



## **2013 Homeless Point-In-Time Study**

### **Seven County Denver Metro Region**

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### Acknowledgements

This is the twelfth Homeless Point-In-Time study conducted by The Metropolitan Denver Homeless Initiative (MDHI) since 1998. Linda Barringer, chair of MDHI's Research Committee, supported the study. The Denver Department of Human Services contributed funding for this project.

MDHI identified people in each jurisdiction to help coordinate and to ensure that all providers within their jurisdiction were participating, attending training, and distributing and collecting survey forms. The outstanding participation by all area providers in the 2013 survey was a direct result of the coordinated efforts of the following point persons:

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<b>Adams County</b>	<i>Alicia Aguilar</i>
<b>Arapahoe County</b>	<i>Josh Meis &amp; Keith Singer</i>
<b>Aurora</b>	<i>Sharon Duwaik</i>
<b>Boulder County</b>	<i>Guio Bravo &amp; Janet Walker Ready</i>
<b>City and County of Broomfield</b>	<i>Sharon Farrell</i>
<b>City and County of Denver</b>	<i>Chris Conner &amp; Melanie Lewis-Dickerson</i>
<b>Douglas County</b>	<i>Rand Clark &amp; Peter Ericson</i>
<b>Jefferson County</b>	<i>Linda Barringer</i>
<b>Domestic Violence Providers</b>	<i>Wendy Oldenbrook</i>
<b>HIV/AIDS</b>	<i>Tracie Smith &amp; Lisa Wheeler</i>
<b>Outreach</b>	<i>Randle Loeb</i>
<b>Veterans</b>	<i>Jennifer Daly &amp; Michelle Lapidow</i>
<b>Youth</b>	<i>Autumn Gold, Nicole Sherwood &amp; Chris Venable</i>

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We would like to thank all of the volunteers who administered the Point in Time survey, the homeless service providers who supported this effort, and especially the survey respondents who completed the surveys and shared their personal stories with us.

Thank you to Sally Shafroth and Adam Zarrin for their help in developing one page summaries for the metro-wide, county and city reports. We are grateful for your time and expertise!

#### *In Memory*

*We would like to acknowledge the significant contribution that Pat Lease made to the Point-In-Time effort over the last decade. Her leadership and guidance were essential to this project. We are grateful to have known Pat and worked with her over the years. We will remember her for her dedication to ending homelessness.*



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AURORA SERVICES CENTER  
AURORA WARMS THE NIGHT  
CLINICA  
COLFAX COMMUNITY NETWORK  
COMMUNITY REACH CENTER  
FAMILY TREE  
GATEWAY BATTERED WOMEN'S SHELTER  
IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY FOOD BANK  
IT TAKES A VILLAGE  
METRO COMMUNITY PROVIDER NETWORK (MCPN)  
MILE HIGH COUNCIL AND COMITIS FAMILY SERVICES  
RESTORATION OUTREACH PROGRAM

ARAPAHOE

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ARAPAHOE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
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STANLEY LAKE LIBRARY  
STRIDE  
THE ACTION CENTER





# 2013 Point-In-Time

## *Annual Assessment of Homelessness Selected Findings*

MDHI and stakeholders in the seven county metro Denver region conducted a Point-In-Time survey during the week of January 28, 2013. This overview provides responses from interviewees (respondents) and also captures information about anyone, such as children, dependents, or other family members in their household (all homeless).

***NOTE: The one consistent finding in all the research on homelessness is that surveys undercount homeless populations. People may enter and leave homelessness throughout the year – the Point-In-Time Survey is an approximate one day snap shot of homelessness in metro Denver.***

**Homeless Incidence:** On Monday, January 28, 2013 there were **11,167 homeless men, women and children** counted in the seven county Metro Denver area. This number only includes people who filled out a survey and their family members, and we know this to be an undercount.

**On the Street:** Of all homeless people, **8.3 percent** or **927** people were unsheltered (living on the street, under a bridge, in an abandoned or public building, in a car, camping, etc.) on the night of January 28, 2013.

**Newly Homeless:** **One in four (25.4%)** of all homeless persons were considered newly homeless. People are considered newly homeless if they have been homeless for less than one year and this is their first episode of homelessness. Of the newly homeless, fully two-thirds (67.6%) or 1,853 people were in households with children.

**Families:** Homeless persons are much more likely to be living in households with children: **62 percent with children versus 38 percent without children.**

**Domestic Violence:** **1,395 adults and children** reported being homeless due to domestic violence.

**Employment:** Nearly **one third (30.1%)** of respondents reported they or someone in their household had worked in the past month.

**Chronically Homeless:** **Thirteen percent (12.7%)** of respondents, **709 individuals**, meet HUD's definition of chronically homeless. Three-quarters (75.4%) of the chronically homeless, or 526 persons, are male, 167 (23.9 %) are female and five people identify as transgender. The great majority of chronically homeless respondents are single (590 persons or 83.2%).

**Youth:** The 2013 Point-in-Time marked the first time HUD required communities to report the number of unsheltered unaccompanied minors and youth 18-24 years old (known as transition aged youth or TAY). MDHI in partnership with the Colorado Office of Homeless Youth in the Colorado Division of Housing, youth serving organizations, McKinney-Vento School Homeless Liaisons and youth currently and formerly homeless youth made an increased effort to reach out and include youth in the Point-in-Time count. We counted **921 youth** head of households in 2013, an increase from the 777 counted in 2012.

**Veterans:** We only asked respondents, those who completed the survey, about their veteran status. This does not include family members. More than ***one in ten*** respondents (**626 or 11.5%**) served in the military. The vast majority is male (90.6%). Nearly 40 percent (39.2%) were staying in an emergency shelter, 16.2 percent were in transitional housing, ten percent (10.5%) were staying in a hotel or motel paid for by themselves or with a voucher, and ten percent (10.0%) were couch surfing. Nearly 15 percent (14.7% -- 91 veterans) were living on the street or in a car on the night of the Point-in-Time. One hundred and nineteen veterans (19.0%) were identified as chronically homeless.

**Notable trends over past three years:**

- The proportion of respondents reporting serious mental illness, a serious medical or physical condition or a problem with substance abuse increased over the past three years.
- The proportion of homeless veterans dropped slightly over the past three years.
- More respondents are homeless for a longer period of time in 2013 than in prior years.
- The proportion of chronically homeless respondents increased over the past three years.
- The proportion of all unsheltered homeless increased steadily over the past three years.
- Respondents reporting on where they were last housed versus where they were homeless on the night of January 28, 2013, indicates migration across seven county area which increases housing and service burdens on several metro area cities and counties.
- According to Colorado Division of Housing (<http://www.divisionofhousing.com/2013/01/vacancy-and-rent-surveys.html#.UbeHdOfkvQx>) there has been a steady decrease in rental housing vacancy rates across the seven county metro area over the past three years.
- Overall, respondents in the seven county metro area are more likely in 2013 than in previous years to be unsheltered, chronically homeless, homeless for longer and to have at least one disabling condition.

***For complete 2013 Point-In-Time report as well as County and select city reports go to: [www.mdhi.org](http://www.mdhi.org)***

***Metropolitan Denver Homeless Initiative***

***Mission: To coordinate and support the Denver Metro Continuum of Care (COC) (cities and counties) to ensure the most efficient and effective services to reduce homelessness in the seven-county region.***

*The metro Denver Continuum of Care includes Adams County, Arapahoe County, Boulder County, City and County of Broomfield, City and County of Denver, Douglas County, & Jefferson County*

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## Table of Contents

I.	INTRODUCTION .....	1
II.	UNDERSTANDING THE DATA .....	2
	<i>Undercounting</i> .....	2
	<i>Submitted Surveys</i> .....	3
	<i>Variables</i> .....	3
III.	FINDINGS .....	4
	<i>Total Homeless Persons</i> .....	4
	<b>DEMOGRAPHICS</b> .....	5
	1. Family Type .....	5
	2. Gender .....	6
	3. Ages .....	6
	4. Race/Ethnicity/Language-Respondents .....	7
	<b>HOUSING AND RISK FACTORS FOR HOMELESSNESS</b> .....	8
	5. Reasons for Homelessness.....	8
	6. Domestic Violence .....	9
	7. Disabling Conditions .....	10
	8. Military Service, Foster Care, Work .....	12
	9. Government Benefits .....	14
	<b>NATURE OF HOMELESSNESS</b> .....	14
	10. Duration and Episodes of Homelessness .....	14
	11. Newly Homeless .....	15
	12. Chronically Homeless .....	16
	13. Where Persons Spent Monday Night .....	18
	14. Unsheltered .....	20
	15. Counties .....	21
	16. Last Permanent Residence .....	22
	<b>Summary</b> .....	24
IV.	METHODOLOGY .....	26
	<i>List of Tables and Figures</i>	
	<i>PIT Surveys</i>	

# METROPOLITAN DENVER HOMELESS INITIATIVE

## POINT-IN-TIME COUNT 2013

***Monday night, January 28, 2013, there were 11,167 homeless men, women and children counted in the annual Point-In-Time study in Metropolitan Denver.***

### INTRODUCTION

With the help of volunteers, service providers, staff, and outreach workers, the Metropolitan Denver Homeless Initiative (MDHI) conducted a Point-In-Time (PIT) study of people experiencing homelessness in the seven-county Denver Metropolitan area. A Point-In-Time count provides a snapshot of homelessness by counting those who are homeless at a particular time.

MDHI is a coalition working with homeless assistance agencies in the seven-county Denver metropolitan area to coordinate the delivery of housing and services to homeless families, individuals, youth and persons with disabilities. Its mission is to coordinate and support the Denver Metro Continuum of Care to ensure the most efficient and effective services to reduce homelessness in the seven-county region. MDHI seeks to provide the leadership, support and structure necessary to develop and sustain a comprehensive system of housing and services for those experiencing homelessness. Referred to as the Continuum of Care, this system encompasses Adams, Arapahoe, Boulder, Broomfield, Denver, Douglas and Jefferson Counties. With emphasis on prevention, MDHI works to unite housing and service providers, neighborhoods, funders, business and non-profit organizations, government agencies

and other groups and individuals across the metropolitan area in an ongoing effort to break the cycle of homelessness and help persons experiencing homelessness achieve and maintain maximum self-sufficiency.

