

2013 Annual Report on the State of Homelessness in Erie County

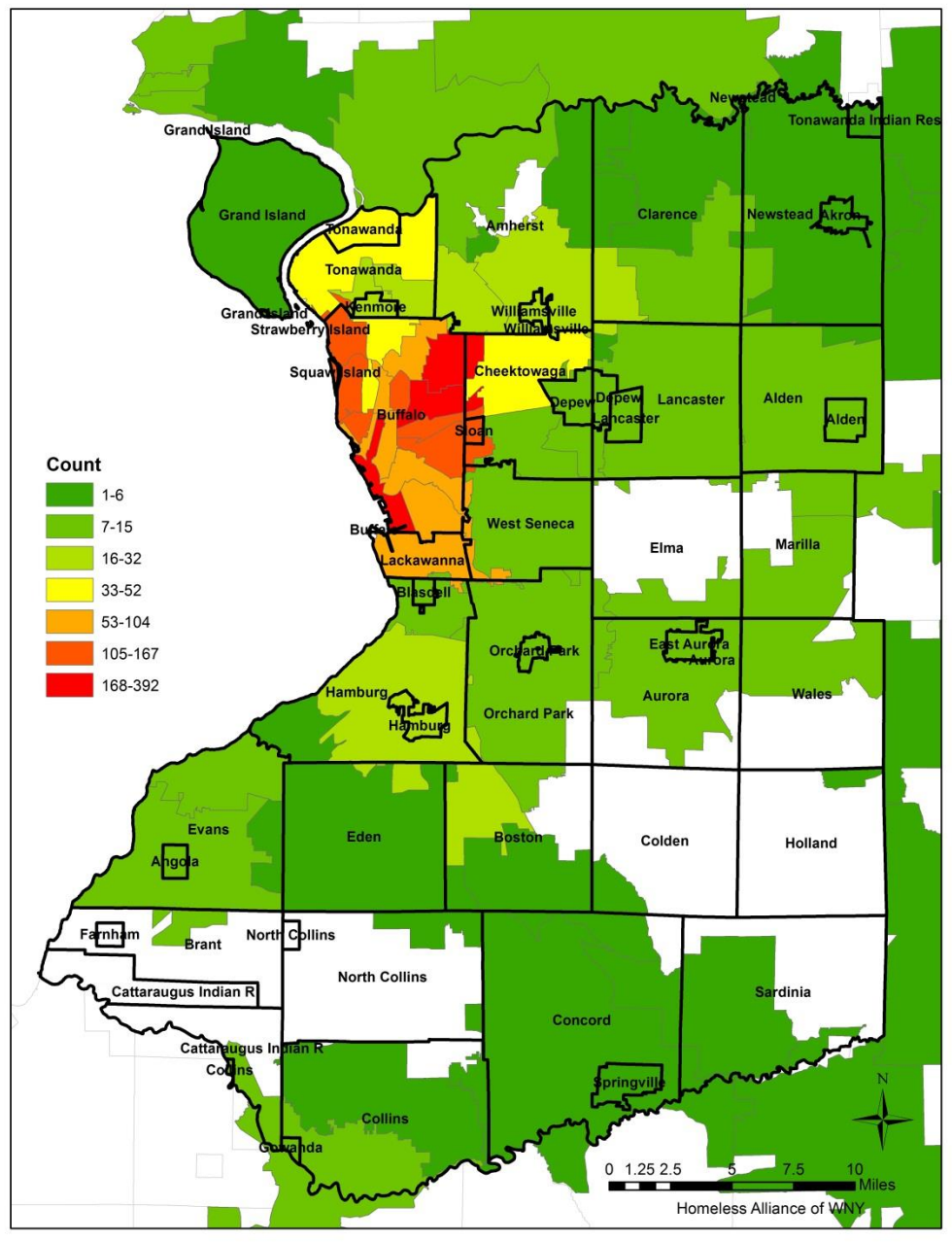


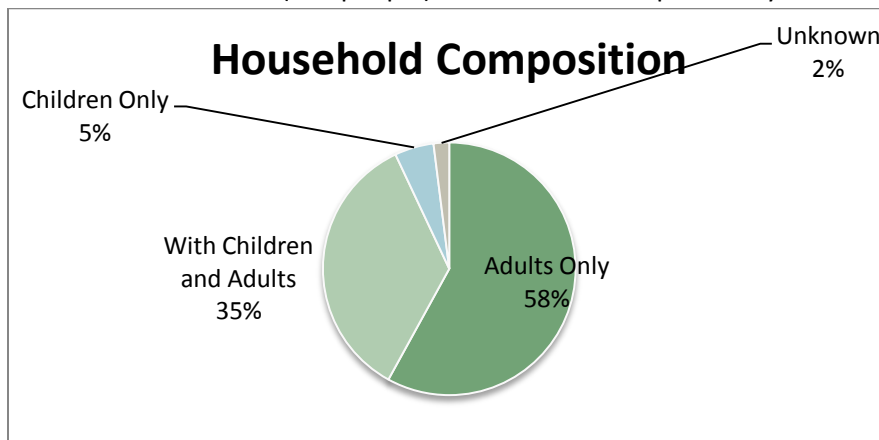
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Key Findings

	2012	2013	% change
Estimated total people who experienced homelessness	5681	5754	+1.2%
Point-In-Time	910	848	-6.8%

- While the number of people accessing homeless services remained steady, those needing housing assistance increased. The data shows that there are more people who received multiple services this year.
- An estimated 2,084 people in families with children stayed in Emergency shelter or Transitional Housing in 2013. This was a 3% (67 people) increase from the previous year.
- An estimated 3,190 adults without children stayed in Emergency shelter or Transitional Housing in 2013. This was a 5% (154 people) increase from the previous year.



- A total of 2,270 people were Newly Homeless¹ in 2013
 - 26.6% of the total homeless population are children under the age of 18.
 - The two-year recidivism rate for people who experience homelessness is 23%. This statistic is calculated using the following criteria:
 - A person that has been homeless during the prior two years (10/1/2010-9/30/2012) and entered the homeless system again within this report period (10/1/2012-9/30/2013)
- OR-
- A person that has multiple entries in this report period and between each homeless episode has at least a 30 days' interval.

Repeated Homeless Household Composition	Household with Adults and children	Household with only adults	Household with only children
Persons	103	514	45
Households	45	512	45

¹ "Newly Homeless" means, for the purposes of this section, that a person that hasn't entered the homeless system in the past two years (10/1/2010-9/30/2012), and had only one homeless episode during this report period (10/1/2012-9/30/2013).

- Selected racial and ethnic composition of the homeless population:
 - 50% African American
 - 38% White
 - 15% Hispanic
- 31% of people who experienced homelessness stayed with family and friend prior to becoming homeless.
- 81% of those who experienced homelessness in 2013 were located within the City of Buffalo.
- The majority of clients who stayed in Emergency Shelters remained there for less than 30 days.
- HMIS records indicate that a total of 246 persons fit the definition of chronically homeless and are in need of housing. The standards for chronic homelessness include:
 - must have 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
- There were 257 Homeless Veterans in 2013, and 16% (41 individuals) of those were female.

Recommendations

- There is tremendous need for safe and affordable rental housing in the community. In addition to overall affordable housing, Erie County could use 500 Single Room Occupancy units and 300 Housing First units for the chronically homeless.
- In order to reduce the number of people experiencing homelessness in Erie County a concentrated effort is needed to offer case management to those who experience multiple episodes of homelessness.
- 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 is a successful model for assisting homeless families because most people require only modest and short-term assistance. We need to refine the current pilot programs to develop an effective local Rapid Re-housing program.
- The HAWNY staff will continue to research cost-effective prevention strategies.
- Expand the HMIS coverage rate and improve data quality for a more comprehensive and reliable data system. The current trend in decision-making and planning is to base funding decisions on data. With more accurate and complete data, our community will have better planning and decision-making.
- Develop a Coordinated Entry/Assessment system to effectively reduce the number of people experiencing homelessness and their length of stay by directing homeless persons to the most appropriate service(s).
- We need to better coordinate the 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.
- More living wage jobs are needed in order to stem the rise of poverty, and as a result, homelessness. The fundamental cause of homelessness is the inability to afford housing.

Introduction

The Homeless Alliance of Western New York is the designated Continuum of Care (CoC) agency for Erie County. As such, it is responsible for compiling the annual Continuum of Care grant from the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). In July 2013, the Niagara County CoC merged with our CoC. By the end of 2013, most providers were officially entering data into HMIS. We will not present Niagara County data in this report. This report covers the time period from 10/1/12 to 9/30/13. Niagara County data is only available from July to September of 2013. We will present information about homelessness in the combined Erie-Niagara Metropolitan area in future annual report.

In 2012, this grant awarded **\$8.2 million** in funding for new and renewed projects to homelessness alleviation agencies throughout Erie County. All agencies awarded homeless funds from the Continuum of Care grant, or through the 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 2013 Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) year (10/1/2012-10/1/2013) 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 the annual Erie County homelessness 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. As a result, we 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, non-HMIS participating providers 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 without a 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. It serves 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 episodes.
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 details of homelessness in Buffalo and Erie County, below is a brief overview of general poverty in Buffalo and Erie County.

Poverty is the Root Cause of Homelessness

- ▶ 30.1% of people in Buffalo and 14.2% of people in Erie County live below the poverty line².
- ▶ Of impoverished persons aged 25 or above:
 - 28% did not graduate from high school
 - 24% have a high school diploma/GED
 - 21% have some college or associate's degree
 - 9% have a bachelor's degree or higher

² Data shown in this section is from American Community Survey 2008-2012 5 years estimates except where stated

- ▶ 42.5% (11,052) female-headed households in Buffalo live below the poverty level, 29.7% (15,929) in Erie County.
- ▶ 10.5% (2,768) of two-parent families live below the poverty level in Buffalo and 3.7% (5,732) in Erie County.
- ▶ 52.2% of the children who live in poverty in Buffalo are young children (age below 5), 26.1% in Erie County.

Tables 1 and 2 illustrate the extent of poverty among Buffalo’s women and children:

NUMBER OF RELATED CHILDREN UNDER 18 YEARS	Number of Female Head of Households	Percentage Below Poverty
No children	7083	19%
1 or 2 children	14738	46%
3 or 4 children	3509	65%
5 or more children	525	85%

Table 1 Female household by number of children- ACS 2008-2012 5-year estimates for Buffalo

- ▶ 58% (35,902) of renters in Buffalo pay more than 30% of their income for rent.
- ▶ Based on Aug. 2013 U.S Bureau of Labor Statistics Report, Buffalo’s unemployment rate is 10%, slightly higher than all of our neighboring cities, and much higher than the national rate of under 6%

Housing affordability is usually considered to be no more than 30% of rent compared to a household’s income. Although Buffalo’s owner occupied units are considered to be very affordable compared to national market, the majority (58.1%) of renters in Buffalo are paying more than 30% of their income. Based on fair market rent, a two-bedroom apartment costs \$710 including utilities. To find such an apartment that would meet living standards is not easy. To afford it is a much higher problem. A single individual would need to earn at least \$13.60/ hr, which is 70% more than the current NYS minimum wage of \$8.00 (as of December 31, 2013). A single parent working full time in a minimum wage job could easily fall into homelessness.

Chapter 1: Overview of Homelessness in Erie County

This chapter presents the 2013 estimates of homelessness as well as the capacity of homeless services for sheltering and housing those who experience homelessness in Erie County. The latest point-in-time count was conducted on January 30th, 2013. The annual count is based on both HMIS data and count of homeless persons in non-participating programs.

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. 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 th , 2011	178	760	938
October 26 th , 2011	135	N/A	N/A
January 26 th , 2012	106	804	910
July 26 th , 2012	131	N/A	N/A
January 30 th , 2013	98	750	848

Table 2 Point In Time Count within 3 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 continues to be approximately 900 homeless persons on any given night in Erie County, a slight decrease from last year.**

Annual Homeless 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 3,948. 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 total estimated unduplicated homeless count is 5,754** (see appendix two for details of the estimation). Contrary with PIT numbers, both our systems and the Department of Social Services were seeing a slightly increased number of clients during the year.

Chapter 1: Overview of Homelessness in Erie County

	2012 HMIS Count	2012 Estimated Total Count	2013 HMIS Count	2013 Estimated Total Count
Total Unique Homeless Persons	3465	5681	3948	5754

Table 3 Annual Homeless Count compared 2011 and 2012

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	53.66%	N/A
TH	410	80.49%	N/A
PSH	959	77.2%	103
Safe Haven	16	100%	N/A
TOTAL	1836	72.33%	103

Table 4 Bed Inventory Comparison – HMIS Participation

VASH and Domestic Violence providers are not allowed to enter data into HMIS currently. Some faith based providers do not have the capacity to be able to enter into HMIS. HAWNY is working with them in an effort to obtain as much information as possible.

³ These are numbers of beds in the CoC by housing type; this is 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 will then present 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	2012 HMIS Count	2012 Estimated Total Count ⁴	2013 HMIS Count	2013 Estimated Total Count
Total Unique Homeless Persons	3465	5681	3948	5754
Emergency Shelter	2316	4558	2481	4710
Transitional Housing	642	768	713	775
Safe Haven	22	22	22	22
SSO	712	712	1266	1266
Outreach	137	137	223	223
Jan. and Jul. Unsheltered count	226 (Jan & Jul)	226	98 (Jan)	98

Table 5 Overall homeless population in HMIS and total estimation for 2012 and 2013

*Numbers for each program type are de-duplicated within the program. Total number of homeless is de-duplicated for all the homeless programs. For example, if someone used the emergency shelter and later was admitted to transitional housing, he/she will be counted in both ES and TH categories. However, he/she will only be counted as one person in the total number and in that particular category. For example if someone used one emergency shelter then went to another emergency shelter, it will only be counted as one person in the ES category.

The information below 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 3,844, instead of 3948.

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

Household Composition

2013	Total	Without Children	With Children and Adults	With Only Children	Unknown HH Type
Households	2909	2233 (76%)	422 (14%)	198 (7%)	56 (2%)
Persons	3844	2248 (58%)	1340 (35%)	199 (5%)	57 (2%)

Table 6 Homeless Persons Household Composition

A Majority (58%) of the homeless population is made up of single adults. The following data is gathered from homeless families (35%) comprised of adults and children. However if we consider a household as a unit, the proportions change. 422 (14%) of families with adults and children were homeless at some point of the year.⁵

More detail information on the household with children and adults can be found on page 46

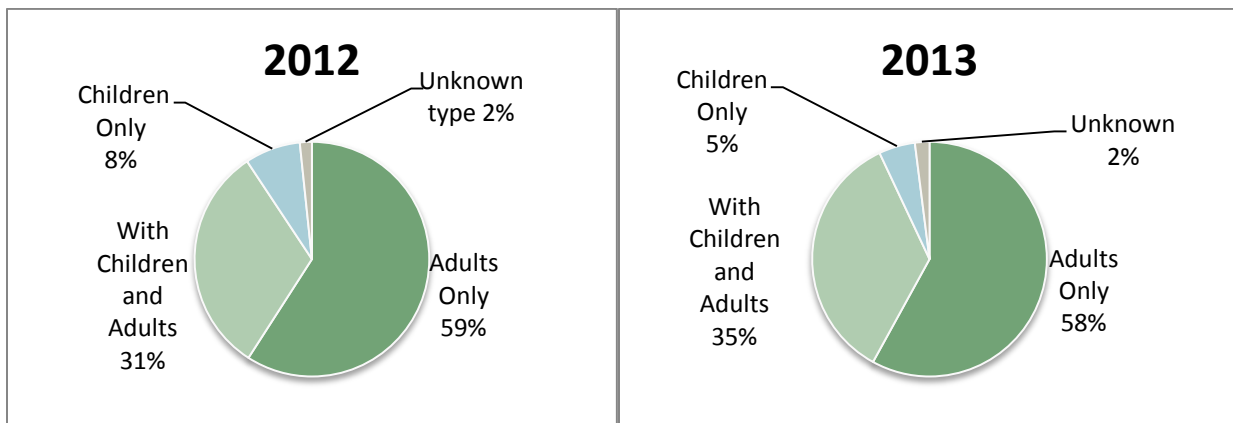


Figure 1 Homeless Persons by Household Type

Gender for Homeless Adults

	Total	%	Without Children	%	With Children and Adults	%
Male	1771	64%	1674	75%	97	19%
Female	985	36%	570	25%	412	81%
Transgendered	2	0%	2	0%	0	0%
Don't Know/Refused	2	0%	2	0%	0	0%
Subtotal	2760		2248		509	

Table 7 Homeless Adults—Gender

⁵ This is a consequence of the number of people covered by “household” in various family types. Households with only adults can be a single adult or a couple without children. Households with adults and children are those who have at least one adult and one child. So there are differences when we count only household or persons in the household.

Chapter 2 Homeless Population

2.1 Homeless Population Characteristics

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, such as 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.

Age

1,024 children under the age of 18 were homeless last year, comprising 26.6% of the homeless population. 34% of the homeless children were young children who were less than 5 years old. The numbers of homeless adults aged 55 or above dramatically drop off, especially those aged 62 and older. This may be due to becoming eligible for social security benefits, senior and subsidized housing, or the increased likelihood of death on streets. HUD and CoC now define homeless youth as being up to the age of 24. HUD defines homeless youth ages 13-17 as households with only children. The number of homeless youth (25 or under) totaled 510, or a 6% decrease from last year.

