

# Roanoke Valley Alleghany Regional Advisory Council On Homelessness

## Winter Shelter Survey Report January 2007

Prepared by:



**2007 Winter Homeless Survey  
Emergency Shelters, Transitional Housing and Street Count**

Conducted by:  
*Roanoke Valley Alleghany Regional Advisory Council on Homelessness*

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**Alleghany Regional Advisory Council on Homelessness**  
**2007 Winter Shelter Survey**

## **Introduction**

The data contained in this 2007 Winter Shelter Survey provide pictures of Roanoke's homeless population at a particular point in time. The pictures, taken as a whole, are an album of the real men, women and children who because of societal pressures such as unemployment, lack of housing, substance use, family instability, acute and chronic health and mental problems find themselves homeless and in need of shelter. Homelessness statistics included on the following pages are not only numbers; they are people dealing with survival issues such as access to food, shelter, physical safety and economic stability.

This report summarizes information about the homeless collected in January 2007. The data collectively viewed are indicators of the condition of homelessness and are used by the Advisory Council to inform its recommendations to the Blue Ridge Continuum of Care, as required by the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). Point in time data clarify an understanding of the extent of homelessness and the people who suffer its consequences on a daily basis.

The Advisory Council uses data from the Point in Time Survey to assist in services gap analysis and to identify trends in the homeless population of the Roanoke Valley. Recommendations based on this information are presented to government bodies, organizations, community agencies and others to support funding requests. Specific objectives of the 2007 Winter Shelter Survey are:

- to obtain an estimate of the number of individuals and families relying on emergency shelters and transitional housing within the designated time period;
- to obtain information on prior residences of the homeless population;
- to identify the current issues facing citizens without permanent housing; and
- to identify the number of chronically homeless persons at a point in time.

Survey data are not intended to answer all the questions regarding homelessness in the region. Rather these data offer a picture of a complex, multidimensional social problem.

The Advisory Council makes every effort to ensure the accuracy of survey data collection. Realizing that the actual number of individuals and families without permanent housing is difficult, if not impossible, to obtain and that numbers vary depending on definitions of homelessness, the Advisory Council continues to concentrate on individuals and families who rely on or are in need of emergency and transitional housing. The Advisory Council acknowledges, but is unable to realistically count or estimate, the sub-population of the hidden homeless who are sharing living space with friends and family, as well as those who remain anonymous and do not wish to be located or assisted.

Finally, the Advisory Council understands that the homeless population is multifaceted and that no single snapshot of a homeless person, or group of homeless people, is representative of the entire homeless population.

### **Methodology**

The procedures utilized to collect information were as consistent as possible with those used in prior surveys. Daily adult occupancy totals were collected at participating shelters during the week of January 21-25, 2007. Average nightly totals for the week were 566 individuals experiencing homelessness. Of these 566 individuals three hundred and thirty-three adults (n=333) participated in the survey. Children under the age of 18 were not surveyed. It should be noted that data charts will not always total 333 due to non-response or multiple response by clients. Homeless adult clients were surveyed by agency staff, the Homeless Assistance Team and other volunteers. Shelters were contacted for permission to survey clients with 100% of shelters electing to participate in the survey. These shelters are:

*Overnight shelters:* Rescue Mission, Salvation Army Red Shield Lodge, TRUST House, Total Action Against Poverty Transitional Living Center (TAP-TLC), Roanoke Valley Interfaith Hospitality Network (IHN), Firebase Hope, Salvation Army Turning Point and YWCA.

*Day shelters:* Roanoke Area Ministries (RAM) and Samaritan Inn

*Other facilities:* Shenandoah Recovery Center

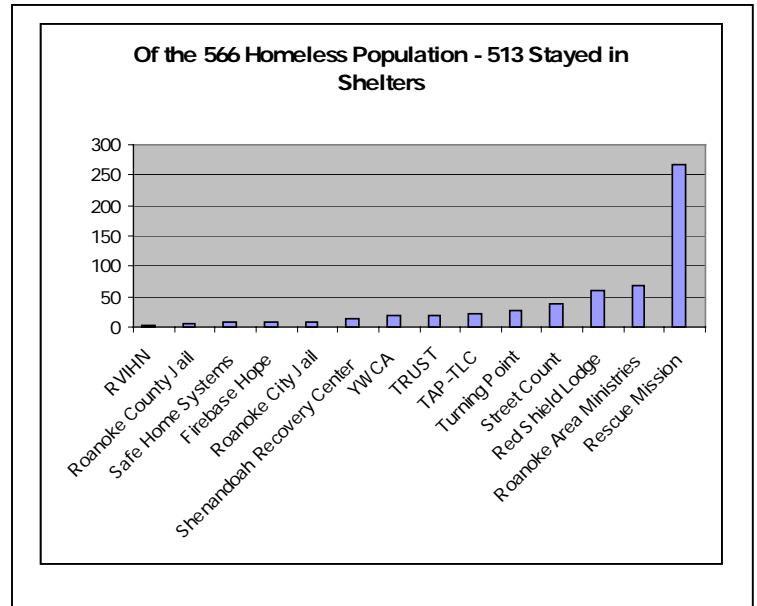
*Street count:* Unsheltered

**Alleghany Regional Advisory Council on Homelessness  
2007 Winter Shelter Survey  
Key Findings**

- 333 Survey responses were collected. Only adults older than 18 were surveyed.
- Nightly Occupancy Averages increased by 363% over a 20 year period
- 75% of Homeless surveyed have been in Roanoke Valley for more than six months
- 64% of Homeless surveyed were male
- 55% of Homeless surveyed were white – 35.4% Black/African American
- 20% of Homeless surveyed were veterans
- Nearly half (49.2%) reported sleeping in a shelter last night
- 69% reported being homeless for less than one year
- 44.1% reported never having been homeless before
- 26.4% reported inability to pay rent/mortgage as reason for current homelessness
- 33.6% reported having children with them on night of survey
- 29% are currently receiving mental health services
- 41.1% reported having received mental health services in the past
- 46% reported having received alcohol abuse treatment at some point
- 33.9% had high school/GED education or more
- 23% were employed full time
- 26% received food stamps
- 44% were actively looking for work
- Inability to find work; affordable housing; medical problems and substance abuse were the 4 greatest challenges experienced by homeless