Designing, implementing and maintaining a Continuum of Care homeless service delivery system requires the on-going collection and analysis of data on the number, location and demographic characteristics of persons experiencing homelessness who need access to emergency shelter, supportive housing, permanent housing and specialized services. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the primary source of federal funding for housing support for homeless populations, requires that each Continuum of Care across the country conduct a "Point-In-Time" survey every two years during the month of January. HUD, MDHI, local governments and service providers use the information collected by the point-in-time survey to assess, project and plan strategies and services to eliminate homelessness.

The PIT data were collected for three years using a very similar survey instrument from 2011 to 2013. Additionally, the data collection methods were nearly identical across these years. Differences in the majority of data points over the three years were minimal. In this report, we highlight trends and differences where they exist.

MDHI defines homelessness as:

- Sleeping in places not meant for human habitation, such as cars, parks, sidewalks, or abandoned or condemned buildings;
- Sleeping in an emergency shelter or safe haven;
- Spending a short time (30 consecutive days or less) in a hospital or other institution, but ordinarily sleeping in the types of places mentioned above;
- Living in transitional/supportive housing but having come from streets or emergency shelters;
- Staying temporarily with family or friends while looking for a permanent place to live;
- Staying temporarily in a hotel/motel while looking for shelter or housing;
- Being evicted within 14 days from a private dwelling unit and having no subsequent residence identified and lacking the resources and support networks needed to obtain access to housing;
- Being discharged from an institution within 14 days and having no subsequent residence identified and lacking the resources and support networks needed to obtain access to housing.

## UNDERSTANDING THE DATA

### ***Undercounting***

There is no disagreement that it is difficult to count people who are experiencing homelessness. The one consistent finding in all the research on homelessness is that surveys undercount homeless populations. It is easy to “miss” individuals and families who are experiencing homelessness -- they might not receive services at the agencies where persons experiencing homelessness are counted on the night of the PIT, or if they do frequent a particular agency, they might not be there during the count. People enter and leave homelessness frequently and may become homeless shortly after the Point-In-Time study. The comprehensiveness of a sheltered homeless count is entirely dependent upon the level of participation of agencies and organizations that serve homeless individuals and families.

Unsheltered people who are experiencing homelessness are particularly difficult to count.

By definition, they are not in places where they can easily be counted, such as transitional housing and homeless shelters.<sup>1</sup> We do not count many people who are experiencing homelessness because they are not in places where they can be found, much less where they have the opportunity to complete a survey, such as those living on the street, in automobiles and other kinds of unacceptable temporary housing. Youth on their own and individuals and families who are doubled up with friends and relatives are often underrepresented among those who access homeless services.<sup>2</sup> Others are homeless due to domestic violence and, because of confidentiality concerns, do not complete surveys. Still others are likely afraid of being counted, such as undocumented persons and persons experiencing mental illness.

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<sup>1</sup> For example, “Number of Homeless Ohioans,” Coalition on Homelessness and Housing in Ohio, 8/27/02; “Report on Homelessness in North Dakota, March 2005” (p. 15); S.J. Farrell and E.D. Reissing, “Picking Up the Challenge: Developing a Methodology to Enumerate and Assess the Needs of the Street Homeless Population,” *Evaluation Review*, Vol. 28, No. 2, April 2004, pp. 144-155.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

### Submitted Surveys

Table 1 describes the number of Point-In-Time surveys collected by agency staff and volunteers and the number of surveys removed from the final dataset.

**Table 1. Survey Collection and Elimination**

Surveys collected	7,416
Not homeless removed	1,532
Duplicates removed	244
Spent night out of Metro area removed	38
Final cases in database	5,602

In 2013, fewer surveys that were collected were identified as not homeless than in 2012: 20.7 versus 24.9 percent. This is because fewer surveys were collected at places such as employment services, food pantries, and other human service agencies.

MDHI recruited as many service providers, volunteers and outreach workers as possible for the 2013 count. MDHI used an extensive system of trained agency staff and volunteers to collect the survey data in order to keep the cost of the Point-In-Time count affordable. Where possible, volunteers and agency staff assisted homeless (or assumed homeless) individuals to complete the two-sided survey.

### Variables

Some variables are reported only for respondents and others for both respondents and all homeless. For all homeless, the data represent respondents and the family members who are with them.

Table 2 describes which variables from the survey are reported for respondents, for all homeless and for both.

**Table 2. Reporting on Survey Data Points / Variables**

VARIABLES	RESPONDENTS	ALL HOMELESS
Age	X	
Chronic homelessness	X	X
County	X	X
Disabling conditions <sup>3</sup>	X	
Duration of homelessness	X	
Episodes of homelessness	X	
Ethnicity	X	
Foster care	X	
Family type	X	X
Gender	X	
Government benefits	X	
Households with and without children		X
Last permanent place	X	
Military service	X	
Where spent Monday night	X	X
Newly homeless		X
Reasons for homelessness	X	
Unsheltered		X
Victim of domestic violence	X	X
Working	X	

<sup>3</sup> Respondents were asked, "Do you or **any adult** in your household (eighteen or older) have any of the following?" and given a list of conditions and told to check all that apply.

## FINDINGS

Some survey respondents did not answer every question. As a result, the percentages reported in each sub-section of the report, in tables and in graphs represent only those people who answered the particular question and not the total number of respondents. In other words, unless otherwise noted, the percentages do not include “missing” responses. ***Additionally, when adding up numbers in various categories, the number will not always equal the number of “respondents” or “all homeless” due to survey questions that were not answered.***

***It is important to note that we report the findings for respondents and all homeless. Respondents are those individuals who completed the survey. The “all homeless” category is the sum of respondents and the homeless family members with them.*** The findings are reported in one or both of these two categories, depending on which category is most useful and informative and on ***whether the variable logically can be imputed to all homeless. For example, military status can be reported for respondents only, while it makes sense to report where people spent Monday night for all homeless.***

### **Total Estimated Homeless Persons**

Some respondents who identified themselves as having children, either as part of a couple or as a single person/parent, did not document these family members when completing their survey. Other respondents reported they were part of a couple without children but did not document their spouse or partner. Where respondents did report their family members with them on the night of January 28th, we calculated the average number of family members in the appropriate category and

applied the average to those respondents that neglected to report any information about their family members. For example, if a respondent said they were a single parent with children and did not indicate the number of people with them or report ages or relationships in the family “table,” the researchers applied the average family size for single parents.<sup>4</sup>

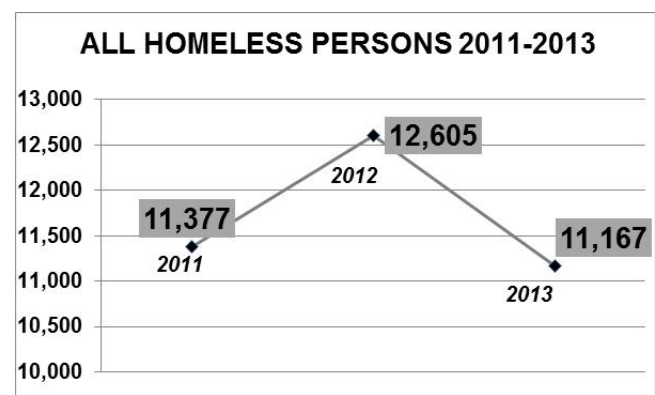
The total homeless count, including respondents and family members is shown in Table 3.

**Table 3. Total Homeless**

Respondents	5,602
Family Members	5,565
<b>Total All Homeless</b>	<b>11,167</b>

The total count of all people experiencing homelessness in 2011 to 2013 is shown in Figure 1.

**Figure 1. PIT Count 2011-2013**



<sup>4</sup> The average household size for single parents is 3.20 persons, and the average household size for couples with children is 4.49 persons.

## DEMOGRAPHICS

### 1. Family Type

People who identified themselves as single or as part of a couple without children are grouped as “households without children.” People who identified themselves as a single person/parent with children or as part of a couple with children are categorized as “households with children.”<sup>5</sup> Family type is reported for respondents and for all homeless, while households with and without children is reported only for all homeless.

Single respondents are predominantly male – 2,437 individuals (75.1%). One-quarter of single respondents are female – 801 individuals (24.7%), and nine are transgender (0.3%). In contrast, single parents are much more likely to be female than male: 81.6 percent compared to 18.3 percent.

**Table 4. Family Type – Respondents**

	Frequency	Percent
Single	3,300	58.9
Single parent with children under 18	1,307	23.3
Couple with children under 18	590	10.5
Couple without children	381	6.8
Other family type	24	0.4
Total	5,602	100.0

**Table 5. Family Type – All Homeless**

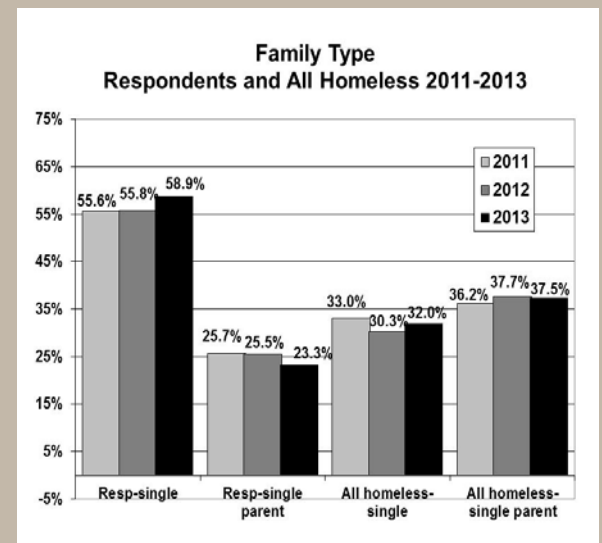
	All Homeless	Percent All Homeless
Single	3,571	32.0%
Single parent with children under 18	4,185	37.5%
Couple with children under 18	2,646	23.7%
Couple without children	733	6.6%
Other family type	32	0.3%
Total	11,167	100.0%

<sup>5</sup> There are some exceptions to this rule. A single person or a couple without children may have reported having a child under 18 with them, such as a sibling, a nephew, etc. In these cases, they were counted as a household with children but remain in the “single” family type category.

## TRENDS

### Family Type

There was a slight drop in the proportion of respondents living in single parent families and a small increase in the proportion of single respondents over the past three years. The proportion of single respondents increased from 55.6 percent in 2011 to 58.9 percent in 2013, while the proportion of single parent families dropped from 25.7 percent to 23.3 percent during the same period. The pattern is reversed for all homeless persons, with a slight decrease in the proportion of all single persons and a slight increase in the proportion of all persons in single parent families from 2011 to 2013.

