THE 2018 ERIE COUNTY SINGLE POINT IN TIME COUNT

GAP Analysis for January 26, 2018

Identifying the Erie County Homeless Population in Emergency Shelter, Transitional Housing, Permanent Housing and Unsheltered

Erie County Department of Human Services and Erie County Home Team

Contents

Executive Summary

The 2018 Single Point in Time (SPIT) count of the homeless population in Erie County, Pennsylvania was conducted on January 26, 2018. This national Housing and Urban Development (HUD) initiative was overseen by Erie's Home Team, the county-level Continuum of Care (CoC) that addresses the needs of homeless individuals and families and works toward the elimination of homelessness in our region. The Erie County Department of Human Services, member of the CoC and administrator of the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS), had extensive involvement with the implementation of the process. The SPIT count was conducted simultaneously with the local Housing Inventory Count (HIC), which provides data on the number of beds/slots available at local emergency shelters and transitional housing programs that serve homeless individuals.

Two additional agencies were utilized to oversee parts of the process. Erie United Methodist Alliance (EUMA), a local agency that offers various programs that serves the homeless population, was instrumental in the coordination of the unsheltered portion of the SPIT count (detailed and defined further in this document). The Mercyhurst University Civic Institute was contracted to oversee aspects related to the sheltered count of Direct Service agencies that provide bed space to homeless individuals the night of the count.

What is the SPIT and HIC?

The Single Point in Time count is a HUD-led initiative that requires Continuums of Care (CoCs) across the country to administer a census of homeless individuals and families. Dates of conducting this count must be held within the last ten days of January, as HUD has identified this as a peak time to locate individuals in shelters and transitional housing units. HUD requires CoCs to collect information on a minimum number of data variables, many of which are collected in HMIS from providers. Local initiatives may also collect additional data that they find helpful for their local decision making efforts. All counts must correspond to 9pm on the evening of January 26, 2018 through 4am on January 27, 2018. The 2018 count sought information from two sources; Direct Service providers and a census of those living on the streets that evening (the unsheltered).

Direct Service providers are those that offer emergency shelter, transitional housing, or permanent housing spaces for homeless populations and individuals. These providers are asked to return completed data forms identifying the number of homeless individuals within their programs for that evening. The data consists of demographic information as well as service-oriented breakdown to help identify the most pressing needs facing the population. Most providers utilize the HMIS data system for completion of this process, as many regularly use this system. Other providers use an 'internal' data-tracking process and generate reports from this process. Additionally, a HUD-derived survey is available for those agencies that do not use any sort of data-tracking system. Agencies are asked to report data on those residing in their program during that timeframe only.

The second component of the Single Point in Time count consists of conducting a census of homeless individuals and families that are unsheltered on the night of the count. This effort utilizes volunteers who traverse the CoC area and attempt to locate members of the local homeless population that are unsheltered. Once found, volunteers approach the individuals in attempt to ask them to complete a questionnaire that will

gather information also found in the Direct Service survey. An observation tool is also made available for those situations which the identified homeless persons do not wish to talk to the data collector.   Because of large geographic areas that CoCs cover, volunteers traditionally begin canvasing areas that are known 'hang-outs' of homeless individuals and families.

In previous years, a third component for the count was conducted: Supportive Service providers. These programs assist homeless persons in meeting their needs in ways other than provision of shelter. Historically, it has been difficult to obtain accurate information on who is being served by these programs, as most of the programs do not utilize the same data-tracking software as the Direct Service providers. There have also been questions regarding duplication of individuals in the reporting. It is believed that many of the people who are identified in the Direct Service count were also being counted in the Supportive Service count, often multiple times. Additionally, many of the data forms that had been returned in the past were incomplete or contained unusable data. Due to these complications, the 2018 SPIT count did not include information from these providers.

In addition to the primary components of the SPIT portion, a Housing Inventory Count (HIC) is also conducted. Agencies that provide emergency shelter or transitional housing are asked to provide the number of bed slots available for the evening of the count. In addition, they provide general census data that is reported along with SPIT count data. Historically, this count was administered by the local-level HMIS system administrator. This year the request for HIC data was included with the SPIT form.

SPIT Implementation

The Mercyhurst University Civic Institute (MCI) was contracted to oversee the Single Point in Time count on behalf of the Continuum of Care. The MCI is a local university-based research and evaluation organization that has been providing services to Erie County and state-based agencies and governments in the areas of youth and family services, drug and alcohol, mental health, and criminal justice for over 20 years.