	Total	%	Without Children	%	With Children & Adults	%	With Children Only	%	Unknown	%
Under 5	351	9%	0		350	26%	0	0%	1	2%
5 – 12	343	9%	0		342	26%	0	0%	1	2%
13 – 17	330	8%	0		131	10%	199	100%		
18 – 24	475	12%	311	14%	163	12%	0		1	2%
25 – 34	661	17%	469	21%	190	14%	0		2	4%
35 – 44	565	15%	453	20%	112	8%	0			
45 – 54	656	17%	618	27%	38	3%	0			
55 – 61	283	7%	278	12%	5	0%	0			
62+	120	3%	119	5%	1	0%	0			
Don't Know/Missing	60	2%	0	0%	8	1%	0		52	90%
Total	3844		2248		1340		199		57	

Table 8 Homeless population—Age by household types

Chapter 2 Homeless Population
2.1 Homeless Population Characteristics

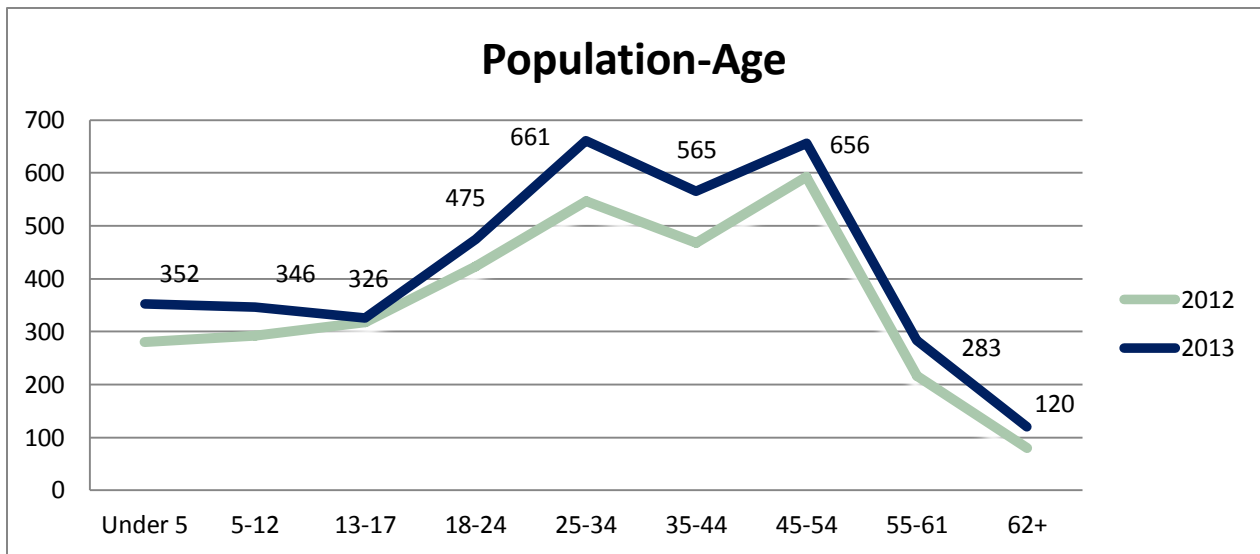


Figure 2 Homeless Population- Age (2012-2013 comparison)

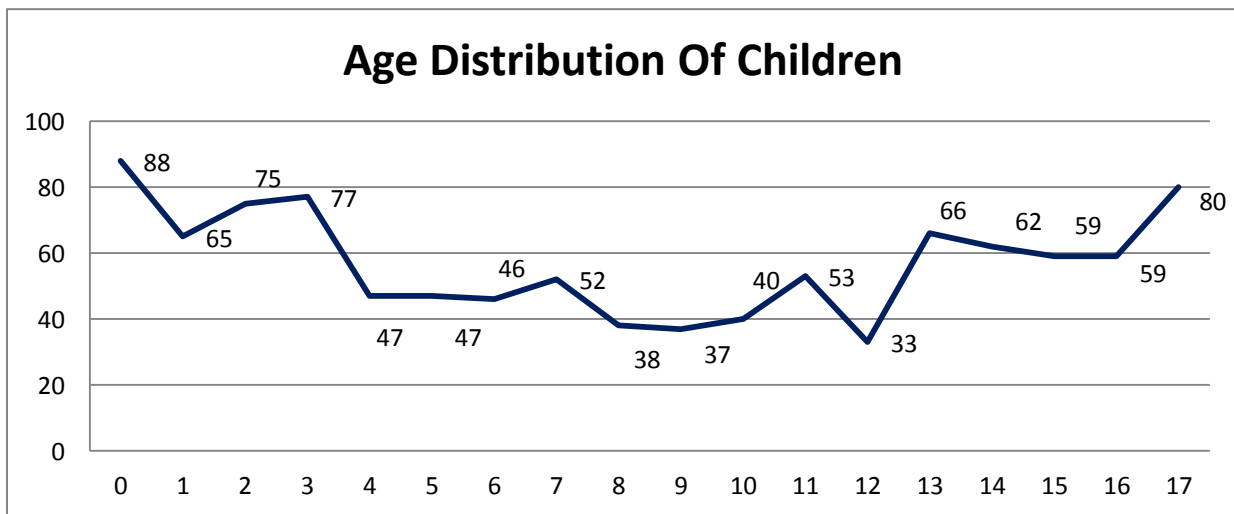


Figure 3 Homeless Population- Age distribution of children

Single adults or households with two adults were evenly distributed between 18-54, slightly leaning towards the 45-54 age group with a fair drop off after the age of 54. However, families with children were most likely to be young single mothers age between 18-34, with children under 12.

Race

Racial composition for the population who lives in Buffalo, NY below poverty level are as follows: White, 35%; African American or Black, 49%; American Indian, 1%; Asian, 5%; Multiple Races, 4%; Other, 6%. Besides the Asian population, the race percentages of homeless persons are similar to the overall population who lives below poverty level. Blacks or African Americans are the majority of the homeless population, about 50%. The racial population living in poverty and experiencing homelessness differs

Chapter 2 Homeless Population
2.1 Homeless Population Characteristics

from the general racial population of Buffalo whose composition is as follows; White, 51%; African American or Black, 38%; American Indian, 1%; Asian, 3%; Multiple Races, 3%; Other, 4%.

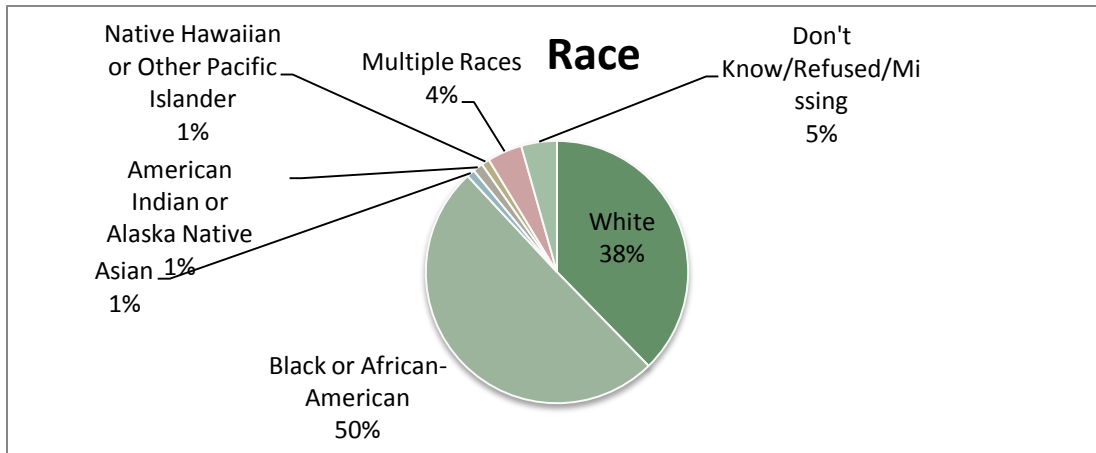


Figure 4 Homeless Population- Race
 Note: Hispanic/ Latino is considered as an ethnicity, not a race

Ethnicity

The ethnic composition of the population of Buffalo, NY who live below the poverty line is Hispanic: 15%; Non-Hispanic: 85%. This matches the ethnic composition of the homeless population in Buffalo. Hispanics are over-represented in the homeless population compared to the general population of Buffalo, whose ethnic background is 91% Non-Hispanic and 9% Hispanic.

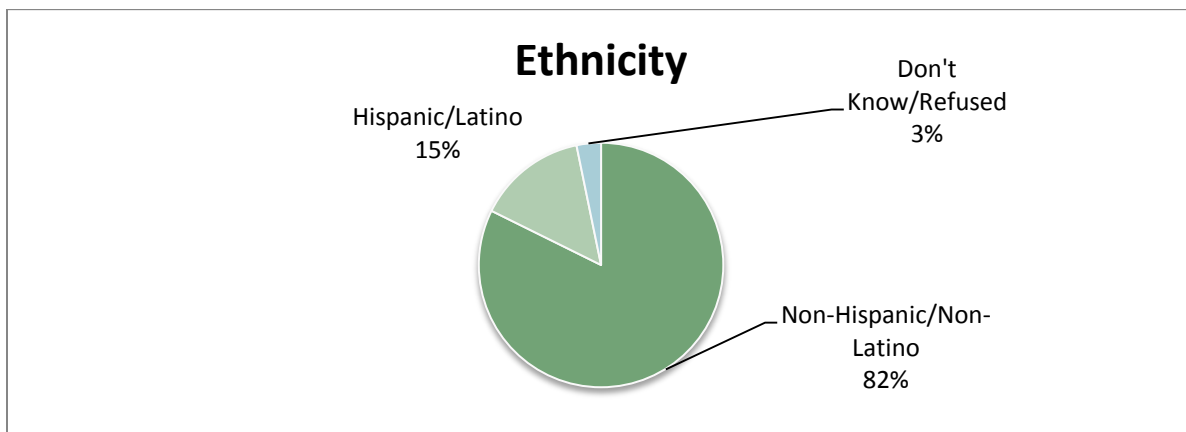


Figure 5 Homeless Population- Ethnicity

Chapter 2 Homeless Population

2.1 Homeless Population Characteristics

Prior Living Situation and Reasons of Homelessness

The reasons for homelessness have changed: evictions increased, while family and health issues have slightly decreased.

Reason of Homelessness	2012 Count	2012 %	2013 Count	2013 %
Family Issues: Household Disputes/ Domestic Violence /Conflict with Legal Guardian or Parent/Double up/Divorce or Separation/ Death of Family Member/Emancipation/Neglect	492	26%	392	20%
Health: Mental Health/ Health and safety/Medical Condition/Substance Abuse	492	26%	464	23%
Economic Reasons: Loss of Job or income/ loss of public assistance/ loss of transportation/ mortgage foreclosure/ no affordable housing/unemployment/utility shutoff	296	16%	305	15%
Eviction/Conflict With Landlord	240	13%	336	17%
Other: Relocation/ Release from institution/Substandard Housing/Fire or Natural Disaster/ Criminal Activity*	386	20%	413	21%

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

Table 9 Homeless Population- Reason of Homelessness

Prior Living Situation	2013	Percentage
Stay with family or friend	903	31%
Emergency Shelter	626	21%
Rental by Client	488	17%
Place not meant for habitation	354	11%
Institutions	281	10%
Other*	304	10%

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

Table 10 Homeless Population- Prior Living Situation

Chapter 2 Homeless Population

2.1 Homeless Population Characteristics

Disabling Conditions

Overall, 52% (1,994) of homeless persons do not have a disability and 44% (1,682) have one or more disabling conditions (4% data errors/missing). The most common disability types were mental illness (29%) and substance abuse (25%).

Disability Types	Counts	Percentage
Mental Illness	1127	29%
Substance Abuse	943	25%
Chronic Health Condition	70	2%
HIV/AIDS and Related Diseases	11	.002%
Developmental Disability	289	8%
Physical Disability	532	14%

Table 11 Homeless Population- Disability Types

Zip Code of Last Permanent Address

This is a different measure from “Prior Living Situation,” the section discussed above. “Prior living situation” refers to where the client slept the night before they entered the program. The zip code of their last permanent address refers to the last address where the client lived for more than 90 days. Maps reflect the homeless count based on Zip Codes can be found in Appendix Four-Map 1 and Map 2. Compared to last year, about 300 more clients were from the City of Buffalo. Clients from outside of Buffalo but within Erie County had slightly decreased, from 212 to 191.

Area	Homeless Client Served in 2012	% In 2012	Homeless Client Served in 2013	% in 2013
Within the City of Buffalo	2401	78%	2778	81%
Erie County (outside City of Buffalo)	212	7%	191	6%
Outside of Erie County, but inside New York State	203	7%	240	7%
Outside of New York State	249	8%	217	6%
Total Valid Zip Codes Entered	3065		3426	

Table 12 Homeless population-client distribution based on Zip Code of last permanent address

Chapter 2 Homeless Population

2.1 Homeless Population Characteristics

Zip Codes are more accurate this year; however, 14203 may still be over represented due to misunderstanding the concept of the question. Other zip codes which have more homeless clients (as shown in Map 2), the poverty rate is high relative to other areas (see table 13).

Location	Below Poverty Level 100%	Below Poverty Level 50%
Buffalo	30.1%	15%
Erie County	14.2%	6.9%
14211	38%	19.8%
14215	29.4%	15.2%
14213	45.8%	23.4%
14207		

Table 13 Homeless population-client distribution based on Zip Code of last permanent address

Education

There are 2115 valid answers in HMIS for adults who answered their highest education level.

The educational attainment of homeless persons is similar to the educational attainment of the part of general population living in poverty (see Page 5). With that said, the less educated are over-represented, especially those who did not graduate high school. There is a slightly higher risk of becoming homeless for those who finished less schooling.

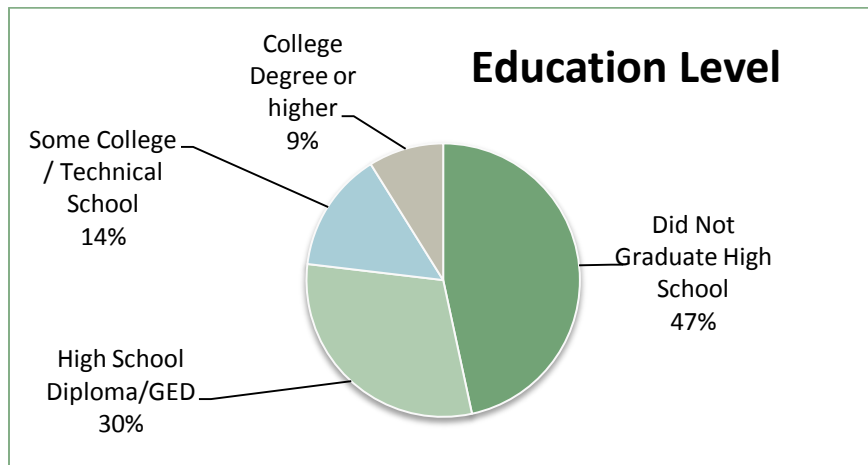


Figure 6 Homeless Population- Adult's highest education level

2.2. Emergency Shelter

	2012	2013	
	Persons	Persons	Households
Total Client served in HMIS	2316	2481	1947
• Adult Only	1331	1490	1477
• With Children and Adults	720	744	232
• With Children Only	235	189	188
• Unknown Type	30	58	50
Total Estimated Clients Served	4558	4710	3462
• Estimated Adult Only	2686	2771	2749
• Estimated with Children and Adults	1637	1750	525
• Estimated With Children Only	235	189	188

Emergency Shelter (ES) – Emergency shelter is housing that homeless persons can access 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.

All demographic data below is based on the shelters who participate in HMIS. Participation in HMIS from emergency shelters is lower than other categories of service providers. This is unfortunate because the homeless residing in emergency shelters are one of the most important populations to gather data from. Greater collaboration among emergency shelter providers is needed in the future.

Gender of Adults in ES

Gender is disproportionately represented among household types in Emergency Shelters. The majority of adult individuals are male while the majority of adults in families are female; specifically the head of households are disproportionately female.

	Total	Without Children	%	With Children and Adults	%
Male	1235	1167	78%	68	24%
Female	540	322	22%	214	76%
Don't Know/Refused	1	1	0%	0	0%
Subtotal	1776	1490		282	