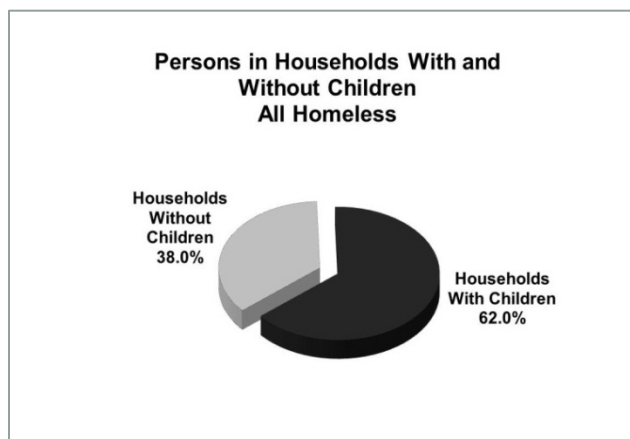




### Households With and Without Children

People who are experiencing homelessness are much more likely to be living in households with children: 62 percent versus 38 percent.

**Figure 2. All Homeless Persons in Households With and Without Children**



### TRENDS Households With Children

There was a slight drop in the percentage of all homeless who are living in households with children across the past three years. The proportion of all households with children is 61.6 percent in 2013, down from a peak of 64.4 percent in 2012 and a more modest 62.0 percent in 2011.

### 2. Gender

Male respondents outnumber female respondents: 56.2 percent to 43.4 percent. Twenty people (0.4%) identified themselves as transgender.

**Table 6. Gender – Respondents**

	Frequency	Percent
Males	3,097	56.2
Females	2,391	43.4
Transgender	20	0.4
Total	5508	100.0

While the majority of respondents are male overall, there are significant differences in gender across counties. The majority of respondents are male in Denver and Boulder, however, the majority of respondents are female in the remaining counties.

### 3. Ages

Respondents range in age from 12 to 84 years. Their average age is 40 years old.

**Table 7. Ages – Respondents**

	Frequency	Percent
Teen (13-17)	52	0.9
Young Adult (18-24)	869	15.8
Adult (25-64)	4451	80.9
Senior (65 and over)	130	2.4
Total	5502	100.0

In 2013, 921 or 16.7 percent of respondents were age 24 or younger, up from 13.5 percent in 2012 (although a high of 18.7% in 2011). Just 1 percent (0.9%) or 52 persons were 17 or younger. However, as practitioners know and as the National Alliance to End Homelessness reports, Point-In-Time counts do not reach most homeless youth.

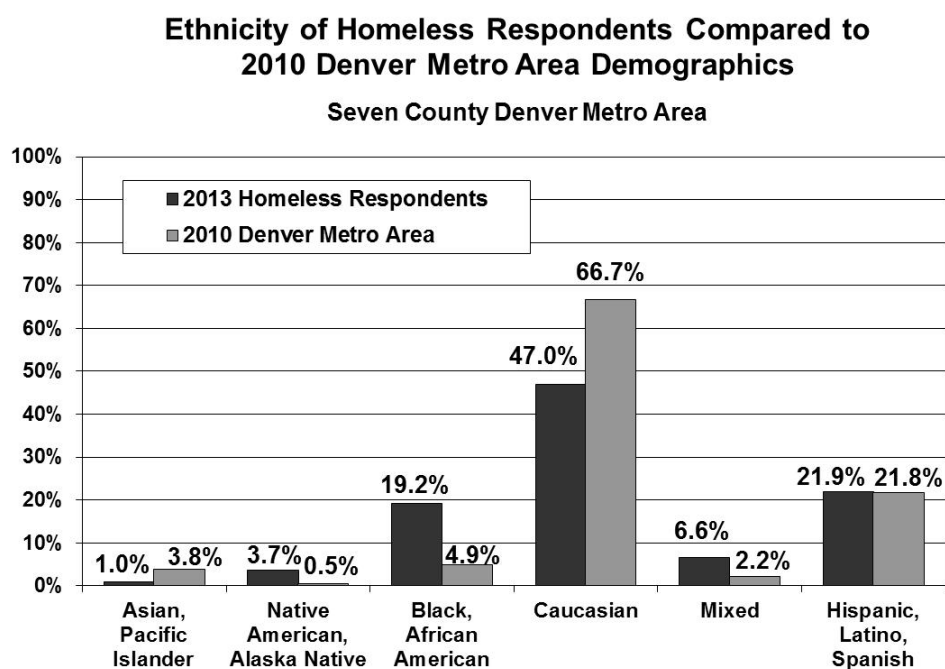
Unaccompanied youth often do not access “adult” services due to concerns about detection and safety, and they tend to be more mobile throughout the day than are homeless adults. The literature describes additional program-related and methodological barriers to accurately counting homeless youth. Given that the younger population is hard to reach, we can say with certainty that the 52 youth less than 18 years old counted in the 2013 PIT is an undercount.

**Table 8. Youth Age Categories by County**

	Teen (13-17)		Young Adult (18-24)		Total	
	#	Percent	#	Percent	#	Percent
Adams	1	1.9%	87	10.0%	88	9.6%
Arapahoe	0	0.0%	93	10.7%	93	10.1%
Boulder	32	61.5%	181	20.8%	213	23.1%
Broomfield	0	0.0%	19	2.2%	19	2.1%
Denver	12	23.1%	384	44.2%	396	43.0%
Douglas	0	0.0%	10	1.2%	10	1.1%
Jefferson	7	13.5%	95	10.9%	102	11.1%
	52	100.0%	869	100.0%	921	100.0%

#### 4. Race/Ethnicity/Language of Respondents

Compared to the general population of the 2010 seven county Denver Metro area, whites are substantially under-represented and African Americans and Native Americans are substantially over-represented among the homeless population.

**Figure 3. Ethnicity of Respondents Compared to 2010 General Population**

Four percent (4.0%) completed the survey in Spanish.

## HOUSING AND RISK FACTORS FOR HOMELESSNESS

### 5. Reasons for Homelessness

Homelessness is largely the result of a lack of affordable housing and of poverty. The National Coalition for the Homeless reports that recently, foreclosures are responsible for increasing the number of people who fall into homelessness. In the MDHI 2013 PIT, more than one in eight respondents (12.8%) said they were homeless due to eviction or foreclosure.

Foreclosures clearly are related to unemployment, the number one reason reported for respondents' homelessness.

Low-wages and less secure jobs with fewer benefits have put housing out of reach for many workers. In the Metro Denver area, over one quarter of respondents reported that housing costs are too high. Average rental rates in Denver Metro counties have climbed between 2009 and 2013 and the available rental market across the seven-county Metro area has been shrinking.<sup>6</sup>

**Table 9. Reasons for Homelessness – Respondents**

	Frequency	Percent
Lost job/can't find work	2,004	37.6
Housing costs too high	1,423	26.7
Relationship or family break-up/death in the family	1,193	22.4
Mental illness, emotional problems	789	14.8
Substance abuse	780	14.6
Eviction/foreclosure	684	12.8
Medical problems including physical, dev disability	651	12.2
Discharged from jail, prison, halfway house	493	9.3
Have work but wages too low	461	8.7
Abuse or violence in the home	447	8.4
Utility costs too high	398	7.5
Runaway/discharged from foster care	50	0.9
Sexual orientation	35	0.7
Other reason	448	8.4

Homelessness is due to a complex set of circumstances, such as unemployment, a decline in public benefits, shortage of affordable housing, lack of affordable health care, mental illness, substance abuse, etc. Conducting in-depth interviews to explore the life events of individuals and families would help us better understand solutions and promote the development of a typology of factors that contribute to homelessness. Based on this typology, experts could highlight interventions along a succession of events to help people avoid falling into homelessness. Such a typology would do a better job of informing program and policy development than a highly correlated list of reasons for homelessness that does not take context into account.

In the PIT survey, respondents were given a list of possible reasons for their homelessness and asked to indicate "all that apply." Overall, loss of a job was the

**Figure 4. Vacancy Rates**



<sup>6</sup> These data are from the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter of each calendar year. [www.divisionofhousing.com/2013/01/vacancy-and-rent-surveys.html#UbeHdOfkvQx](http://www.divisionofhousing.com/2013/01/vacancy-and-rent-surveys.html#UbeHdOfkvQx).

most common reason given. This reason was followed by housing costs, relationship or family breakup, mental illness and substance abuse. The three top reasons given for homelessness were consistent across 2011-2013 Point-In-Time survey efforts.

There are differences between households with and without children in their reasons for homelessness, some more striking than others. Table 10 compares the three most frequently reported reasons by households with and without children.

**Table 10. Top Three Reasons for Homelessness – Respondents in Households With and Without Children**

Reasons for Homelessness	Households Without Children		Households With Children	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Lost job/can't find work	1,364	39.0	640	35.0
Housing costs too high	750	21.4	673	36.8
Relationship or family break-up/death in family	685	19.6	508	27.8

While households with and without children share the same top three reasons for homelessness, there are significant differences between the two types of household. Households with children are substantially more likely than households without children to say that they are homeless because housing costs are too high, relationship or family break-up, violence in the home, wages are too low, medical problems, and utility costs are too high. All of these differences are significant at the .01 level.

In contrast, households without children are substantially more likely than households with children to say they are homeless because of substance abuse, mental illness or emotional problems and being discharged from jail, prison or a halfway house. Again, these differences are all significant at the .01 level.

Survey respondents wrote in “other” reasons for their current episode of homelessness. “Other” reasons given for experiencing homelessness were moving here from another city or state, a criminal record, immigration issues including “deportation” of a family member and various problems with government benefits, such as respondents had lost their benefits or were waiting for benefits. Additional reasons for homelessness were landlord/tenant issues and substandard housing conditions (overcrowding, bed bugs, building unsafe or not up to code).

## 6. Domestic Violence

For the past two years, MDHI included a survey question that specifically asked if the respondent was homeless due to domestic violence. Fully 616 respondents (11.5 %) reported that domestic violence was the reason for their homelessness. When considering all persons who are experiencing homelessness, 1,395 adults and children were homeless due to domestic violence.

We know with certainty that this is an undercount given concerns about safety and the prevalence of homelessness among women who have experienced domestic violence. The National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty reports that domestic violence is the primary cause of women’s homelessness: “between 22% and 57% of homeless women report that domestic or sexual violence was the immediate cause of their homelessness,

depending on the region and type of study.” The Center also reports that “up to 100 percent of homeless women have experienced domestic or sexual violence at some point in their lives.”<sup>7</sup>

Table 11 shows that nearly one in three (30.7%) of all homeless persons who are homeless due to domestic violence spent Monday night in a shelter (emergency, domestic violence or youth shelter), 29 percent were in transitional housing and one-fifth (24.8%) were staying with family or friends. Nearly five percent (4.5%) of all persons who reported experiencing homelessness due to domestic violence were unsheltered.