**Night and Day Homeless\* – January 25, 2007**

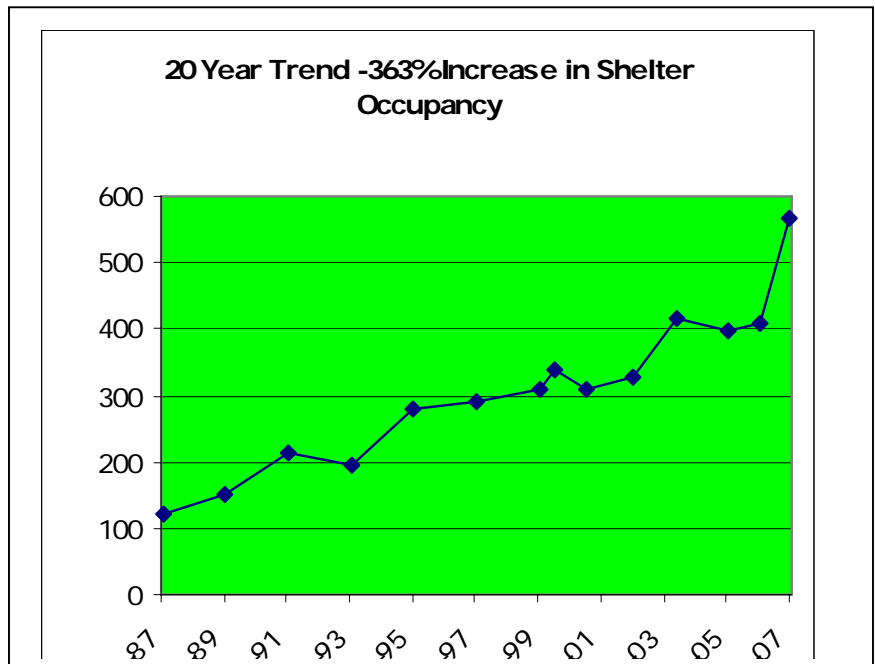
Shelter/Location	Number	Percentage
RVIHN	2	0.35%
Roanoke County Jail	6	1.06%
Safe Home Systems	7	1.24%
Firebase Hope	8	1.41%
Roanoke City Jail	9	1.59%
Shenandoah Recovery Center	13	2.30%
YWCA	18	3.18%
TRUST	18	3.18%
TAP-TLC	23	4.06%
Turning Point	28	4.95%
Street Count	38	6.71%
Red Shield Lodge	61	10.78%
Roanoke Area Ministries	68	12.01%
Rescue Mission	267	47.17%
<b>Total</b>	<b>566</b>	<b>100.00%</b>



\*Includes homeless at Roanoke Area Ministries [RAM], Samaritan Inn and those who are on the street.

**Nightly Averages – 1987 thru 2007**

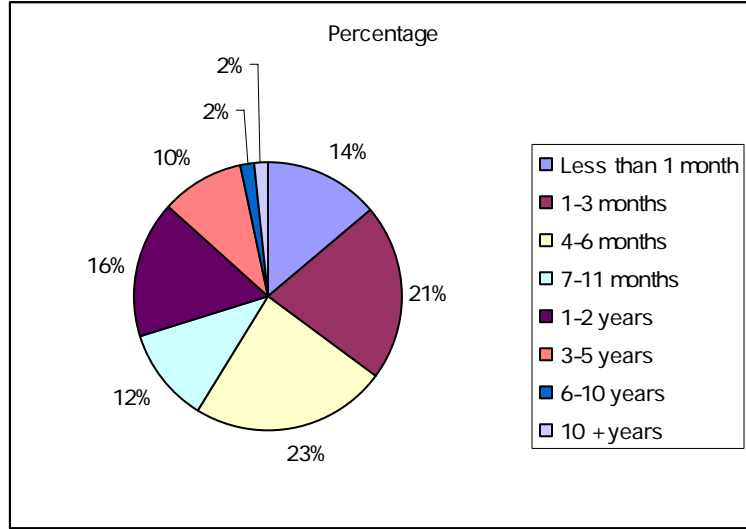
January 1987	122
January 1989	151
January 1991	215
January 1993	194
January 1995	281
January 1997	291
January 1999	309
July 1999	340
July 2000	310
January 2002	327
June 2003	416
January 2005	397
January 2006	408
January 2007	566



**Results – 333 participated in the survey-**

[Missing data is not reported and questions may have multiple answers thus percents may not total 100.]

1. How long has it been since you had a place to live?<sup>1</sup>



	Number	Percentage
Less than 1 month	45	13.5%
1-3 months	70	21.0%
4-6 months	77	23.1%
7-11 months	38	11.4%
1-2 years	53	15.9%
3-5 years	33	9.9%
6-10 years	6	1.8%
10 + years	5	1.5%

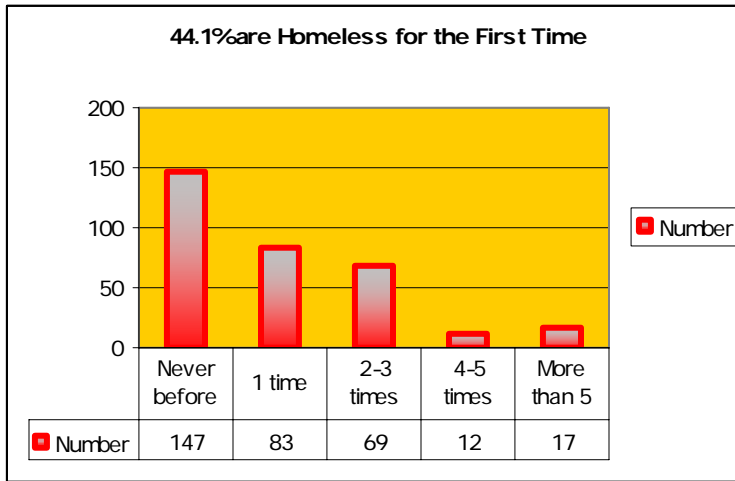
2. Please tell us the reason you are currently homeless.

	Number	Percentage
Unable to pay rent/mortgage	88	26.4%
Evicted /unrelated to payment	24	7.2%
Victim of domestic violence	28	8.4%
Family problems	39	11.7%
Institutional discharge	14	4.2%
Other*	130	39.0%

\*Other includes a wide variety of reason such as the following: Jail, Addiction, unable to pay, violence, employment problem, moved from another facility, I am in drug court and my probation officer sent me here, Spouse left with resources, incarceration/government, budgeting, out of work, lost job, by choice, divorce, on disability, job, relocating, drug dependence, diabetic, just moved to town, not able to get job but can get disability, was incarcerated on 6/2006 lost my job my apartment and means of income, disabled, started drinking again, jobless, irresponsible, bad budgeting, , unable to work(RSL), judgment, short hours at work, move to Roanoke with girlfriend, bills, drugs, leg was amputated, from Salem program, no income, prison, too many drugs, harassed by staff in a program, bad area, unsuitable living conditions, car accident leaving me disabled I then lost my job and home, Lost drivers license unable to work, Left a drug infested area too dangerous, Hard to find work with out ID, Trying to pursue disability, Was in RM Rehab, Condemned home, Put into mental institution by sister because sister stated " I was going to kill myself", Husband suffered heart attack and lost everything, Suffered heart attack and lost everything.