Table 14 ES- Adult Gender Distribution

Age

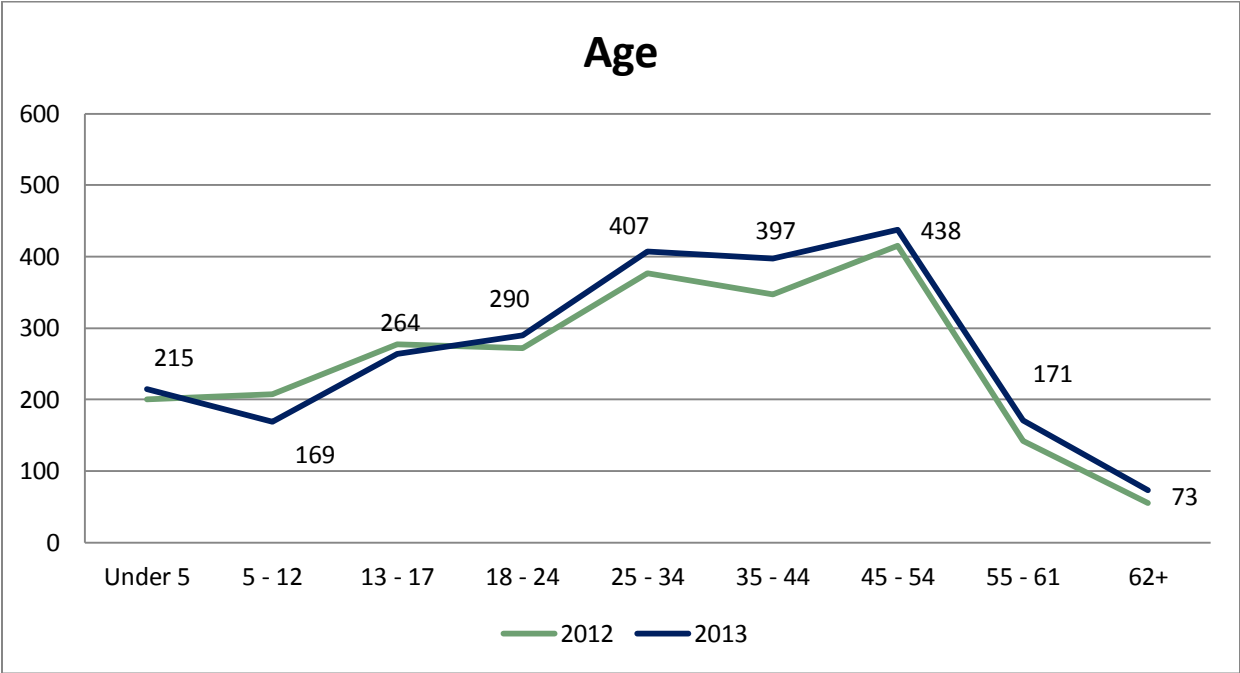


Figure 7 ES- Age Distribution comparison for 2011 and 2012

Race

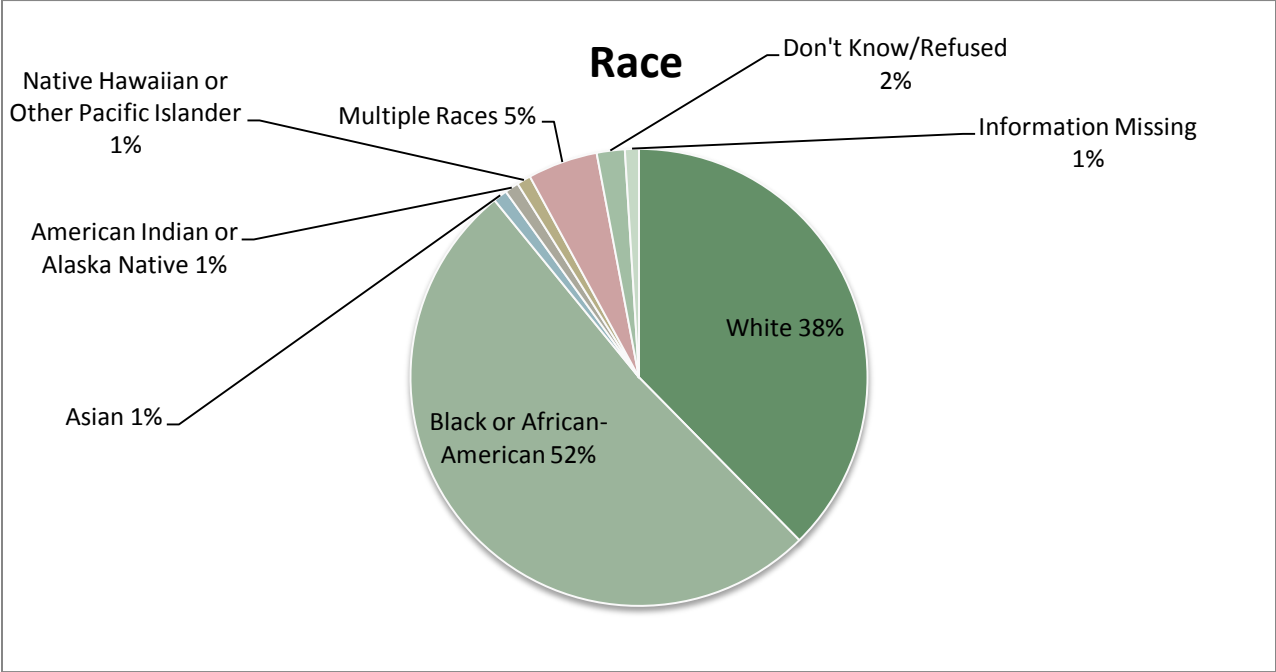


Figure 8 ES-Race

Ethnicity

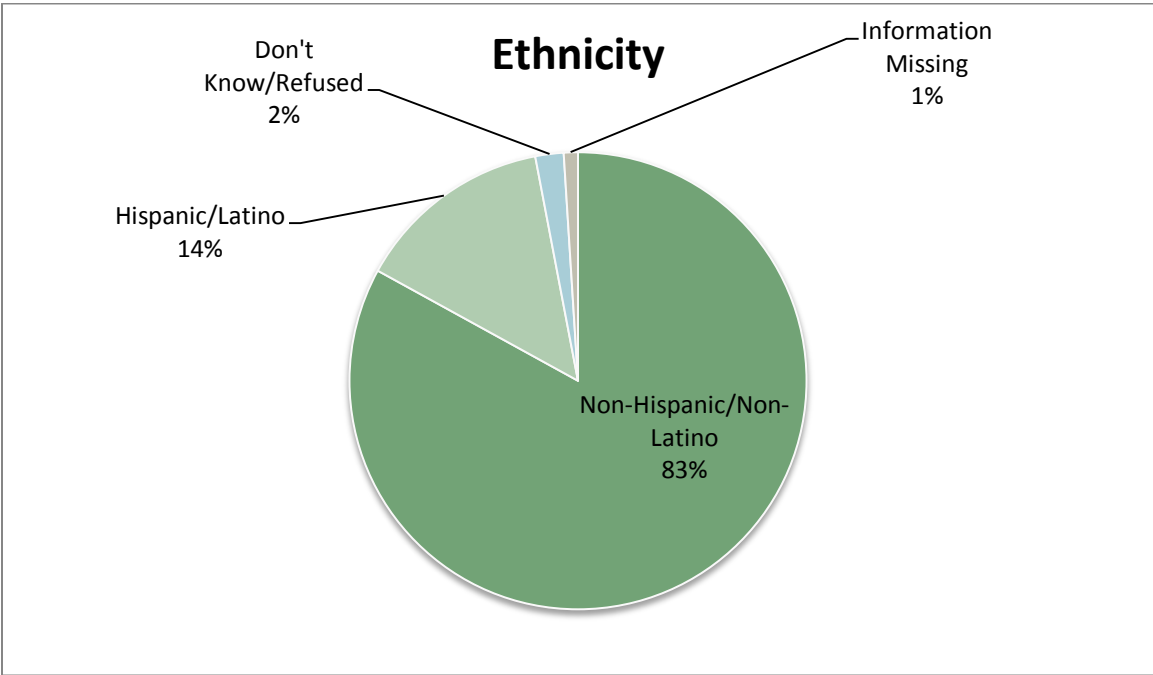


Figure 9 ES-Ethnicity

Disabilities

57% of the clients who stayed in emergency shelters do not have a disability and 36% have at least one long-term disability. For those who have a disability, 49% have two or more conditions. Mental illness is the most common disability at 23%.

Disability Type	Count	Percentage
Mental Illness	559	23%
Substance Abuse	193	17%
Chronic Health Condition	38	2%
HIV/AIDS and Related Diseases	6	.002%
Developmental Disability	164	7%
Physical Disability	305	12%
Total clients who have at least one disability	903	

Table 15 ES- Disability types

Last Prior living situations

Chapter 2 Homeless Population
2.2 Emergency Shelter

Prior Living Situation	2013	Percentage
Double up	818	42%
Rental by Client	322	16%
Institutions	241	12%
Emergency Shelter	232	12%
Place not meant for habitation	118	6%
Other	232	12%

Table 16 ES- last Prior living situations

Length of Stay

The majority of clients who stayed in Emergency Shelters remained for less than 30 days (68%). The average length of stay (LOS) for persons who left the shelter is 29 days, and the median LOS is only 13 days. CoC is working towards shorter shelter stays with the goal that clients would be placed into permanent housing as soon as possible. Children-only household type tend to stay in shelters for a very short period of time, while adults and adults with children tend to stay around 30 days.

	< 30 Days	30 – 60 Days	61 – 180 Days	181 – 365 Days	> 1 Year	Avg. length of stay
Adults	72%	15%	10%	2%	1%	32 Days
Adults with children	53%	31%	16%	N/A	N/A	33 Days
Children only	97%	2%	1%	N/A	N/A	6 Days
Unknown	87%	10%	2%	1%	N/A	18 Days

	2012		2013	
	Average LOS	Median LOS	Average LOS	Median LOS
Clients who left the program at the end of the report period	36	19	29	13
Clients who stay in the program at the end of the report period	63	30	45	27

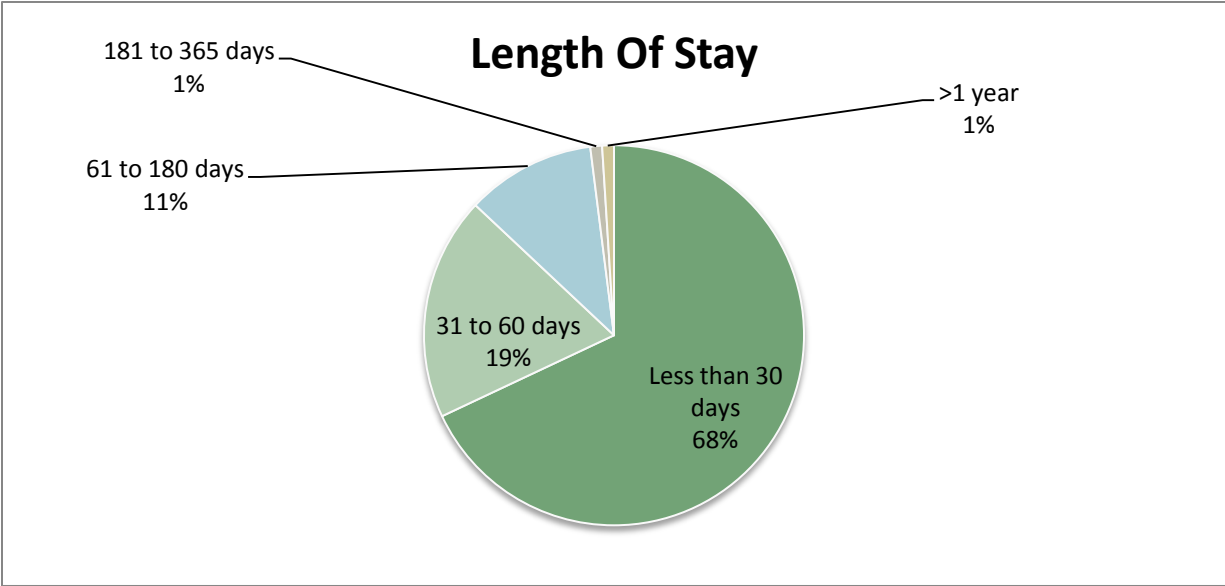


Figure 10 ES- Length of Stay

Destinations

Compared to last year, we have more records reported as “other destinations” (including other, deceased, don’t know, refused) and have less identified destinations. Destinations of permanent housing decreased by 1% and temporary destinations decreased by 7%. 39% of the temporary destinations were to transitional housing for homeless persons, which is a positive outcome for clients. Much work needs to be done. Emergency Shelters in this CoC will attempt to have less than 30% of clients leave care and go to unknown destinations. We will also try to place clients into permanent housing and other appropriate destinations.

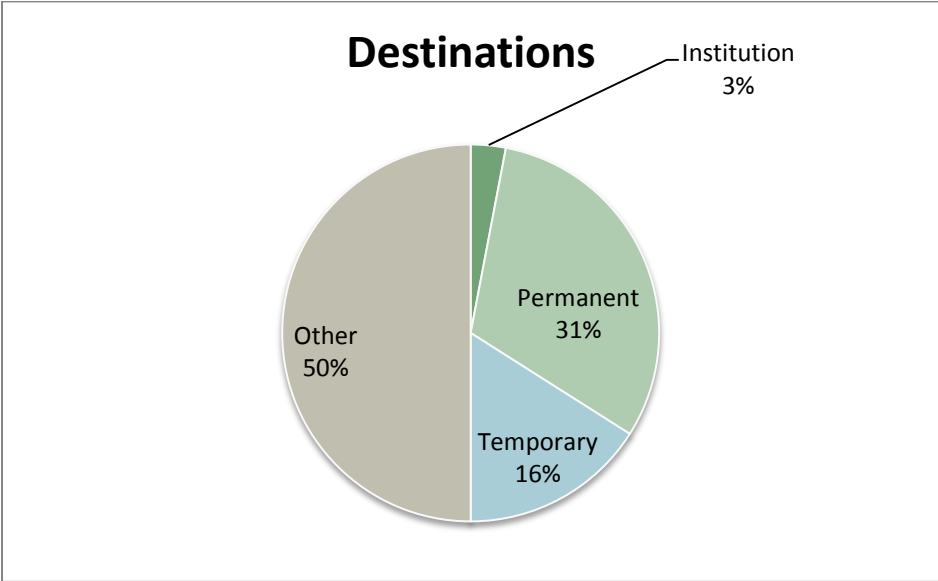


Figure 11 ES-Destinations

Income or Non-Cash Benefits

Among adults that reported an income at entry into a shelter 40% (723) had no income, 53% (953) had some sort of income, and 7% of the data was missing or reported as didn't know.

Most frequent Income Sources	Count	%
SSI/SSDI	448	28%
Earned Income	226	14%
General Assistance	190	12%
TANF	177	7%

Table 17 ES- Frequent Income Sources

Adults that reported non-cash benefits at the initial intake, 62% were receiving non-cash benefits and 31% were not, with 7% of the data missing. 60% individuals were receiving food stamps and 52% were receiving Medicaid/Medicare.

2.3. Transitional Housing

	2012	2013	
	Persons	Persons	Households
Total Clients served in HMIS	642	713	494
• Adult Only	289	362	357
• With Children and Adults	306	326	114
• With Children Only	38	21	21
Total Estimated Clients Served	768	775	551
• Estimated Adult Only	350	419	413
• Estimated with Children and Adults	380	334	117
• Estimated With Children Only	38	21	21

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

In 2013, the transitional housing programs who participated in HMIS served 71 more clients than last year. This is in part due to reclassifying beds.

Gender of Adults in TH

Overall, the gender of transitional housing participants was fairly evenly distributed: 54% were males and 46% were female. However, if we divide them by Household types, they are very disproportionate. For adults in families, 95% are female head of households; for individuals, 70% were males and 30% were females.

	Total	%	Adult Only	%	With Children and Adults	%
Male	260	54%	254	70%	6	5%
Female	222	46%	108	30%	114	95%
Transgendered	0		0	0%	0	0%
Subtotal	482		362		120	

Table 18 Transitional Housing Adult Gender

Age

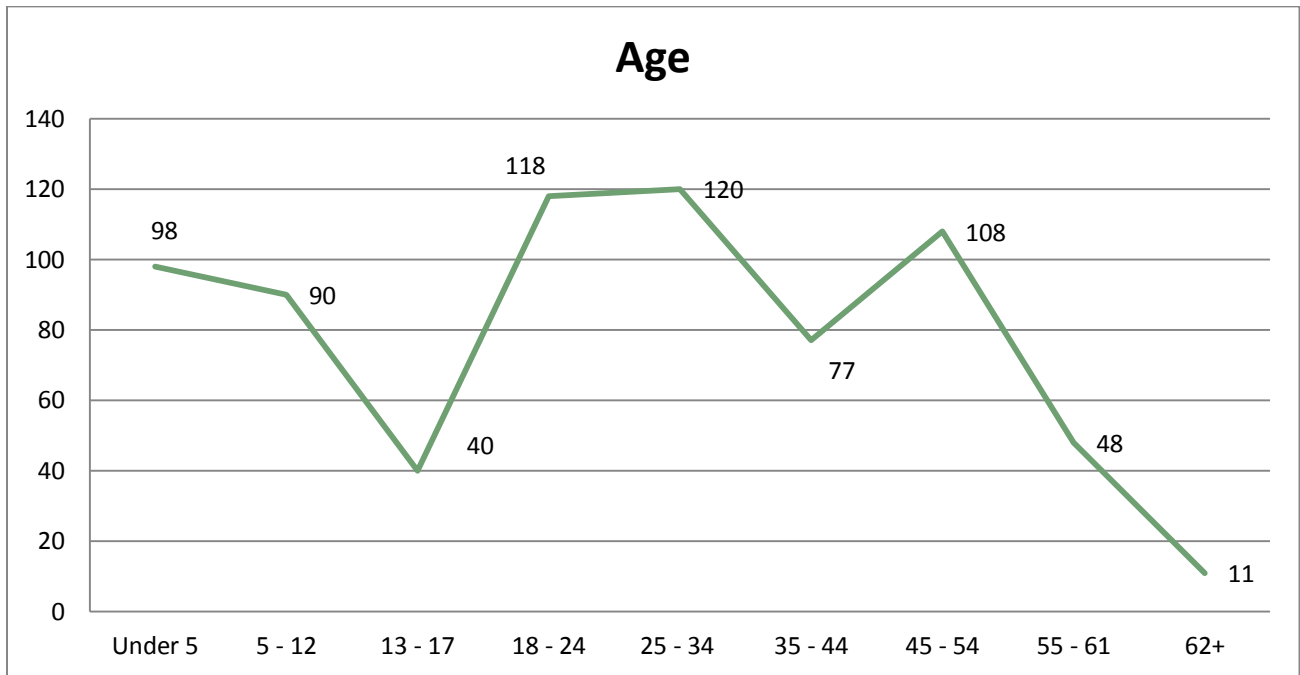


Figure 12 TH-Age Distribution

	Total	%	Without Children	%	With Children and Adults	%	With Only Children	%	Unknown HH Type
Under 5	98	14%			97	30%	0	0%	1
5 - 12	90	13%			89	27%	0	0%	1
13 - 17	40	6%			19	6%	21	100%	0
18 - 24	118	17%	78	22%	40	12%			
25 - 34	120	17%	68	19%	52	16%			0
35 - 44	77	11%	59	16%	18	6%			0
45 - 54	108	15%	99	27%	9	3%			0
55 - 61	48	7%	47	13%	1	0%			0
62+	11	2%	11	3%	0	0%			0
Don't Know/Refused	3	0%	0	0%	1	0%	0	0%	2
Information Missing	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0	0%	0
Total	713		362		326		21		4