**Table 11. Domestic Violence as Reason for Homelessness and Where Spent Monday Night – All Homeless**

	All Homeless	Percent
Transitional housing	401	29.1
Temporarily with family/friends	341	24.8
Emergency shelter	276	20.1
Domestic violence shelter	143	10.4
Hotel/motel paid for by voucher	61	4.4
On street, under bridge, etc.	48	3.5
Hotel/motel paid for yourself	40	2.9
In car or other vehicle	14	1.0
Jail/prison	13	0.9
In own apt or house	11	0.8
Halfway house	10	0.7
Safe Haven	5	0.4
Substance abuse treatment program	4	0.3
Youth shelter	3	0.2
Hospital including psychiatric facility	2	0.1
Section 8 housing	1	0.1
Somewhere else	3	0.2
Total	1378	100.0

<sup>7</sup> National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty. *Some Facts on Homelessness, Housing, and Violence Against Women*. Metropolitan Denver Homeless Initiative

## 7. Disabling Conditions

HUD requires that the Point-In-Time survey include questions asking respondents to identify if, at the time of the survey, they or another adult in their household had any of the following disabling conditions – serious mental illness, a serious medical condition, chronic substance abuse issues, a developmental disability, or HIV/AIDS. Nearly half (47.6%) of respondents reported that they or some adult in their household had at least one of the five disabling conditions, *not* including some “other” disabling condition. The National Alliance to End Homelessness reports that approximately 40 percent of homeless adults have a disability.<sup>8</sup>

In Metro Denver, of those with one of the five disabling conditions, two-thirds (65.6%) reported only one disabling condition, one-quarter (25.1%) reported two, and 9.4 percent reported that an adult in their household had three or more disabling conditions. The largest group of respondents (23.1%) indicated that they or another adult in their household have a serious mental illness. Nationally, 20 to 25 percent of the homeless population suffers from a severe mental illness.<sup>9</sup> Following mental illness, respondents reported a serious medical or physical conditions or a substance abuse problem. Many respondents noted that a household member was suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and/or are bipolar.

**Table 12. Disabling Conditions – Respondents**

	Frequency	Percent
Mental illness	1,295	23.1
Medical or physical condition	1,227	21.9
Substance abuse	1,026	18.3
Developmental disability	205	3.7
HIV/AIDS	120	2.1
Other disability	46	0.8

<sup>8</sup> National Alliance to End Homelessness. *SOH 2012: Chapter Three – The Demographics of Homelessness*. January 2012.

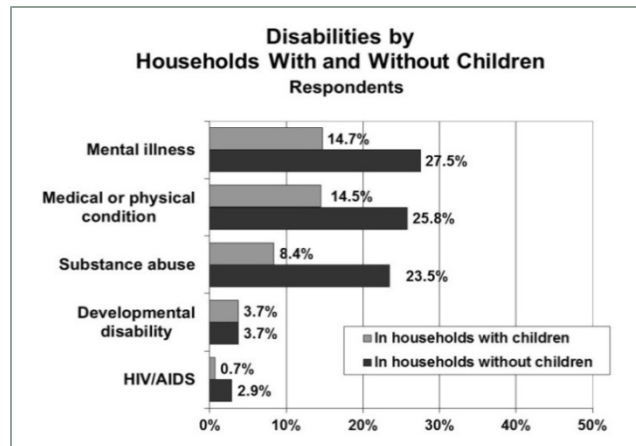
<sup>9</sup> Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. National Coalition for the Homeless. *Mental Illness and Homelessness*, July 2009.

### Disabling Conditions/Households

Households without children were almost twice as likely as households with children to report that an adult has at least one of the five disabling conditions: compare 56.8 percent with 30.2 percent.

Households without children are substantially more likely than households with children to report substance abuse (23.5% versus 8.4%) and a serious mental illness (27.5% versus 14.7%). All of these differences are significant at the .01 level.

Figure 5. Disabilities by Households

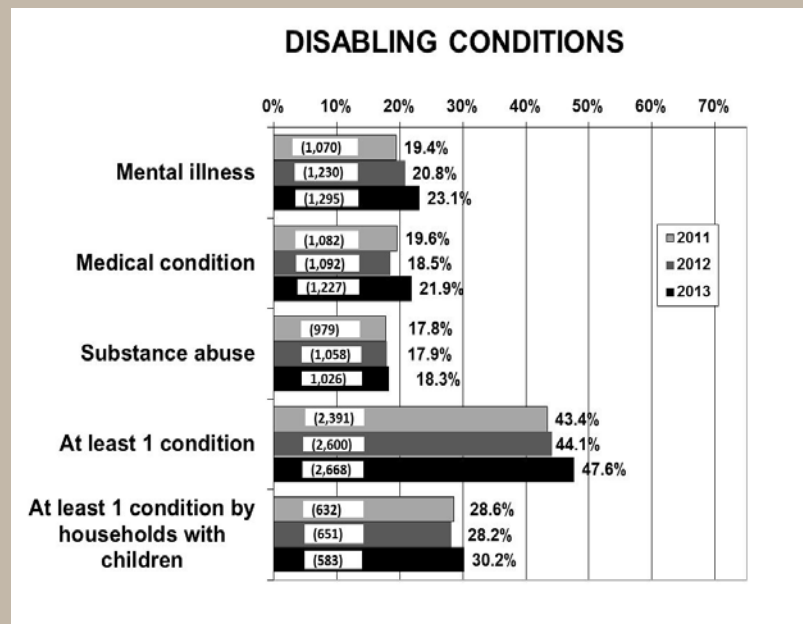


## TRENDS

### Disabling Conditions

Overall, the proportion of respondents reporting that they or any adult in their household has at least one of the five listed disabling conditions increased from 43.4 percent in 2011 to 47.6 percent in 2013.

Consistently, the proportion reporting serious mental illness, a serious medical or physical condition or a problem with substance abuse increased over the past 3 years.



The proportion of households with children reporting that an adult has at least one of the five disabling conditions increased slightly, from 28.6 percent in 2011 to 30.2 percent in 2013.

## 8. Military Service, Foster Care, Work

Respondents were asked, “Have you served in the U.S. Military (veteran) including the National Guard?” Also, respondents were asked if they had ever been in foster care and if in the past month they or anyone else in their household had received any money from working.

### ***Military Service***

The survey asked only respondents about their veteran status. The number of veterans does not include family members. Of the 5,602 respondents, more than one in ten respondents (11.5%) served in the military. The vast majority is male (90.6%). Nearly 40 percent (39.2%) were staying in an emergency shelter, 16.2 percent were in transitional housing, ten percent (10.5%) were staying in a hotel or motel paid for by themselves or with a voucher, and ten percent (10.0%) were couch surfing. Nearly 15 percent (14.7% -- 91 veterans) were living on the street or in a car on Monday night. One hundred and nineteen veterans (19.0%) were identified as chronically homeless.

Over one quarter (26.5%) of veterans reported a serious mental illness, one third (32.6%) reported a serious medical or physical condition, and one quarter of all respondents reported a medical / physical disability.

Just 16.0 percent of homeless veterans reported they are receiving VA benefits or pension; one in ten (20.4%) receive SSI/SSDI and one-third (33.7%) are receiving food stamps.

## **TRENDS Veterans**

The proportion of homeless veterans dropped slightly over the past three years, from a high of 12.9 percent in 2012 to 11.5 percent in 2013. In 2013, a higher proportion of veterans were unsheltered than in 2011 and a lesser proportion unsheltered in 2013 than in 2012: compare 14.7 percent unsheltered in 2013 with 11.3 percent in 2011 and 15.4 percent in 2012.

Veterans who are experiencing chronic homelessness have steadily increased since 2011, from 87 veterans in 2011, 92 in 2012, to 119 chronically homeless veterans in 2013.



**Foster Care**

The majority of young adults in the United States either lives with their parents or receives some form of economic support from family. Children aging out of foster care often lack the family support that other young people have. Studies show that one in five young people who age out of foster care will be homeless within two years. Half will not have a high school diploma, and fewer than three percent earn a college degree. A Casey Family Programs study showed that more than half of the youth leaving foster care were unemployed. About 60 percent of young women are already parents or are pregnant when they age out of foster care.<sup>10</sup>

In Metro Denver, more than one in ten respondents (13.0%), or 691 individuals, said they had been in foster care.

**Work**

Nearly one-third (30.1%) of respondents reported they or someone else in their household had worked in the past month. Those who reported working were relatively evenly divided between households with children (50.6%) and without children (49.4%). According to a national study by the Urban Institute, about 45 percent of homeless adults had worked in the past month.

**9. Government Benefits**

Respondents were asked to indicate all of the government benefits that anyone in their household received. The majority (63.8%) reported that their household received some type of government benefit. Of those receiving benefits, nearly half (48.6%) were receiving one benefit, one-third (31.8%) were receiving two benefits and 19.6 percent were receiving three or more government benefits. Of all respondents, the greatest proportion (45.1%) said they receive food stamps, and nearly a quarter (27.4%) said they get Medicaid/Medicare.

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<sup>10</sup> Smith, Carol. "A growing problem: Fresh out of foster care and homeless." October 2010.

<http://www.seattlepi.com/local/article/A-growing-problem-Fresh-out-of-foster-care>.

Metropolitan Denver Homeless Initiative



## NATURE OF HOMELESSNESS

### 10. Duration and Episodes of Homelessness

Duration of homelessness refers to how long a particular episode of homelessness has lasted. Number of episodes refers to the number of separate times a household has experienced homelessness, regardless of how long each of the episodes lasted.

#### Duration

Half (50.1%) of respondents say their household has been homeless for less than one year, while 37.8 percent have been homeless for one year or more.

**Table 13. Duration of Homelessness -- Respondents<sup>11</sup>**

	Frequency	Percent
Less than 1 month	597	11.2
More than 1 month but less than 1 year	2,083	38.9
1 to 3 years	1,363	25.5
More than 3 years	657	12.3

#### TRENDS Duration

More respondents are homeless for a long period of time in 2013 than in prior years. In 2013, fully 37.8 percent of respondents said they were homeless for one year or more, compared to 33.5 percent in 2011 and 33.7 percent in 2012. Further, 12.3 percent of respondents in 2013 said they were homeless for more than three years, compared to 10.4 percent in 2011 and 10.2 percent in 2012.