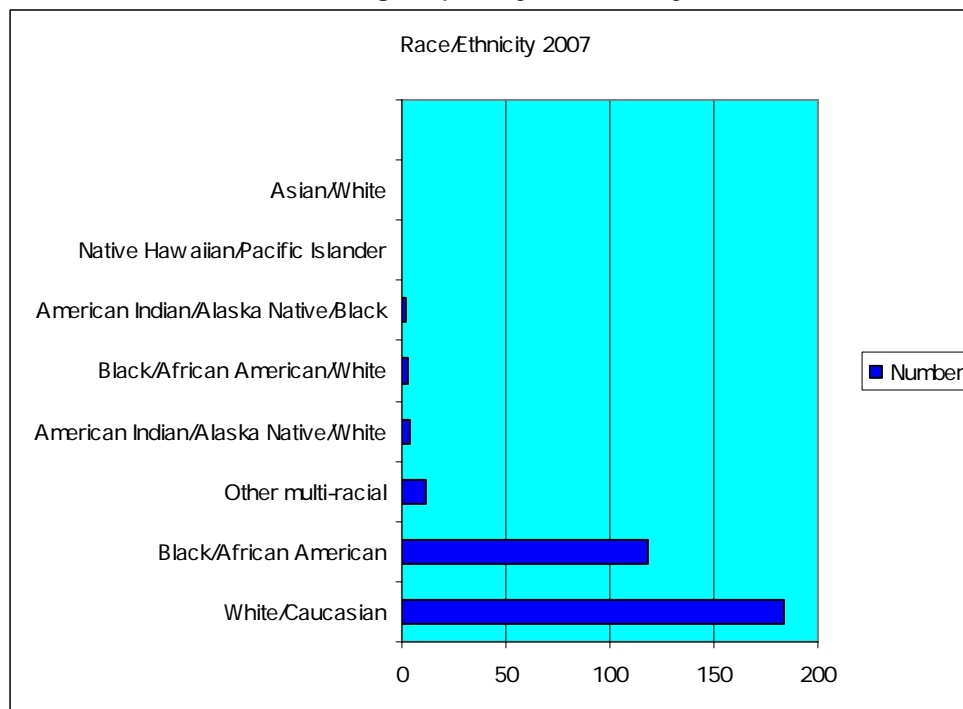
<sup>1</sup> HUD defines a chronically homeless person as an unaccompanied homeless individual with a disabling condition who has either been continuously homeless for a year or more OR has had at least four (4) episodes of homelessness in the past three (3) years. To be considered chronically homeless, persons must have been sleeping in a place not meant for human habitation (e.g., living on the streets) and/or in an emergency homeless shelter during that time."

3. How many times have you been homeless before?



	Number	Percentage
Never before	147	44.1%
1 time	83	24.9%
2-3 times	69	20.7%
4-5 times	12	3.6%
More than 5 times	17	5.1%

4. What racial/ethnic group do you identify with the most?





Race/Ethnicity	Number	Percentage
White/Caucasian	184	55.0%
Black/African American	118	35.4%
Other multi-racial	12	3.6%
American Indian/Alaska Native/White	4	1.2%
Black/African American/White	3	0.9%
American Indian/Alaska Native/Black	2	0.6%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	1	0.3%
Asian/White	1	0.3%

**5. What year were you born?**

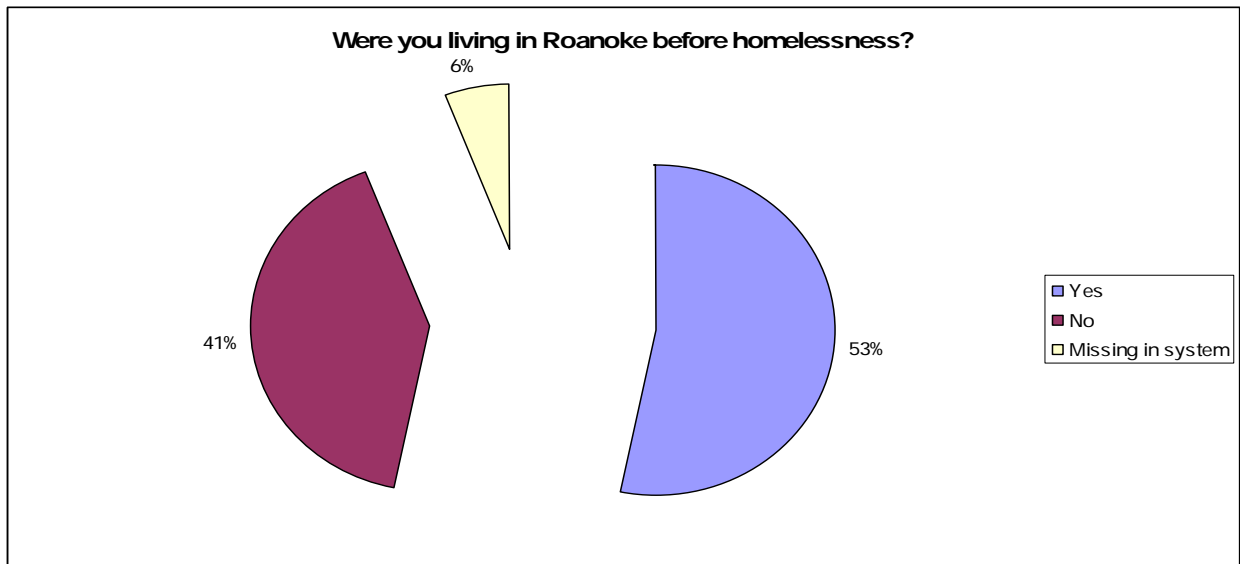
Youngest Respondent	18
Oldest Respondent	71

55% (168) of those surveyed were between the ages of 39 and 53

**6. How long have you been in the Roanoke Valley?**

Less than 6 months	80	24.0%
Longer than 6 months	242	72.7%

**7. Were you living in Roanoke before Homelessness?**



**Of the 41 %**

- 62 Individuals came to Roanoke after becoming homeless from other Instate Localities.

- 30 Individuals came to Roanoke after becoming homeless from Out-of State Localities.

8. If no, what was your zip code?

If No, what was your zip code?	Location	State	County	Frequency
4104				
8401				
11212	Brooklyn	NY	Kings	1
16801	State College	PA	Centre	1
17503	Bart	PA	Lancaster	1
19144	Philadelphia	PA	Philadelphia	1
20401	Washington	DC	District of Columbia	1
20517	Not currently assigned			1
22124	Oakton	VA	Fairfax	1
22932	Crozet	VA	Albemarle	1
23226	Richmond	VA	Henrico	1
23277	Not currently assigned			1
23415	New Church	VA	Accomack	1
23417	Onancock	VA	Accomack	1
23435	Suffolk	VA	Suffolk City	1
23508	Norfolk	VA	Norfolk City	1
23701	Portsmouth	VA	Portsmouth City	1
23707	Portsmouth	VA	Portsmouth City	1
23803	Petersburg	VA	Petersburg City	1
23851	Franklin	VA	Franklin City	1
23930	Crewe	VA	Nottoway	1
24013			City of Roanoke	
24014			City of Roanoke	
24016			City of Roanoke	
24017			City of Roanoke	
24019	Roanoke	VA	Roanoke County	2
24021	Not currently assigned			1
24053	Ararat	VA	Patrick	1
24065	Boones Mill	VA	Franklin	1
24073	Christiansburg	VA	Montgomery	1
24078	Collinsville	VA	Henry	2
24090	Fincastle	VA	Botetourt	1
24092	Glade Hill	VA	Franklin	1
24112	Martinsville	VA	Martinsville City	4
24113	Martinsville	VA	Martinsville City	1
24133	Patrick Springs	VA	Patrick	1
24136	Pembroke	VA	Giles	1
24148	Ridgeway	VA	Henry	1
24149	Riner	VA	Montgomery	1
24151	Rocky Mount	VA	Franklin	4
24153	Salem	VA	Salem	4
24162	Shawsville	VA	Montgomery	1
24315	Bland	VA	Bland	1