Staff from the MCI began collaborating with key stakeholders from the Erie County Home Team and Erie County Department of Human Services to develop a plan for gathering needed information for the count. Data templates were developed that providers would be asked to fill out and return for their portion of the process. Introductory letters were sent to agencies that provide shelter to the homeless announcing SPIT survey dates. The week prior to the count, two trainings were held in which all providers were invited to attend. At these trainings, attendees were given an overview of the process, including why it is conducted and their agency's responsibilities. Additionally, the attendees were given the opportunity to review the data collection tools they would be asked to complete. At the conclusion of each session, attendees were given packets which included surveys corresponding to the type of service they provide. In addition to the data collection tool, agencies also received a Causes of Homelessness Survey, to be completed by a staff person who works directly with homeless clients, and ten copies of a Housing Needs Survey, to be completed by homeless clients themselves. Any agencies not represented at that meeting had their survey packets hand-delivered.

Direct Service Provider Survey: Direct Service providers are those that are described as offering shelter or housing spaces for homeless individuals and families. For Single Point in Time reporting to HUD, figures for emergency shelters and transitional housing are utilized. For local data collection and analysis (such as this report), Permanent Housing programs are also included in the process. A total of 34 programs (housed within 14 different agencies) participated and returned surveys. A complete listing of agencies that participated can be found in the Appendix at the conclusion of this report. A total of 1,026 individuals were identified as: receiving shelter or housing services (1,022) or identified in the unsheltered count (4). Detailed results of this count can be found in the Appendices.

Causes of Homelessness Survey: A Causes of Homelessness Survey was distributed to each Direct and Supportive Service program that was asked to participate in the SPIT count. A program administrator with sufficient knowledge of the population being served was asked to complete and return it with the SPIT data form. A total of 22 surveys were completed and returned. Respondents were asked to rate 29 factors that are key contributors to homelessness using a Likert Scale to identify what they felt are the most pressing factors leading to their clients' homelessness. The three top-rated factors in 2018 are Mental Health Problems, Poor Decision Making, and Insufficient Income for Family Needs; the top three factors in 2017 were Poor Money Management Skills, Mental Health Problems, and Poor Decision Making Skills. An in-depth summary can be found later in this report, and complete responses can be found in the Appendix.

Housing Needs Survey: Ten copies of a Housing Needs Survey were distributed to each program that was asked to participate in the SPIT count this year. Programs were asked to hand them out to clients to fill out anonymously. The Housing Needs Survey was developed to collect information from homeless individuals regarding the reasons they are homeless and what they need to improve their situation. A total of 147 surveys were filled out and returned. Clients were asked a series of questions to gain insight into factors they feel contribute to their homelessness situation as well as what they need to become stable. Clients identified Not Enough Money and Lack of Employment as the primary reasons leading to their homelessness, and their biggest needs are More Money and Employment to get back on their feet. Responding clients also identified Housing and Transportation as leading needs to become independent. An in-depth summary can be found later in this report, and complete responses found in the Appendix.

2018 Erie County Single Point in Time Survey

The information contained in the 2018 Single Point in Time (SPIT) report is critical to understanding the extent of homelessness in Erie County, Pennsylvania. Homeless individuals and families remain an important concern locally, as well as across the United States. It is difficult to imagine the day-to-day struggles of people having no place to live and nothing to eat for themselves or for their children. The root causes of homelessness need to be fully examined to understand how to empower people and society in order to avoid this situation. This report aims to capture the number of individuals and families that are considered homeless in Erie County, as well as to document the causes of homelessness as described by both the program recipients and service providers.

The number of homeless people including families, individuals, and children has fluctuated considerably since the beginning of the HUD-directed SPIT count. Various factors may impact the actual count, such as date of count and economic factors, among others. In terms of reported numbers, there is also variance that is tied to project methodology as well as the number of programs reporting data. Site reporting can be impacted by staff changes, knowledge and willingness to participate in the Single Point in Time count, accurate HMIS use, and other factors. Figures can also vary from year to year depending on the number of providers and programs being utilized throughout the county. Since the beginning of the count in Erie County, significant outreach and coordination efforts has been done to include all programs. *The reader should understand that the annual reporting is based off of figures and numbers provided by the participating agencies each year,* therefore making it difficult to draw solid conclusions regarding homeless population fluctuations.

This local report also contains additional information that is above and beyond what is required for the Point in Count that is submitted to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development each spring. Numbers seen here are significantly higher than what is submitted to HUD, as it is inclusive of Permanent Housing data, which is not submitted on the HUD Exchange report. This information is found to be helpful in generating a complete picture of the local homeless population and how they are being served. With the adaptation of Housing First, the premise of assuring that the primary goal of serving homeless persons is to align them with permanent housing as quickly as possible, viewing this data long-term allows for the programs and Continuum of Care to view this progress.

NOTE: there is one major change in the 2018 report. In previous years, the SPIT count was inclusive of identifying those with Unmet Needs. Locally, Supportive Service providers were identified and asked to submit figures for the number of individuals served on the day of the SPIT count that were in need of services. Truthfulness of this figure has always been difficult to gauge, as forms had often been returned incomplete or with a 'guestimate'; most of these provides did not utilize the HMIS for data tracking purposes. Additionally, it was always understood that portions of the Unmet Needs count was assuredly duplicated, as many sheltered persons were also receiving services provided elsewhere. For 2018, HUD did not require an Unmet Needs count. Due to this change in policy, and the issue of duplication, it was decided to eliminate that portion from the report this year.