<sup>11</sup> The table adds up to 87.9 percent. The missing percentage represents those respondents who reported they were not homeless in this question, but indicated homelessness in their answers to other questions.

#### Episodes

The single largest group of respondents (46.6%) said their household was experiencing its first episode of homelessness in the last three years on the night of January 28. More than one in five (21.9 %) had been homeless twice in the last three years, and eight percent (7.7%) had been homeless five or more times.

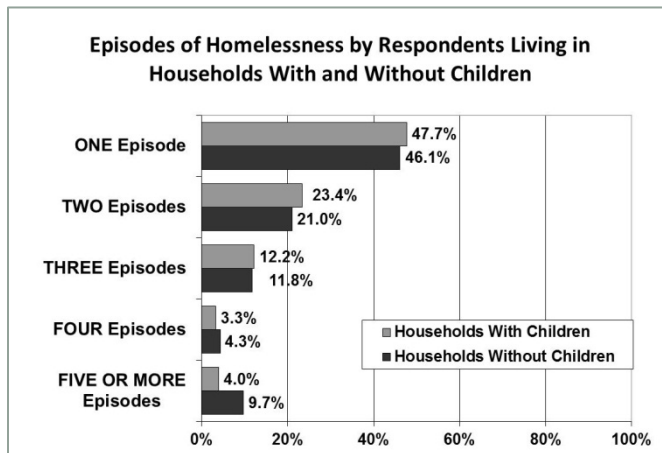
**Table 14. Episodes of Homelessness -- Respondents<sup>12</sup>**

	Frequency	Percent
Once in last three years	2510	46.6
Twice in last three years	1,176	21.9
Three times in last three years	643	11.9
Four times in last three years	211	3.9
Five or more times in last three years	415	7.7

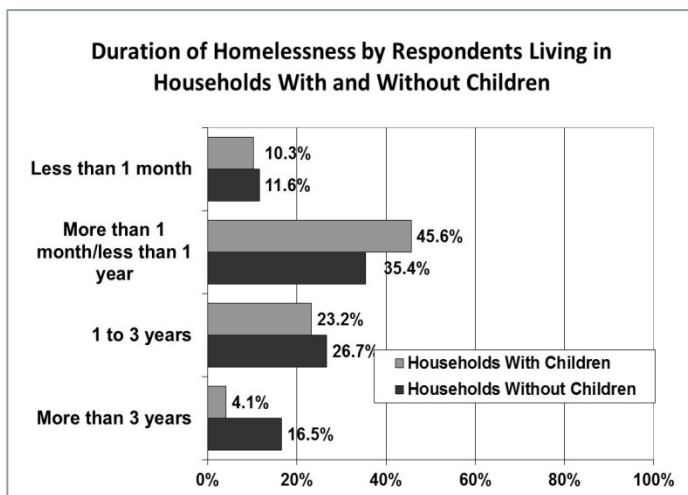
#### Episodes and Duration by Households

Figures 6 and 7 show the differences between households with and without children regarding episodes and duration of homelessness. Households without children are twice as likely to have been homeless five or more times in the last three years, and more than four times as likely to have been homeless for more than three years.

<sup>12</sup> The table adds up to 92.0 percent. The missing percentage represents those respondents who reported they were not homeless in this question, but indicated homelessness in their answers to other questions.

**Figure 6. Episodes by Households - Respondents**

Respondents in households without children are homeless for longer periods of time than respondents in households with children. Fully 43 percent (43.2%) of respondents in households without children have been homeless for one year or longer, compared to 27 percent (27.3%) of respondents in households with children.

**Figure 7. Duration by Households - Respondents**

## 11. Newly Homeless

For the purpose of this study, people were considered “newly homeless” if they had been homeless for less than one year and this was their first episode of homelessness. On January 28, 2013, one in four (24.5%) of all persons experiencing homelessness, or 2,739 people were considered newly homeless. Of the newly homeless, fully two-thirds (67.6%) or 1,853 people were in households with children.

### TRENDS Newly Homeless

There is no pattern in the proportion of all homeless who are newly homeless across the past three years. While the proportion of all newly homeless increased from 23.7 percent in 2011 to 25.7 percent in 2012, it dropped back to 24.5 percent in 2013. However, in prior years the proportion of newly homeless persons steadily increased with a dramatic jump from one in five (19.5 %) in 2006 to one-third of all homeless persons (32.6%) in 2007.

## 12. Chronically Homeless Individuals

### *HUD Definitions and Criteria*

HUD defines chronic homelessness as:

- Having a chronic debilitating condition, and
- Sleeping in a place not meant for human habitation and/or in an emergency homeless shelter and/or in a safe haven, and
- Having been homeless continually for one year or more **OR** having four or more episodes of homelessness in three or more years.
- Includes singles and families

HUD defines a disabling condition as “a diagnosable substance abuse disorder, serious mental illness, developmental disability or chronic physical illness or disability.” A disabling condition limits an individual’s ability to work or perform activities of daily living.

Based on HUD criteria, unaccompanied homeless children under the age of 18 are not counted as chronically homeless individuals. In 2013, no respondents under 18 were identified as chronically homeless.

This report includes the following descriptions of chronically homeless:

- Number of chronically homeless single individuals
- Number of chronically homeless family units
- Number of chronically homeless -- ***All Homeless*** persons

### *Chronically Homeless Respondents*

Thirteen percent (12.7%) of respondents –709 individuals – meet HUD’s definition of chronically homeless. Three-quarters (75.4%) of the chronically homeless, or 526 persons, are male and 167 (23.9 %) are female. Although the number of respondents who identified themselves as transgender is small, five people or one-quarter of this group is chronically homeless.

### *Chronically Homeless Single Individuals and Families*

The great majority of chronically homeless respondents are single (590 persons or 83.2%).

**Table 15. Chronically Homeless by Family Type – Respondents**

	Number	Percent
Single	590	83.2
Single parent with children under 18	37	5.2
Couple with children under 18	14	2.0
Couple without children	65	9.2
Other	3	0.4
Total	709	100.0

### *Chronically Homeless by County*

The majority of chronically homeless respondents spent Monday night in Denver as reported in Table 16.

**Table 16. Chronically Homeless Respondents by County**

	Number	Percent
Adams	23	3.2
Arapahoe	15	2.1
Boulder	81	11.4
Broomfield	0	0
Denver	565	79.7
Douglas	1	0.1
Jefferson	24	3.4
Total	709	100.0

Table 17 describes the proportion of chronically homeless respondents based on each county's homeless respondent population. Denver reported the highest percentage of chronically homeless respondents, followed by Boulder County.

**Table 17. Proportion of Chronically Homeless Respondents - Within Each County**

	Number	Percent
Adams	23	4.7
Arapahoe	15	4.1
Boulder	81	7.3
Broomfield	0	0
Denver	565	19.3
Douglas	1	1.4
Jefferson	24	4.4

#### ***Chronically Homeless -- All Homeless***

Of all persons experiencing homelessness, 905 or 8.1 percent are chronically homeless. Consistent with chronically homeless respondents, of all chronically homeless persons (respondents and their family members), the largest group is single individuals and the small number of family members with them (67.5%). Nearly one-in-five (18.6% -- 168 individuals) chronically homeless persons are in households with children.

Of all chronically homeless persons, approximately two out of every five (42.0%) people were on the street or sleeping in a vehicle on Monday night, and the remaining persons were in an emergency/ domestic violence shelter or safe haven.

**Table 18. ALL Homeless – Chronically Homeless/Family Type**

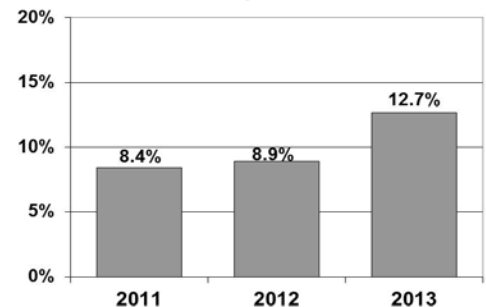
	All Homeless	% of All Homeless
Single	611 <sup>13</sup>	67.5
Single parent with children under 18	110	12.2
Couple with children under 18	58	6.4
Couple without children	123	13.6
Other	3	0.3
Total	905	100.0%

### **TRENDS** **Chronically Homeless**

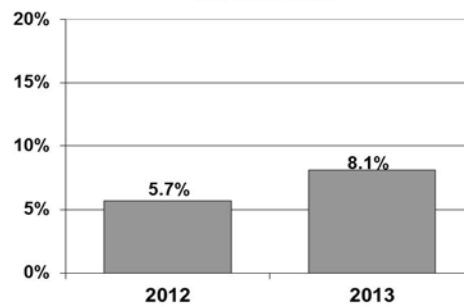
The proportion of chronically homeless respondents increased over the past three years, from 8.4 percent in 2011 and 8.9 percent in 2012 to 12.7 percent in 2013.

The proportion of all chronically homeless -- homeless respondents and their families -- also increased, from 5.7 percent in 2012 to 8.1 percent in 2013. *[In 2011, HUD defined chronically homeless as single individuals only.]*

**CHRONICALLY HOMELESS Respondents**



**CHRONICALLY HOMELESS All Homeless**



<sup>13</sup> There are 590 chronically homeless persons whose family type is identified as 'single'; however, considering all homeless persons, there are 611 chronically homeless persons in this category. This is due to some single respondents having family members with them, such as a sibling or an adult respondent with a parent.

**13. Where All Persons Experiencing Homelessness Spent Monday Night**

On January 28, 2013, all homeless people were predominantly staying temporarily with family or friends (28.0%), in transitional housing (24.7 %) or in an emergency / domestic violence shelter (22.9%).

**Table 19. Where Spent Monday Night – Respondents and All Homeless**

	<b>Respondents</b>	<b>All Homeless</b>	<b>Percent of All Homeless</b>
Temporarily with family or friends	1247	3060	28.0
Transitional housing	1113	2698	24.7
Emergency shelter	1581	2331	21.3
On the street, under a bridge, abandoned bldg, car, etc	510	704	6.4
Hotel, motel paid for by self	260	603	5.5
Hotel, motel paid for by others, vouchers	189	384	3.5
Own apt or house	100	304	2.8
In a car or other vehicle	114	223	2.0
Domestic violence shelter	72	174	1.6
Jail, prison	74	139	1.3
Substance abuse treatment program	58	86	0.8
Halfway house	45	74	0.7
Hospital including a psychiatric facility	41	47	0.4
Youth shelter	13	17	0.2
Safe haven	23	23	0.2
Section 8 housing	7	16	0.1
Permanent supportive housing	4	4	0.0
Juvenile detention	1	4	0.0
Somewhere else	25	42	0.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>5477</b>	<b>10934</b>	<b>100.0</b>

\*Note that 125 respondents did not report where they spent Monday night.

