5.9 Improving Point-in-Time (PIT) Counts for Youth

Wednesday, February 19
Workshops V – 10:45 am – 12:15 pm

Peter Connery, Applied Survey Research
Agenda

- ASR Experience
- Why do a Youth PIT Count
- Examples of Youth PIT Counts and Surveys
- The “How” of Youth PIT Counts
- McKinney-Vento (MV) and Youth PIT Counts
- The “How” of MV Youth PIT Counts
- Examples of MV inclusion in Youth PIT Counts
ASR Experience

1999
• Began conducting Point-in-Time counts of people experiencing homelessness Monterey County

2005
• Began conducting separate Point-in-Time counts of homeless children and youth Los Angeles County

2009
• Expanded youth counts into other counties including small towns and rural areas Santa Clara Co/San Jose, Santa Cruz County, Sonoma County, Mendocino, Clark County/Las Vegas

2011
• Piloted youth specific surveys and continued to expand youth counts Monterey County, Santa Clara Co/San Jose, Riverside, Las Vegas, Sonoma County, Santa Cruz County

2013
• Continued to promote youth counts and expanded efforts with school districts (San Luis Obispo, Santa Cruz, Monterey, Santa Clara) and a dedicated San Francisco youth count
Why do a PIT Count for Youth?

- HUD recommends it
- Diversity of homeless population requires targeted outreach strategies
- Lack of inclusion outweighs duplication concern
- Youth do not co-mingle with general homeless
- Service-centric strategies ineffective due to scarcity
- Represents one of largest sub-populations
- Youth census and assessment info necessary for program planning and policy formation, especially discharge planning and prevention efforts
Results of 2013 Counts

Unaccompanied children and youth represent between 16% and 26% of the homeless population a sample of counties

- San Francisco
  - 1,902 unaccompanied children and transition age youth
  - 26% of the PIT population
- Santa Clara County
  - 1,226 unaccompanied children and transition age youth
  - 16% of the PIT population
- Sonoma County
  - 1,128 unaccompanied children and transition age youth
  - 26% of the PIT population
- Santa Cruz County
  - 914 unaccompanied children and transition age youth
  - 26% of the PIT population
Dedicated Surveys*

- 64% identified as male, 34% female, 2% transgender
- 93% are TAY (18-24 age group)
- 30% identify as ‘not straight’ (LGBTQ)
- 28% reported a history of foster care
- 18% had parents who were formerly/currently homeless
- 38% claimed fight with friend/family as major homeless cause
- 32% had been physically assaulted on the street
- 40% had their safety threatened 1 or more x’s in the past month
- 26% have traded sex or drugs for place to stay
- 47% had no one to support them in a time of crisis
- 62% needed food, 55% clothing

*Source: 509 in-person surveys in SF, Santa Clara, Sonoma & Monterey counties
Dedicated Surveys

- 13% have children
- 20% in CoC shelter; 53% outdoors, 5.5% in vehicle
- 64% were living in county they became homeless
- 68% are homeless >4 months.....38% a year or more
- 28% reported they had fair or poor mental health
- 36% reported they were in fair or poor physical health
- 52% claim a disabling condition including 3.6% HepC, 1.6% TB, 2.5% HIV/AIDS, 13.5% PTSD, 30% chronic depression, 17.8% mental illness, 18% substance abuse (self assessment)
- 80% reported using drugs or alcohol
- 75% unemployed
- 15% on probation/parole
- 64% first became homeless <18 years old
The How - Key Partnerships

- Homeless youth service providers (group)
- TAY homeless and previously homeless youth
- Non-profits/Government agencies
  - CASA, Youth Services, LGBT, etc.
- County Office of Educ. & school districts – McKinney Vento Liaisons
- Veterans Authority/advocacy networks
- Health service providers
- Informal networks of support
  - Faith community
  - Community youth advocates
  - Youth sanctuary locations
The How - Rural Communities

• Special Challenges in rural communities
  o No youth services
  o No youth shelters
  o Big areas to cover
  o Youth in very remote areas
  o Elusive migrant TAY homeless

• Special strategies needed
  o Identify informal community support networks
  o Direct outreach to TAY homeless leaders
  o Emphasize trust, confidentiality and desire to develop new services
  o Offer money to participants – TAY homeless and community members who have access to them
The How - Recruitment Process

- Recruit through both formal and informal service networks
- Acknowledge & plan for diversity of the TAY population
  - Rural/urban
  - Ethnic
  - Age
  - LGBT
  - School – secondary and college
  - Vehicles
- Be very selective
  - Mandatory training – emphasize trust and data integrity
  - Represent the diversity of the TAY homeless population
  - Provide supervision, support (transportation, food, etc) and check output
  - Provide incentives for participation - compensation
  - Assure confidentiality and respect their time and effort
Critical Success Factors

• Important to have youth involved in every step of the process
• Recruitment of interviewers is key to obtaining diverse sample
• Utilize incentives for PIT participation, survey interviewers and respondents
• Recognize TAY diversity and build flexibility into recruitment and data collection process
• Continually build and maintain connections to diverse TAY networks and contacts
McKinney-Vento Data and the PIT

• Work to ensure the process fits into the overall PIT count effort without duplication
• Recruit partners who will create buy-in and facilitate data collection
• Separate the process from other youth count efforts
• Do not expect full compliance from Education partners – create realistic expectations
Planning and Design

• Use a separate group of people and resources
  o Youth Count Advocates
  o COE/LEA representatives
  o PIT count coordinators

• Work within the current system
  o COE/LEA chain of command
  o Use existing categories of data collection to guide the PIT data collection process

• Develop an outreach strategy with regular contact to COE representatives
Planning and Design Example

Santa Cruz County

- **COE Structure**
  - Students Support Services Coordinator
  - 1 COE Homeless Liaison
  - 8 District Homeless Liaisons

- **COE Data Collection**
  - Double-up
  - Shelter
  - Motel/hotel
  - Unsheltered
  - Truancy
Planning and Design Example

• Changed the level of data collection from the child to the household
• Gathered data from each district
• Homeless Liaisons called to verify the location of the child and all household members on the night of the count
  - Confidentiality
  - Safety
• Recorded anonymous data
# Planning and Design Example

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household</th>
<th>Children under 18</th>
<th>Youth 18-24</th>
<th>Adults 25+</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Car</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sisters house</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Storage shed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Transit Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Car</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Bus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Friends house</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Apartment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Partnering with COE helped to capture data on families

• Santa Cruz County
  o 108 additional people included in the count
  o 83 people in families – 15% of the overall number of persons in families

• Monterey County
  o 214 additional people included in the count
  o 214 people in families – 38% of the overall number of persons in families
Thank You
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