24450	Lexington	VA	Lexington City	1
24501	Lynchburg	VA	Lynchburg City	8
24504	Lynchburg	VA	Lynchburg City	2
24538	Concord	VA	Campbell	1
24540	Danville	VA	Danville City	4
24541	Danville	VA	Danville City	4
24551	Forest	VA	Bedford	1
24563	Hurt	VA	Pittsylvania	1
24591	Not currently assigned			1
24801	Welch	WV	McDowell	1
25301	Charleston	WV	Kanawha	1
27288	Eden	NC	Rockingham	1
27591	Wendell	NC	Wake	1
27951	Not currently assigned			1
28206	Charlotte	NC	Mecklenburg	2
28211	Charlotte	NC	Mecklenburg	1
28572	Pink Hill	NC	Duplin	1
28659	North Wilkesboro	NC	Wilkes	1
29566	Little River	SC	Horry	1
30135	Douglasville	GA	Douglas	1
30341	Atlanta	GA	Dekalb	1
33444	Delray Beach	FL	Palm Beach	1
33713	Saint Petersburg	FL	Pinellas	1
37641	Chuckey	TN	Greene	1
41102	Ashland	KY	Boyd	1
43209	Columbus	OH	Franklin	1
45044	Middletown	OH	Butler	1
53209	Milwaukee	WI	Milwaukee	2
53511	Beloit	WI	Rock	1
59103	Billings	MT	Yellowstone	1
78734	Austin	TX	Travis	1
92386	Sugarloaf	CA	San Bernardino	1

9. Where did you sleep last night?\*

	Number	Percentage
Emergency Shelter	164	49.2%
Transitional Housing	45	13.5%
Substance Abuse Treatment Center/Detox	69	20.7%
Hospital (non-psychiatric)	1	0.3%
Jail, Prison or Juvenile Detention	1	0.3%
Rented Housing Unit	4	1.2%
Hotel or Motel with no Voucher	1	0.3%
Outdoors/Abandoned Building/Bridge	7	2.1%
Family	3	0.9%
Permanent Supportive Housing	3	0.9%

\* In addition to the respondents above, 9 inmates of the Roanoke City Jail and 5 inmates of the Roanoke County jail reported being homeless at intake.

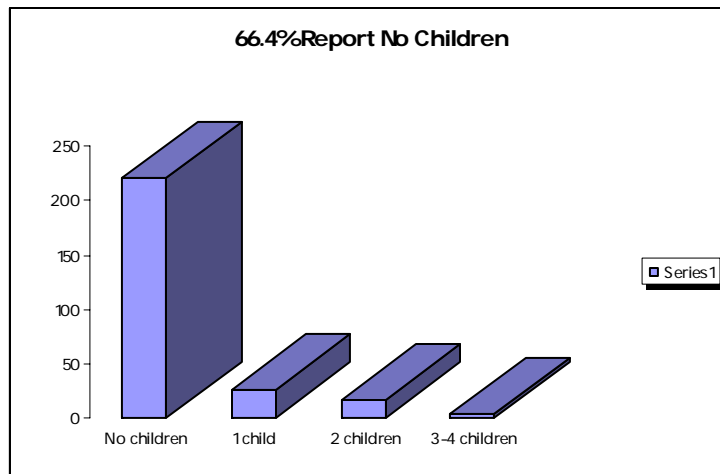
10. Have you been denied a bed at a local shelter in the past 12 months?

	Number	Percentage
Yes	22	6.6%
No	299	89.8%
No Response Recorded	12	3.6%
	333	100.0%

11. If yes, why?

	Number	Percentage
Shelter was full	8	2.4%
Drugs or alcohol	5	1.5%
Conflicts with staff	3	0.9%
Other	7	2.1%
Missing in system	310	6.9%

12. How many children under the age of 18 do you have with you tonight?



	Number	Percentage
No children	221	66.4%
1 child	25	7.5%
2 children	16	4.8%
3-4 children	4	1.2%

13. Are they enrolled in school?

	Number	Percentage
Yes	32	9.6%
No	48	14.4%
Not applicable	117	35.1%
No Response Recorded	136	40.8%
	333	99.9%

13a. How do you handle child care?

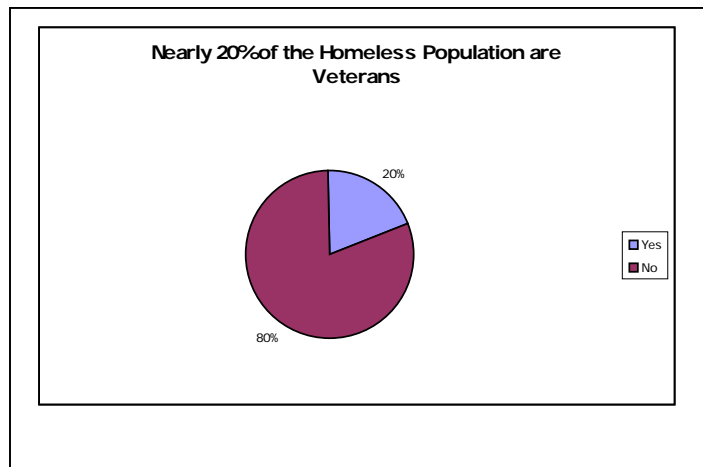
	Number	Percent
I do not need child care	132	39.6%
I take care of my children myself	9	2.7%
Friends and family	7	2.1%
Day care center	9	2.7%
Other child care	9	2.7%
No Response Recorded	167	50.2%
	333	100.0%

14. How many meals a day do you most often eat?

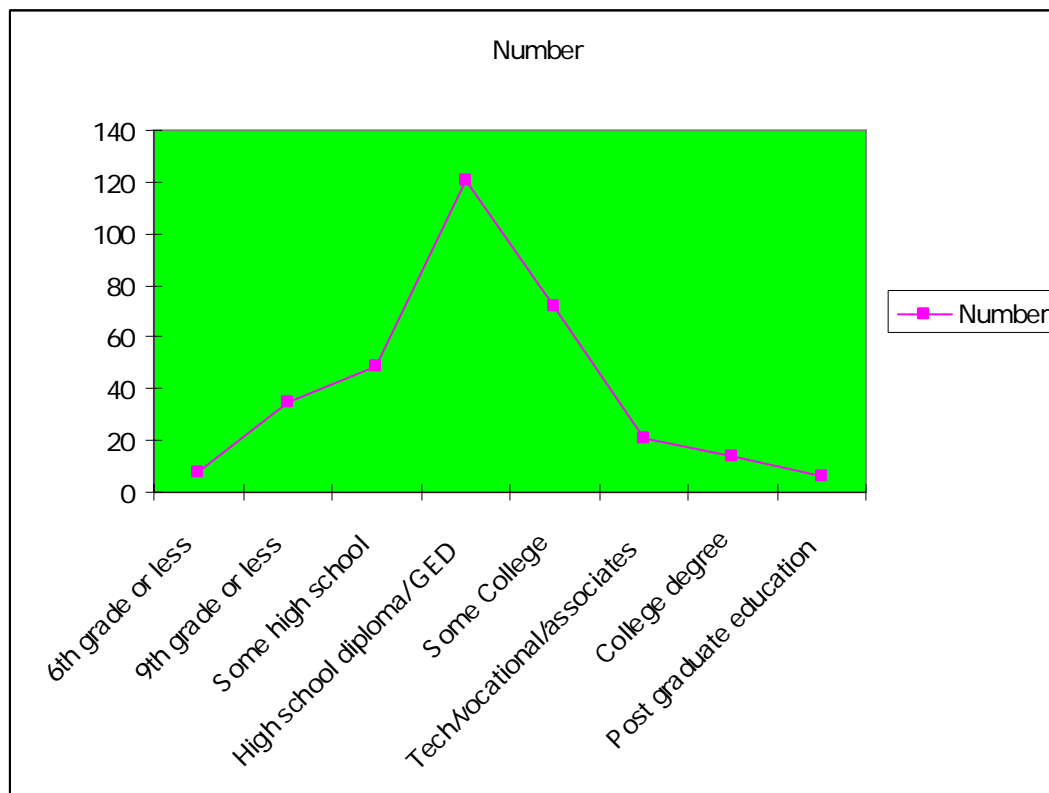
	Number	Percent
Never	1	0.3%
1 meal	50	15.0%
2-3 meals	246	73.9%
4-5 meals	19	5.7%
More than 5 meals	7	2.1%
No Response Recorded	10	3.0%
	333	100.0%