Table 19 TH-Age by household Type

Race

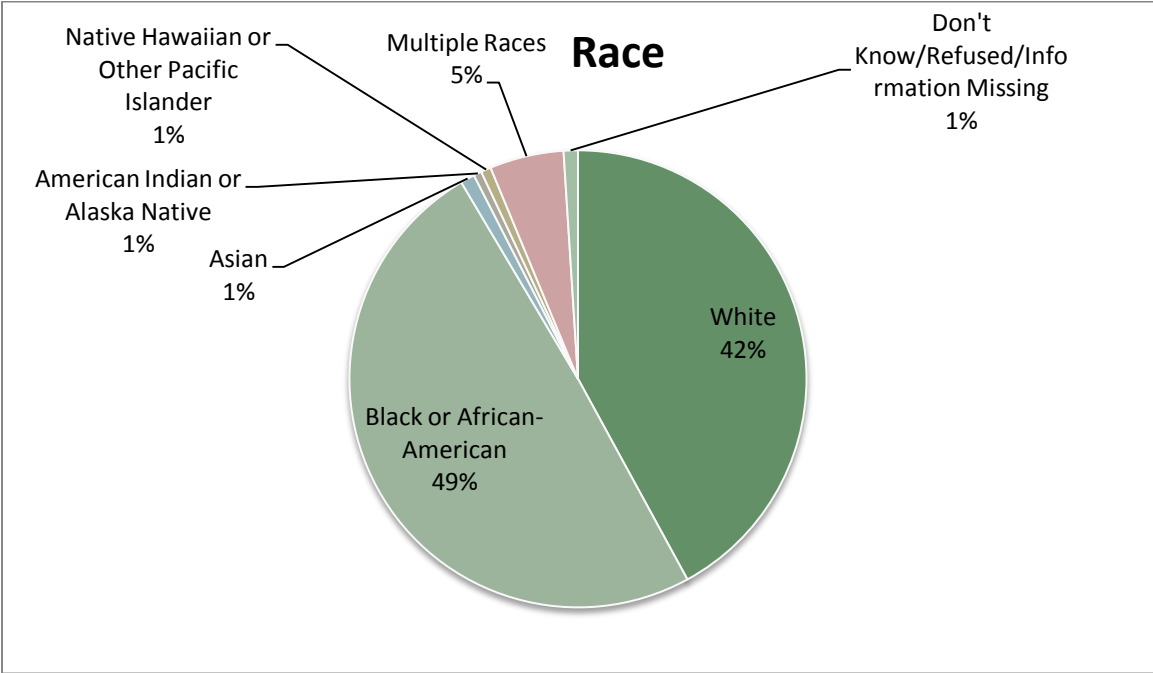


Figure 13 TH-Race

Ethnicity

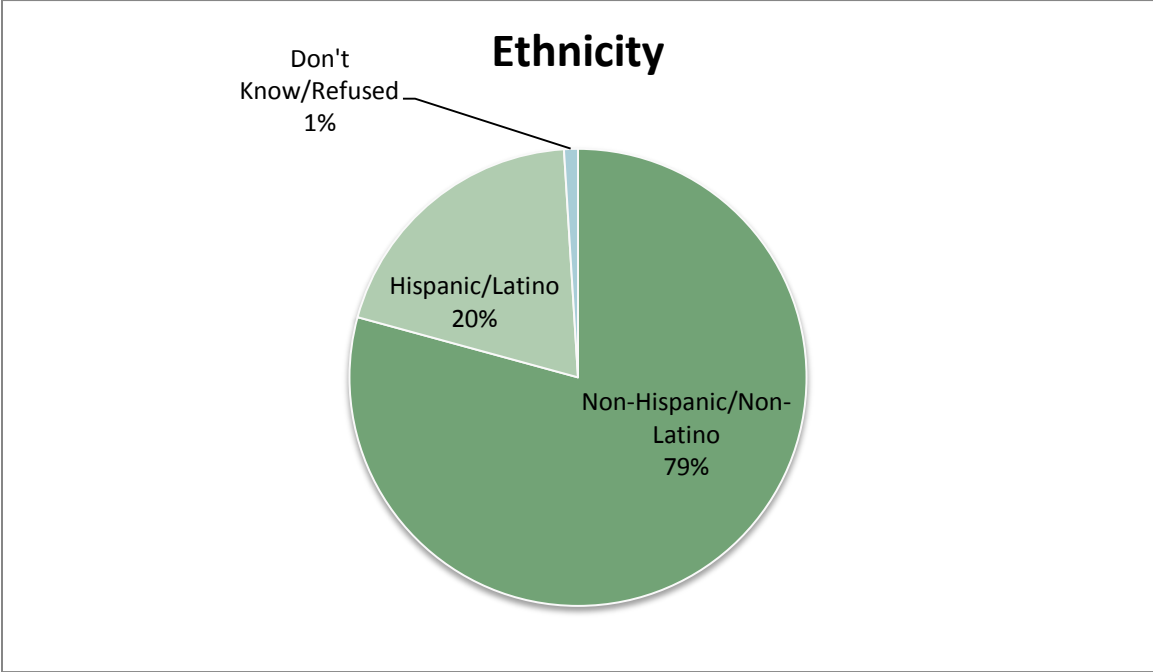


Figure 14 TH-Ethnicity

Disabilities

61% of adult TH participants did not have a disability, and 39% 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, 29% had substance abuse issues and 27% had a mental illness.

Disability Types	Count	%
Mental Illness	192	27%
Substance Abuse	209	29%
Chronic Health Condition	6	.008%
HIV/AIDS and Related Diseases	0	0%
Developmental Disability	48	7%
Physical Disability	61	9%
Total clients who have one or more disability(ies)	271	39%

Table 20 TH-Disabilities

Prior Living Situations

	2012	%	2013	%
Emergency Shelter	246	37%	193	38%
Double Up	232	36%	152	30%
Rental by client	68	10%	56	11%
Others	102	16%	101	21%

Table 21 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

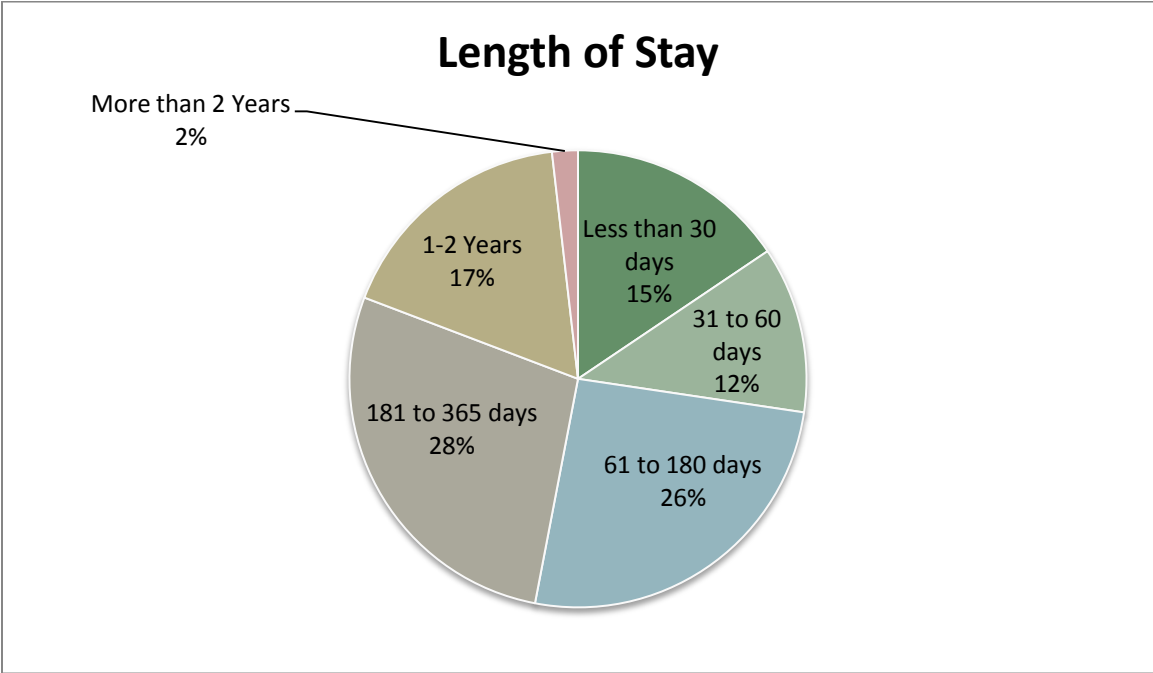


Figure 15 TH-Length of Stay for all clients

		2012		2013	
		Average Length	Median Length	Average Length	Median Length
Leavers	Average Length	267 (8 months)	173 (5 months)	238 (8 months)	186 (6 months)
	Median Length				
Stayers	Average Length	230 (7 months)	152 (5 months)	205 (7 months)	131.5 (4 months)
	Median Length				

Table 22 TH-Averages length of stay

The average length of stay for persons who left the program decreased by 29 days and the length of stay for clients who are still in the program decreased by 25 days.

Destinations

Compared to 2012 data, there was an increase of exits to permanent housing, from 57% to 66%. “Other Destinations,” which includes “Don’t know,” decreased to 14% this year. The HUD benchmark for exits to permanent housing has now increased to 80%.

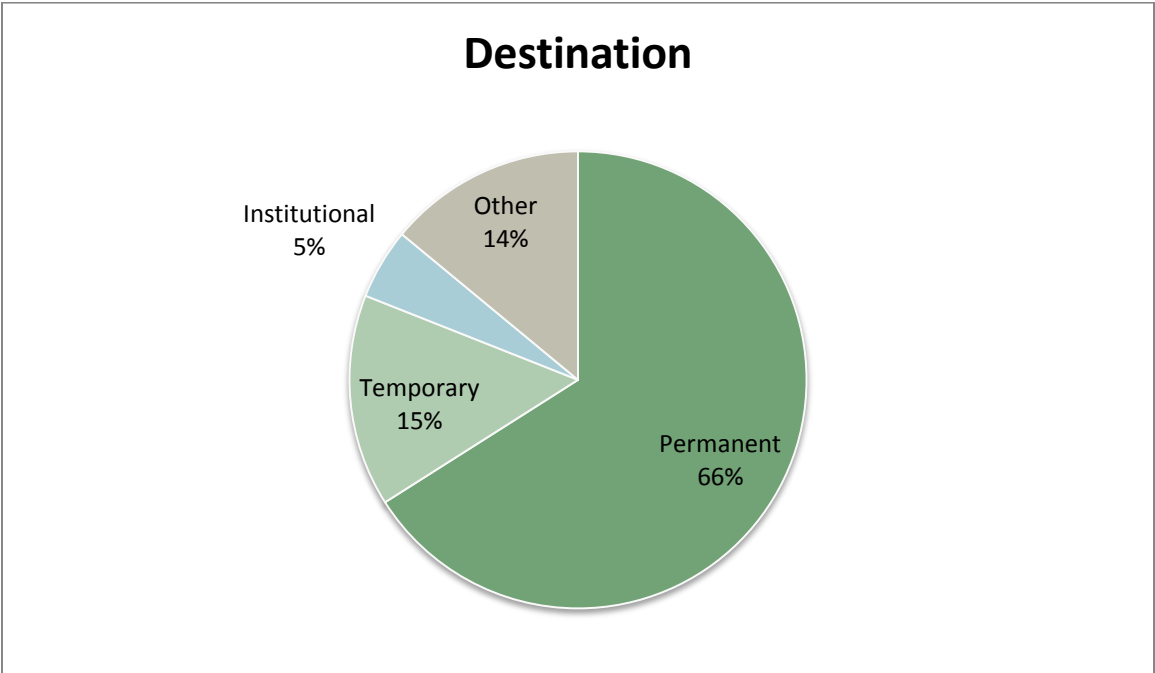


Figure 16 TH-Destinations

Income or Non-Cash Benefits

Among adults that reported an income at entry 23% (109) had no income and 77% (373) had some sort of income.

Most Frequent Income Sources	Count	%
SSI/SSDI	125	18%
Earned Income	116	16%
General Assistance	118	17%
TANF	85	12%
Other	58	8%

Table 23 TH-Frequent Income Sources

For those adults that reported non-cash benefits at entry, 75% were receiving non-cash benefits and 24% were not, with 1% missing data. 46% of individuals were receiving food stamps and 39% were receiving Medicaid/Medicare.

Chapter 3 Permanent Supportive Housing

	2012	2013	
	Persons	Persons	Households
Total	876	895	818
• Adult Only	748	791	779
• With Children and Adults	124	104	39
Total Estimated Clients Served	1100	1094	984
• Estimated Adult Only	884	963	936
• Estimated with Children and Adults	216	131	48

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) - Permanent supportive housing is a type of housing in which homeless persons with a disability may live without a 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 PSH includes rental assistance programs (formerly known as Shelter Plus Care).

This year, the number of individuals and families who stayed in permanent housing programs has slightly increased. PSH programs were able to serve more people because more residents from PSH were successfully graduated into the Section 8 program. The availability of Section 8 vouchers in the future will be very limited. To be able to successfully transition permanent housing program residents, we need more long term subsidies like Section 8 that prioritize persons who experienced homelessness.

Gender

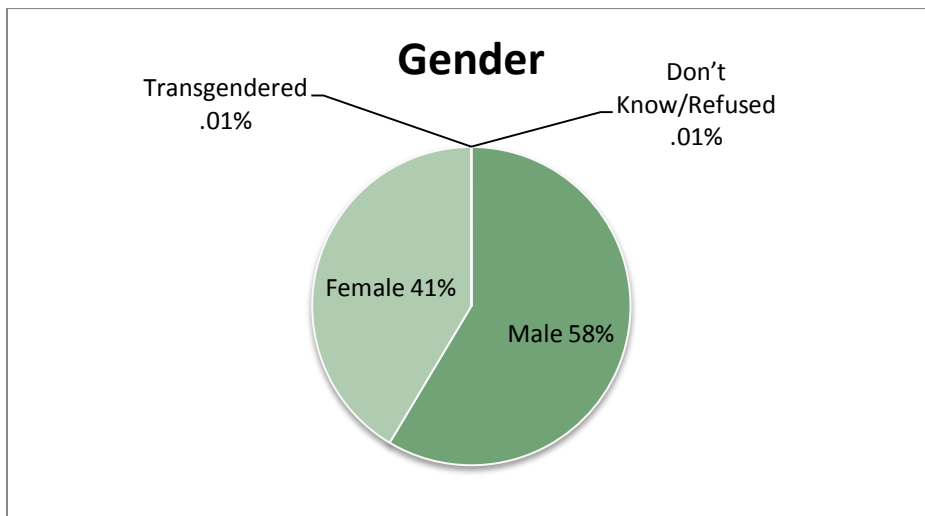


Figure 17 PSH-Gender

Age

The age of individuals and families who are participating in the permanent housing programs is concentrated between the age of 45-54 and drops quickly after 55.

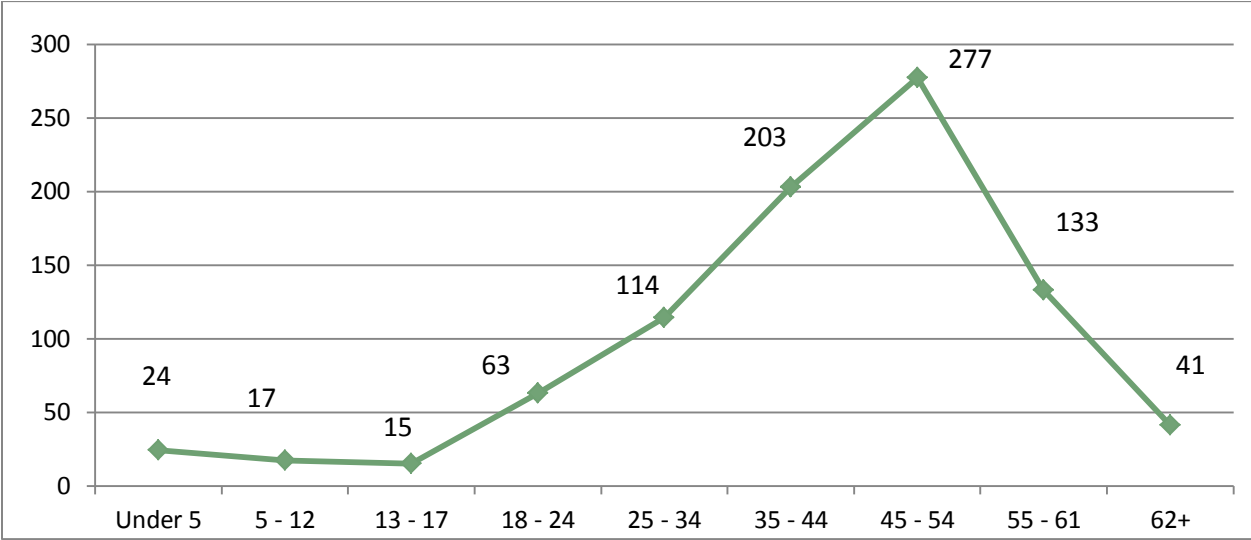


Figure 18 PSH-Age

Race and Ethnicity

The majority of participants are white (49%), while the homeless population majority is African American.