Though the local Single Point in Time data report has been published since 2004, this report will compare results from 2008 through 2018.

Figure 1 illustrates the total number of homeless in Erie County on the night of January 26, 2018. This number is derived from information gathered from Emergency Shelters, Transitional Housing, Permanent Housing, and the unsheltered count. As the policy of not tracking those with unmet needs has changed, that population has been taken out of the previous years' figures, as the below now reflect only those in the above categories. The current year represents the highest reported figure over the comparative period, and an 8% increase from 2017's count.

Figure 1: Total Number of Homeless in Erie County, 2008-2018

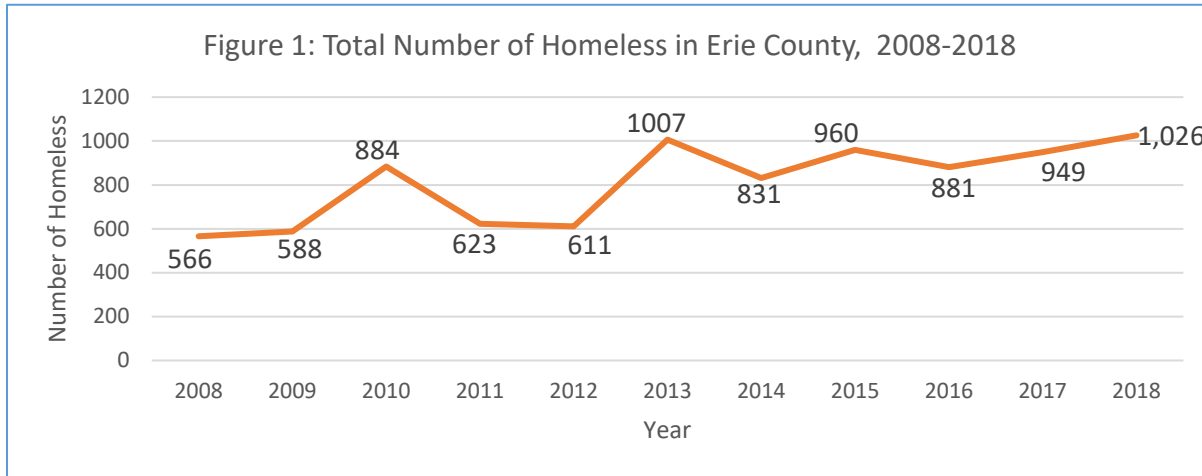Figure 2 illustrates the breakdown of those who were in a Shelter, Transitional Housing or Permanent Housing program, versus those that were found to be unsheltered the evening of the SPIT count. Though 2018 had the largest number of reported homeless individuals (1,026), this year also found the lowest number of unsheltered persons in the covered time period (4).

Figure 2: Sheltered vs Unsheltered Count, 2008-2018
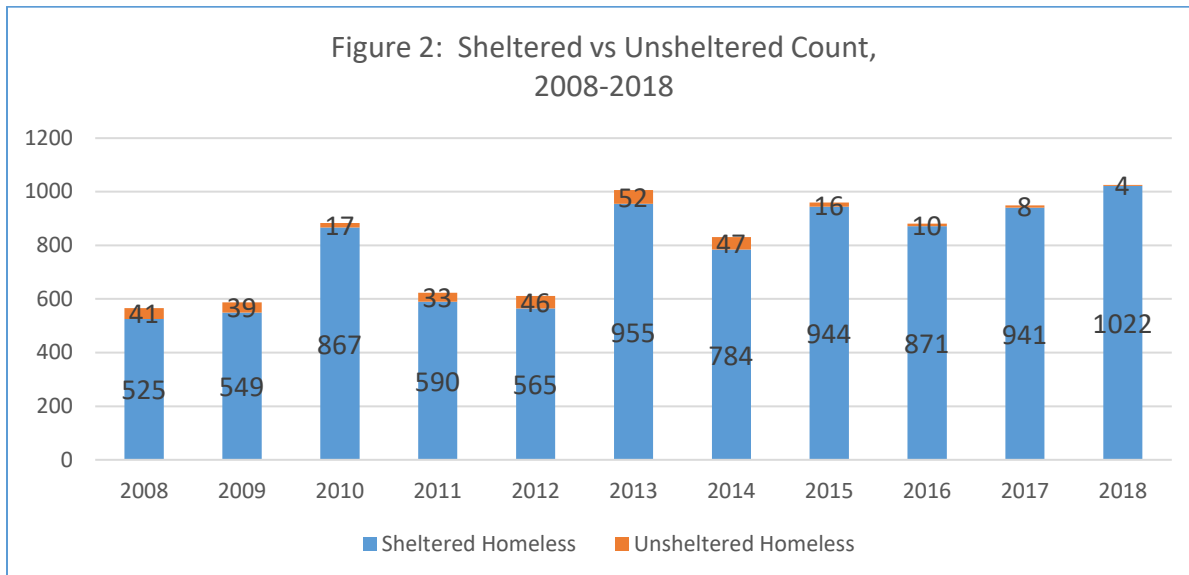
Direct Service Provider Survey

