2016 Kamloops
Youth Homelessness Count

October 13th- 21st 2016

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A WAY HOME

Working Together to End Youth Homelessness in Kamloops

Contents

Acknowledgements

Introduction

Who Did the Count?

The 2016 Kamloops Youth Homelessness Count was conducted by the *A Way Home* committee, a collective of 120 professionals from diverse sectors, including business, non-profit, government, health, and Aboriginal agencies. This committee was established to implement *A Way Home: A Plan to End Homelessness in Kamloops.* An annual youth homelessness count is critical in measuring our progress toward ending youth homelessness in Kamloops.

Why a Youth Specific Homelessness Count?

Across Canada, there is growing awareness of the significant differences between youth and adult homelessness. Kamloops has conducted an annual Point in Time (PIT) Count for years. A PIT Count is a snapshot of how many people are visibly homeless on the street or shelter system on a single morning every year.

However, youth are less likely to use homelessness services and, because they may be transient and pursue survival strategies to remain hidden, they may be less visible than adults experiencing homelessness. Research has shown that young people are twice as likely as adults to be part of the "hidden homeless" population.[1] Youth may also have a greater degree of fear or mistrust of authorities. For all these reasons, traditional PIT counts are limited in their ability to accurately capture numbers of youth experiencing homelessness.

Youth homelessness is unique, and we require youth-focused strategies to identify those experiencing homelessness. *A Way Home* built on the traditional PIT count by applying youth-specific methodologies to identify young people experiencing homelessness.

Definition of Youth Homelessness for the Youth Count

A Way Home has adopted the definition of youth homelessness provided by The Canadian Observatory on Homelessness: "the experience of young people between the ages of 13 and 24 who are living independently of parents and/or caregivers, but do not have the means or ability to acquire a stable, safe or consistent residence."[2]

The Canadian Observatory on Homelessness further describes four types of youth homelessness:

1) Unsheltered: Youth who are sleeping outside on the river banks and on the street. They have no access to housing.

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[1] Gaetz, Gulliver, & Richter (2014). The State of Homelessness in Canada. Toronto: The Homeless Hub Press.
[2] Canadian Observatory on Homelessness (2012) Canadian Definition of Homelessness. Homeless Hub: www.homelesshub.ca/homelessdefinition/

2) Emergency Sheltered: Youth who are housed temporarily in emergency shelters. In Kamloops, this includes youth ages 13-18 accessing the Youth Shelter and youth 19-24 at the Emerald Centre.

3) Provisionally Accommodated: Youth who are couch surfing, living in transitional housing, or in temporary institutional care such as hospitals, treatment facilities, and correctional facilities, with no arrangements for safe, permanent housing upon release.

4) At Risk of Homelessness: Youth at risk of homelessness are experiencing precarious, unsafe housing or economic instability.

The 2016 Kamloops Youth Homelessness Count includes information about youth in the first three categories. While we also learned about youth at risk of homelessness, we cannot reliably measure numbers of individuals in this category.

Purpose of the 2016 Kamloops Youth Homelessness Count

The 2016 Kamloops Youth Homelessness Count fits *A Way Home's* goal of monitoring our community's efforts in preventing, reducing, and ending youth homelessness. The word "count" can be somewhat misleading, since identifying a clear number of individuals experiencing homelessness is only part of the purpose of any count. More importantly, a homelessness count provides valuable information about the experiences of the homeless population.

By surveying youth experiencing homelessness, we may identify gaps in services, emerging needs, and the relative success of *A Way Home's* initiatives aimed at preventing homelessness and supporting those experiencing homelessness. The information collected during this count will assist *A Way Home* to:

- Establish a community benchmark of the minimum number of youth experiencing homelessness;
- Provide an opportunity for youth to share their voice about their needs;
- Build relationships with youth experiencing homelessness and connect them to services;
- Increase public awareness, set community priorities, and create supports that meet gaps in services;
- Prevent other youth from experiencing homelessness by providing community education;
- Advocate for policy change and opportunities that youth need to succeed.

Count Organization

Planning

To steer the planning process, a Youth Count team was formed from within *A Way Home,* with the *A Way Home* Youth Homelessness Manager acting as Youth Count Coordinator. The team met bi-weekly to plan and organize Count activities.

Point in Time Count

A critical decision was whether to incorporate our Youth Count within the adult Point in Time Count being conducted by the HomeFree Collective in the fall, or to do a fully separate count during a different time period. In the end, we recognized the benefits of coordinating our efforts. The HomeFree PIT Count Committee was flexible and supported the incorporation of a youth lens into the structure of the existing PIT Count. To ensure alignment between the two counts, the Youth Count Coordinator sat on the HomeFree PIT Count Committee and the City of Kamloops Project Manager of Housing and Homelessness sat on both the Youth Count Team and the HomeFree PIT Count Committee.

Timing

The week of Thursday, October 13th -21st was chosen as the time frame for the count, as the general PIT Count was to be conducted on the 13th. A period of one week was chosen to allow for sufficient time to conduct a Service Count and to host Magnet Events. We recognized, however, that conducting a count over a period of a week introduced the risk of duplicating respondents. We attempted to prevent duplication by identifying survey respondents by initials and birthdates.

Engagement

A Way Home's diverse representation provided a solid foundation to engage partners in the Youth Homelessness Count and to ensure our methods reached all those in contact with youth. The Count itself helped some partners in relationship-building with youth experiencing homelessness. For example, City of Kamloops By-Law Enforcement had never participated in a homelessness count, but they surveyed youth experiencing homelessness, which helped them improve previous relationships that had become strained when by-law officers had previously dismantled homeless camps. The School District was engaged early in the planning process and Thompson Rivers University provided two Human Service students to help organize and conduct activities. Youth were engaged by reviewing the survey tool and helping to raise funds for backpacks containing supplies that would be distributed to youth during the Count. These backpacks were also packed by youth. Community members and businesses were engaged through raising awareness with a media blitz prior to the Count.

Data Collection Survey Tool

For the purposes of the Count, we used the same survey tool used in the general PIT Count. *A Way Home* was able to add youth specific questions to the survey tool, but wording was restricted by Federal guidelines. In developing the survey tool, we consulted community partners, Aboriginal organizations, and the School District. The Youth Count team tested the tool with a group of youth and incorporated their feedback. The purpose of the survey was to count the minimum number of youth currently experiencing homelessness or who had experienced homelessness in the past year. The survey included questions about several important issues, such as demographics, barriers to housing, and gaps in services. To prevent potential duplication, youth were assigned a de-duplicator code based on first and last initials and birthdate. Screening questions were not developed, as service providers were encouraged to survey all youth regardless of whether they had disclosed an experience of homelessness or not. This was done because many youth may fear stigma or fail to characterize experiences such as running away as youth homelessness.