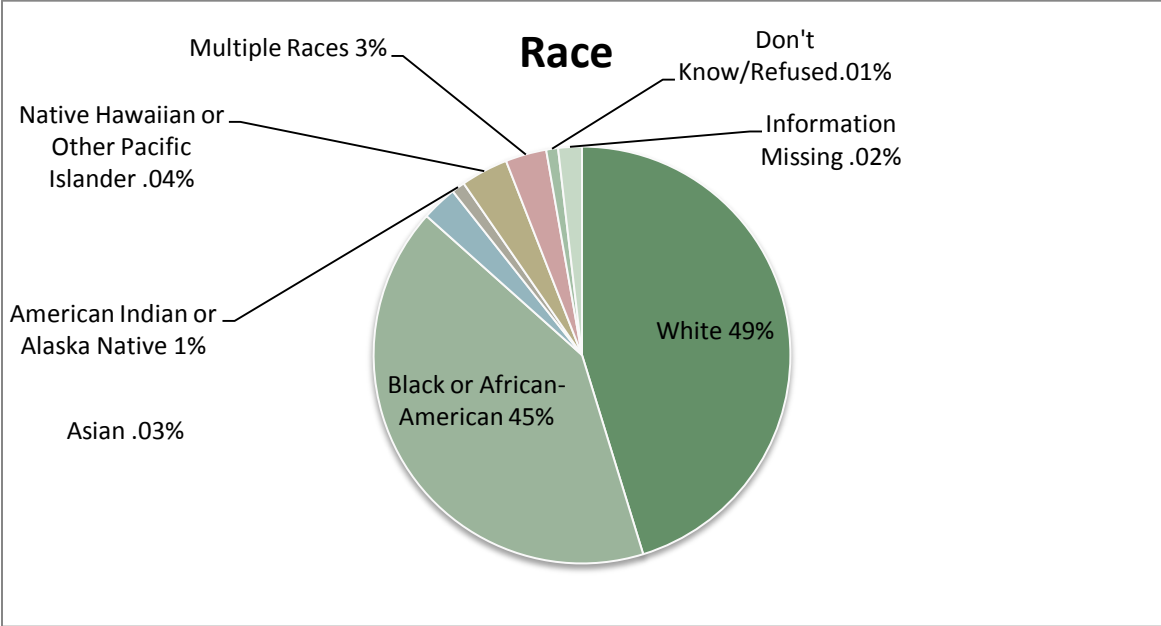


Figure 19 PSH – Race

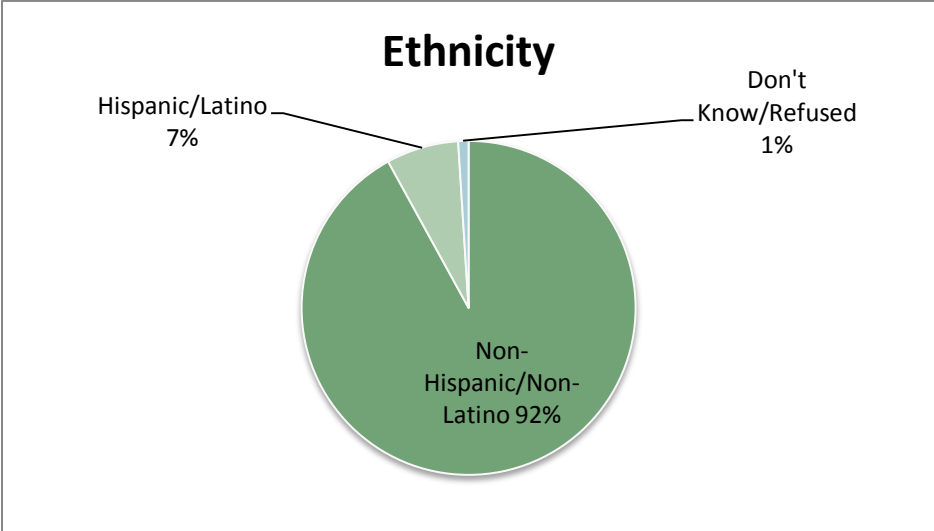


Figure 20 PSH- Ethnicity

Disabling Condition

To be eligible for PSH, the participant must have a diagnosed disability. Of the 8% who reported not having disability, 82% are children living with an adult who has one or more disabilities. The remaining adults who are shown to have no disability are either the spouse or adult children of a disabled client. 818 participants have a disability. 44% of the participants have three or more disabilities. 82% of the participants have mental illness and 49% have substance abuse issues.

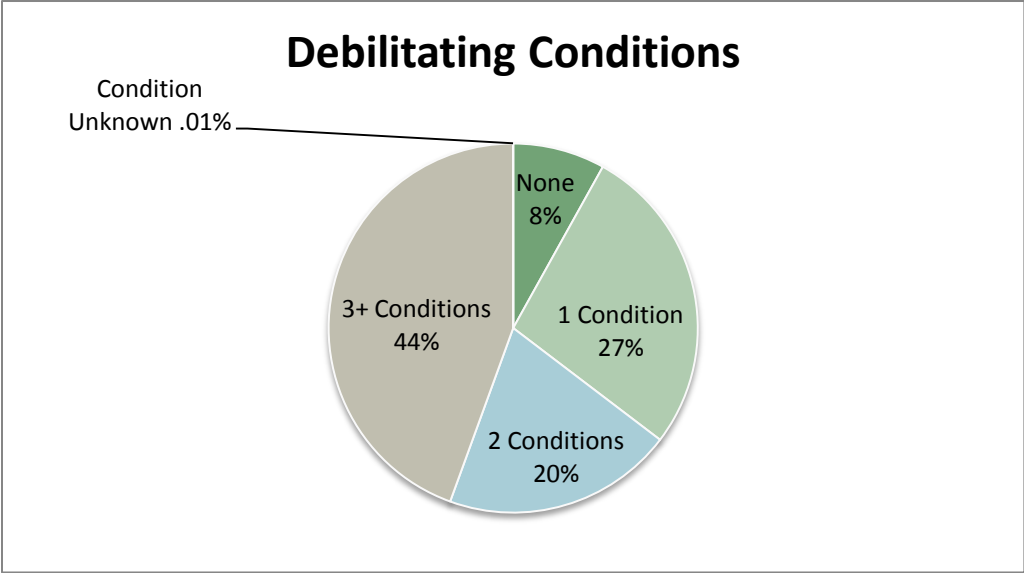


Figure 21 PSH- Disabling Condition

Chapter 3 Permanent Supportive Housing

	Total	Percentage
Mental Illness	738	90%
Substance Abuse	437	53%
Physical Disability	162	20%
Developmental Disability	26	3%
Chronic Health Condition	24	3%
HIV/AIDS and Related Diseases	5	1%

Table 24 PSH-Disability Type

Prior Living Situation

Most PSH participants (72%) 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. This is a requirement for entry into PSH.

Prior Living Situation	Count	Percentage
Emergency Shelter	546	61%
Place not meant for habitation	98	11%
Transitional Housing for homeless persons	94	11%
Institutional settings	27	3%
Hotel/Motel	12	1%
Others	49	5%

Table 25 PSH- Prior Living Situation

Income or Non-Cash Benefit

95% of the adults who participated in PSH during this report period had cash income. Cash income includes earned income, SSI, SSDI, general assistance, etc.

Most Frequent Income Sources	Count	%
SSI/SSDI	603	73%
Earned Income	108	13%
General Assistance	216	26%
TANF	66	8%
Other	85	10%

Of those individuals that receive non-cash benefits 95% received SNAP or food stamps, and 79% received Medicare/Medicaid.

Length of Stay for Leavers

179 participants’ exited permanent supportive housing during 2013 and 719 remained in PSH. 86% of participants who exited a PSH program during this time period stayed more than six months, exceeding the HUD benchmark of 80% of PSH participants remaining in permanent housing for more than six months. PSH programs have great success in stabilizing participants in housing.

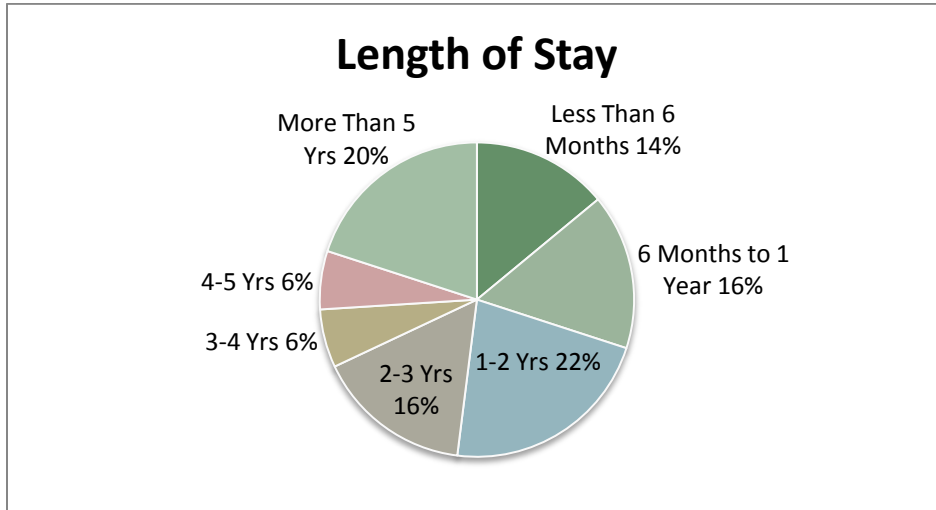


Figure 22 PSH- Length of Stay

Destinations

71% of the clients who exited permanent supportive housing programs left successfully for other permanent housing destinations, an increase of 13% from last year and 26% over the last two years. 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 lower this year, from 18% to 12%

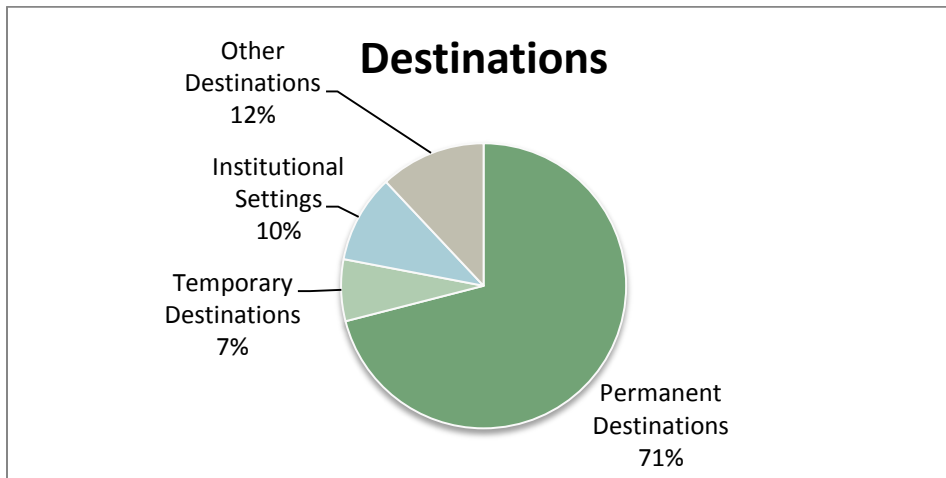


Figure 23 PSH-Destinations

Chapter 4 Subpopulation

This chapter will cover subpopulations listed below,

- Chronically Homeless
- Homeless Pattern- Repeated Homeless, Newly Homeless
- Homeless Veterans
- Victims of Domestic Violence
- Homeless Families
- Homeless or At Risk Homeless Children in School

4.1. Chronically Homeless

In 2010, the definition of chronically homeless expanded 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 have 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

HMIS records indicate that a total of **246** persons fit the definition of chronically homeless and in need of housing.

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

There are 554 individuals who answered “Yes” to the chronically homeless question in HMIS. However, there are only 311 that fit the definition above based on the HMIS answers. Within these 311 chronically homeless persons, there are 65 identified as housed, and 246 who might be still in need of housing. This year we are seeing more chronically homeless identified through HMIS; however, it may be due to an emphasis on identifying chronically homeless instead of an actual increase.

HUD established a goal to end chronic homelessness by 2015. To do this, HUD encouraged existing permanent supportive housing programs to take the chronically homeless using the housing first model⁶. We started the conversation about the new strategy in late 2013. In 2014, Buffalo’s Continuum of Care started to house chronically homeless in the existing PSH by prioritizing those who are most vulnerable when beds turned over. We are planning to add 80 new beds for the chronically homeless in late 2014 to 2015. We are expected to see a significant drop in the chronically homeless population in 2015 and it will set a path to end chronically homeless.

⁶ Housing First is an approach to ending homelessness that centers on providing people experiencing homelessness with housing as quickly as possible, and then providing other therapeutic services as needed.

Gender

The majority of people in the chronically homeless population are male (77%).

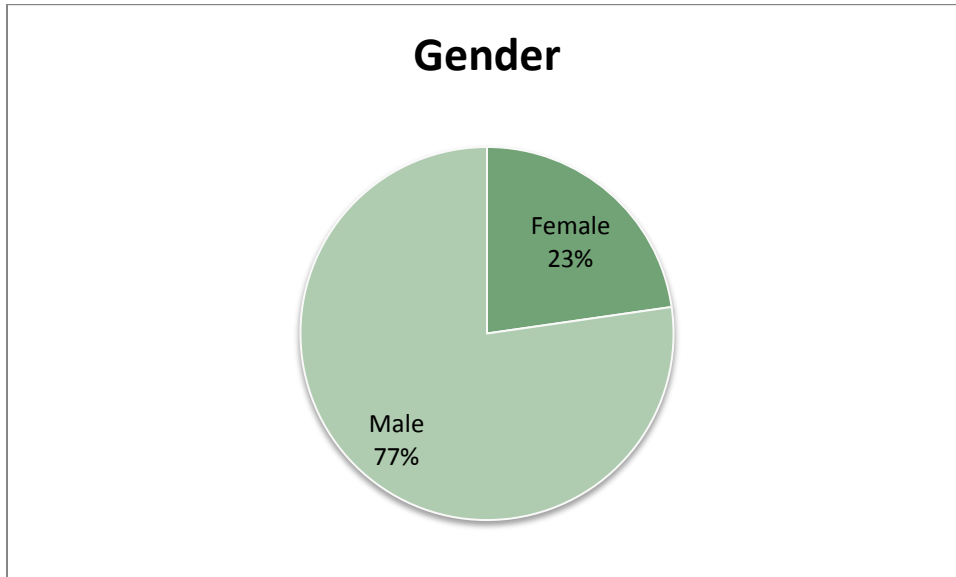


Figure 24 Chronically homeless- Gender

Age

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

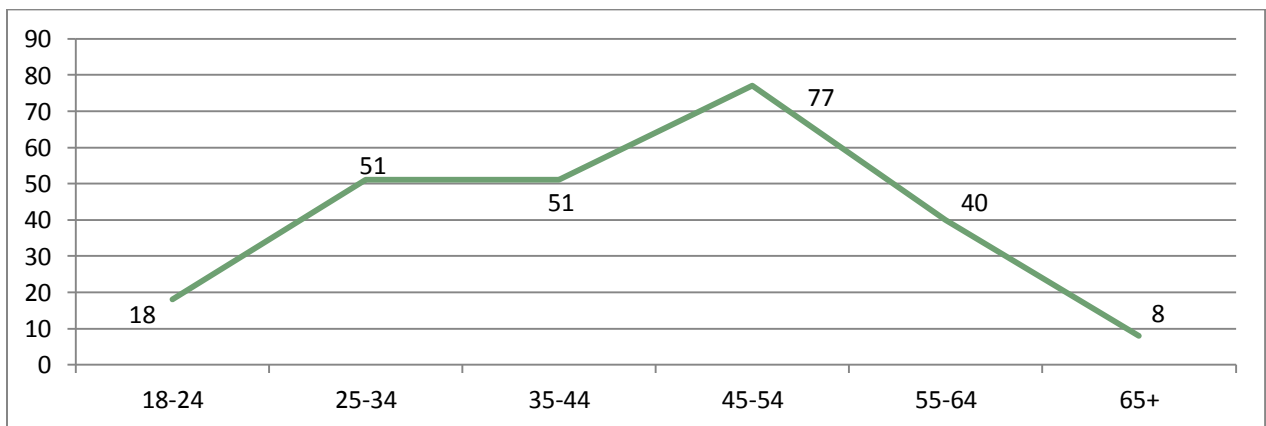


Figure 25 Chronically homeless- Age Distribution

Disabilities

A majority (69%) of the chronically homeless have more than one disability condition. 82% has mental health problems and 62% has substance abuse issues.

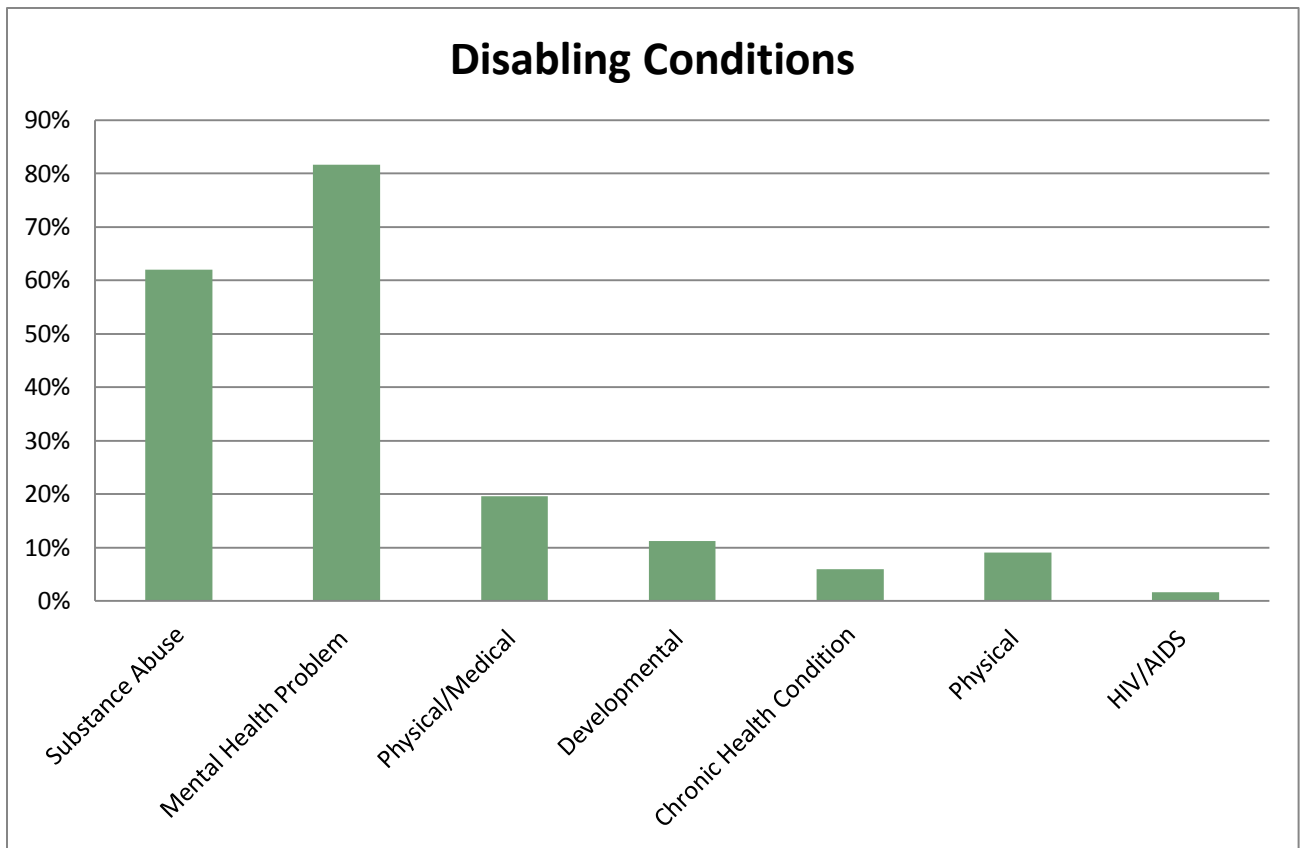


Figure 26 Chronically Homeless- Disabling Conditions

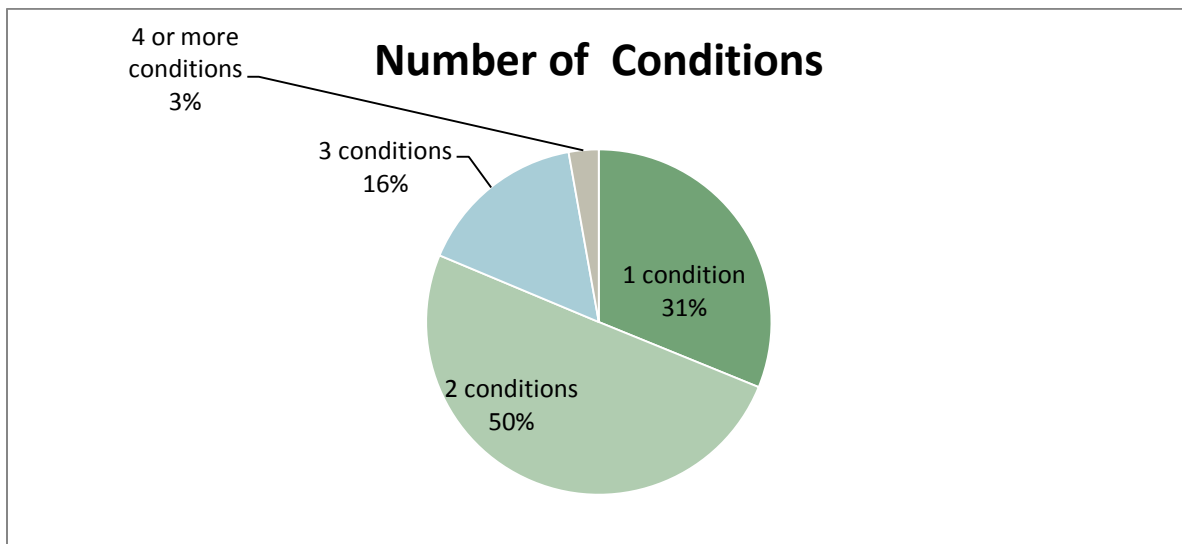


Figure 27 Chronically Homeless- Disabling Conditions

4.2. Pattern of Homelessness

The definitions for “Repeated homelessness” and “newly homelessness” have not yet been released by HUD. Despite this, CoCs across the country are using these concepts for planning purposes. In this report we will provide the methods that we believe will best help our planning process and most meaningfully help us understand the issues.