Direct Service providers are comprised of Emergency Shelter, Transitional Housing, and Permanent Housing providers. The number of homeless individuals in Emergency Shelters on January 26, 2018 was approximately the same as in 2017 (238 vs. 240). The numbers of homeless individuals residing in Transitional Housing this year were 37% lower than last year (114 vs 179), while the population in Permanent Housing continues to grow, up 25% from 2017 and 47% from the 2015 figure, as shown in Figure 3.

Figure 4: Number of Homeless Servied by Direct Service Providers, by Type, 2016 vs. 2017
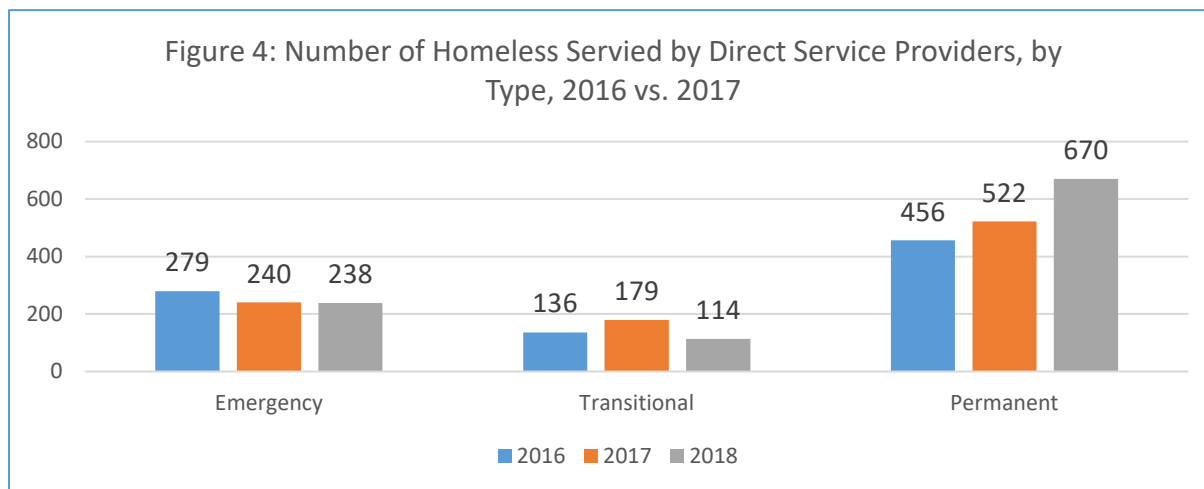
Further breakdown of the 2017 figures shown in the previous chart reveals that in some instances family structures account for various shares of the population as compared to individuals. Of the 238 persons accounted for in Emergency Shelters the night of the count, 166 were identified as being in Adult Only households, while 72 were part of a familial structure. Transitional Housing consisted of 68 people residing in Adult Only households and 30 in those defined as Adults with Children; in addition there were 15 youth residing in Children Only households. Permanent housing consisted of 415, 235, and 20, respectively, as shown in Figure 4.

Figure 4: Household Type, by Direct Service Type, 2018
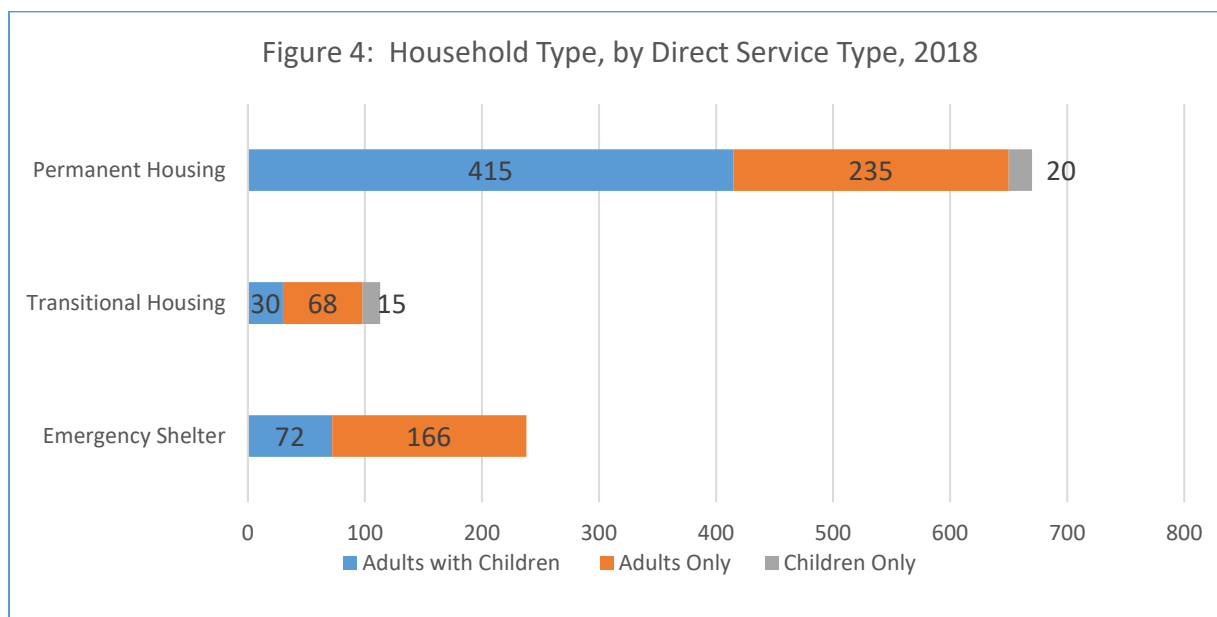
Adults with Children