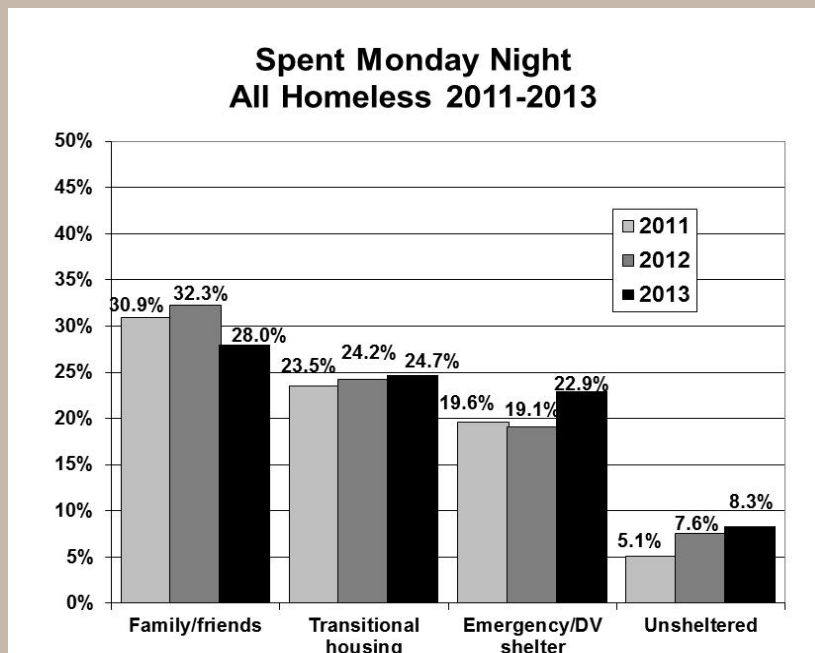
Nationally, there was a 53 percent increase from 2005 to 2010 in people who were living doubled up with friends and family.<sup>14</sup> In the Metro Denver area, in each year from 2011 to 2013, the greatest proportion of all homeless persons was staying temporarily with family and friends.

<sup>14</sup> National Alliance to End Homelessness. *SOH 2012: Chapter Three – The Demographics of Homelessness. January 2012.*

## TRENDS

### Where All Persons Experiencing Homelessness Spent Monday Night

The proportion of all persons experiencing homelessness who are unsheltered increased from 5.1 percent in 2011 to 8.3 percent in 2013. In addition, the proportion of all homeless who spent Monday night in an emergency or domestic violence shelter increased from 19.6 percent in 2011 to 22.9 percent in 2013. The proportion who spent Monday night in time-limited transitional housing also increased slightly, from 23.5 percent in 2011 to 24.7 percent in 2013. In contrast, the proportion of all homeless persons staying with family and friends is lower in 2013 than in the prior years, dropping from a high of 32.3 percent in 2012 to 28.0 percent in 2013.



#### 14. Unsheltered

Of all people experiencing homelessness, 8.3 percent or 927 people were unsheltered (living on the street, under a bridge, in an abandoned or public building, in a car, camping out, etc.) on the night of January 28. The majority of those who were unsheltered are living in households without children (70.9%), although 29 percent (29.1%) of the unsheltered are living in households with children.

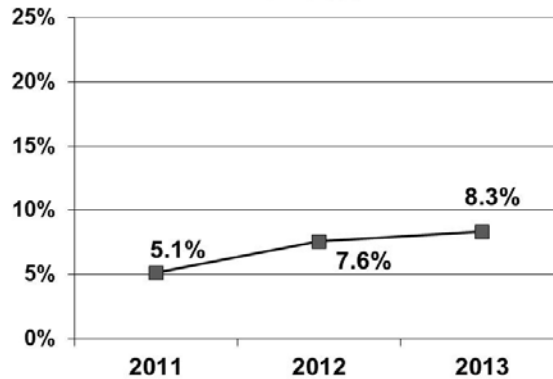
### TRENDS

#### Unsheltered

The proportion of all unsheltered homeless increased steadily over the past three years, from 5.1 percent in 2011 to 8.3 percent in 2013. Since 2011, the proportion of unsheltered homeless persons living in households without children has increased, from a low of 22.9 percent in 2011 to 29.1 percent in 2013.

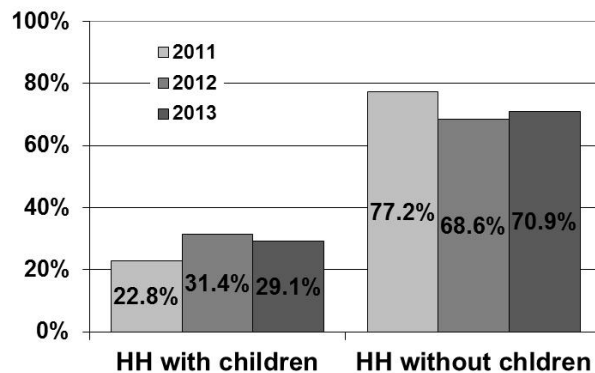
#### UNSHeltered

##### All Homeless



#### UNSHeltered

##### Proportion of Unsheltered Homeless Living in Households With and Without Children All Homeless



## 15. Counties

The largest proportion (43.9%) of all persons experiencing homelessness spent Monday night in the City and County of Denver. More, however, spent Monday night in other Metro area counties (56.1%). More than one in five (21.2%) persons included in the Point-In-Time surveys spent Monday night in Boulder county.

**Table 20. County Where Persons Spent Monday Night – All Homeless**

	<b>Respondents</b>	<b>All Homeless</b>	<b>Percent of All Homeless</b>
Adams County <sup>15</sup>	485	1,264	11.3
Arapahoe County	363	803	7.2
Boulder County	1,106	2,366	21.2
Broomfield City & County	103	302	2.7
Denver City & County	2,923	4,904	43.9
Douglas County	72	172	1.5
Jefferson County	550	1,356	12.1

Counties differ in proportion of homeless households with and without children. The majority of households without children (56.5%) indicated that they spent Monday night in Denver. Conversely, the majority of households with children (66.3%) spent Monday night in counties other than Denver.

Table 21 shows the percentage of all homeless persons in households with children in each of the seven Metro counties. The majority of all persons experiencing homelessness in every county are living in a household with children.

**Table 21. Persons in Households With Children by County – All Homeless**

	<b>All Homeless</b>	<b>Percent of All Homeless</b>
Adams County	1,007	79.7
Arapahoe County	561	69.9
Boulder County	1,474	62.3
Broomfield City & County	258	85.4
Denver City & County	2,455	50.1
Douglas County	134	78.0
Jefferson County	992	73.2

<sup>15</sup> The proportion of all homeless who spent the night of the PIT count in Adams County dropped from 19.8 percent in 2012 to 11.3 percent in 2013. Further, the number of all homeless who spent the night of the PIT count in Adams County dropped from 2,500 in 2012 to 1,264 in 2013. This decrease reflects the fact that Adams County submitted 43 percent fewer surveys overall in 2013 than in 2012: compare 997 with 1,758. It is not possible to determine whether or not the number of homeless persons in Adams County actually has changed.



## 16. Last Permanent Residence

Respondents were asked to indicate the county where they last lived before they became homeless. Of those respondents who answered the question, about one-third (34.2%) of respondents indicated their last permanent residence was in Denver City and County, 41.4 percent were from one of the Metro counties other than Denver, and one-quarter (24.3%) were from another Colorado county, out of state or from another country. Respondents who said their last permanent residence was outside of the Metro area reported the following:

- Other county in Colorado: 3.7%
- In Colorado but county missing: 4.2%
- Out of state: 15.4%
- Out of country: 1.0%

The number of respondents in Table 22 reflects the number of respondents who provided information about *both* where they spent Monday night *and* the county where they last had a permanent residence. The table compares the county where respondents spent the night of Monday, January 23 (columns) and the county where respondents had their last permanent residence (rows). For example, out of the 1,004 respondents who spent the night in Boulder County and answered the question about their last permanent residence, 582 said that Boulder was their last permanent residence, 58 were from Denver and 195 were from out of state.

**Table 22. County of Last Permanent Residence by County Spent Monday Night**

Last Permanent Residence	County Spent Monday Night							TOTAL
	Adams	Arapahoe	Boulder	Broomfield	Denver	Douglas	Jefferson	
<b>Adams</b>	296	24	20	1	153	2	22	518
<b>Arapahoe</b>	15	183	3	0	174	5	27	407
<b>Boulder</b>	7	2	582	1	20	1	0	613
<b>Broomfield</b>	2	0	9	99	6	0	1	117
<b>Denver</b>	55	71	58	0	1,584	3	68	1,839
<b>Douglas</b>	2	2	1	0	14	29	6	54
<b>Jefferson</b>	12	10	12	1	182	5	294	516
<b>Other CO county</b>	15	6	64	0	95	5	13	198
<b>In CO county missing</b>	28	20	26	1	126	2	24	227
<b>Out of state</b>	25	42	195	0	475	19	74	830
<b>Out of country</b>	4	1	34	0	12	0	5	56
	461	361	1,004	103	2,841	71	534	5,375

These data provide some information about the migration of homeless respondents among Metro area counties.<sup>16</sup> Table 23 shows the proportion of respondents who spent Monday night in a county other than the county of their last permanent residence. For example, of respondents who reported their last permanent residence was in Adams County, 43 percent spent Monday night in one of the other Metro area counties. In contrast, just 5 percent of respondents who reported that their last permanent residence was in Boulder County spent Monday night in a county other than Boulder.

**Table 23. Migration**

Adams	43%
Arapahoe	55%
Boulder	5%
Broomfield	15%
Denver	14%
Douglas	46%
Jefferson	43%

Table 24 provides some characteristics of those respondents who spent Monday night in a location different from their last county of permanent residence.

