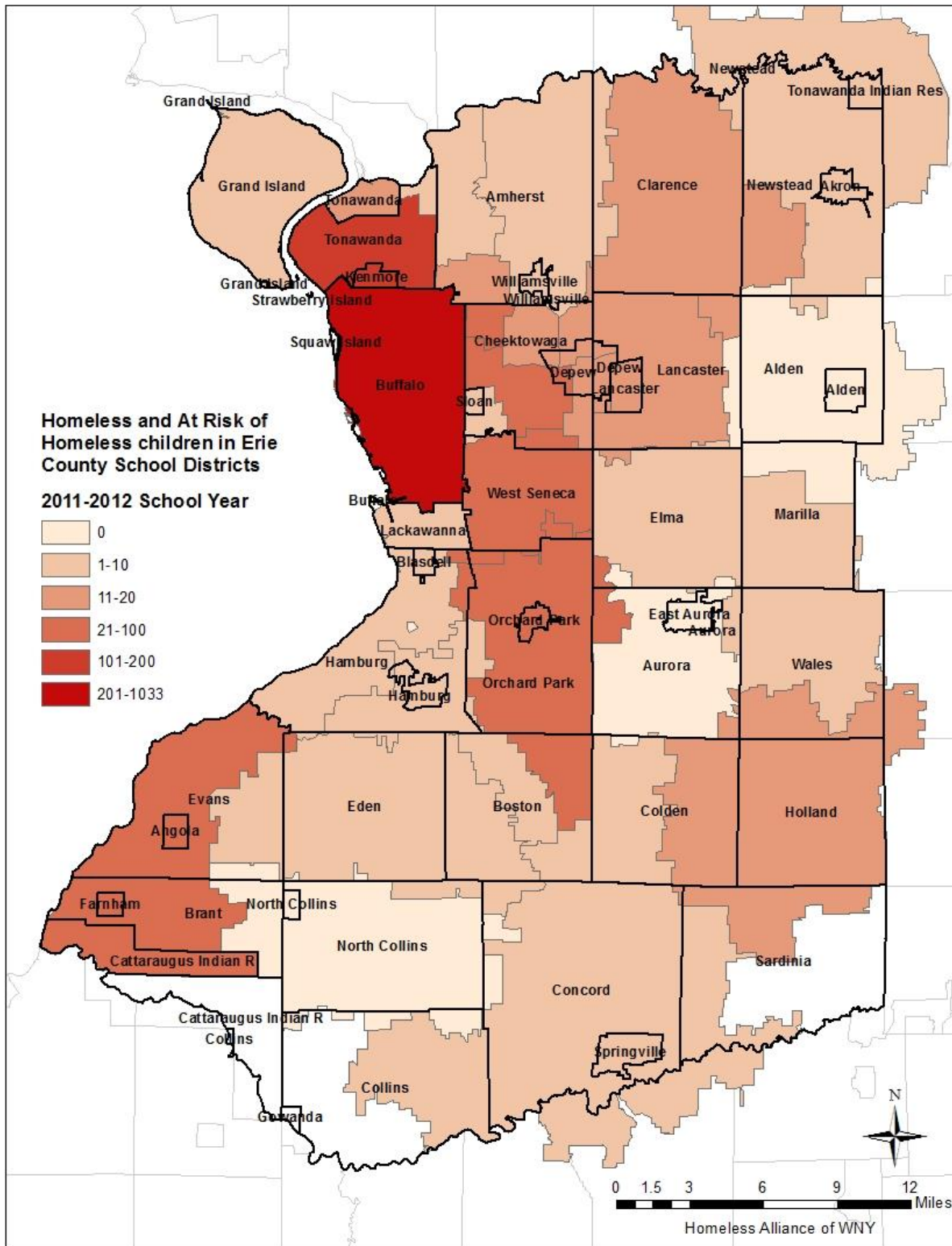
Map 1 Homeless Clients Served in Erie County (color version, if print in black and white, please use Map 1-1)



Map 1-1 Homeless Clients Served in Erie County (Blank and white print version)



Map 2 Homeless Clients Served in Buffalo



Map 3 Homeless and At Risk Homeless Children in Erie County School Districts