Funding

Funding from various community sources was critical to the Count's success. Funds were needed for honoraria given to survey respondents and to those attending the magnet events. Kamloops Rotary provided a $1,000 donation, which was used to purchase Tim Horton gift cards. Local businesses such as NRI Distribution and Surplus Herbies donated merchandise for the backpacks. A booth with youth homelessness literature, a makeshift camp, and sample backpacks was displayed at Aberdeen Mall and North Shore Safeway. Youth at these displays provided information on homelessness to community members, who provided cash donations to sponsor the creation of backpacks and honoraria. The media was also a valuable partner in encouraging community members to donate to the Youth Count.

Methods

During the week of the Youth Count, an awareness campaign engaged community around youth homelessness through a media blitz and orange ribbon campaign. Our Youth Count methodology followed the Homeless Hub's Youth Count Toolkit recommendations of focusing on "measuring hidden homelessness, including couch surfing and additional enumeration methods such as magnet events, service counts, and school counts."[3] There were five components to our Youth Count methodology:

1.   Point in Time Count

The planning process led to a partnership with the general PIT Count and the use of the same survey tool. Youth data collected from the general PIT Count was forwarded

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[3] Homeless Hub (2016). Youth Count Toolkit. Retrieved from: http://homelesshub.ca/youthcounttoolkit

to the Youth Count Team, which provided a snapshot of youth experiencing absolute homelessness.

2.   Service Count

Thirty-five different organizations were engaged to conduct a Service Count during the Count week. The goal was to have the survey integrated into agency workers' daily practice in order to identify all youth who may be experiencing homelessness. Key contacts were established at each organization to act as liaisons with the Youth Count Team and to ensure agency buy-in. The key contacts participated in training and were provided materials to educate their colleagues about the Youth Count. Many key contacts incorporated their training into a regular staff meeting and sent all staff emails to promote the Count. During the week of the Count, bundles of surveys and honorariums were dropped off at each organization to the key contact who then distributed count materials.

3.   Public Systems Count

This component helped to identify youth experiencing homelessness who are connected to corrections, health care, or the foster care system. A Youth Count member was deployed to Kamloops Regional Corrections Centre, and the Integrated Offender Management team identified youth 19-24 in custody who were willing to participate in the survey. Kamloops Youth Probation completed the survey with all youth in each probation officer's caseload. Interior Health Authority distributed the surveys at different locations including: Kamloops Public Health Centre, Kamloops Mental Health and Addiction Services and Emergency Response, King Street Centre, Parkview Child and Adolescent Mental Health Centre, and Royal Inland Hospital. The Ministry of Children & Family Development had the Youth Team complete surveys with youth in foster care or on youth agreements. Our survey also allowed the option for guardian social workers to complete the survey on a youth's behalf if they knew they were disconnected from services and would not complete the survey elsewhere. Secwepemc Child and Family Services, an Aboriginal delegated agency, also completed the survey with youth at both their urban and rural locations. The Ministry of Social Development and Innovation permitted a Youth Count booth at their locations to survey youth accessing their services.

4.   School District Count

School District 73 partnered with *A Way Home* and an online survey was developed that was similar to the Youth Count Survey tool. The survey began with educational questions designed to break down traditional constructs of homelessness. Respondents then answered a screening question to direct them to one of two surveys. If youth identified an experience of homelessness, they completed the Youth Count survey. If they did not, they answered a similarly formatted survey that was created to educate youth about homelessness and measure risk.

As this was a first year pilot and there was limited capacity to analyze data, four schools were chosen to participate: Twin Rivers Education Center, Four Directions Secondary School, Sahali Secondary School, and Norkam Secondary School. The online survey was completed at Sahali Secondary by students in grade 11 and one youth at Norkam Secondary School. *Youth Against Youth Homelessness* had a launch event at Twin Rivers Education Centre and Four Directions where youth shared their experiences of homelessness and their solutions to end it. The Human Service Students completed the surveys with the youth or students completed it independently, depending on their comfort level.

5.   Magnet Events

Boys & Girls Club of Kamloops and White Buffalo Aboriginal and Métis Health Society planned a magnet event called "Crash at the Club." This was a sleepover event where youth could spend the night, eat good food, complete the survey, and receive gifts. Interior Community Services Youth Outreach team held a Subway luncheon and a chili lunch on two separate occasions. The Safe Spaces program incorporated the survey into one of their socials for LGBTQ2S+ youth. An information and engagement fair for street-entrenched individuals, called Project Connect, was held the same day as the PIT Count. This fair was another magnet opportunity to enumerate youth. There was also a mobile booth monitored by students and located at the Kamloops Food Bank & Outreach Society, Ministry of Social Development and Innovation, Bus Exchange, and Twin Rivers Education Center.

Follow-Up

Surveys

During the week following the Count, surveys were collected from each of the participating agencies. Surveys were analyzed and distributed into two categories. The first category included youth who had never been in foster care or did not disclose any experience of homelessness. The second category included youth who identified an experience of homelessness or time in foster care. Their survey responses were inputted into an excel spread sheet. A Youth Count Data team analyzed the data to identify 1) youth who had experienced homelessness, and within that group 2) youth who were currently experiencing homelessness. Responses to several different questions were used to identify an experience (previous or current) of homelessness.

Online surveys of youth in participating high schools was not included in the overall data. Contradictory responses to online survey questions made it difficult to reliably identify experiences of homelessness.

Feedback on Process

A telephone and email survey to participating service providers generated feedback on the count. The process was debriefed at an *A Way Home* meeting, as well as at various Action Team tables. Feedback will be incorporated into future Counts.

Appreciation

The Youth Against Youth Homelessness Committee created beautiful paintings to thank businesses and community members who had contributed to the count. These thank-you gifts were presented by youth and the committee at a community *A Way Home* meeting.

Report

Draft reports were prepared by the *A Way Home* Youth Homelessness Manager and an independent consultant who sits on the *A Way Home* committee. These drafts were reviewed by several members of the Count Planning Committee and the *A Way Home* committee. Feedback from reviewers informed report revisions, and the final report was released in June 2017.

Youth Count Launch

In June 2017, a Youth Count Launch event was held to officially release the results of the Count to members of the community and municipal leaders.

Survey Results

The following figures are estimates of the minimum numbers of youth experiencing homelessness in Kamloops.

129 youth reported having experienced homelessness

56 youth reported being homeless at the time of the count

(these 56 are included in the 129 reported above)

Information gathered through the survey reveals data about youth who have experienced homelessness and those currently homeless.

Information About Youth Who Have Experienced Homelessness (n=129)

Information in this section describes the 129 youth who reported having experienced homelessness.