The family structure of those identified as being homeless face a different set of challenges than those identified as being single. One of the most notable obstacles is that of raising children as a parent while struggling to find affordable, stable housing. Figure 5 looks at those households identified as Adults with Children. In 2018 there were 153 total Households identified as being Adult with Children (25 shelter, 11 transitional housing, and 117 permanent housing). Those 153 households consisted of 517 persons identified as homeless. When this number is compared to the total homeless population of 1,026, Adults with Children make up over 50%.

Figure 5: Adults wtih Children, Households with Residing Members, by Provider Type, 2018
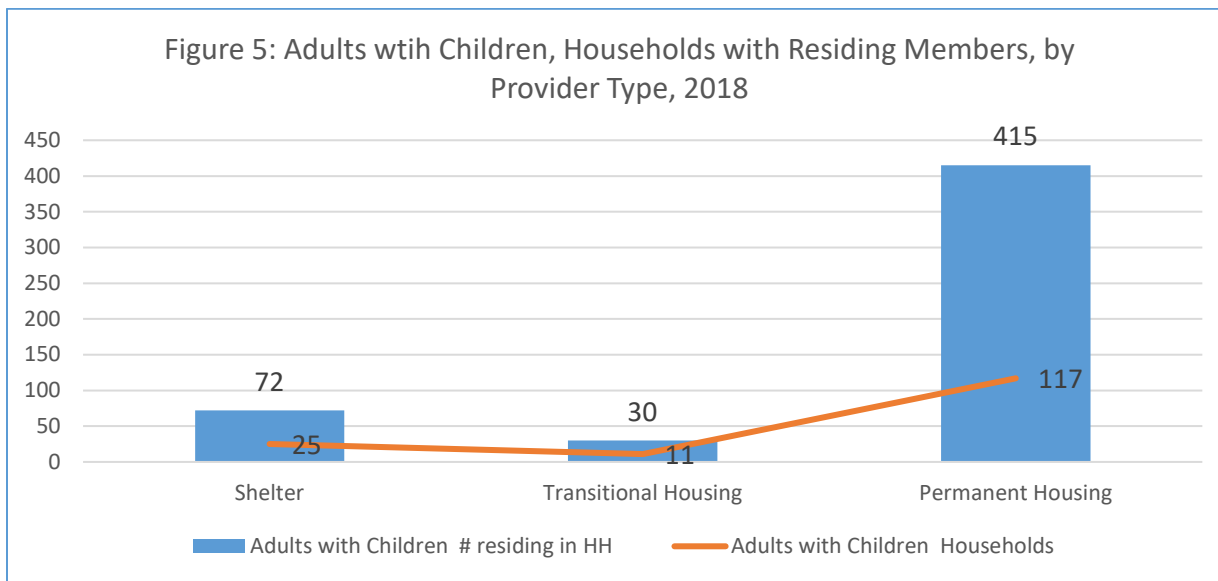
Figure 6 looks more closely at those who make up the 517 persons residing in this household type. Note: certain categories may not equal the total residing, due to reporting restrictions within some programs.

Figure 6: Demographics of Individuals identified as homeless

# of People 17 or younger	296
# of People 18-24	26
# of People age 25 and older	142
Female	245
Male	210
Transgender	9
Non-Hispanic	406
Hispanic	58
White	219
Black/African American	214
Native American	3
Multiple Races	42

Figure 7 illustrates the number of children in the families residing in Adults with Children households. Note: due to reporting changes and programmatic reporting, the 2018 figure is somewhat understated. Additionally this year's figure is reflective of those ages 17 or younger. The number of children in identified homeless families continues to rise, increasing by more than 7% to 296 youth in 2018, up from 276 in 2017.