15. Are you a veteran of the United States Military?

	Number	Percentage
Yes	63	18.9%
No	260	78.1%

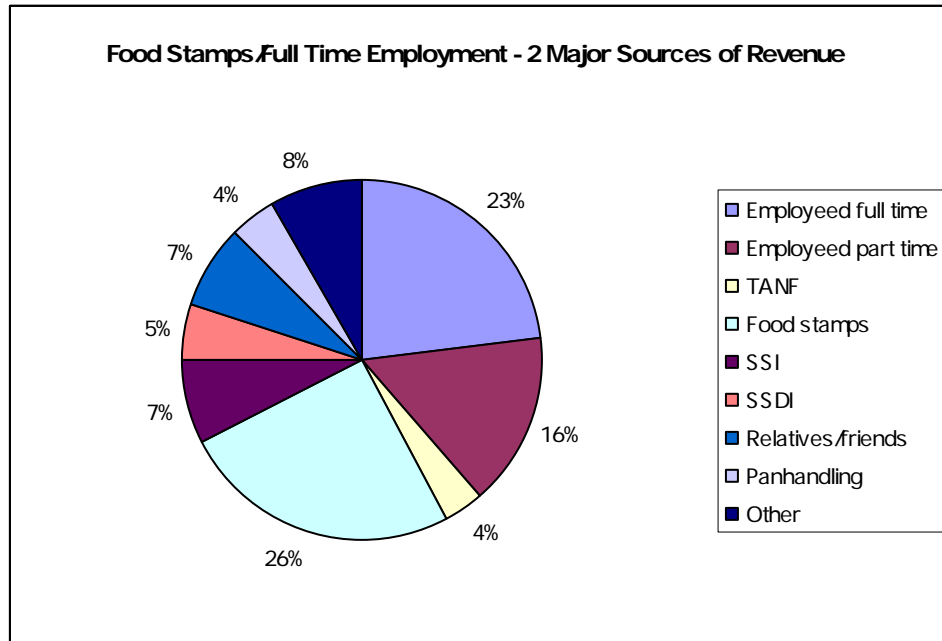


16. What is the highest level of education you completed?



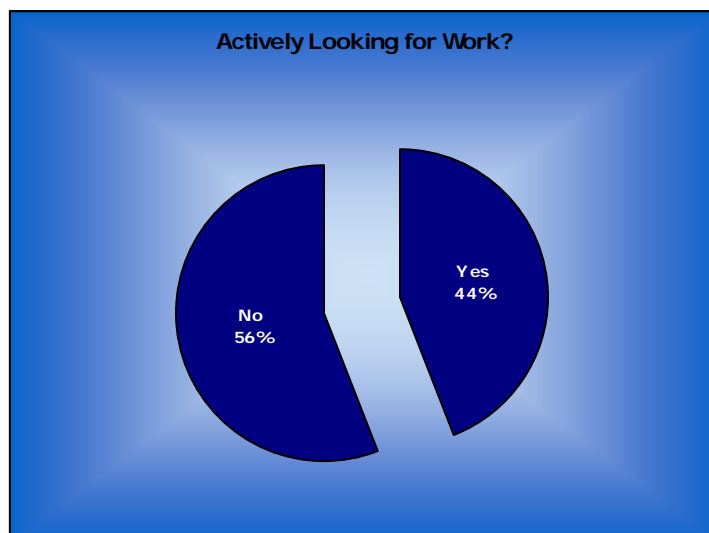
	Number	Percentage
6th grade or less	8	2.4%
9th grade or less	35	10.5%
Some high school	49	14.7%
High school diploma/ GED	121	36.3%
Some College	72	21.6%
Tech/vocational/associates	21	6.3%
College degree	14	4.2%
Post graduate education	6	1.8%

17. What sources of income have you used in the last 6 months?



	Number
Employed full time	90
Employed part time	61
TANF	15
Food stamps	99
SSI	29
SSDI	20
Relatives/friends	29
Panhandling	16
Other	33

18. Are you actively looking for work?



	Number	Percentage
Yes	139	44.0%
No	175	56.0%

19. If working, what is your hourly wage?

Wage	Number	Percent
\$6.00	4	1.2%
\$6.25	4	1.2%
\$6.50	5	1.5%
\$7.00	8	2.4%
\$7.50	4	1.2%
\$8.00	6	1.8%
\$8.50	2	0.6%
	33	9.9%
Total	50	
No Response	283	
	333	

19a. If you work second or third shift, are there barriers to keeping the job?

	Number	Percent
Yes	48	14.4%
No	71	21.3%
No Response	214	64.3%
	333	100.0%

19b. What are the barriers caused by second or third shift jobs?

	A place to sleep during day	Transportation	Other
Yes	17	39	10
No	142	121	146
No Response	174	173	177
Total	333	333	333

20. Do you use banking services?

	Number	Percent
Yes	84	25.2%
No	235	70.6%
No Response	14	4.2%
	333	100.0%



21. Do you have a payee or guardian?

	Number	Percent
Yes	13	3.9%
No	297	89.2%
No Response	23	6.9%
	333	100.0%

21a. Do you need a payee/guardian?

	Number	Percent
Yes	5	1.5%
No	302	90.7%
No Response	26	7.8%
	333	100.0%

22. How do you get around? Check all that apply

	Reported Yes	Percent
I own a car	24	7.2
I walk	230	69.1
Family or friends provide transportation	76	22.8
I ride Valley Metro	154	46.2
I have other transportation	26	7.8

23. If you get sick, where do you go for medical treatment?

	Reported Yes	Percent	Reported No	Percent	Missing in system
Emergency room	153	45.9%	161	48.3%	19
Rescue Mission Clinic	104	31.2%	210	63.1%	19
Kuumba Clinic	15	4.5%	292	87.7%	26
Private Doctor	28	8.4%	277	83.2%	28
VA Medical Center	39	11.7%	266	79.9%	28
Health Department	9	2.7%	294	88.3%	30
Bradley Free Clinic	25	7.5%	279	83.8%	29
Other Medical Care	25	7.5%	278	83.5%	30

24. How do you pay for medical care?

	Reported Yes	Percent	Reported No	Percent	Missing in system	Percent
Medicaid	61	18.3%	212	63.7%	60	18.0%
Private Insurance	13	3.9%	259	77.8%	61	18.3%
Medicare	25	7.5%	248	74.5%	60	18.0%
Out of pocket for medical care	116	34.8%	162	48.6%	55	16.5%
Other medical payment	4	1.2%	96	28.8%	233	70.0%