Duration of Homelessness

Youth who have experienced homelessness were asked about the length of their longest period of homelessness in Kamloops. Responses were as follows:

WHAT WAS YOUR LONGEST PERIOD OF HOMELESSNESS IN KAMLOOPS

Unclear, don't know, no answer, 22%
Under 1 month, 17%
"years", 3%
5 to 10 years, 2%
1 to 5 years, 16%
6 to 12 months, 4%
1 to 6 months, 35%
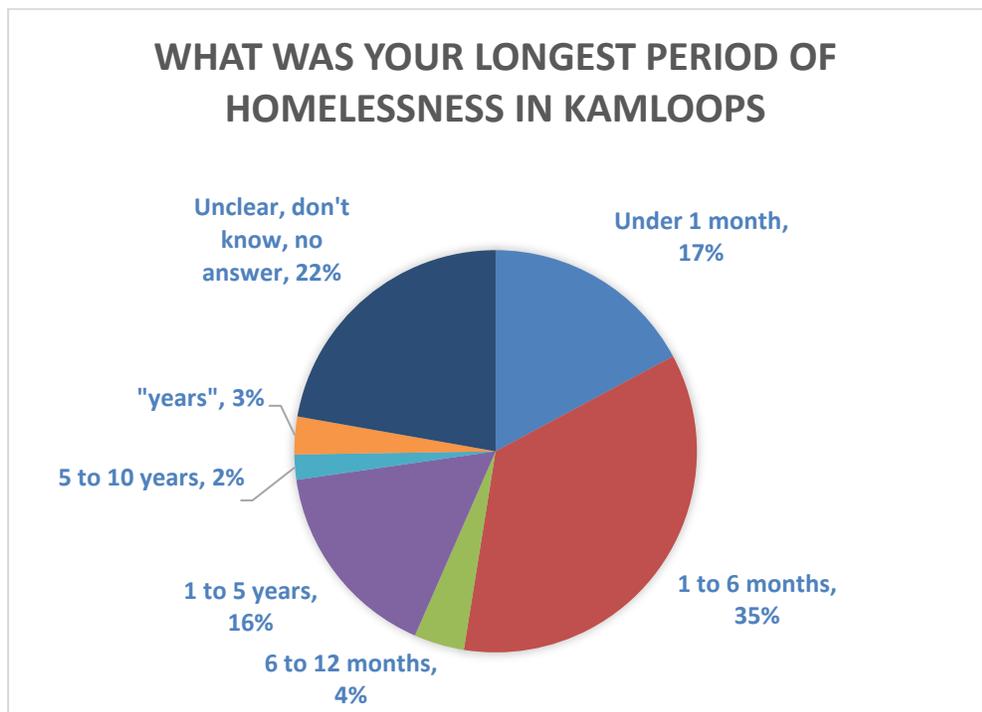
Reasons for Losing Housing

Youth who have experienced homelessness were asked about what happened that caused their most recent loss of housing. 107 of 129 provided one or more responses. The most common responses were:

REASONS FOR LOSING HOUSING

Reason	Percentage
Eviction:	24%
Family Conflict:	41%
Abuse:	21%
Addictions / Substance Use*:	43%
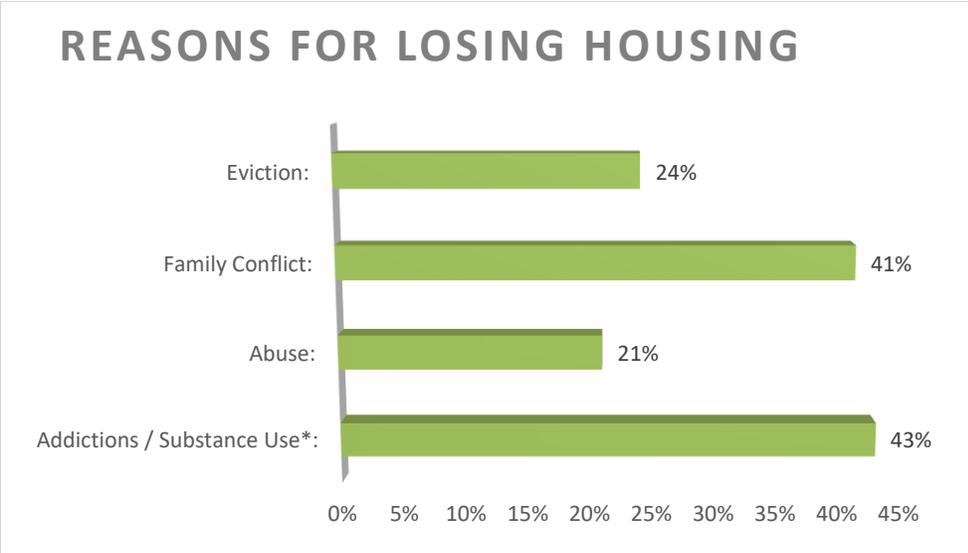
* Addictions or substance use as a reason for losing housing may indicate substance use in the youth themselves or in someone else in the home.

LGBTQ2S+

Youth were asked if they identified as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Two-spirited, or other gender non-conforming identity. Responses were as follows:

Q: DO YOU IDENTIFY AS LGBTQ2S+?

- Two-spirited, 1%
- No answer, 5%
- Yes, 17%
- No, 77%
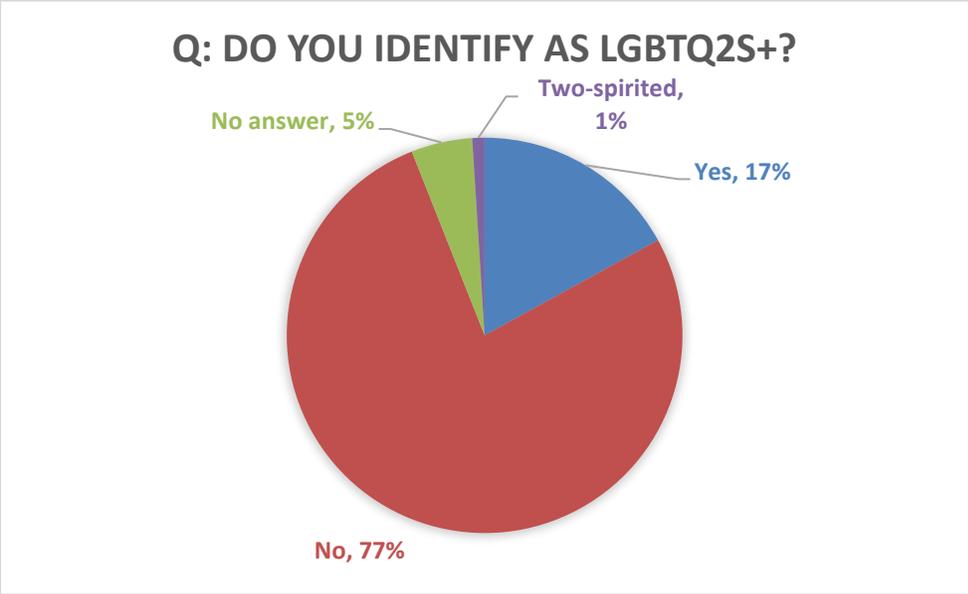
Information about Youth Currently Experiencing Homelessness (n=56)

Information in this section describes the 56 youth who reported currently experiencing homelessness.