Figure 7: Frequency of Children in Families as Reported by Direct Service Providers, 2008-2018
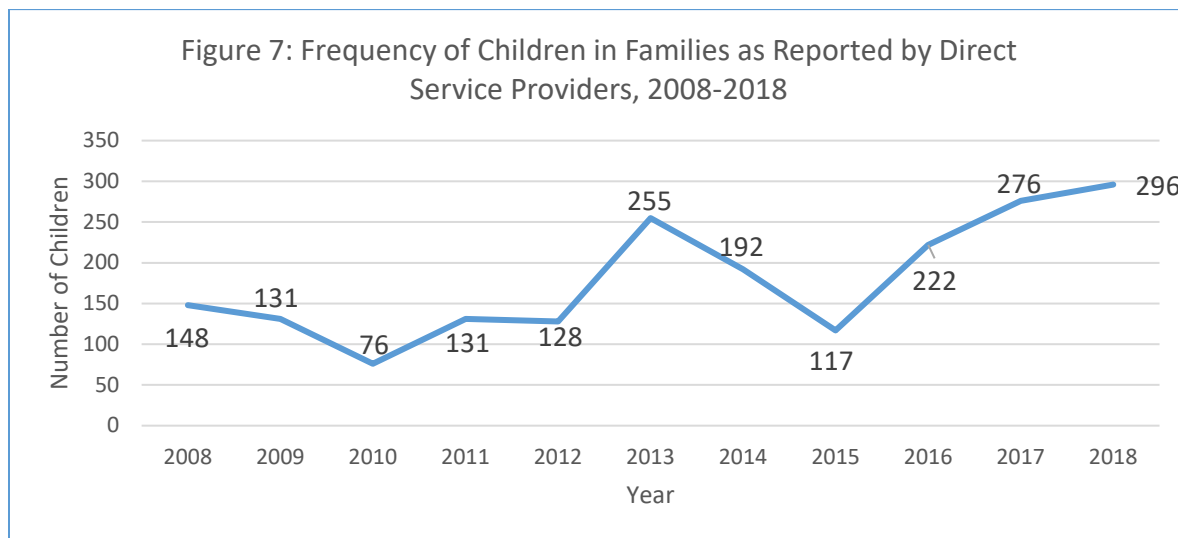
Children Only

Though not as high as other populations, there are those children who are homeless that have no adults to care for their well-being. In fact, what is reported by providers is believed to be well under the actual homeless figure for this group, as many homeless youth are not found in shelters or program. They tend to reside with friends, in cars, or do what is known as 'couch surfing'. Figure 8 illustrates the population breakdown as reported by providers. Zero Children Only were reported in shelters, while there were 14 reported Children Only households consisting of 36 persons in Transitional and Permanent Housing. Included in these populations are instances of Parenting Youth households.

Figure 8: Children Only, Households with Residing Members, by Provider Type, 2018
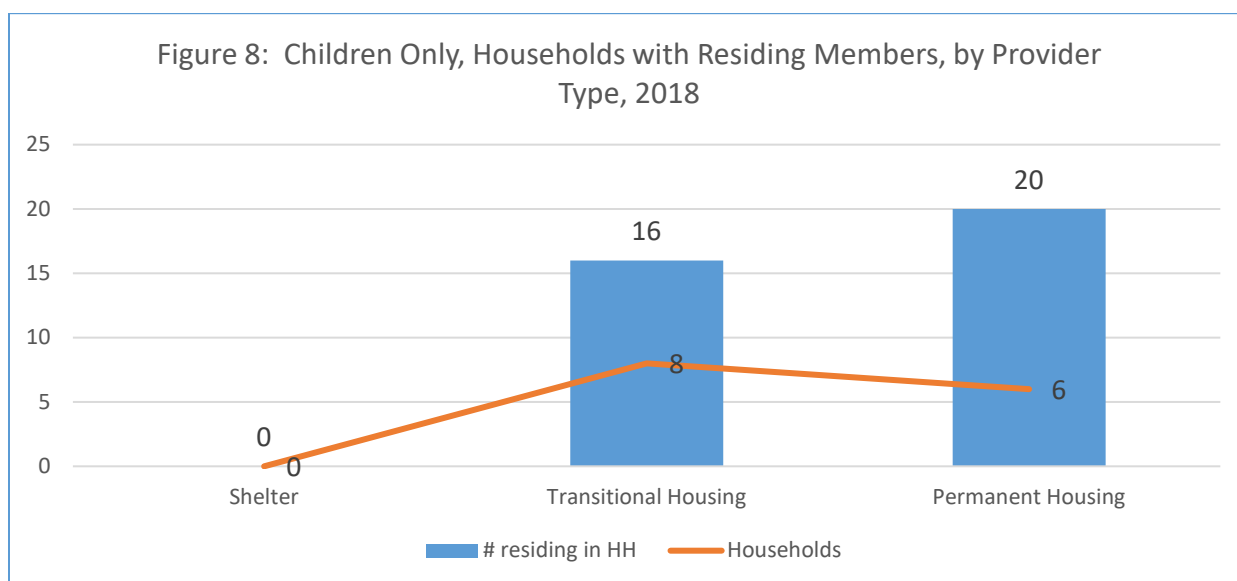
Adults without Children

A third grouping that is examined via the SPIT count is that of Adults without Children. This group overall has a similarly-sized population as those of Adults with Children, as there were 469 identified persons in this category. Figure 9 shows that slightly more than a third of Adults without Children were residing in a shelter the night of the SPIT count. The most notable difference between this population breakdown compared to Adults with Children and Children Only households is the number of persons total compared to number of households identified. In this population, the numbers are almost identical (467 households consisting of 469 persons).