25. When was the last time you saw a doctor?

	Number	Percent
0-3 months	192	57.7%
4-6 months	54	16.2%
7-12 months	27	8.1%
More than 12 months	50	15.0%
No Response	10	3.0%
	333	100.0%

26. When was the last time you saw a dentist?

	Number	Percent
0-3 months	44	13.2%
4-6 months	27	8.1%
7-12 months	41	12.3%
More than 12 months	205	61.6%
No Response	16	4.8%
	333	100.0%

27. When was the last time you had your eyes examined?

	Number	Percent
0-3 months	40	12.0%
4-6 months	29	8.7%
7-12 months	39	11.7%
More than 12 months	208	62.5%
No Response	17	5.1%
	333	100.0%

28. When was the last time your children saw a doctor?

	Number	Percent
0-3 months	38	11.4%
4-6 months	18	5.4%
7-12 months	5	1.5%
More than 12 months	8	2.4%
Not applicable	102	30.6%
No Response	162	48.6%
	333	99.9%

29. When was the last time your children saw a dentist?

	Number	Percent
0-3 months	26	7.8%
4-6 months	15	4.5%
7-12 months	5	1.5%
More than 12 months	17	5.1%
Not applicable	100	30.0%
No Response	170	51.1%
	333	100.0%

30. When was the last time your children had their eyes examined?

	Number	Percent
0-3 months	22	6.6%
4-6 months	10	3.0%
7-12 months	8	2.4%
More than 12 months	19	5.7%
Not applicable	102	30.6%
No Response	172	51.7%
	333	100.0%

31. Have you ever had a pap smear? (women only)

	Number	Percent
Yes	114	34.2%
No	4	1.2%
Not applicable	86	25.8%
No Response	129	38.7%
	333	99.9%

31a. If yes, when was the last time you had a pap smear? (Women only)

	Number	Percent
0-3 months	16	4.8%
4-6 months	19	5.7%
7-12 months	27	8.1%
More than 12 months	43	12.9%
No Response	228	68.5%
	333	100.0%

32. Have you ever had a mammogram? (women only)

	Number	Percent
Yes	71	21.3%
No	52	15.6%
Not applicable	60	18.0%
Mis No Response	150	45.0%
	333	99.9%

32a. If yes, when was the last time you had a mammogram? (Women only)

	Number	Percent
0-3 months	9	2.7%
4-6 months	10	3.0%
7-12 months	9	2.7%
More than 12 months	40	12.0%
No Response	265	79.6%
	333	100.0%

33. Are you supposed to take any medications?

	Number	Percent
Yes	179	53.8%
No	114	34.2%
No Response	40	12.0%
	333	100.0%

34. How do you obtain your medications?

	Purchased from a store	Percent	Healthcare provider	Percent	Cannot afford meds	Percent
Yes	57	17.1%	107	32.1%	54	16.2%
No	93	27.9%	82	24.6%	103	30.9%
Missing	183	55.0%	144	43.2%	176	52.9%
	333	100.0%	333	99.9%	333	100.0%

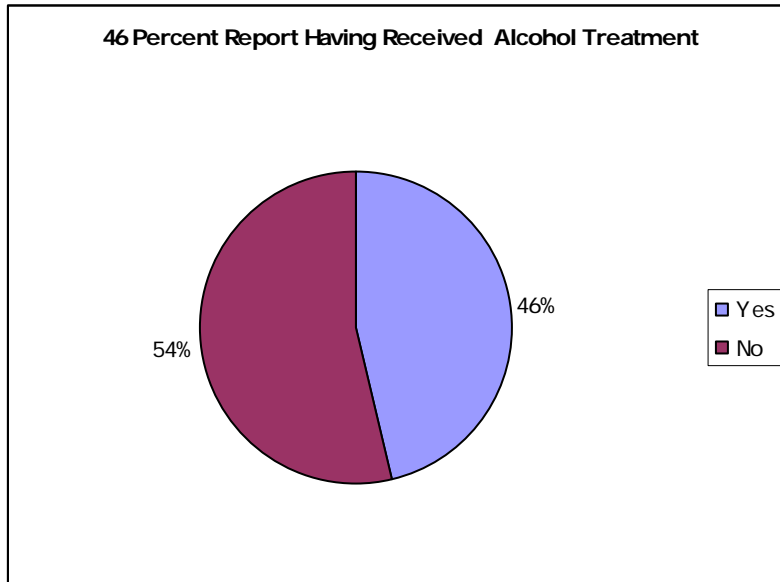
35. Do you have major medical problem(s)?

	Number	Percent
Yes	90	27.0%
No	36	10.8%
No Response	207	62.2%
	333	100.0%

35a. Are they being treated?

	Number	Percent
Yes	122	36.6%
No	84	25.2%
No Response	127	38.1%
	333	99.9%

37. Have you ever received alcohol abuse treatment?

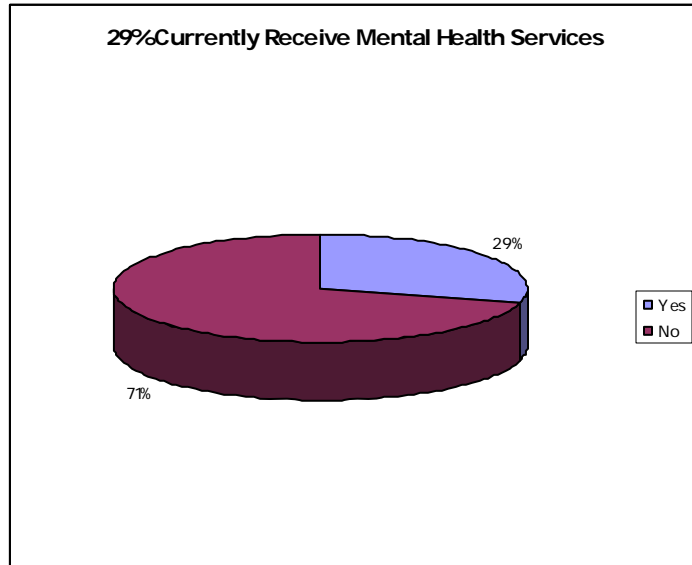


	Number	Percentage
Yes	151	45.3%
No	175	52.6%

38. Have you previously received drug treatment?

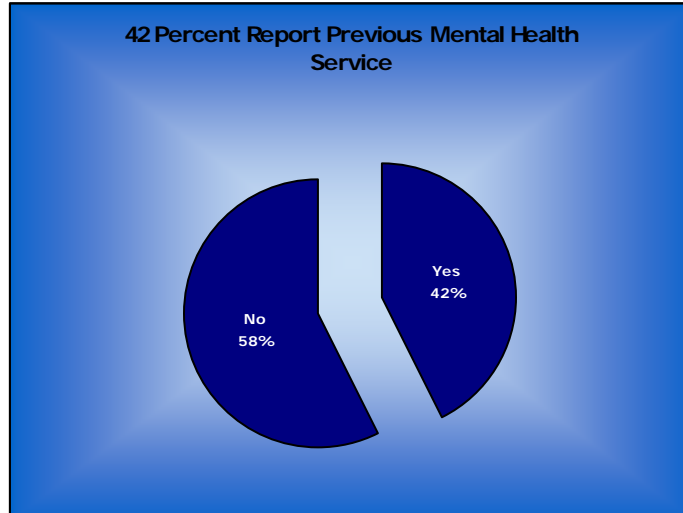
	Number	Percentage
Yes	152	45.6%
No	170	51.1%
No Response	11	
	333	