Age

Youth experiencing homelessness were asked their age. Grouped responses were as follows:

AGE

- No answer, 2%
- 13-18 years, 27%
- 19-24 years, 71%
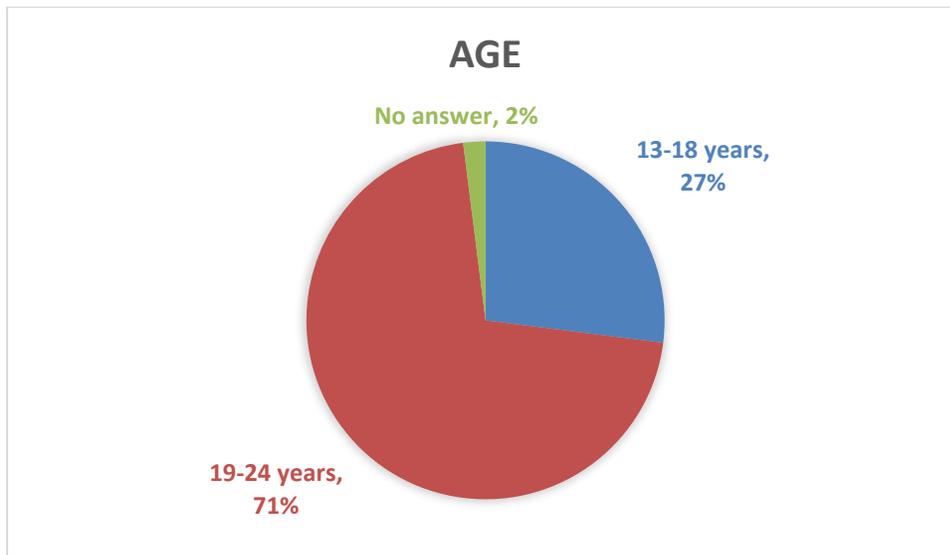
Gender

Youth experiencing homelessness were asked their gender. Responses were as follows:

GENDER

- No Answer 7%
- Female 38%
- Male 55%

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Youth were asked if they identified as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Two-spirited, or other gender non-conforming identity. Responses were as follows:

Q: DO YOU IDENTIFY AS LGBTQ2S+?

- Two-spirited, 0%
- No answer, 7%
- Yes, 5%
- No, 79%

Type of Homelessness

We asked youth experiencing homelessness about their current situation. We then grouped responses into the three categories of homelessness that we were able to reliably identify. Responses were as follows (see pages 5-6 for descriptions of types of homelessness):

TYPE OF HOMELESSNESS

- No Answer, 2%
- Unsheltered, 34%
- Emergency Sheltered, 14%
- Hidden Homeless, 50%
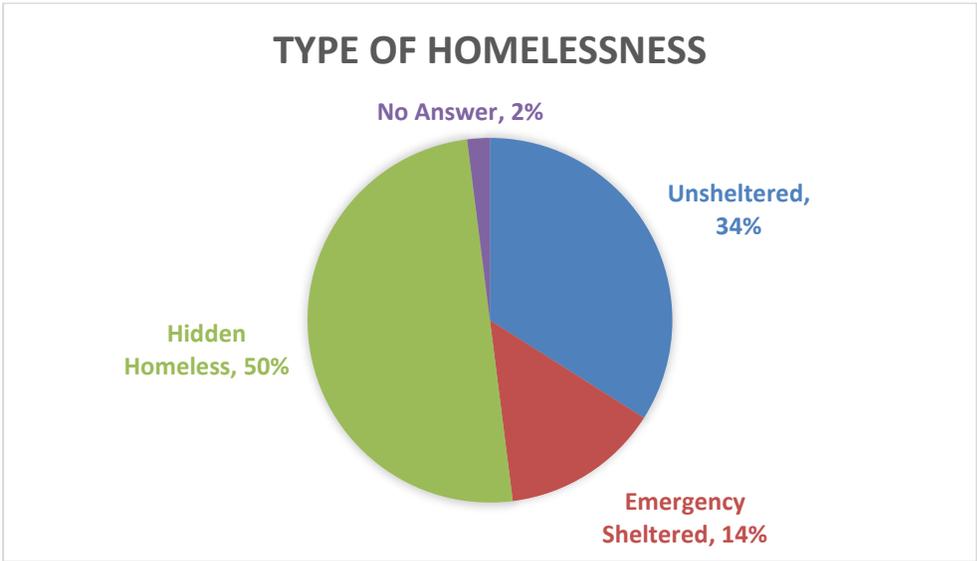
Source of Income

We asked youth experiencing homelessness about their source of income. Responses were as follows:

SOURCE OF INCOME

- Employed, 2%
- Disability, 27%
- Informal / Self-employed, 29%
- Basic Income Assistance, 27%
- No income, 16%
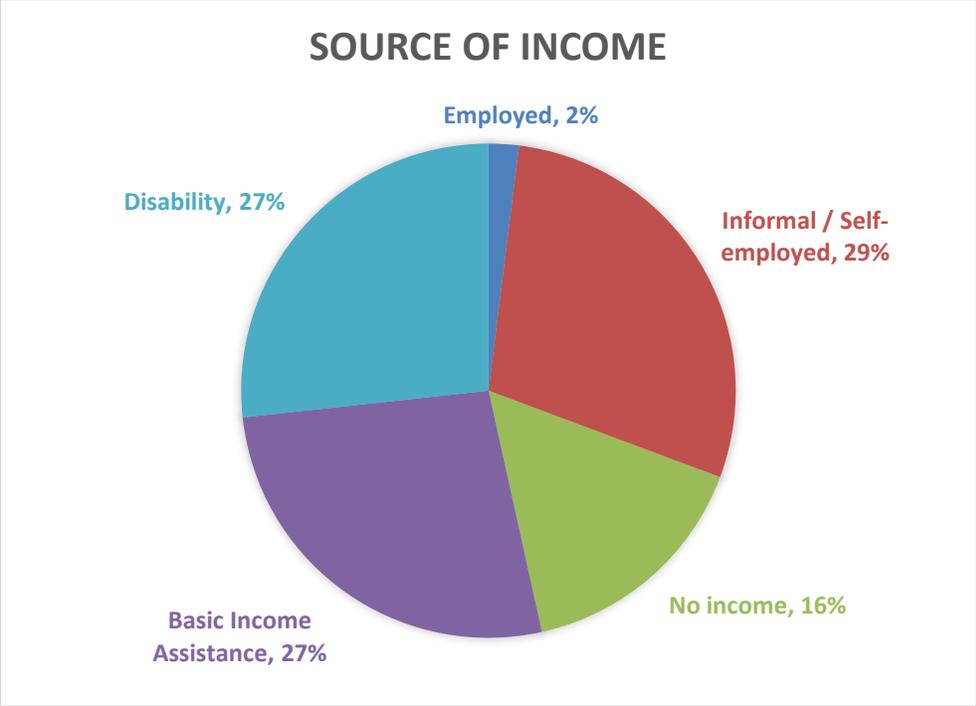
Education

We asked youth experiencing homelessness about their education. Responses were as follows:

CURRENTLY ENROLLED IN SCHOOL	18%
HAD POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION	2%

Of the 50 youth of graduation age (over 17):

COMPLETED GRADE 12	22%

Geographical Background

We asked youth experiencing homelessness whether they had moved to Kamloops within the past year. Responses were as follows:

DID YOU MOVE TO KAMLOOPS IN THE PAST YEAR?