**Table 24. Monday Night in a Location other than County of Last Permanent Residence – Respondent Demographics**

COUNTY WHERE SPENT MONDAY NIGHT	Number of Respondents from a Different County	Respondents in Households With and Without Children				Newly Homeless Respondents		Chronically Homeless Respondents	
		Without Children		With Children					
Adams	165	99	60.0	66	40.0	48	29.1	8	4.8
Arapahoe	178	107	60.1	71	39.9	36	20.2	11	6.2
Boulder	422	307	72.7	115	27.3	102	24.2	45	10.7
Broomfield	4	3	75.0	1	25.0	2	50.0	0	0
Denver	1,257	969	77.1	288	22.9	298	23.7	240	19.1
Douglas	42	17	40.5	25	59.5	14	33.3	1	2.4
Jefferson	240	132	55.0	108	45.0	78	32.5	11	4.6

The key messages from Table 24 are:

- In all counties but Douglas County, the majority of respondents who spent Monday night in a county different from their county of last permanent residence were living in households without children.
- On average, one-third or fewer respondents who spent Monday night in a county different from their county of last permanent residence were newly homeless.<sup>17</sup>
- Denver County has the highest proportion of chronically homeless respondents who reported another location as their last permanent residence.

<sup>16</sup> While these data provide us with some information about people migrating across counties, we are making some assumptions about migration. The definition of “last permanent residence” is likely interpreted differently across respondents.

<sup>17</sup> The City and County of Broomfield was not included here because there are only four respondents.  
Metropolitan Denver Homeless Initiative

## SUMMARY

Thousands of people on any given night lack a safe and permanent home in Metro Denver. While fewer homeless adults and children were counted this year than last -- 11,167 in 2013 compared to 12,605 in 2012 -- the count is entirely dependent upon participation, and therefore we cannot determine whether or not there has been a real decrease in persons experiencing homelessness.

There have been some changes in the characteristics of homeless respondents over the past three years. Respondents are somewhat more likely to be Caucasian in 2013 than they were in prior years, and less likely to be Hispanic. The proportion of African American homeless respondents also dropped very slightly since 2011.

The proportion of veterans dropped slightly over the past three years, from a high of 12.9 percent in 2012 to 11.5 percent in 2013 -- close to the 11.7 percent for 2011. However, veterans are considerably more likely to be unsheltered than they were in 2011, but less likely to be unsheltered than they were in 2012 (compare 14.7 percent in 2013 with 11.3 percent in 2011 and 15.4 in 2012). The proportion of veterans who are chronically homeless increased from a low of 13.0 percent in 2012 to 19.0 percent in 2013.

From 2011 to 2013, the proportion of single respondents increased from 55.6 to 58.9 percent. While the number of homeless children and families remains a critical problem, it appears that the short-term trend is an increase in homeless single persons.

In the past decade, the number of homeless households with children has been the focus of a great deal of attention. The current survey suggests that since 2011, there has been a slight drop in the percentage of all persons experiencing homelessness

who are living in households with children. The proportion of households with children is 61.6 percent in 2013, down from a peak of 64.4 percent in 2012 and a more modest 62.0 percent in 2011. This small decrease may be related to the slight decline in the proportion of respondents living in single parent families over this same period, from a high of 25.7 percent in 2011 to 23.3 percent in 2013.

Overall, unemployment and housing costs were the most common reasons given for homelessness. Over one quarter of respondents reported that housing costs are too high. The Colorado Division of Housing reports that the average rental rates in Denver Metro counties have climbed since 2009 while the available rental market has been steadily shrinking since 2009. In 2013, households with children are substantially more likely than households without children to report that they are homeless because of high housing and utility costs, relationship or family break-up, violence in the home, low wages, and medical problems.

The proportion of chronically homeless respondents and of all chronically homeless persons has increased over the past three years. The proportion of chronically homeless respondents grew 4.3 percent from 2011 to 2013, while the proportion of all chronically homeless persons increased by 2.4 percent from 2012 to 2013.<sup>18</sup> By definition, chronically homeless persons had to spend Monday night in an emergency or domestic violence shelter, on the street or in a car, or in a safe haven. The increase in chronic homelessness may reflect the growth in the proportion of all unsheltered persons, from 5.1 percent in 2011 to a high of 8.3 percent in 2013. The proportion of all people experiencing homelessness who spent Monday night in an

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<sup>18</sup> In 2011, HUD only included single individuals in its definition of chronically homeless.

emergency or domestic violence shelter also increased, up from 19.6 percent in 2011 and 19.1 percent in 2012 to 22.9 percent in 2013.

Consistent with these findings, respondents are homeless for longer periods of time than they were in prior years. In 2013, fully 37.8 percent of respondents said they were homeless for one year or more, compared to 33.5 percent in 2011 and 33.7 percent in 2012. Further, 12.3 percent of respondents in 2013 said they were homeless for more than three years, compared to 10.4 percent in 2011 and 10.2 percent in 2012.

**Overall, respondents in the seven county metro area are more likely in 2013 than in prior years to be unsheltered, chronically homeless, homeless for longer and to have at least one serious disabling condition.**

As noted above, the proportions of all homeless who spent Monday night unsheltered and in an emergency or domestic violence shelter both increased from 2011 to 2013. The proportion of all homeless who spent Monday night in time-limited transitional housing also increased very slightly during this period. In contrast, the proportion of all homeless staying with family and friends is lower in 2013 than in prior years, dropping to 28.0 percent from a high of 32.3 percent in 2012. The greatest proportion of all persons experiencing homelessness, however, continues to reside temporarily with family and friends.

There is no pattern across the past three years in the proportion of all homeless people who are newly homeless. While the proportion of all persons who are newly homeless increased from 23.7 percent in 2011 to 25.7 percent in 2012, it dropped to 24.5 percent in 2013.

The Point-In-Time count is a tool to help inform decision-makers, service providers, funders and the public about the characteristics of people who are experiencing homelessness in our communities. However, it is important to emphasize that the Point-In-Time count is a one-night snapshot of persons experiencing homelessness across the Denver Metro area who were willing to complete a survey.

The impact of homelessness on individuals and families is profound. Whatever is the true number of adults and children experiencing homelessness, no one should be without a safe and stable place to live.

## METHODOLOGY

MDHI collected data in the last week in January, referencing the Point-In-Time as the night of Monday, January 28, 2013.

### ***Survey Instrument***

The survey instrument was developed by the Metropolitan Denver Homeless Initiative (MDHI). The survey was revised based on input from MDHI's PIT Committee and on changes in HUD definitions. Although the survey instrument is largely the same from 2011 to 2013, the PIT Committee approved the addition of a set of questions directed toward youth ages 18 to 24 at the request of the Colorado Office of Homeless Youth in the Colorado Division of Housing. These findings are not included in the report. Additionally, Question 9a was added in 2013, which asked respondents to report the age at which they left foster care.

### ***Data Entry/Cleaning***

A professional data entry firm entered the survey data. The researchers performed numerous procedures to identify data entry and logic errors. For example, the researchers ran frequencies on all variables to check for out of range / incorrect values; coded and cleaned all open-ended responses; conducted countless logic checks comparing "Family Type" and family member data; and performed many additional logic checks on all data points.

The researchers paid particular attention to identifying family type and households with and without children. Although evidence of children in a household often was not thoroughly or consistently documented, if there was solid evidence that the respondent had any children under 18 years of age, the household was identified as a household with children. Respondents age 17 or under were automatically classified as a household with children.

The number of homeless persons in a household could be counted if the respondent:

- 1) entered the number of people in the household
- 2) identified the family members who were with them on Monday night. In many cases, responses to these questions were inconsistent; handling these cases required extensive data examination and cleaning.

### ***Criteria for Eliminating Not Homeless***

The researchers established clearly defined, objective criteria to identify homelessness. Determining whether a respondent was homeless initially was determined by where he or she spent the PIT night. As needed, other questions were included in the decision process. Many surveys had inconsistent responses. In these situations, the researchers examined responses indicating housing status and developed additional criteria so they could sort respondents consistently.

### ***Duplicates***

The PIT survey was conducted over a 24-hour period in order to reduce the number of duplicate surveys. However, duplicates are inevitable. Several steps were taken to address this issue:

- Although agency staff, volunteers and homeless respondents were instructed to complete a survey for every homeless individual or family, only one survey was counted for each household.
- Agency staff and volunteers were trained regarding the critical nature of obtaining the identifying information at the top of the survey form.

A unique identification or pin number was created for each respondent. This identification number consisted of first initial, middle initial, first three letters of last name and month respondent was born, as well as age and gender. The researchers omitted duplicates based on this pin number.

***Identifying Persons Experiencing Homelessness and Households with Children***

We developed several more explicit rules for determining whether or not a respondent was homeless and if a household included children under 18. The rules reflected our best efforts to handle missing or inconsistent responses and to avoid undercounting or over-counting homeless respondents and families with children.

- If a survey had a lot of missing data and it was not possible to find consistent evidence of homelessness or not being homeless, if the evidence was weighted in favor of homelessness, we identified the respondent as homeless.
- If respondents said they were living with family and friends on Monday night and said the arrangement is permanent, but said that they are homeless now (q. 7) and also indicated they were homeless in response to other questions, we identified them as homeless.
- If respondents listed children as family members but did not report their children's ages, the researchers had to create a logical and consistent rule based on existing data and established an extremely conservative criteria. If the respondent was age 38 or younger, the respondent was counted as having a child under 18. For respondents age 39 or older, we assumed that the listed child was age 18 or older.
- If respondents listed grandchildren as family members but did not report their grandchildren's ages, the researchers used a similar rule as above. If the grandparent was 59 or younger, he/she was counted as having a grandchild under 18. For respondents age 60 or older, we assumed that the listed grandchild was age 18 or older.