39. Are you currently receiving mental health services?



	Number	Percentage
Yes	95	28.5%
No	230	69.1%

40. Have you previously received mental health services?

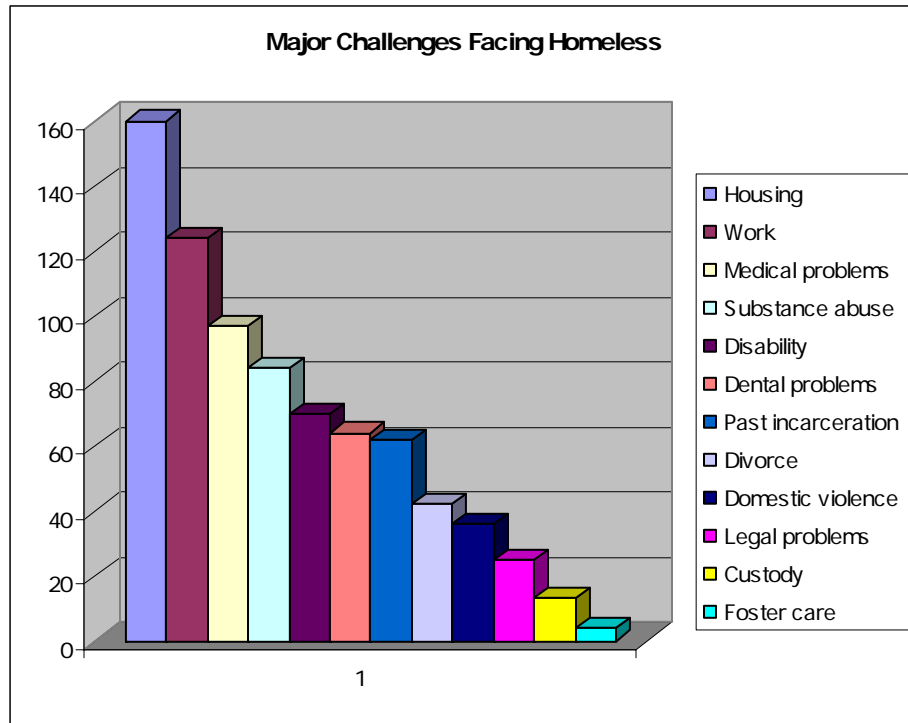


	Number	Percentage
Yes	137	41.1%
No	186	55.9%

41. Within the past year have you used any of the following services or needed any of the following services and been unable to obtain them.

	Used number	Used percentage	Needed unable to obtain#	Needed unable obtain %	Both number	Both percentage
Emergency shelter	207	91.6%	14	6.2%	5	2.2%
Transitional housing	66	62.9%	36	34.3%	3	2.9%
Used job training/ job placement	32	41.0%	45	57.7%	1	1.3%
Used substance abuse services	103	81.7%	23	18.3%	0	0.0%
Used mental health services/counseling	91	77.8%	26	22.2%	0	0.0%
Used housing placement	21	31.3%	46	68.7%	0	0.0%
Used food pantry/meals	125	87.4%	17	11.9%	1	0.7%
Used transportation vouchers	72	68.6%	30	28.6%	3	2.9%
Used GED or English classes	10	24.4%	31	75.6%	0	0.0%
Used emergency financial assistance	34	50.0%	33	48.5%	1	1.5%
Used Legal Aid	12	30.8%	26	66.7%	1	2.6%
Used child care	11	26.8%	30	73.2%	0	0.0%
Used public assistance	50	64.1%	27	34.6%	1	1.3%
Used medical services	86	81.1%	18	17.0%	2	1.9%
Used dental services	33	36.3%	58	63.7%	0	0.0%
Used a drop-in center	10	27.8%	26	72.2%	0	0.0%
Used domestic violence services	23	50.0%	23	50.0%	0	0.0%
Used showers	124	87.3%	15	10.6%	0	0.0%
Used shelter and care	99	79.2%	24	19.2%	2	1.6%
Used medication	15	38.5%	23	59.0%	1	2.6%
Used respite care	3	21.4%	11	78.6%	0	0.0%
Used other services	1	100.0%*	0	0.0%	0	0.0%

42. Characteristics and challenges experienced by those without a home.  
(Percent answering “yes”)



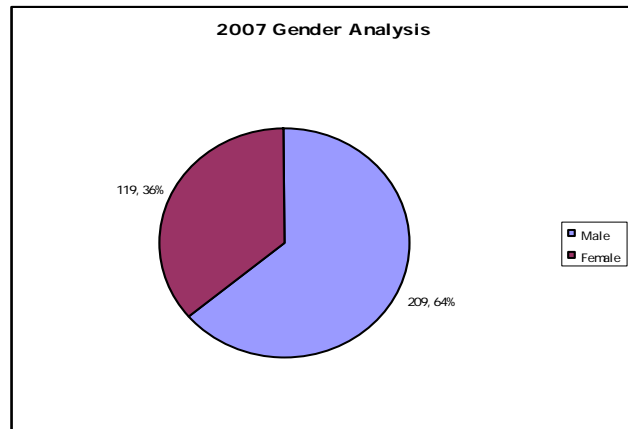
Numbers Percentage

Cannot find affordable housing	160	48.0%
Cannot find work	124	37.2%
Medical problems	97	29.1%
Substance abuse	84	25.2%
Physical disability	70	21.0%
Dental problems	64	19.2%
Past incarceration	62	18.6%
Divorce	42	12.6%
Domestic violence victim	36	10.8%
Legal/police problems	25	7.5%
Child custody disputes	13	3.9%
Previous foster care	4	1.2%

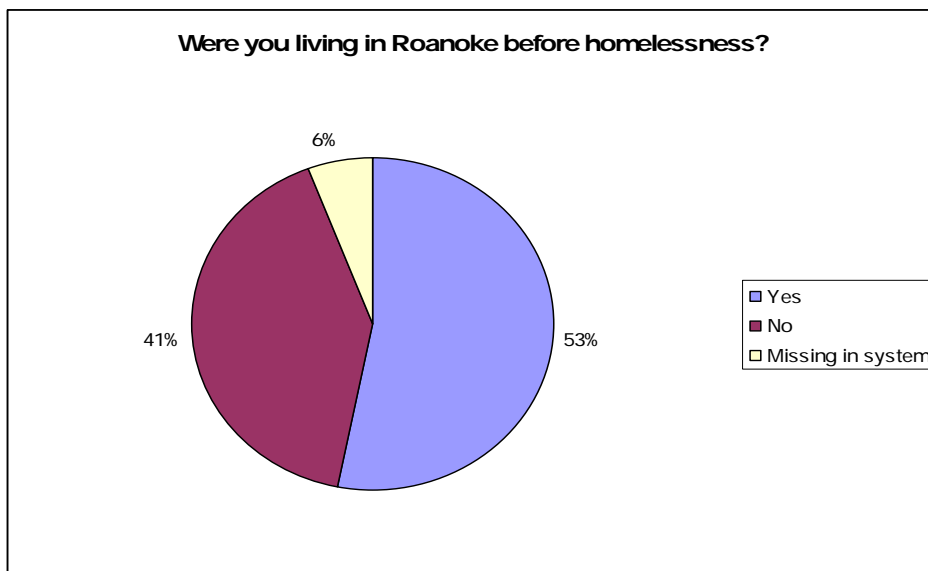


43. Gender

Gender	Number	Percentage
Male	209	62.8%
Female	119	35.7%



44. Were you living in Roanoke before Homelessness?



Reported as Yes	177
Reported as No	137
Response not recorded	19
Total	333

45. What are the top 5 Instate localities influencing the City of Roanoke's Homeless Population Count?

- Lynchburg City-10
- Danville City-8
- Franklin County-6
- Martinsville City-5
- Salem-4