Yes, 34%

No, 66%
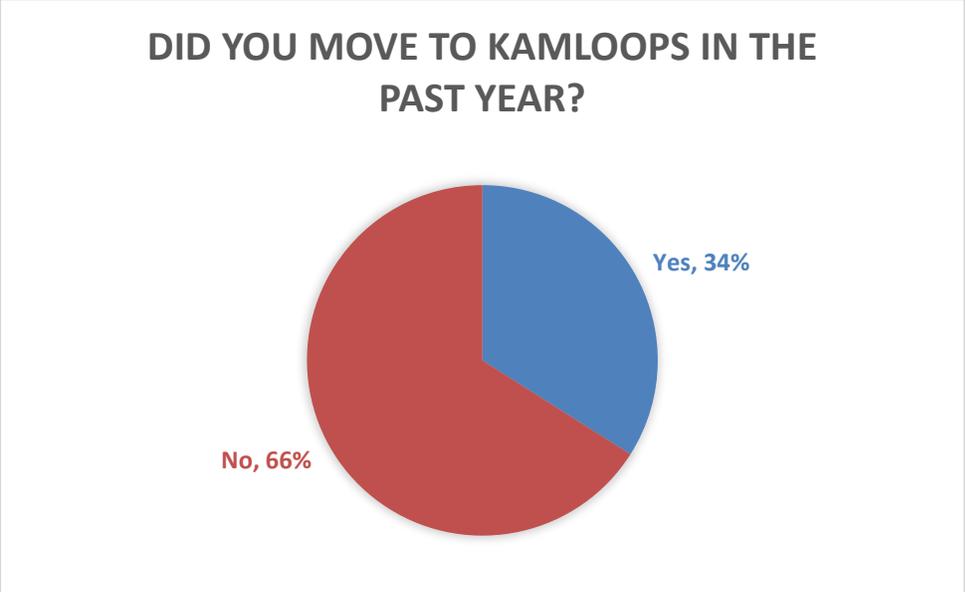
Ages of the 19 youth experiencing homelessness who had moved to Kamloops within the past year:

UNDER 19	7 youth
OVER 19	12 youth

Origin of the 19 youth experiencing homelessness who had moved to Kamloops within the past year:

Thompson Nicola Cariboo region	9 people
Alberta	2 youth
Nanaimo	1 youth
Lower Mainland	7 youth

Living Situation

We asked youth experiencing homelessness who they lived with. Responses were as follows:

WHO DO YOU LIVE WITH?

- friend, 2%
- no answer, 4%
- partner, 4%
- cousin, 2%
- adult(s), 16%
- alone, 73%
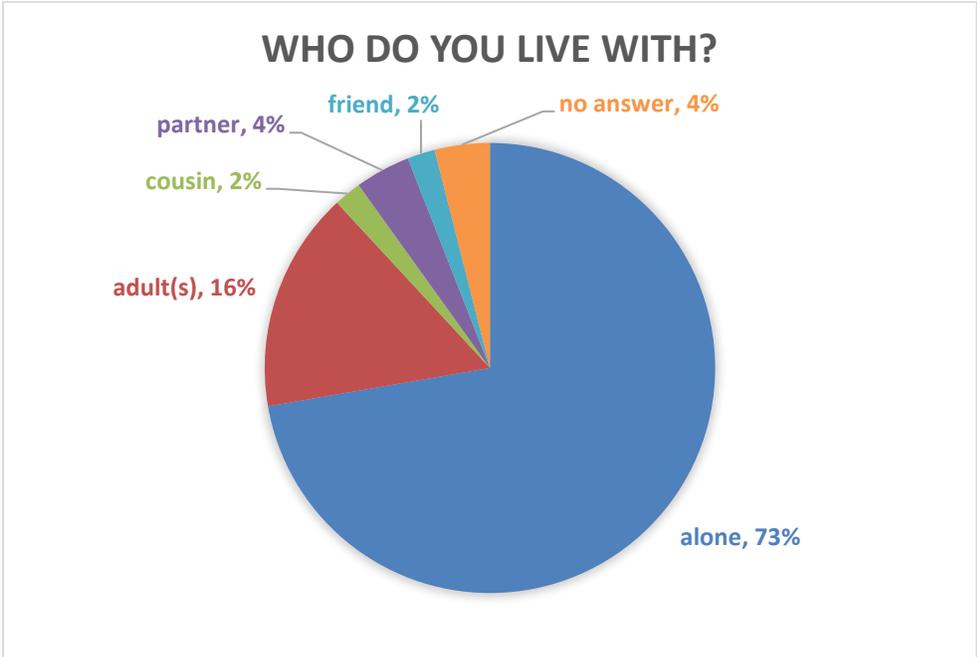
Shelter Uptake

We asked youth currently experiencing homelessness whether they had stayed in an emergency shelter over the past year. Responses – broken down by age group – were as follows:

HAVE YOU STAYED IN AN EMERGENCY SHELTER IN THE PAST YEAR (13 TO 18 YEARS OLD; N=15)?

- yes, 6
- no, 9
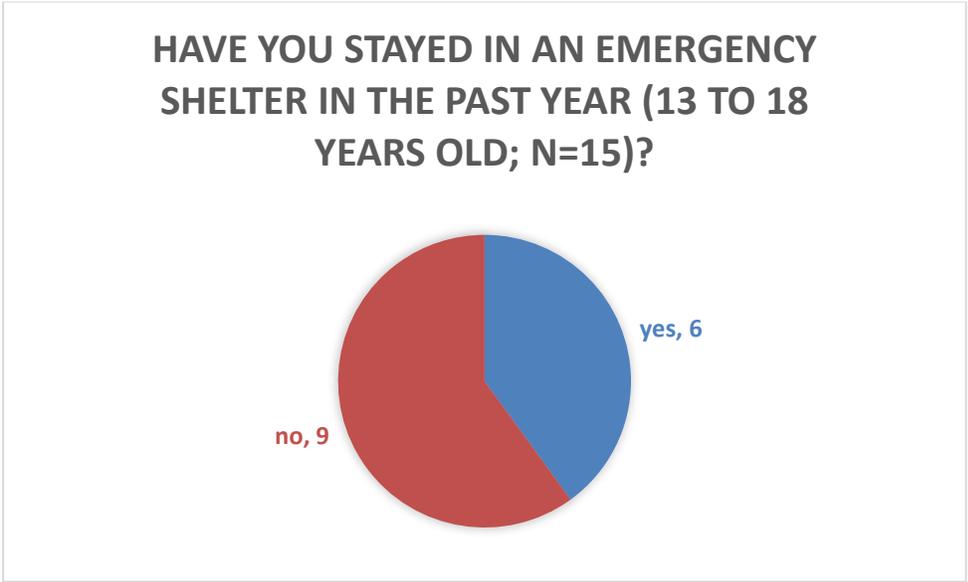
HAVE YOU STAYED IN AN EMERGENCY SHELTER IN THE PAST YEAR (19 TO 24 YEARS OLD; N=40)?