## List of Tables, Figures and Trends

**TABLES**

Table 1	Survey Collection and Elimination	Page 3
Table 2	Reporting on Survey Data Points / Variables	Page 3
Table 3	Total Homeless	Page 4
Table 4	Family Type - Respondents	Page 5
Table 5	Family Type – All Homeless	Page 5
Table 6	Gender	Page 6
Table 7	Ages – Respondents	Page 6
Table 8	Youth Age Categories by County	Page 7
Table 9	Reasons for Homelessness – Respondents	Page 8
Table 10	Top Three Reasons for Homelessness – Respondents in Households With and Without Children	Page 9
Table 11	Domestic Violence as Reason for Homelessness and Where Spent Monday Night – All Homeless	Page 10
Table 12	Disabling Conditions – Respondents	Page 14
Table 13	Duration of Homelessness – Respondents	Page 13
Table 14	Episodes of Homelessness - Respondents	Page 14
Table 15	Chronically Homeless by Family Type – Respondents	Page 16
Table 16	Chronically Homeless by County – Respondents	Page 16
Table 17	Proportion of Chronically Homeless Respondents Within Each County	Page 17
Table 18	Chronically Homeless by Family Type – All Homeless	Page 17
Table 19	Where Spent Monday Night – Respondents and All Homeless	Page 18
Table 20	County Where Persons Spent Monday Night – All Homeless	Page 21
Table 21	Persons in Households With Children by County – All Homeless	Page 21
Table 22	County of Last Permanent Residence by County Spent Monday Night	Page 22
Table 23	Migration	Page 23
Table 24	Monday Night in County other than County of Last Permanent Residence – Respondent Demographics	Page 23

**FIGURES**

Figure 1	PIT Count 2011-2013	Page 4
Figure 2	All Homeless Persons in Households With and Without Children	Page 6
Figure 3	Ethnicity of Respondents Compared to 2010 General Population	Page 7
Figure 4	Vacancy Rates	Page 8
Figure 5	Disabilities by Households	Page 11
Figure 6	Episodes by Households – Respondents	Page 15
Figure 7	Duration by Households - Respondents	Page 15

**TRENDS**

	Family Type	Page 5
	Households With Children	Page 6
	Disabling Conditions	Page 11
	Veterans	Page 12
	Duration	Page 14
	Newly Homeless	Page 15
	Chronically Homeless	Page 17
	Spent Monday Night	Page 19
	Unsheltered	Page 20

**Please complete the following information about yourself:**

First initial  Middle initial  First 3 letters of last name    Month you were born (Circle 1 response): 

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec

**1. What is your age?** \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Gender:**

1 ☐ Male 2 ☐ Female 3 ☐ Transgender

**3. Race/Ethnicity: (Check only ONE response)**

- 1 ☐ Asian/Pacific Islander  
2 ☐ Black/African American  
3 ☐ Hispanic/Latino(a)/Spanish  
4 ☐ Native American/Alaska Native  
5 ☐ White  
6 ☐ Mixed Race  
7 ☐ Other → Describe: \_\_\_\_\_

**4. Have you served in the U.S. Military (veteran) including the National Guard?**

1 ☐ Yes 2 ☐ No

**5. Are you: (Check only ONE response)**

- 1 ☐ A single person (including separated or divorced)  
2 ☐ A single parent/person with children under 18 (including separated or divorced)  
3 ☐ Part of a couple with children under 18  
4 ☐ Part of a couple without children under 18  
5 ☐ Other---describe: \_\_\_\_\_

**6. Are you or anyone else in your household receiving ANY of the following government benefits? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)**

- 1 ☐ SSI/SSDI Supplemental Security Income/Soc. Sec. Disability  
2 ☐ Social Security Retirement Benefits  
3 ☐ TANF Temporary Assistance for Needy Families  
4 ☐ Food Stamps  
5 ☐ VA Pension/Benefits  
6 ☐ Medicaid/Medicare  
7 ☐ Aid to the Needy Disabled (AND)  
8 ☐ Any other government benefit  
9 ☐ Receiving NO government benefits

**7. In the past month, have you or anyone in your household received any money from working?**

1 ☐ Yes 2 ☐ No

**8. Do you or any adult in your household (eighteen or older) have any of the following: (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)**

- 1 ☐ Serious mental illness  
2 ☐ Serious medical or physical condition  
3 ☐ Alcohol or drug abuse  
4 ☐ Developmental disability  
5 ☐ HIV/AIDS  
6 ☐ Other → Describe: \_\_\_\_\_

**9. Have you ever been in foster care?**

1 ☐ Yes 2 ☐ No

**9a. If yes, at what age did you leave?** \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Are you homeless now?**

1 ☐ Yes 2 ☐ No 3 ☐ Don't know

**11. If you are homeless now, how long have you been homeless this time? (Check ONE response)**

- 1 ☐ I am NOT homeless now  
2 ☐ Less than one month  
3 ☐ More than one month but less than 1 year  
4 ☐ 1 to 3 years  
5 ☐ More than 3 years

**12. Including now, how many times have you been homeless in the last three years? Even if you are NOT homeless right now, please tell us the number of times you have been homeless in the last three years. (Check only ONE response)**

- 1 ☐ One  
2 ☐ Two  
3 ☐ Three  
4 ☐ Four  
5 ☐ Five or more  
6 ☐ I have not been homeless at any time in the last three years

**13. Why did you become homeless this time? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)**

- 1 ☐ I am NOT homeless now  
2 ☐ Lost job/can't find work  
3 ☐ Relationship or family break-up/death in family  
4 ☐ Housing costs too high  
5 ☐ Alcohol or drug abuse problems  
6 ☐ Eviction/foreclosure  
7 ☐ Mental illness/emotional problems  
8 ☐ Medical problems  
9 ☐ Abuse or violence in the home  
10 ☐ Have work but wages are too low  
11 ☐ Discharged from jail, prison or halfway house  
12 ☐ Utility costs too high  
13 ☐ Runaway/discharged from foster care  
14 ☐ Sexual orientation  
15 ☐ Other Describe: \_\_\_\_\_

**14. Are you homeless because of domestic violence?**

1 ☐ Yes 2 ☐ No

**15. In the next 14 days, are you being evicted or thrown out of the place you are staying?**

1 ☐ Yes 2 ☐ No 3 ☐ Don't know

**16. In the next 14 days, are you being released from an institution (hospital/treatment program, jail, halfway house, etc.) and have no place to stay?**

1 ☐ Yes 2 ☐ No 3 ☐ Don't know



**17. Where did you spend the night of *Monday, January 28, 2013*? (Check ONE response)**

1 <input type="checkbox"/> Emergency shelter → Please write name of shelter: _____	8 <input type="checkbox"/> Permanent supportive housing
	9 <input type="checkbox"/> Jail /prison
2 <input type="checkbox"/> Domestic violence shelter	10 <input type="checkbox"/> Hospital including a psychiatric hospital or facility
3 <input type="checkbox"/> On the street, under a bridge, abandoned building, public building, traveling on a bus, camping out, etc.	11 <input type="checkbox"/> Halfway house
	12 <input type="checkbox"/> Juvenile detention
4 <input type="checkbox"/> In a car or other vehicle (not including public transportation)	13 <input type="checkbox"/> Substance abuse treatment program
5 <input type="checkbox"/> Hotel/motel <b>paid for by yourself</b> while looking for housing	14 <input type="checkbox"/> Transitional housing (time-limited)
6 <input type="checkbox"/> Hotel/motel <b>paid for by others/vouchers</b>	15 <input type="checkbox"/> Youth shelter
7 <input type="checkbox"/> Temporarily with family or friends ↓  If with family or friends, do you have an arrangement to stay there permanently? 1 <input type="checkbox"/> Yes 2 <input type="checkbox"/> No 3 <input type="checkbox"/> Don't know	16 <input type="checkbox"/> Section 8 housing
	17 <input type="checkbox"/> In your own apartment or house that you rent or own?
	18 <input type="checkbox"/> Somewhere else → <i>Where?</i> _____

**18. Including yourself, how many household members who usually live with you were homeless on the night of Monday, January 28<sup>th</sup>? Write the number of people here: # \_\_\_\_\_**

**19. Please complete the following table for all of these people from question #18. Be sure to include ages! (If you don't know, it is ok to write in your best guess.)**

(Required)	AGE	RELATIONSHIP TO YOU			
Person 1		YOURSELF - PERSON ANSWERING SURVEY			
Person 2		1 <input type="checkbox"/> Spouse/partner	2 <input type="checkbox"/> Son/daughter	3 <input type="checkbox"/> Grandchild	4 <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
Person 3		1 <input type="checkbox"/> Spouse/partner	2 <input type="checkbox"/> Son/daughter	3 <input type="checkbox"/> Grandchild	4 <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
Person 4		1 <input type="checkbox"/> Spouse/partner	2 <input type="checkbox"/> Son/daughter	3 <input type="checkbox"/> Grandchild	4 <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
Person 5		1 <input type="checkbox"/> Spouse/partner	2 <input type="checkbox"/> Son/daughter	3 <input type="checkbox"/> Grandchild	4 <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
Person 6		1 <input type="checkbox"/> Spouse/partner	2 <input type="checkbox"/> Son/daughter	3 <input type="checkbox"/> Grandchild	4 <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
Person 7		1 <input type="checkbox"/> Spouse/partner	2 <input type="checkbox"/> Son/daughter	3 <input type="checkbox"/> Grandchild	4 <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
Person 8		1 <input type="checkbox"/> Spouse/partner	2 <input type="checkbox"/> Son/daughter	3 <input type="checkbox"/> Grandchild	4 <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
Person 9		1 <input type="checkbox"/> Spouse/partner	2 <input type="checkbox"/> Son/daughter	3 <input type="checkbox"/> Grandchild	4 <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
Person 10		1 <input type="checkbox"/> Spouse/partner	2 <input type="checkbox"/> Son/daughter	3 <input type="checkbox"/> Grandchild	4 <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

**20. In what city/town did you spend the night of Monday, January 28, 2013?**

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Fill in city/town name)

**21. In what county did you spend the night of Monday, January 28, 2013?**

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Fill in county name)

**22. Where was the last permanent place you lived?**

1 ☐ Colorado 2 ☐ Other State 3 ☐ Other Country

**IF IN COLORADO, what was the last City and County you consider to be your permanent place to live?**

\_\_\_\_\_  
City County **CO**  
State

**If you are a youth head of household aged 18-24, please answer questions 23-27:**

**23. Have you ever spent time in a Juvenile Detention Center?** 1 ☐ Yes 2 ☐ No If yes, when? 1 ☐ Within last 6 months 2 ☐ 6 months to 1 year ago 3 ☐ More than one year ago

**24. Have you ever spent time in Residential Treatment?** 1 ☐ Yes 2 ☐ No If yes, when? 1 ☐ Within last 6 months 2 ☐ 6 months to 1 year ago 3 ☐ More than one year ago

**25. What is the highest grade in school you completed?** 1 ☐ Less than high school 2 ☐ High school graduate/GED 3 ☐ Some college or college degree

**26. How do you make money?** 1 ☐ I have a job 2 ☐ SSI 3 ☐ Public Assistance 4 ☐ Drug Trade 5 ☐ Sex Trade 6 ☐ No Income 7 ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

**27. How many adults in the community do you trust and have regular contact? Write number here: # \_\_\_\_\_**