Family Homelessness in Minnesota

Prepared for the University of Minnesota
Rochester CONNECTS
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Presented by
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Overview of the statewide study

- Point in time survey, every 3 years
- Trained volunteer interviewers

On October 25, 2012:

- Interviews in >250 shelters and programs
- Outreach locations in >50 cities, towns, and outlying areas
One-night study counts

- Total count:
  - 1991: 3,079
  - 1994: 4,553
  - 1997: 5,645
  - 2000: 7,696
  - 2003: 7,854
  - 2006: 7,751
  - 2009: 9,654
  - 2012: 10,214

- Children with parents:
  - 1991: 889
  - 1994: 1,791
  - 1997: 2,294
  - 2000: 3,178
  - 2003: 2,862
  - 2006: 2,726
  - 2009: 3,251
  - 2012: 3,546
What is new?

- Increase in numbers mainly accounted for by
  - Children with their parents (up 9%)
  - Older adults (age 55+)
- 22% increase in 2-parent families
- Emergency shelter use up by 27%
Age groups

- Children with their parents: 35%
- Unaccompanied minors age 12-17: 1%
- Unaccompanied young adults age 18-21: 10%
- Adult females age 22 or older: 25%
- Adult males age 22 or older: 29%
Ages of children with their parents

The proportion of children in specified age groups is similar across both the metro area and greater Minnesota.
Children and families
Children and families: Counts

- Homeless families and children have made up the fastest-growing segment of homeless people in Minnesota since study began in 1991.

- On a single night in 2012:
  - 1,747 families were counted with 3,546 children
  - 1,526 families were in shelters, 221 were unsheltered

- Besides children who are homeless with their parents, at least another 2,000 are affected by a parent’s homelessness but are not with them.
Where homeless children (age 0-17) were counted (N=3,546)

- Not in shelter: 11%
- Transitional housing: 55%
- Emergency shelter: 24%
- Battered women’s shelter: 11%

Note: Data based on census counts
Children and families

Parent interviews
Parents with children *not* living with them

- Nearly half (48%) of all homeless adults were parents of children (age 17 or younger).
- Yet, only 26 percent had at least one child with them.
- For a small proportion (7%), parents reported not having their children with them because of program restrictions at the shelter.

The data that follow are about parents whose children are living with them.
Where homeless children (age 0-5) were living (N=718)

- Transitional housing: 45%
- Emergency shelter: 23%
- Battered women’s shelter: 11%
- Not in shelter: 21%

Note: Data based on interviews with parents of children age 0-5
Children and families: Demographics

- 72% of children are with their mom; 4% are with their dad; and 24% are with both
  - Proportions are almost identical for children age 0-5
- 29% of youth (age 21 and under) are parents (for female youth 39%); 21% have their children with them
- Median age for homeless parents is 29
## Parents: Racial disparities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adults (18+)</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Homeless parents (children of any age)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Homeless parents (children age 0-5)</strong></td>
<td><strong>MN</strong></td>
<td><strong>Race/ethnicity</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>American Indian</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>Asian American</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50%</td>
<td>44%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Black</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>White (non-Hispanic)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>Other, including multi-racial</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8%</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>Hispanic (any race)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Parents: Homelessness history

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Homeless parents (children of any age)</th>
<th>Homeless parents (children age 0-5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Homeless at least a month</td>
<td>92%</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spent at least one night in last 30 days outside/car, etc.</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spent at least one night in last 30 days doubled-up</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First experienced homelessness as a child</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Parents: Health problems

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Homeless parents (children of any age)</th>
<th>Homeless parents (children age 0-5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Has serious mental health problem</td>
<td>52%</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has chronic physical health problem</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has chemical dependency issues</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Parents: Minnesota ties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Homeless parents (children of all ages)</th>
<th>Homeless parents (children age 0-5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lived in MN more than 2 years</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>79%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Where recent MN transplants (in MN less than 2 years) came from:

- **Homeless parents (children of all ages)**
  - Illinois: 30%
  - Wisconsin: 9%
  - Indiana: 7%
  - Texas: 5%

- **Homeless parents (children age 0-5)**
  - Illinois: 38%
  - Indiana: 7%
  - Texas: 5%
  - Africa: 5%
## Parents: Other characteristics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Homeless parents (children of any age)</th>
<th>Homeless parents (children age 0-5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>On waiting list for Section 8 or subsidized housing</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employed</td>
<td>33% (11% full-time)</td>
<td>36% (11% full-time)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receive food stamps/SNAP</td>
<td>93%</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receive WIC</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receive child care assistance</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physically or sexually abused as child/youth</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Health care needs of children with parents

Percent of parents who could not get needed care for their children in the past year:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Homeless parents (children of all ages)</th>
<th>Homeless parents (children age 0-5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dental care</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical health care</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental health care</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Other health related needs

Percent of parents who report at least one child with a chronic or severe problem:

<table>
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<th>Homeless parents (children age 0-5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emotional or behavioral problems</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical health problems</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Other needs of children

Percent of parents who report:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Needs</th>
<th>Homeless parents (children of all ages)</th>
<th>Homeless parents (children age 0-5)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children skipped a meal in the past month because there was not money to buy food</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unable to get regular child care when needed in the past year</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7 in 10 families had young children with them (ages 0-5)

Of those with young children (age 0-5):

- 42% have a child who is enrolled in Head Start or an early childhood program
  - Up from 2009 (40%) and several previous years (26% in 2003, 34% in 2000)

- 15% of these report that their children have difficulty attending because of their housing situation
A few takeaways

- Fastest growing segment of homelessness: families and children
- Homeless children tend to be young
- Racial disparities among homeless parents
- Parents of young children (age 0-5):
  - Are often in non-shelter settings (21%)
  - Had trouble finding childcare in past year (43%)
  - Do not have child in early childhood programs (58%)

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Questions and Discussion
Question for discussion

- What are your initial reactions to the findings?
- Which findings are most surprising to you?
- Why do you think this problem has grown so significantly since the initial statewide homeless study was conducted in 1991?
- What opportunities do you see to enhance the lives of our youngest homeless population?
To learn more about homelessness in Minnesota go to
www.wilderresearch.org