Full coverage of HMIS and correct data are crucial to the accuracy of tracking the patterns of homelessness. However, about half of the emergency shelter beds are not participating in HMIS. This may significantly affect the analysis.

Summary

Out of all the people who experienced homelessness in 2013, 23% are repeated homeless and there are 77% newly homeless. Among households with only adults, the recidivism rate is 29%. Among households with adults and children, the recidivism rate is only 13%. Among homeless youth (under 18), the recidivism rate is 23%. 22% of homeless households are with a child under one. The repeated homeless persons, in households with only adults, have a higher rate (49%) of long-term disability, compared to the newly homeless group (33%).

A coordinated entry system will be in place in the near future and clients will be directed to the most appropriate services and housing from the beginning in order to reduce recidivism. Erie County needs more affordable housing and case management services that can provide support or direction to clients and maybe follow up with client that are in need.

4.2.1. Repeated Homelessness

Repeated homelessness in this section includes:

- A person that has been homeless during the prior two years (10/1/2010-9/30/2012) and entered the homeless system again within this report period (10/1/2012-9/30/2013)
- A person that has multiple entries in this report period and between each homeless episode has at least a 30 days’ interval.

There are 2,932 unduplicated homeless clients who entered ES, TH or SH this year, and there are 662 clients who fit the definition above*. **The recidivism rate is 23%.**

*Last year we only used the first definition, and the rate was 19%. This year if we only considered the first definition, the rate is at 19% as well.

	Household with Adults and children	Household with only adults	Household with only children
Persons	103	514	45
Households	45	512	45

Table 26- Repeated Homeless Household Composition

The majority of the households experiencing repeated homelessness are households with only adults (85%). Households with adult and children and households with only children both consist 7% of this population.

Persons in Households with Adult and Children:

38 out of 45 (84%) homeless families with multiple episodes of homelessness have a female head of household. Households with adult and children have the lowest recidivism rate, about 13%.

Based on current data, when families are homeless for the first time, they match the characteristics of the general homeless family population. At their first instance of homelessness, a majority of families had children 1 year or younger. As families re-enter the system, they no longer match the characteristics of the homeless population, as they have older children present at each subsequent episode. Not all children were present at each episode of homelessness.

37% of families experiencing repeated homelessness have also experienced domestic violence. Domestic violence shelters do not participate in HMIS and therefore these families could stay in DV programs. There may be more families that have experienced repeated homelessness that our system cannot track.

Homeless families with repeat episodes also differ from repeated homeless individuals in the period of time between occurrences of instability. Single people often have homeless episodes that are close together and frequent. Homeless families often re-renter the system after a long period out of the system. It is usually around one year after of the first episode of homelessness that they experience subsequent episodes

49% of families who experience homelessness have 3 or more episodes. 50% of these families have adults under 30 years old. To reduce this number, we recommend that these families be given priority access to case management or services at the second instance of homelessness so as they do not re-enter into the system again. Shelters could create a follow-up program to follow these young parents during their first year following discharge from the shelter to ensure stability in housing.

Persons in Households with Only Children:

23% of unaccompanied youth have more than one episode of homelessness. When a broader definition of youth, up to 24 years old instead of 18, was considered, we found that most youth aged 18-19 with repeat episodes first experienced homelessness when they were 16-17. For some, it was even earlier.

However, youth aged 20-24 years-old have a completely different pattern. Most (90%) had their first episode of homelessness after age 18 and have an average of three episodes of homelessness total.

Persons in Households with Only Adults:

29% of households with only adults have more than one episode of homelessness. Individual adults have the highest rate of recidivism. 45-54 remained the age group with the highest return to homelessness.

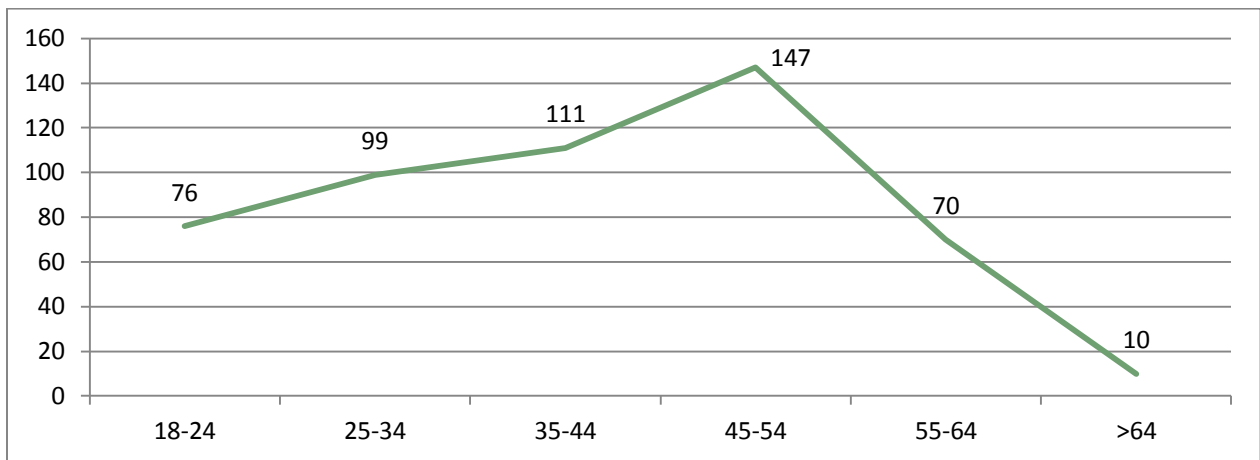


Figure 28 Repeated Homeless- Age distribution of household with only adults

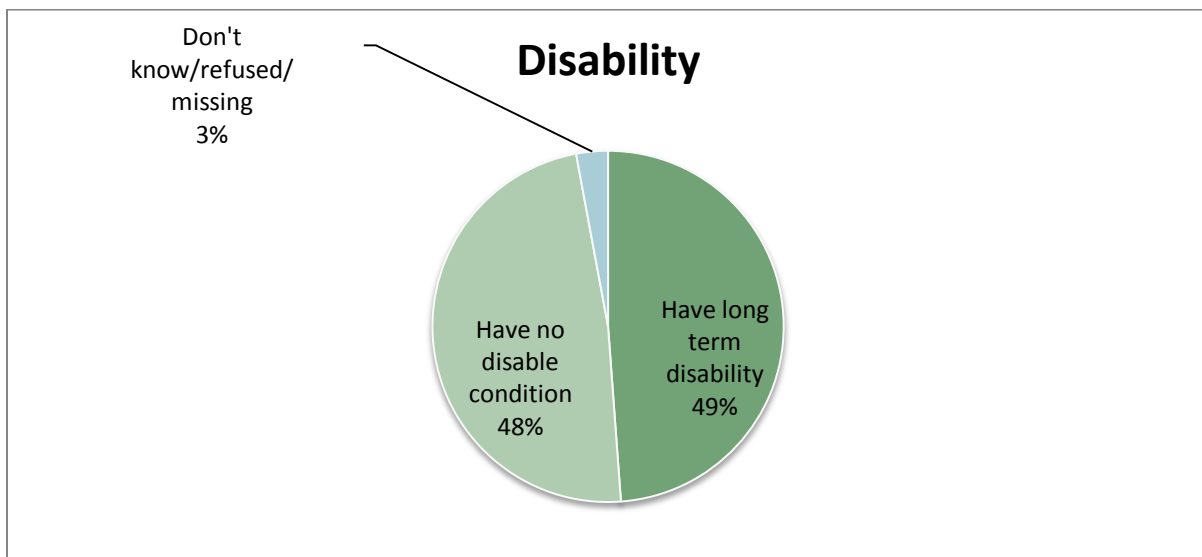


Figure 29 Repeated Homeless- Disabilities of adult households of repeated homeless

49% of all repeatedly homeless adult individuals reported having at least one disability. We might expect to see a higher rate of disability in individuals with repeated episodes of homelessness. Staying only for short periods of time at shelters may contribute to a low disability rate as case workers might not identify a client’s disabling condition with little time spent with clients

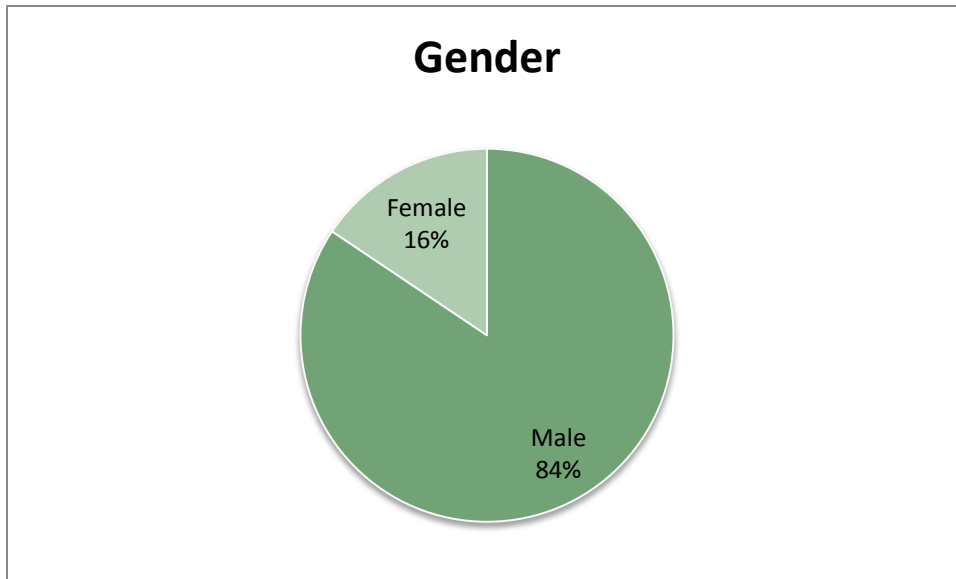


Figure 30 Repeated Homeless- Gender distribution of household with only adults

The age distribution of the repeated homeless population is similar to last year's group. It matches neither the general homeless population nor the chronically homeless population.

There is another way to look at recidivism—by destination. 38% of the previous two years' clients reported that they left their last bout of homelessness for a permanent housing destination. 53% are reported to leave homelessness for a temporary or unknown destination. Out of those who reported to have been housed, 7% (137) of them entered the homeless system this year. Of those who reported that they were not permanently housed, 15% (412) entered the homelessness system this year. Though a majority of clients are not coming back into the system, there are still significant numbers of people that can be taken care of when they were homeless for the first time. The coordinated entry system will hopefully resolve this problem. Providing permanent housing to those unstable families and individuals should result in a much lower rate of recidivism.

4.2.2. Newly Homeless

"Newly Homeless" means, for the purposes of this section, that a person that hasn't entered the homeless system in the past two years (10/1/2010-9/30/2012), and had only one homeless episode during this report period (10/1/2012-9/30/2013).

A total of 2,932 unduplicated homeless clients entered ES, TH or SH this year. There are 2,270 (77%) person fits this newly homeless definition.

	Household with Adult and children	Household with only adults	Household with only children
Persons	883	1239	148
Households	309	1234	148

Table 27- Newly Homeless Household Composition

Persons in Households with children and adults

Persons in households which include both adults and children make up 39% of total newly homeless individuals. The majority (78%) of these households are female single parents. Female-headed single-parent households became newly homeless at a relatively high frequency compared to the corresponding population who live in poverty.

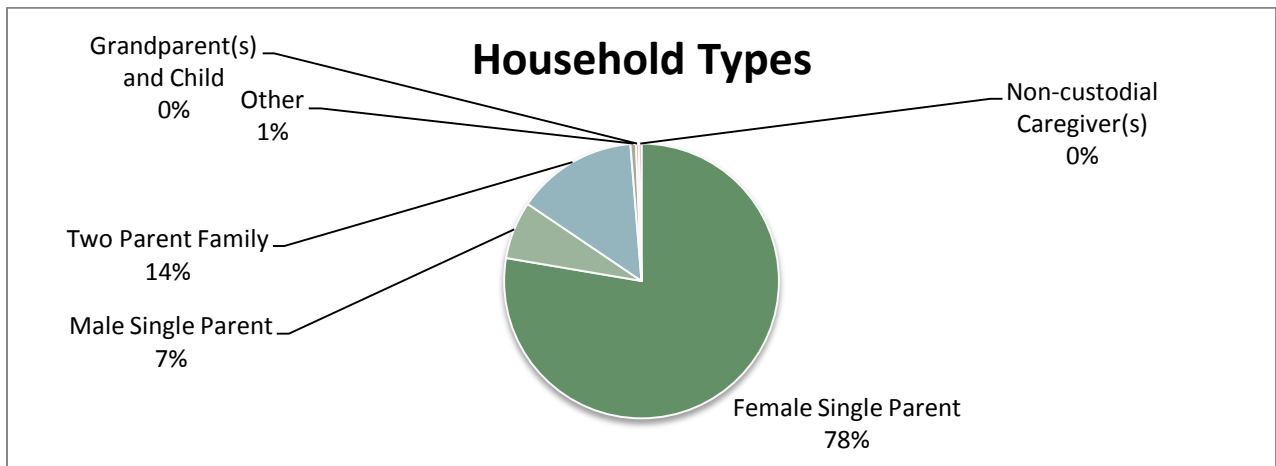


Figure 31 New Homeless- household with children by household types

49% of the children in these families are under 5 years old, a 5% increase from last year. For children who are under 5 years old, one third is new born babies. Children aged between 5-12 drops from 42% of the children’s population to 35%. 38% of the adults in the household are between 18-24 years of age, a 6% increase from last year. Single parents with a pre-school aged child have a much higher chance of becoming homeless.

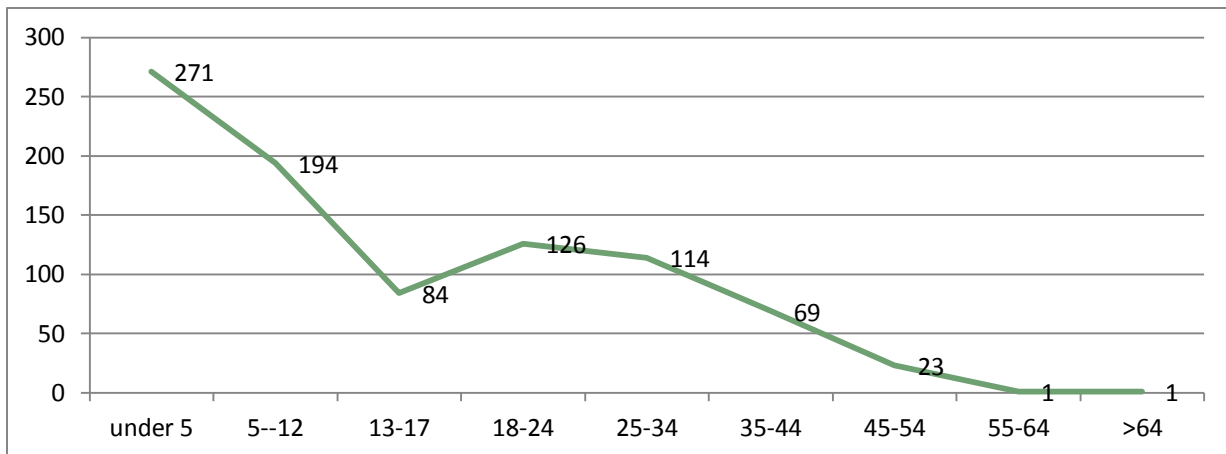


Figure 32 New homeless- Household with children by age distribution

Persons in Households with only adults

70% of the newly homeless persons in households with only adults are male while 30% of the population is female.