46. What are the top 3 States influencing the City of Roanoke's Homeless Population Count?

- a. North Carolina-7
- b. Pennsylvania-3
- c. Wisconsin-3

### Shared comments about being homeless

- This program has really helped me so much & I'm so grateful to each and everyone. Thank you SRC for everything
- Being without housing makes me feel like I'm nothing
- Biggest Issue-Unable to stay at the shelter during the day, made to go outside. Also I can't stay at the mission especially when I can't get around easily.
- I hope to have housing within 30 days.
- I just need some help
- It's a terrible situation to be in, and there aren't enough agencies in the Roanoke Valley to help.
- I want a home.
- I'm scared to ask for help
- Afraid, no support, helpless feeling.
- It is very undesirable and challenging. It is bad for self esteem. It makes you dependent on others, I'm losing independence.
- The world is a cold place; but God is good.
- It is a learning experience. One becomes invisible and unacceptable to society in general. We fall through the cracks of social acceptance.
- The older you are the more unacceptable you become and the social programs exclude you, I get \$722.00/month because of my age I get \$10.00 in food stamps. Yes! \$10.00 a mo. This past month due to the cost of living increase in SSA I now pay 0.35 cents more per non-generic on drugs and 0.15 cent on generic prescriptions. (You- make a budget for yourself of \$722.00 a month for rent, food, transportation, medicine, communications [phone or cell], and utilities - no frills- cigs if you smoke. No eating out, soft drinks or bottled water. Now try and find a place to live on this budget). Bad credit or a felony makes subsidized housing unavailable such as Section 8, etc.
- The YWCA is a wonderful place they help you and give you a place to live at a low cost while you get back on your feet.
- I feel homeless

- This is the only time I have ever been in a place for shelter. And the YWCA helps me and I have my own room, it is clean- I have a bed to sleep in. And I have access to a kitchen to cook my food. If I have a problem the staff is here and they are helpful. If they can't help me, they point me in the right direction for the help.
- I am a little bit overwhelmed about just getting out of prison & being homeless. But I do have a lot of hope.
- My new start, YWCA is my foundation, transition for Hegira Program
- It is an unfortunate situation, but we were thankful to have a roof over our head, food in our mouths. Besides, we have accomplished a lot in the last 3 years. Responsibility, priorities, money management paid, off lots of things, judgments that were on credit so that we could security financial stability.
- It would be nice to have my own private place to live.
- Thankful for Rescue Mission
- I have experienced unfair treatment, prejudice, and bigotry because of my homeless situation by the employers of this town because of my position in society. I have been prejudged.
- It's no fun. I don't like it. I want my own place and job.
- I can't wait to get where I'm going.
- HAT team does a good job
- Hard without having any kind of occupation, especially for us U.S. Veterans
- More options for affordable housing
- Have two strikes against me: not familiar with the area and bad credit
- If you go out of the shelter, they won't let you back in-so you don't have any place to go. You leave at 7:30 and can't come back in until 4:30. When it's snowing you still have to leave.
- I work five years as BRT, Behavior Rehabilitation, used cocaine and went down hill.
- Being homeless makes my depression worse. Physical problems worse due to not being able to have a place to be during the day. Having to be up every day even when I am hurting makes everything worse.
- We were told it is mandatory to fill out or we could not stay here anymore. It should be clear to management that these are not mandatory. And if I fill this one out at the library I don't have to fill one out here. So I filled out two of these.

- I'm just funny I let my addictions get me homeless but I'm recovering.
- I think that with this survey, it will help with housing so I can spend more time with my kids
- Transportation is not available for 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> shift. Buses do not go to some areas
- I just need to get back on my feet so I can do things for my family. I have a daughter on the way. I need God to work things through for me. I need to make money to feed myself and my family.
- A free clinic needs to exist in Roanoke. It is not fair to present a check stub in order to receive medicine services.
- I don't like the simple fact that I am homeless. I have a baby on the way (fiancé) and I want to do well. I need an ID for work.
- Driving me crazy-not being able to cook for and take care of my family-I feel embarrassed angry and restless.

## **Significant Areas of Concern for Further Research and Future Recommendations**

### Survey Mechanics

The number of questions with significant percentages of “missing” or “other” categories could be reduced by revising the survey questionnaire to include a “not-applicable” option for surveyors to use. For example, those questions related to woman only... such as: Have you ever had a pap smear? When was the last time you had a pap smear? We recommend that all gender specific questions and questions relating to children, be revised to include a not applicable section. In addition all questions with significant “missing in system” responses should be reviewed for possible modification.

### Issues raised by Survey Results

57.6% of survey respondents indicate that they have not had a place to live for 0 to 6 months; 36.5% indicate between 0 and 3 months. In addition, 44.1% indicate that they have never been homeless before. These data suggest that there is a correlation (a bi-variant analysis would show the exact correlation) between trauma experienced in first time homelessness and the amount of time needed to come to grips with the situation, learn the system of services and figure a way out. If such a correlation exists, what should be done to reduce the time needed for an individual to get back on his feet? For example, should more emphasis and resources be spent on the Housing First initiative?

26.4% of survey respondents said that the reason they are homeless is that they are unable to pay rent/mortgage. 23% said they were employed full-time and another 16% said they were employed part-time. 19.8% of those employed full or part-time indicated that their hourly wage was between \$6.00 and \$8.50 per hour. In addition to those employed, 44% of those unemployed told us they were currently looking for work. These data indicate a need to investigate and/or strengthen existing linkages between job training programs and homeless shelter occupants. Where are existing job training opportunities located, what are the hours of availability and costs? Are additional job training programs needed, do current job training opportunities need to be relocated? What are the existing barriers to finding jobs?

26.4% of survey respondents say they are homeless because they are unable to pay rent/mortgage. Is this an issue of availability of affordable housing or lack of knowledge regarding affordable housing? When the 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness was published in November 2006, it reported that 150 public housing units were vacant. Affordable Housing and the homeless population merit further research in areas already underscored in the ten year plan including:

- How rapidly are individuals or families being housed?
- Are individuals or families remaining housed?
- Do individuals or families reenter shelter?

Data throughout the 2007 survey indicate a need to focus on providing affordable housing, upgrading job skills and investigating new strategies to prevent homelessness before it occurs. The ten year plan contains an action step to establish a community housing resources center that would directly address these three focus areas. It is recommended that new energy be put into the establishment of such a center.