Improving Local Data on Youth Homelessness

Tuesday, July 29th
2:00 pm - 4:00 pm

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Agenda

- Background
- Advocating for Youth PIT Counts and Surveys
- Examples of Youth PIT Counts and Surveys
  - Urban Counts
  - Rural Counts
- COE and School Counts
- Closing Comments
ASR

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
Youth Count - Why it is important

1. Important, previously underrepresented sub-population
2. Better data improves program planning, policy formation and public education
3. Provider-centric only strategies are ineffective
4. Diversity and elusiveness of TAY require targeted outreach strategies
5. PIT Count duplication concerns are less significant than not attempting to document prevalence of TAY homelessness
The Youth Count

Youth may represent one of the largest subpopulations in your community – between 16% and 26%

- **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

*Source: 2013 PIT Counts*
The Youth Survey

- Better data improve program planning and policy formation at system and Continuum level
  - Especially successful exits and prevention efforts
- Gather data that matter to youth and youth service providers at program level
- Develop understanding of the diversity of homeless youth in your community
- Helps support differential response to homelessness
Youth Survey Data

- 30% identify as ‘not straight’ (LGBTQ)
- 28% reported a history of foster care
- 64% first experienced homelessness at <18 years old
- 18% had parents who were formerly/currently homeless
- 13% had children of their own

*Source: 509 in-person surveys in SF, Santa Clara, Sonoma & Monterey counties*
Youth Survey Data

- 68% were homeless >4 months.....38% a year or more
- 38% claimed fight with friend/family as major homeless cause
- 64% resided in county they became homeless
- 25% were employed or going to school
- 47% had no one to support them in a time of crisis

- Traded sex and/or drugs for a place to stay: 26%
- Safety threatened in the past month: 40%
- Physically assaulted on the street: 32%
Youth Survey Data

- 28% reported they had fair or poor mental health
- 36% reported they were in fair or poor physical health
- 80% reported using drugs or alcohol
- 15% on probation/parole

52% reported one or more disabling conditions

- Depression: 30%
- Substance Abuse: 18%
- Mental Illness: 18%
- PTSD: 14%
- Hep C: 4%
- HIV/AIDS: 3%
- TB: 2%
Key Partners

• Youth service providers
  ▫ Homeless service providers
  ▫ McKinney Vento Liaisons
  ▫ Non-profits/Government agencies
  ▫ CASA, Youth Services, Diversity Centers, etc.
• Currently and previously homeless youth
• Veterans Administration/advocacy networks
• Health service providers
• Informal networks of support
  ▫ Faith community
  ▫ Community youth advocates
  ▫ Youth sanctuary locations
Special Considerations - Urban

- Special challenges in urban communities
  - Timing
  - Transportation – covering dense areas quickly
  - Accessing abandoned buildings, rooftops
  - Getting beyond youth homeless services
- Special strategies needed
  - Identify informal community support networks
  - Direct outreach to homeless youth
  - Emphasize trust, confidentiality and desire to develop new services
  - Offer money to participants – homeless youth and community members who have connections to them
Special Considerations - Rural

- Special challenges in rural communities
  - No youth services
  - No youth shelters
  - Transportation-big areas to cover
  - Youth in very remote areas
  - Elusive migrant TAY homeless

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

- Engaging with COE and McKinney Vento Coordinators is essential in any community

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data Sharing and Reporting</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PIT Count Coordinators gather and share school and PIT data and discuss the inclusion of annual data in community assessment reports and PIT community reporting</td>
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<tr>
<th>Increased School COC Partnership</th>
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<tr>
<td>PIT Count Coordinators and COE McKinney-Vento representatives work together to increase inclusion of school aged youth and families in the PIT count.</td>
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<tr>
<th>School Count - Event Based</th>
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<tr>
<td>School representative hold an event targeted to McKinney-Vento identified youth and families during the PIT Count including them in the enumeration and survey.</td>
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<tr>
<th>School Count - Survey</th>
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<tr>
<td>School representatives contact students or families to verify their location at the time of the count.</td>
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</table>
Special Considerations - Schools

- 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
Special Considerations - Schools

- Do not overburden COE with general PIT Count logistics
- Recruit Youth Count Advocates
  - COE/LEA representatives
  - PIT count coordinators
- Work within the current system
  - COE/LEA chain of command
  - Use existing categories of data collection to guide the PIT planning and data collection process
- Develop an outreach strategy with regular contact to COE representatives
COE Based Count - Case Study: Santa Cruz, CA

• Each year we increased the COEs level of engagement in the youth count
  ▫ 2009: Engaged with COE in the COC PIT planning efforts
  ▫ 2011: Engaged with COE directly and worked with COE identified youth to conduct youth street counts
  ▫ 2013: Conducted county-wide school based validated PIT count
COE Based Count  -Case Study: Santa Cruz, CA

- Used existing CALPAD and McKinney-Vento lists
- Gathered data from each school/district
- Changed the level of data collection from the child to the household- one call
  - Homeless Liaisons/interns called families or met with independent youth to verify the location of all household members on the night of the count
  - Recorded anonymous data
## COE Based Count - Case Study: Santa Cruz, CA

<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 and youth

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

- **Monterey County**
  - 214 additional people included in the count
  - 214 people in families - 38% of the overall number of persons in families
Closing

- Have youth involved in every step of the process
- Recruit a diverse group of census and survey workers
- Use incentives to increase PIT participation, survey interviewers and respondent interest
- Recognize youth diversity and build flexibility into recruitment and data collection process
- Build and maintain connections to diverse youth networks and contacts – relationships take time
- Integrate COE contacts into your local planning and PIT Count strategy efforts and encourage their greatest (non-overwhelming) level of engagement
Thank You

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