Figure 9: Adults without Children, Households with Resding Members, by Provider Type, 2018
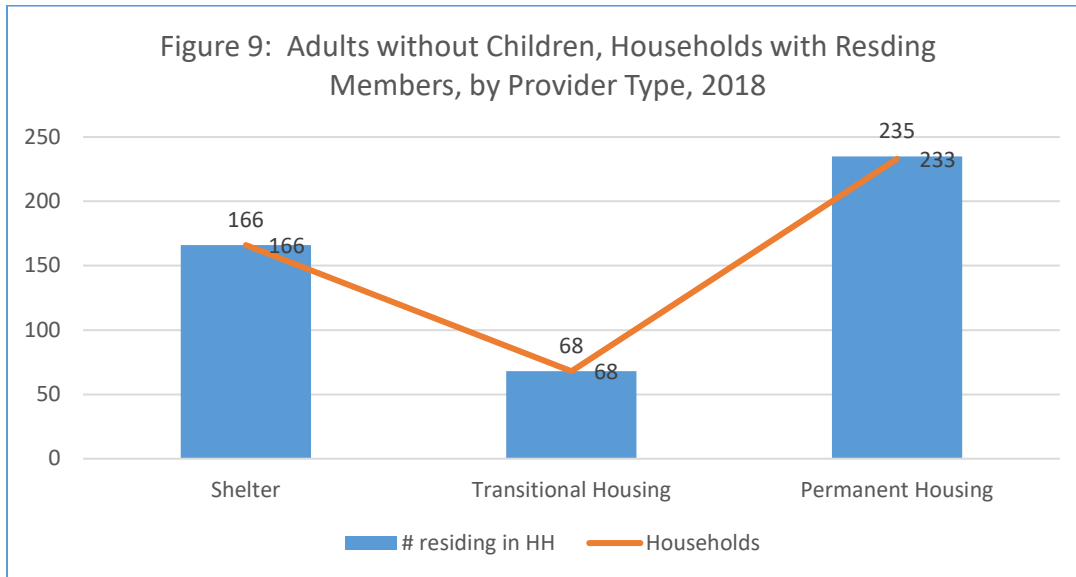
Figure 10 looks more closely at those who make up the 469 persons residing in this household type. Note: certain categories may not equal the total residing, due to reporting restrictions within some programs.

Figure 10: Demographics of Homeless Adults with Children

# of people age 18-24	19
# of people age 25 or older	380
Female	110
Male	275
Transgender	15
Non-Hispanic	357
Hispanic	43
White	264
Black/African American	112
Asian	8
American Indian/Alaska Native	2
Multiple Races	13

Additional Items of Note

In addition to receiving specific services that contribute to homelessness, many persons are identified as facing other issues that may be linked to their housing situation. The most common identified issues were having a Serious Mental Illness (292) followed by Substance Abuse (197), as shown in Figure 11.

Figure 11: Persons Identified as Facing Additional Issues, as Reported By Direct Service Providers, 2018

Figure 12 illustrates the number of persons identified by Direct Service Providers as being Chronically Homeless. There were 131 said persons, residing in 79 Households. The largest share of this category were identified as being Adult with Children (44%).

Figure 12: Persons identified as being Chronically Homeless, by Household Type, 2018
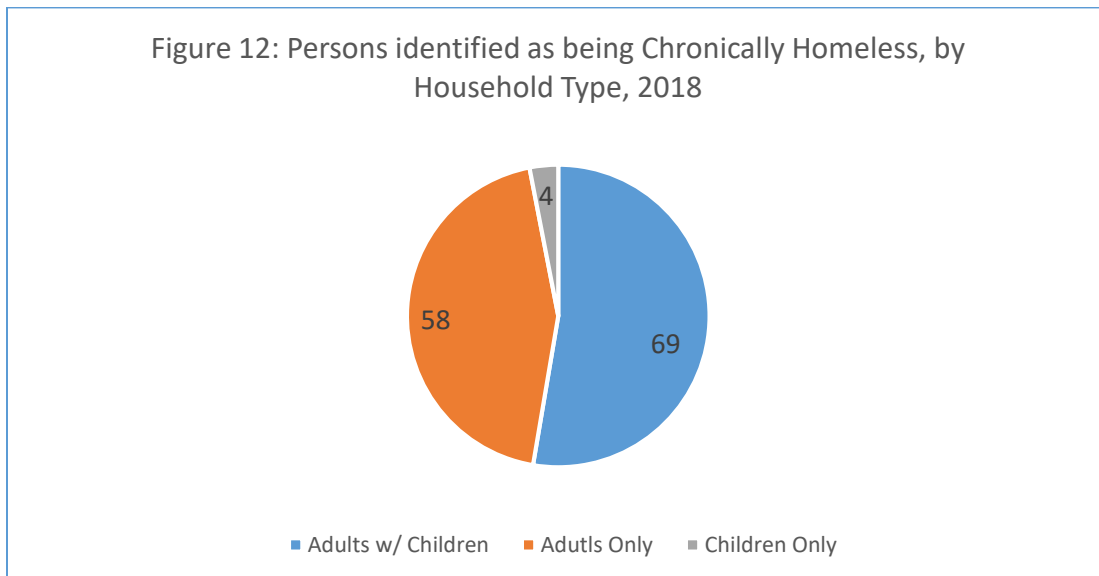
Causes of Homelessness Survey