don't know, 1

yes, 17

no, 22
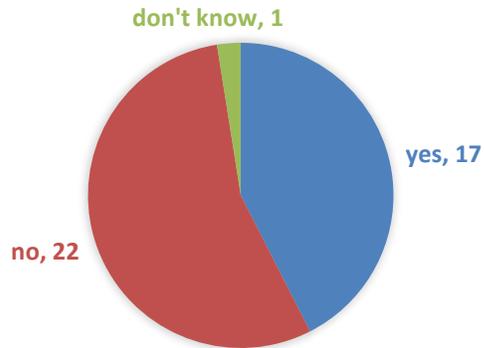
Specific Populations

Aboriginal Youth

We asked youth who have experienced homelessness and those currently experiencing homelessness about their cultural identity:

CULTURAL IDENTITY OF YOUTH WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED HOMELESSNESS

Non-aboriginal, 45%
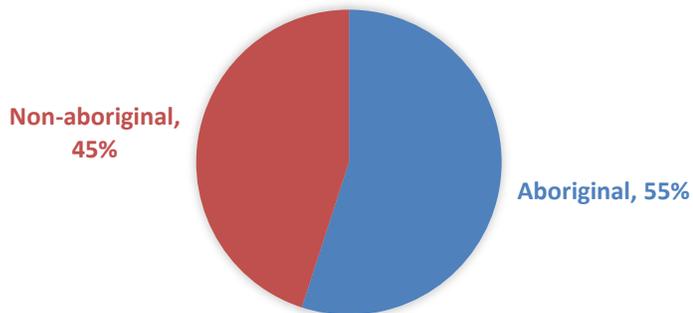
Aboriginal, 55%

CULTURAL IDENTITY OF YOUTH CURRENTLY HOMELESS

Non-aboriginal, 41%
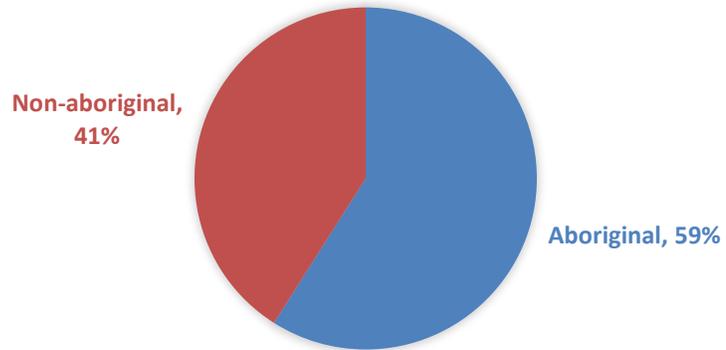
Aboriginal, 59%

IDENTITY OF ABORIGINAL YOUTH WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED HOMELESSNESS

No answer, 7%

Metis, 20%

First Nations, 58%

Non-status, 15%
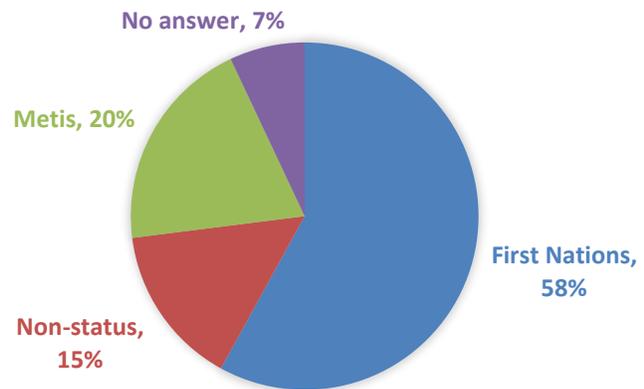
Youth in Care or Youth Formerly in Care

We asked youth whether they had ever lived in foster care or a group home, and whether they had aged out of foster care.

YOUTH WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED HOMELESSNESS - HAVE YOU EVER LIVED IN FOSTER CARE OR A GROUP HOME?

No, don't know, decline to answer, 45%

Yes, 55%
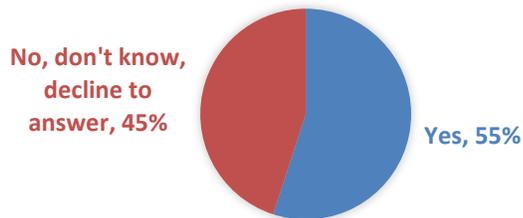
YOUTH WHO ARE CURRENTLY HOMELESS - HAVE YOU EVER LIVED IN FOSTER CARE OR A GROUP HOME?

No, don't know, decline to answer, 43%

Yes, 57%
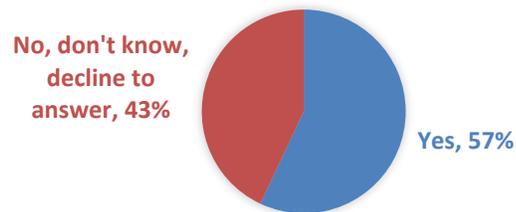
YOUTH AGE 19 AND OVER CURRENTLY EXPERIENCING HOMELESSNESS - DID YOU AGE OUT OF FOSTER CARE?

Yes, 40%

No, don't know, decline to answer, 60%
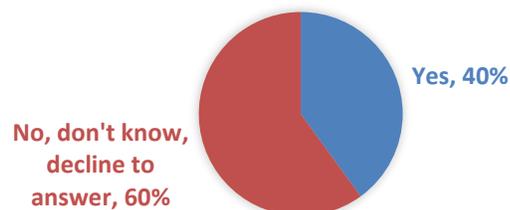
Limitations

While the 2016 Kamloops Youth Homelessness Count was very robust, the Count and the results are subject to several limitations. The first three limitations relate to the Count Survey tool:

Length and Language

Feedback on the survey suggests that it may have been too long and that the language may have been confusing to some youth. These factors contributed to some surveys being incomplete.