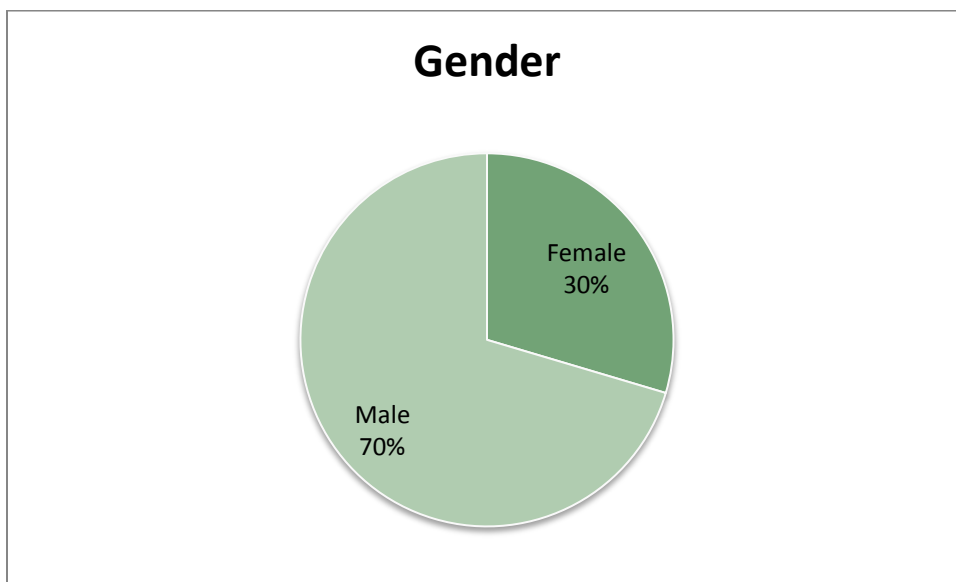


Figure 33 New Homeless- Household with only adults by genders

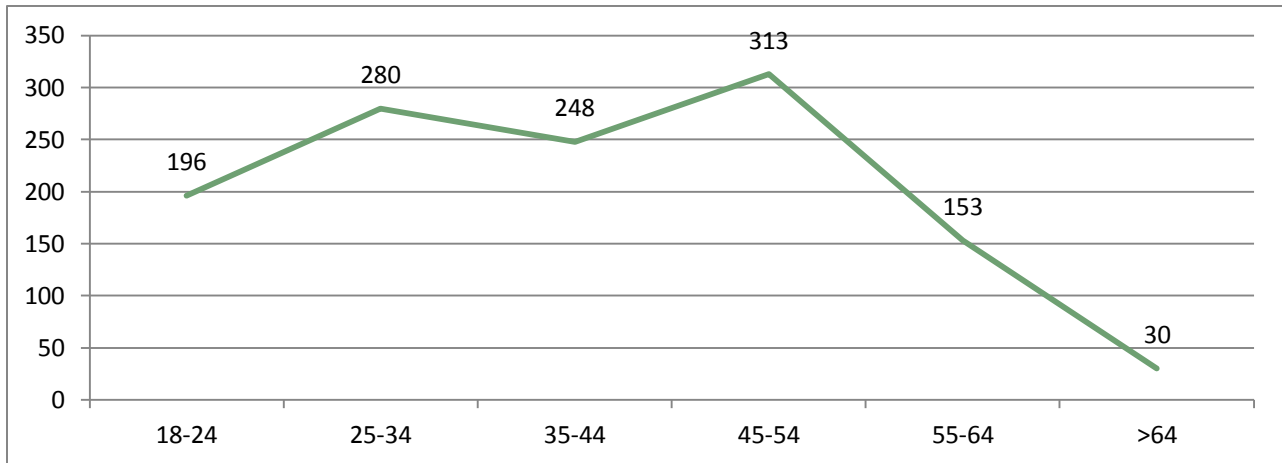


Figure 34 New Homeless-Household with only adults by age distribution

Persons younger than 54 are fairly evenly distributed and there is significant drop from 55 onwards.

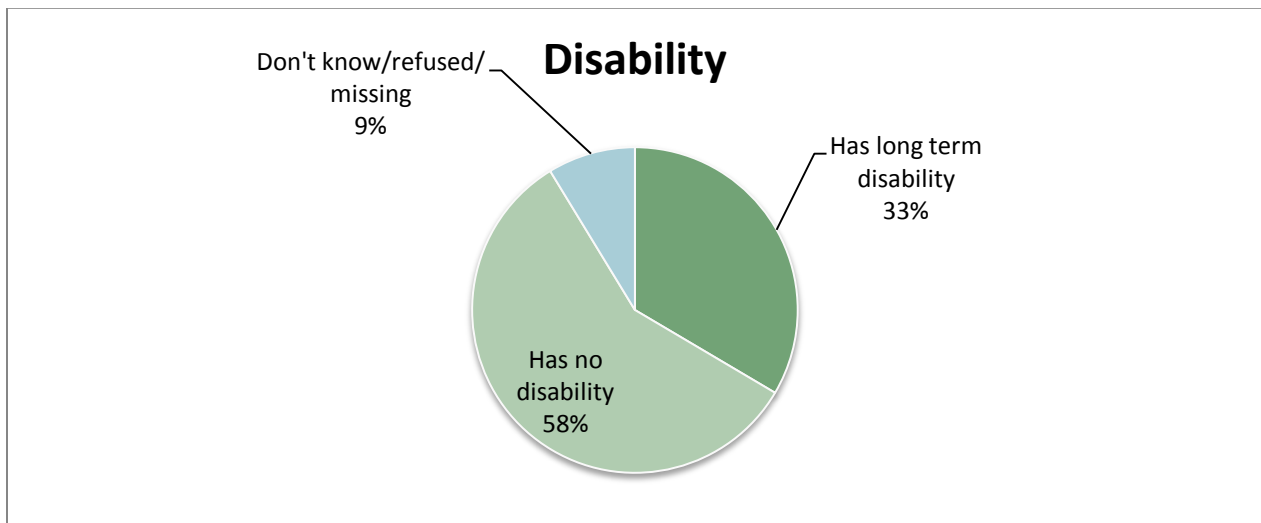


Figure 35 New Homeless-Household with only adults by disability

Compared to the repeatedly homeless population, newly homeless persons who reported having a long-term disability is a lot lower (16% less). However, a third of the population still has one or more long-term disabilities.

The concept of “newly homeless” is different from “first-time” homeless. We looked at the first-time homeless, which we define as a person who has never entered the system prior to this year. This includes data not only from emergency shelter, transitional housing, and safe haven but also includes outreach programs, and permanent housing. Data is pulled from 2004, when HMIS started, to the present. . Although there are limitations of our data, we found that 86% of the newly homeless had no history of homelessness in HMIS.

4.3. 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, 199 Veteran Households 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. HMIS data on veterans shows that, of the 257 veterans entered into the database, 41 were female veterans and 216 were male veterans. The total number of veteran identified, 257, in HMIS is higher than last year, an increase of 21%. This is contrary to the nationwide theme where there has been a decrease in veteran homelessness.

Gender

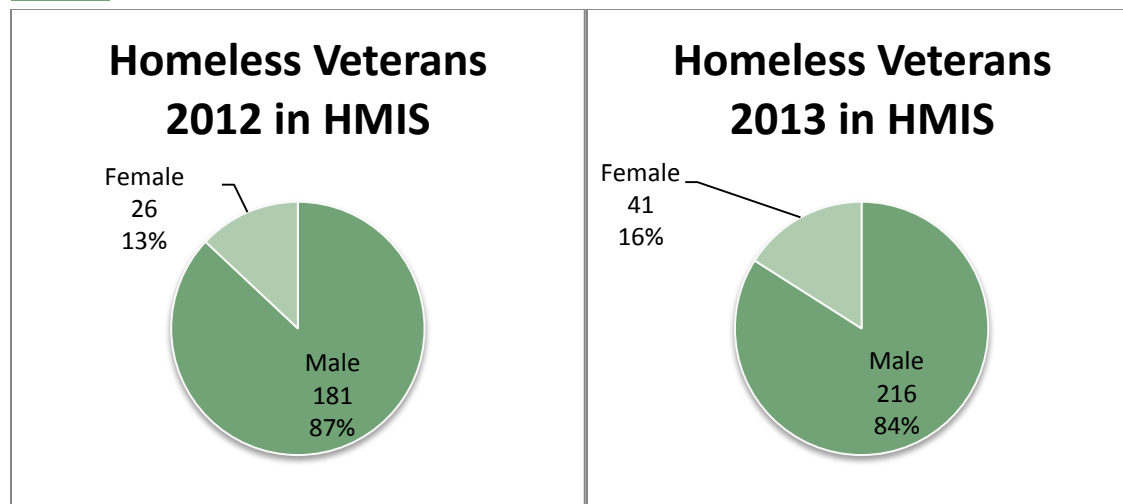


Figure 36 Homeless Veterans by Gender in HMIS

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 clients from the street, and less doubled up or from institutional settings.

Prior Living Situations	Count	Percentage
Emergency Shelter	58	22%
Rental by clients	60	24%
Doubled up	57	22%
Place not meant for habitation	32	12%
Institutional settings	25	10%
Others	25	10%

Table 28 Homeless-Veterans- Prior Living Situations

Household type

Among all veterans, there are 232 single adult households and 31 with children and adult households.

4.4. 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 498 households (493 Adults) were DV victims. 165 children were in households affected by domestic violence.

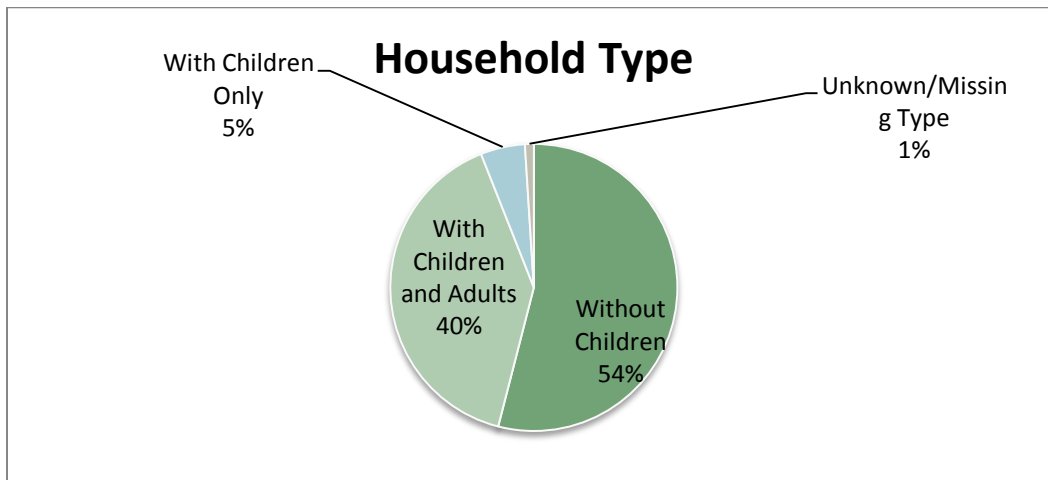


Figure 37 Homeless Victims of Domestic Violence by household type

Gender

Most (69%) 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	153	149	4	0
Female	343	209	132	2

Table 29 Homeless Adults Victims of Domestic Violence by gender

4.5. Homeless Families (Households with Adult and Children)

The average household size is 3. There are 509 adults and 823 children (8 persons did not specify their age). 352 of the children are under the age of 5. There is an increase of total homeless households from 329 to 422.

Household Size	Households	# of Persons
2	165	330
3	123	369
4	68	272
5	38	190
6	16	90
7	10	70
8	0	0
9	1	9
10	1	10
Total	422	1340

Table 30 Homeless Families- Household Size

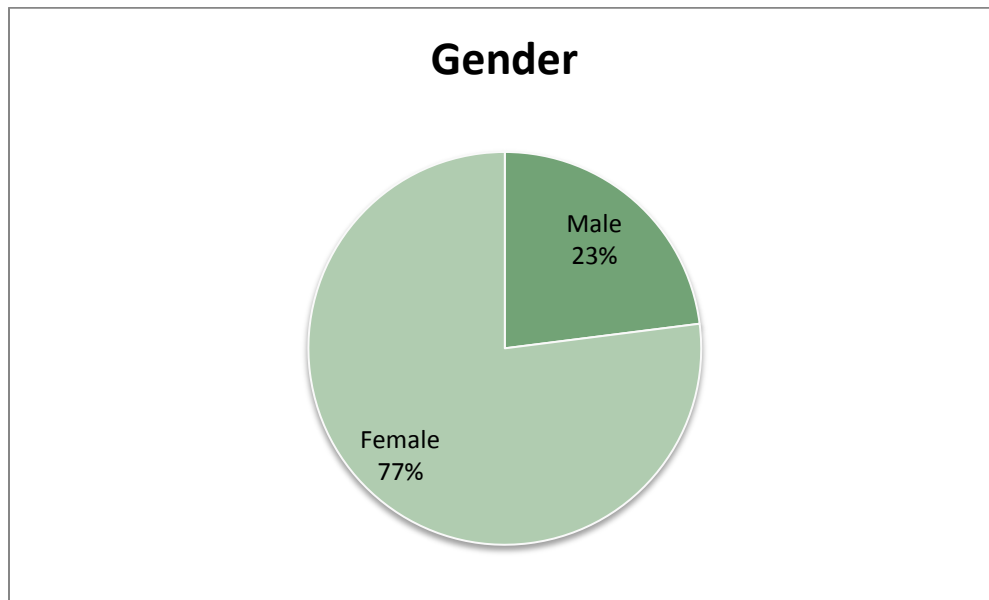


Figure 38 Homeless Families- Adult Gender

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

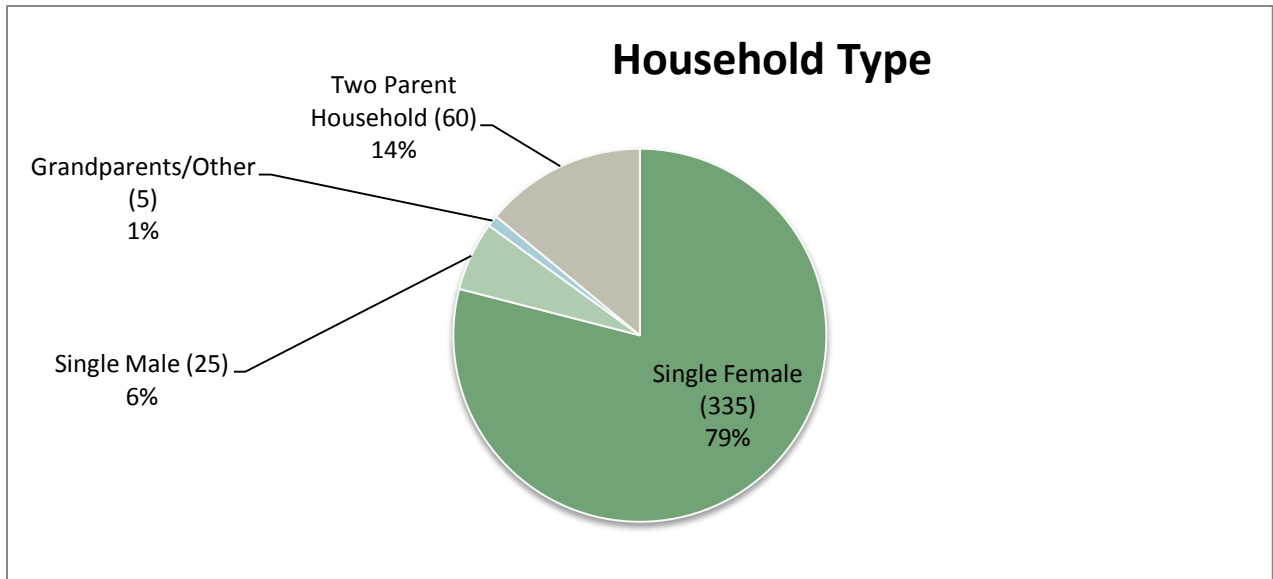


Figure 39 Homeless Families- Family type

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

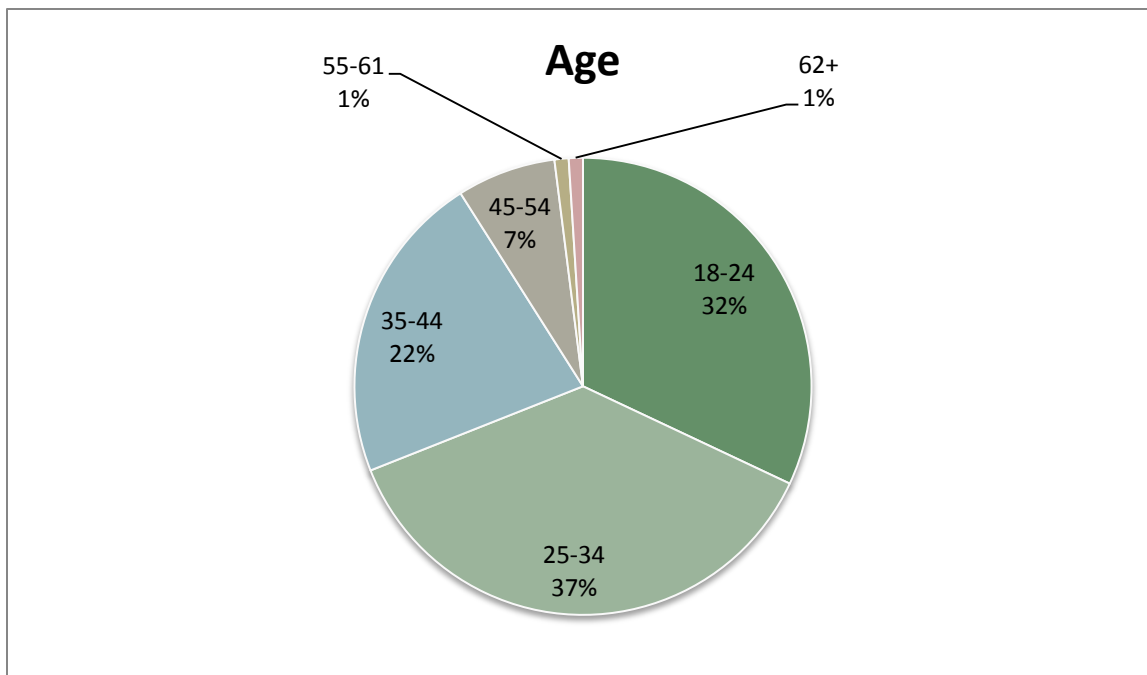


Figure 40 Homeless Families-Adult Age

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

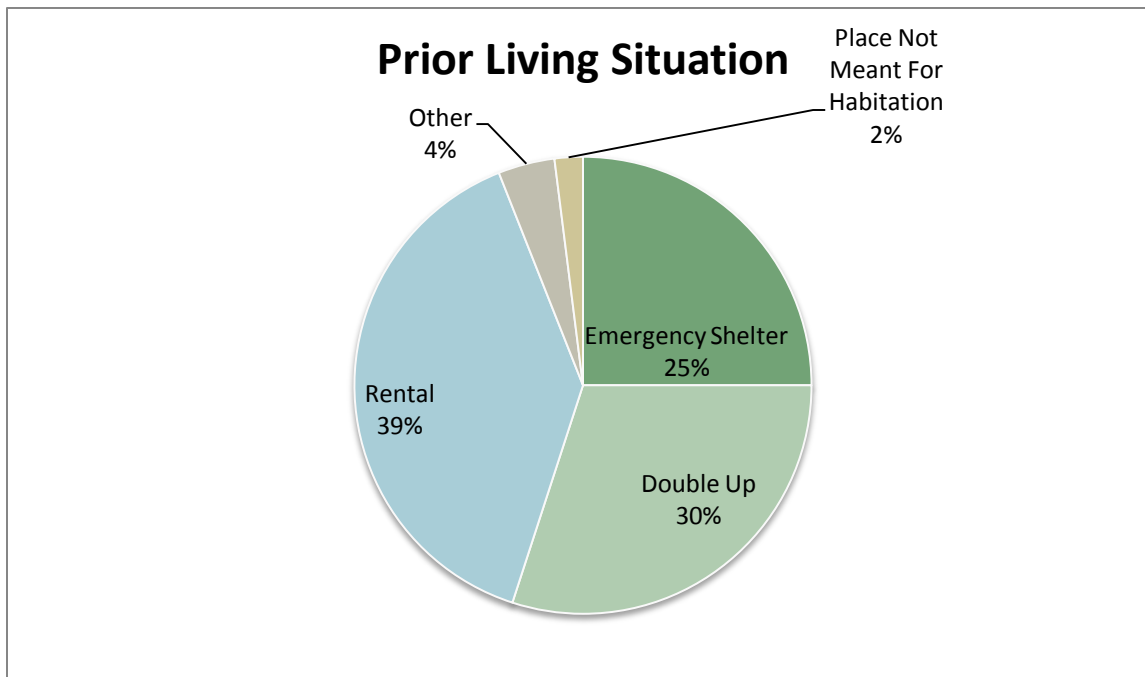


Figure 41 Homeless Families- Prior living Situation

Adults in families are very different from adult individuals. They are mostly female (77%). Ages compared to single adults are a lot younger. 69% of this population falls between ages 18-34, versus only 44% of the single adults. Very few families experienced “living in places not meant for habitation” or institutions.

4.6 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 31 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, 909, slightly lower than last year. This year charter schools are included in the SIRS report. Total 130 homeless or at risk of homeless students are identified from the charter schools within Erie County.

School District	10-11	11-12	12-13 ⁷
AKRON CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT	4	2	<4
ALDEN CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT	0	0	0
AMHERST CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT	10	13	<4
BUFFALO CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT	810	1033	909
CHEEKTOWAGA CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT	32	37	41
CHEEKTOWAGA-MARYVALE UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT	16	20	17
CHEEKTOWAGA-SLOAN UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT	2	10	12
CLARENCE CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT	15	12	20
CLEVELAND HILL UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT	18	23	26
DEPEW UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT	23	12	13
EAST AURORA UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT	0	0	<4
EDEN CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT	20	10	15
EVANS-BRANT CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT (LAKE SHORE)	25	22	48
FRONTIER CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT	23	9	12
GRAND ISLAND CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT	3	2	11
HAMBURG CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT	3	1	<4
HOLLAND CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT	5	11	<4
HOPEVALE UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT AT HAMBURG	0	0	10
IROQUOIS CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT	6	7	116
KENMORE-TONAWANDA UNION FREE SCHOOL DISTRICT	122	131	<4
LACKAWANNA CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT	2	7	5
LANCASTER CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT	3	16	0
NORTH COLLINS CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT	0	0	39
ORCHARD PARK CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT	28	21	8
SPRINGVILLE-GRIFFITH INSTITUTE CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT	12	6	6
SWEET HOME CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT	8	7	30
TONAWANDA CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT	10	19	61
WEST SENECA CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT	53	66	18
WILLIAMSVILLE CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT	11	7	<4

Table 31 Homeless or At Risk Homeless Children by School Districts (Data Source: <http://www.nysteachs.org/info-topic/statistics.html>)

⁷ SIRS doesn't present the specific data if a district has less than 4 homeless students. So we are labeling it as "<4" in our report.

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). HAWNY 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, the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) program, Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF), and Solutions to End Homelessness Program (STEHP) 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 the client's 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's 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 inputted 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 counted twice in both categories and only information from the transitional housing program will be presented in the Overall Homeless section.

What are the challenges of using HMIS data?

As with any database, if good data is entered in, then good data will result for reporting purposes. Data entered into BAS-Net is physically entered by service providers and the information is usually 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

Description	Source	TH FAM	TH Adult + unaccompanied youth	ES FAM	ES Adult	ES Children Only	subtotal of ES+TH	Outreach	Safe Haven	SSO	Unsheltered	Unduplicated Count
Unduplicated number of persons participating in HMIS	HMIS	326	383	744	1490	189	2969	223	22	1157	98	3840
Non-HMIS participating providers who provided annual number served	Agency reported	26	106	1098	941	0		0	0	0		
Number of beds in HMIS				125	161	13						
Average number of people served per bed per year					9							
Number of beds for agencies that cannot provide annual number served					70							
Estimated numbers served for agency cannot provide annual numbers of clients served					648							
Numbers for non-participating agencies served	Reported +estimated	26	106	1098	1589	0						
Overlap in service between TH & ES in HMIS		65	160									
Rate of overlap		19.94%	41.78%									
Estimated overlap between TH & ES among non-HMIS agencies		5	44									
Estimated Clients Served *		334	440	1750	2771	189	5210	177	22	843	98	5721

*We estimated 10% duplication between HMIS participating and non-participating agencies for single adults and 5% for families.

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/Code Blue
- 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
- Buffalo City Mission Journey Transitional Housing 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
- 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

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
- YWCA of Tonawanda

Permanent Supportive Housing

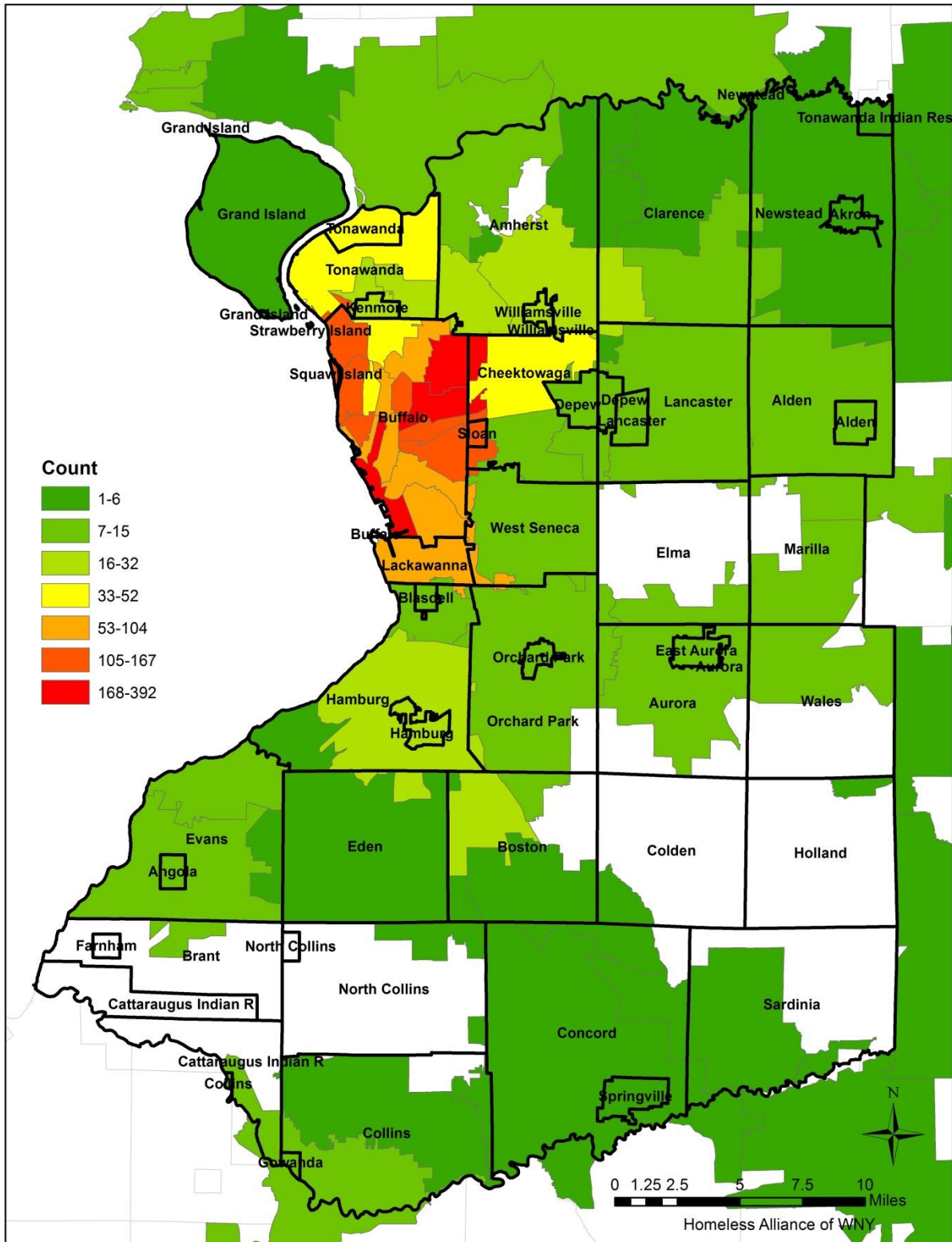
Participate in HMIS

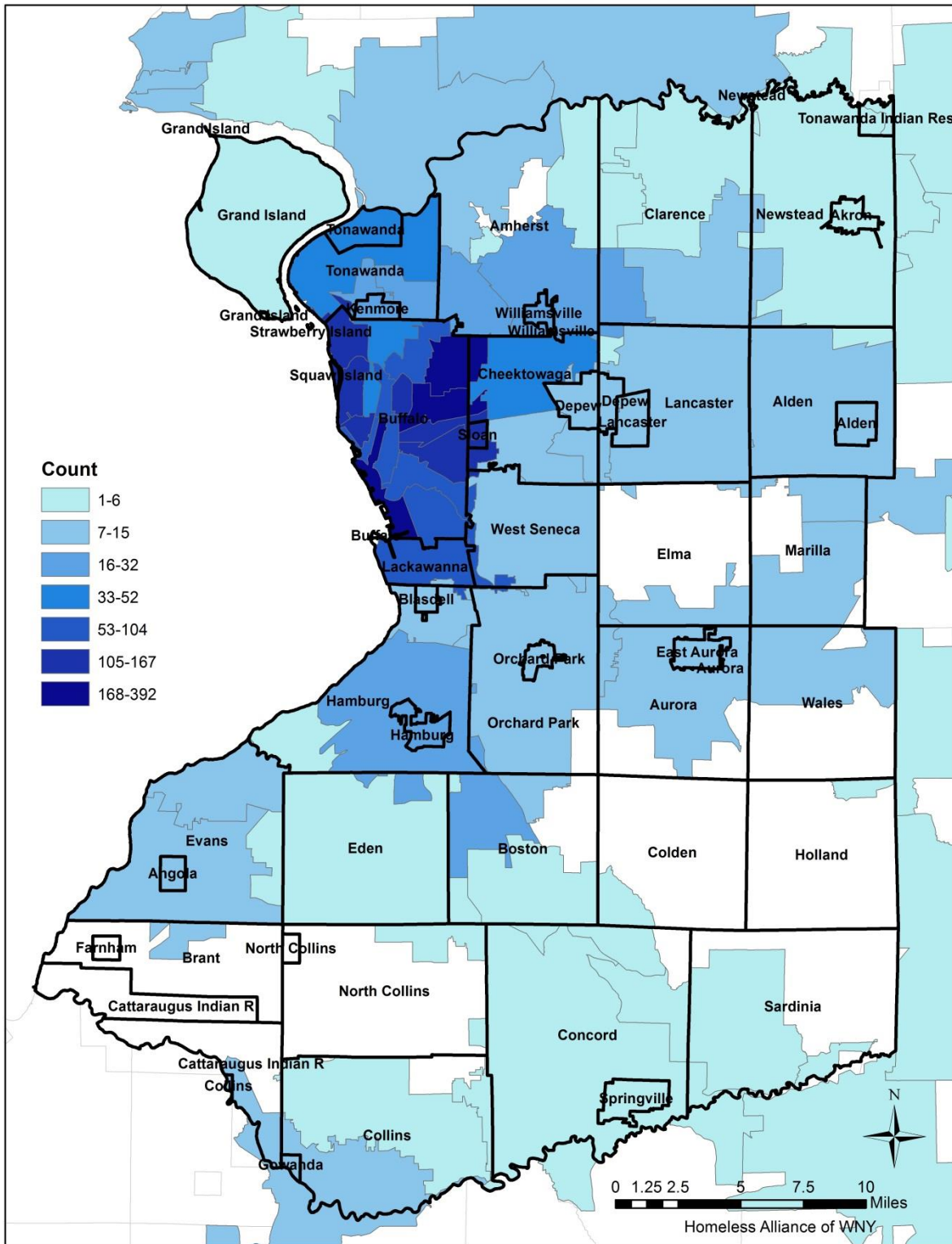
- Buffalo Federation of Neighborhood Centers Shelter Plus Care II & III
- Buffalo Federation of Neighborhood Centers Shelter Plus Care IV
- Cazenovia Chronic Homeless Program
- Cazenovia Supportive Housing Program VI
- Cazenovia Supportive Living II
- Cazenovia Supportive Housing Program VIII
- Cornerstone Permanent Supportive Housing
- Cornerstone PSH
- 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

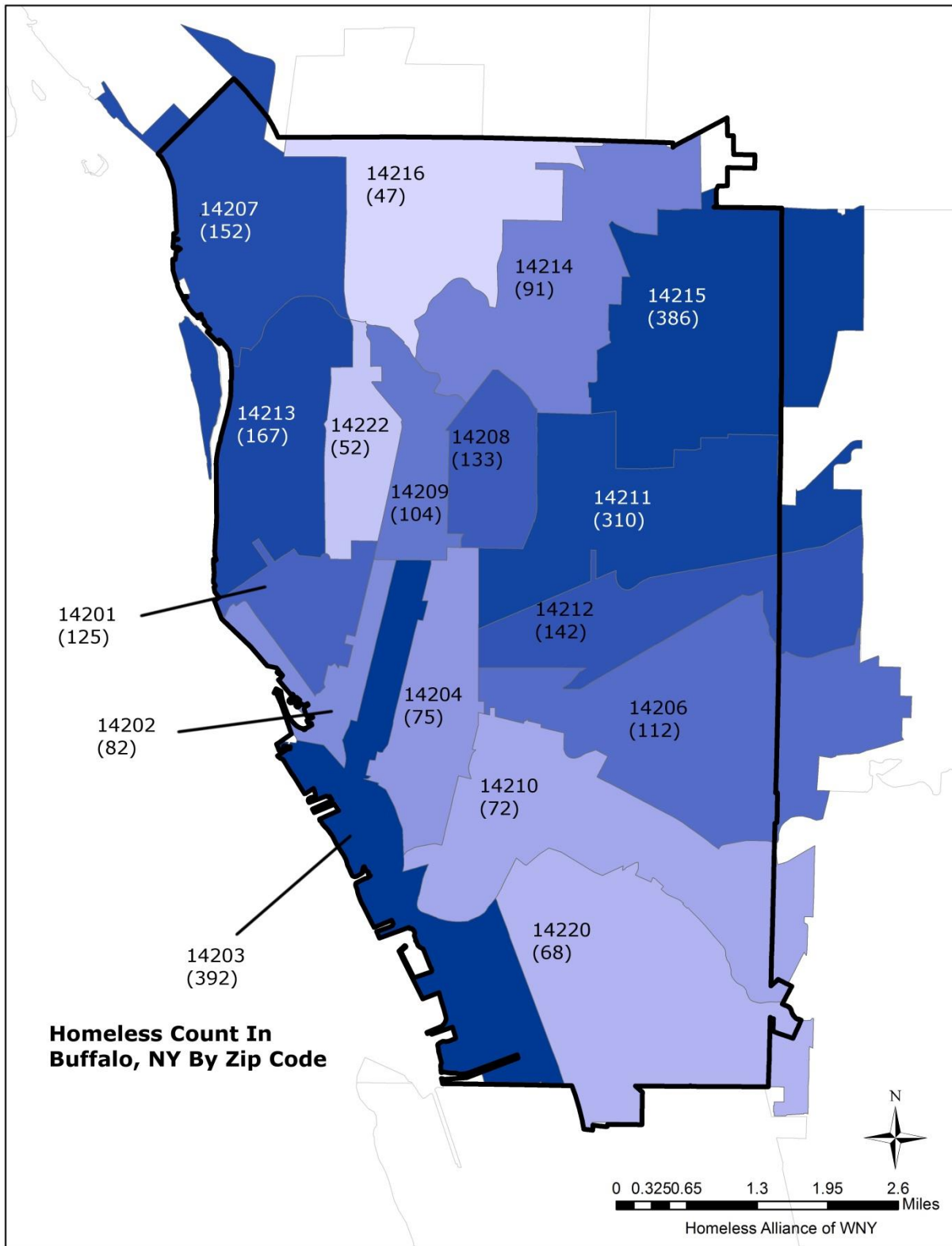
- VA - Homeless Veterans - VASH

Appendix Four: Maps





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



Map 2 Homeless Clients Served in Buffalo