Determining Experience of Homelessness

Because youth experiencing homelessness may not consider themselves homeless, determining an experience of homelessness depends on asking several questions about where a person is staying and the permanence and suitability of their accommodation. The Count Committee "qualified" an individual as homeless only if more than one response supported such a conclusion. However, in some cases it was not perfectly clear whether an individual was experiencing homelessness just from survey responses. This limitation does not lead exclusively to *over*estimation of numbers of youth experiencing homelessness; it may also lead to underestimation, since many individuals were not categorized as homeless despite the existence of evidence that they did not have a permanent and suitable place to stay.

Duplication

The survey included questions about a respondent's initials and birthdate, in order to avoid including an individual more than once. This was especially important because the Count took place over a week's time, and an individual might come into contact with the survey at several different service agencies or Count events. Despite these steps to avoid duplication, there may be a chance that an individual completed the survey more than once, if they provided incorrect identifying information.

Besides limitations in the survey tool, and despite a very broad survey net - including a service count, magnet events, PIT count, and public systems count – the Count may be limited by failure to reach all youth experiencing homelessness. It is for this reason that such counts represent *minimum* estimates of people experiencing homelessness. Several factors may have limited participation:

Youth Disconnection

Despite a broad variety of methods in the Count, there may be youth experiencing homelessness who were not found by the PIT Count, the service count, nor the public systems count and who did not attend magnet events.

Youth Declining to Participate

The Count survey was voluntary, and some youth may have declined to participate, for various reasons. For one, some youth fear authority. Others may decline out of fear that a duty to report when a child is in need of protection could negatively impact their lives or situation.

Agency Buy-In

While many agencies agreed to participate in the Count, it is not always easy for staff or frontline workers to incorporate the survey into their regular duties and interactions. Not every youth who accessed services during the week of the Count was surveyed, and there were varying degrees of participation between agencies.

Learnings

The *A Way Home* Steering Committee debriefed learnings from the Count at a regular meeting, and a phone and email survey were used to solicit feedback from partners. This feedback will help inform changes to the next Kamloops Youth Homelessness Count. Key learnings include:

Survey Tool Language

Because we tried to fit the Federal Government's PIT Count questions, we discovered language that was not youth-friendly, which resulted in confusion for participants. Specific examples include:

- Use of the term "permanent residence" in question #1: *"Do you have a permanent residence to return to?"* A youth's sense of permanence is quite different from an adult's. Many youth who answered "yes" to this question then reported that they would be sleeping outside or couch surfing that night.
- Question #2: *"Where are you staying tonight?"* As the survey was used in many environments such as schools, where some youth have not experienced homelessness, many youth who had always lived at home with their parents were confused by this question. Some who live with their parents identified that they were sleeping "at someone else's place." By reviewing follow-up questions, we were able to determine that they lived with their parents; for example, a sixteen-year-old saying they had lived in the same place for 16 years and in other questions did not disclose any episodes of homelessness was not categorized as homeless.
- Question #6: *"Have you ever lived in foster care or in a group home?"* Some youth were confused by the question asking if they had been in foster care or on a Youth Agreement if they had not been exposed to those terms. A definition for these concepts will need to be provided in subsequent counts.

- Question #9: "*Over the past year, how much of the time have you been homeless?*" One response option given for this question was "0-2 months," which means a person could select this option without having had an experience of homelessness. This question was therefore not used to determine an experience of homelessness.
- Question #16: "*Do you practice any of the following sources of livelihood (hunting, fishing, gathering, and harvesting)?*" Many non-Aboriginal youth answered this question based on recreational activities.
- Question #19: "*Have you ever had service in the Canadian Military or RCMP?*" Many youth under age 19 mistakenly responded "yes," as they misunderstood the question as one asking whether they had been arrested or charged.

Survey Structure

The survey was structured in such a way as to build relationship and engagement with early questions, but feedback identified that a shorter survey was required, since many youth did not complete the entire survey. Responses to qualitative questions were hard to compare, but gave an opportunity for youth to share their voice. Many youth did not complete qualitative questions at the end, so in the future we may mix these questions throughout to prevent burnout. In subsequent counts, the committee will create a youth-specific survey with more youth-friendly language.

De-Duplicator

The code did not protect anonymity as youth used their initials and birthdate. While reviewing survey data, youth were easily identified. This showed the need to take greater care to safeguard privacy.

Cultural Barriers

Within the school survey, exchange students were confused around their housing situation.

Training

Community members who had volunteered in the past for general PIT Counts did not need to complete the training this year, so did not receive the new information regarding the youth-specific lens. In subsequent counts, there will be a separate training for a Youth-specific Point in Time Count that will map youth hot spots and support volunteers to manage the duty to report. A tally count will also be applied for youth in the shelter system choosing not to participate in the count.

Youth Joking Around

Some youth did not take the survey seriously and answered questions jokingly. To mitigate this risk, youth should be supported to complete interviews.

Service Count

Effective agency engagement requires engaging all levels of leadership within an organization such as the Executive Director, middle management, and frontline staff. In the future, training will be provided to key contacts well in advance of the count to allow for agency-wide training. Some agencies could use this opportunity to pre-identify youth experiencing homelessness on their caseloads and plan to complete the survey during the count. To support agencies with the Count, Social Work students will be engaged to have booths at various agencies and hot spots to complete the surveys with youth.

Timing

The Youth Count week began on a Thursday, stopped through the weekend and restarted on Monday. This was confusing to some agencies and the count may have lost momentum. Subsequent counts will take place over a five-day week from Monday to Friday.

Funding and Resources

Undertaking a homelessness count of this size requires considerable energy and resources. The success of such projects depends on having enough people with enough time dedicated to planning, organization, execution, and reporting.

Areas for Further Study

Now that a 2016 benchmark has been set of the minimum number of youth experiencing homelessness, there is a hope to see a reduction in youth homelessness next year. Areas for further study and development include:

- Developing a Youth Specific Survey
- Implementing a Youth Point in Time Count
- Using social media such as Twitter and Facebook to reach another audience of youth experiencing homelessness.
- Further developing the School Survey to assess risk factors for future homelessness to inform prevention efforts throughout School District 73.
- Further exploring the correlation between youth aging out of care and homelessness, as well as measuring the number of youth currently in care experiencing homelessness.

Conclusion

A Way Home Kamloops is thankful to be the first community to conduct a Youth Homelessness Count in Canada. We hope our experience helps other communities to conduct their own youth counts and demonstrates that Youth Specific Counts are required to measure a reduction in youth homelessness. Our Youth Homelessness Count provided many lessons that will inform our methodology in subsequent years. We would like to thank all the partners who made this Youth Count possible and who together have risen to become a community that raises its children wisely.

We are grateful to the Youth Count Team, whose creativity, collaboration, planning, and execution efforts brought to life the concept of a Youth Count. Most importantly, we honour and recognize the youth whose voices informed this research and the future work of Kamloops *A Way Home* Committee. Youth voice is critical to making the necessary changes in community to ensure every youth has access to safe housing.

A Special Recognition of Funding Partners:

> *Rotary Club of Kamloops Daybreak*
> *Kamloops Surplus Herbies*
> *Community Members*
> *Kamloops Subway*
> *Kamloops Domino's Pizza*
> *Sweet Spot Cupcakes*
> *City of Kamloops*
> *NRI Distribution Inc.*
> *Thompson Rivers University Trades*
> *Blue Sky Clothing Co.*
> *Kamloops Domtar Pulp*
> *Kamloops North Shore Safeway*
> *Government of Canada*

For more information about this report, please contact:

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SURVEY INFO

Location: _____ **Time:** _____AM/PM

Surveyor's Name and Contact Info:_____ **Phone:** _____

First, Middle, & Last Name Initials _____ **Birth Month** _____ **Birth Year** _____ **Age** _____

Are you a service provider or guardian completing the form on behalf of a youth not engaged in services?
Yes ☐ **No**☐

> **Thank you for your participation. Your responses will remain anonymous and the information collected will help improve services available to you and assist with identifying our Community's needs**

CURRENT SITUATION

1. Do you have a permanent residence that you can return to tonight?

Yes ☐   No ☐   Don't Know ☐   Decline to answer☐

2. Where are you staying tonight?

☐ Decline to answer

☐ Own apartment/house

☐ Someone else's place (friend or family)

    ☐ Couch surfing

☐ Motel/hotel

☐ Hospital, jail, prison, remand centre

☐ Emergency shelter, domestic violence shelter

☐ Transitional housing

☐ Public space (e.g., sidewalks, squares, parks, forests, bus shelter)

☐ Vehicle (car, van, RV, truck)

☐ Makeshift shelter, tent or shack

☐ Abandoned/vacant building

☐ Other unsheltered location unfit for human habitation (specify)_____

☐ Respondent doesn't know [likely homeless]

a. How long have you lived there?

_____

b. Do you have your own bedroom?

_____

c. How long can you stay there?

_____

d. Where will you go afterwards?

_____

3. What family members are with you / who do you live with**?**

☐ None

☐ Partner

☐ Decline to answer

☐ Other Adult_____

☐ Child(ren)/Dependent(s) [indicate age and gender]
_____
_____

4. Did you move to Kamloops in the past year?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't Know ☐ Decline to answer☐

If yes, where did you move from?

If yes, how long do you plan to live in Kamloops?

5. Did you come to Canada as an immigrant or refugee within the past 5 years?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't Know ☐ Decline to answer☐

6. Have you ever lived in foster care or in a group home?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't Know ☐ Decline to answer☐

Did you age out of care at 19?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't Know ☐ Decline to answer☐

Have you been, or are you currently, under a youth agreement?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't Know ☐ Decline to answer☐

7.	**Have you stayed in an emergency shelter in the past year?**	**Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't Know ☐ Decline to answer☐**

How many times have you stayed in a shelter?

8.	**Were you homeless any time between Oct 13-21, 2016?**	**Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't Know ☐ Decline to answer☐**

9. **Over the past year, *how much of the time* have you been homeless? [Best estimate]**

☐ Length: _____ days / weeks / months   ☐ 0-2 months

☐ Don't know   ☐ 3-5 months

☐ Decline to answer   ☐ 6-12 months

10. **Over the past year, *how many different times* have you experienced homelessness? [Best estimate]**

☐ Number of times_____   ☐ 1 time [this is the first time/ current episode]

☐ Don't know   ☐ 2 times

☐ Decline to answer   ☐ 3 or more times

11. **How long was your longest period of homelessness in Kamloops?** [ever]

☐ Length: _____ days/weeks/months/years   ☐ Don't know

                                                   ☐ Decline to answer

12.	**Have you talked to a school teacher, counselor, or principal about where you are living?**	**Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't Know ☐ Decline to answer☐**

13. **What happened that caused you to lose your housing most recently?**

Why is it/was it difficult to get housing?

☐ Illness or medical condition

☐ Addiction or substance use

☐ Job loss

☐ Evicted: Unable to pay rent

☐ Evicted: Other reason

☐ Domestic abuse: Spouse or partner

☐ Domestic abuse: Parent or guardian

☐ Family conflict: Spouse or partner

☐ Family conflict: Parent or guardian

☐ Left care (child protection)

☐ Incarcerated (jail or prison)

☐ Hospitalization or treatment program

☐ Unsafe housing conditions

☐ Other reason _____

☐ Don't know

☐ Decline to answer

14. **Describe the kind of housing you feel would be best for you:**

15. **What would help you find permanent, safe, stable housing?**

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INCOME AND EDUCATION

16. Where do you get your money from?

☐ Employment

☐ Informal/self-employment (e.g., bottle returns, panhandling)

☐ Employment insurance

☐ Welfare/income assistance

☐ Disability benefit

☐ Child and family tax benefits

☐ Money from family/friends

☐ Other source _____

☐ No income

☐ Decline to answer

17. Do you practice any of the following sources of livelihood?

☐ Hunting   ☐ Fishing   ☐ Gathering   ☐ Harvesting   ☐ Other: _____

18. Are you currently going to school?   Yes ☐   No ☐   Don't Know ☐   Decline to answer ☐

What grade or post-secondary school have you completed?

ABOUT YOU

19. Do you identify as Aboriginal or do you have Aboriginal, Indigenous, First Nations, Métis, or Inuit ancestry?

☐ **Yes** →   ☐ First Nations   ☐ Inuit   ☐ Métis   ☐ Non-status / have Aboriginal ancestry

☐ No   ☐ Don't Know   ☐ Decline to answer

Which Territory or Nation do you identify with?

Have you recently moved from off-reserve?   Yes ☐   No ☐   Don't Know ☐   Decline to answer ☐

Do you speak, or know some of, your Native language?   Yes ☐   No ☐   Don't Know ☐   Decline to answer ☐

If yes, which?

Do you engage in cultural or traditional practices?   Yes ☐   No ☐   Don't Know ☐   Decline to answer ☐

20. Have you ever had any service in the Canadian military or the RCMP?

☐ Yes   ☐ Military   ☐ RCMP

☐ No   ☐ Don't Know   ☐ Decline to answer

21. What gender do you identify with?

☐ Male   ☐ Female   ☐ Transgender   ☐ Two-Spirited

☐ Don't know   ☐ Decline to answer   ☐ Other response_____

22. Do you identify as part of the LGBTQ2S+ community?
(Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Transgender, Transsexual, Queer, Questioning, Two-Spirited, Other)   Yes ☐   No ☐   Don't Know ☐   Decline to answer ☐

23. How do you access healthcare?
(e.g. hospital, King Street, walk-in clinic…)

24. In general, what services or agencies do you access for help and / or information? *(e.g. agency names or service types)*

Thank you for your participation.