The Causes of Homelessness survey captures the significant contributors of homelessness from the perspective of the individuals who work with the homeless within each agency. Twenty-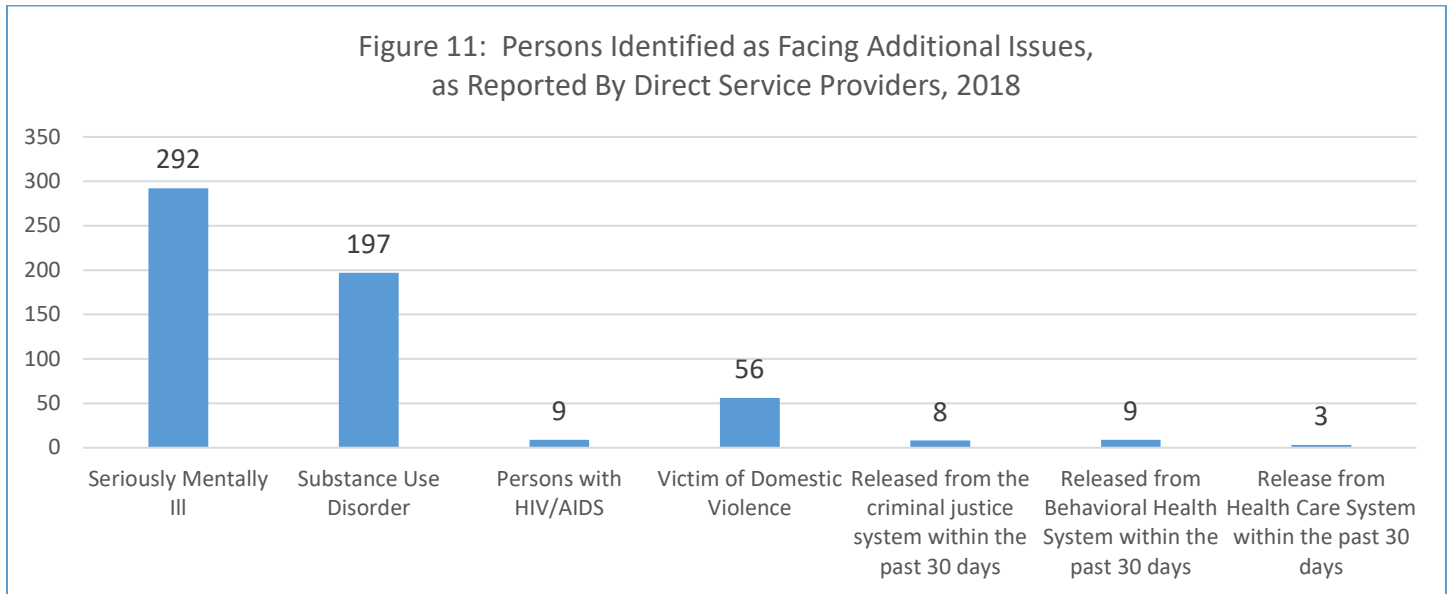two service providers returned surveys. Respondents were asked to rate a series of 29 issues that are common factors that may contribute to homelessness. By identifying on a Likert scale the Level of Significance (1-no significance, 2- little or some significance, 3- moderate impact, or 4- significant impact), mean scores were derived to illustrate what respondents felt were the primary causes. The top ten causes of homelessness rated as most significant by employees of the responding agencies are listed below from highest to lowest, (Figure 13). The full results can be found in the Appendix of this document. The Appendix also lists additional responses that were noted by those that completed the survey.

Figure 13: Identified Causes of Homelessness

Cause	Score
Mental health problems	3.76
Poor decision making skills	3.68
Insufficient income for family needs	3.64
Drug and alcohol problems	3.57
Poor Money managment skills	3.55
Lack of job skills	3.45
Non-payment of rent	3.43
Unemployed	3.29
Lack of employment	3.23
On waiting list for public housing	2.95
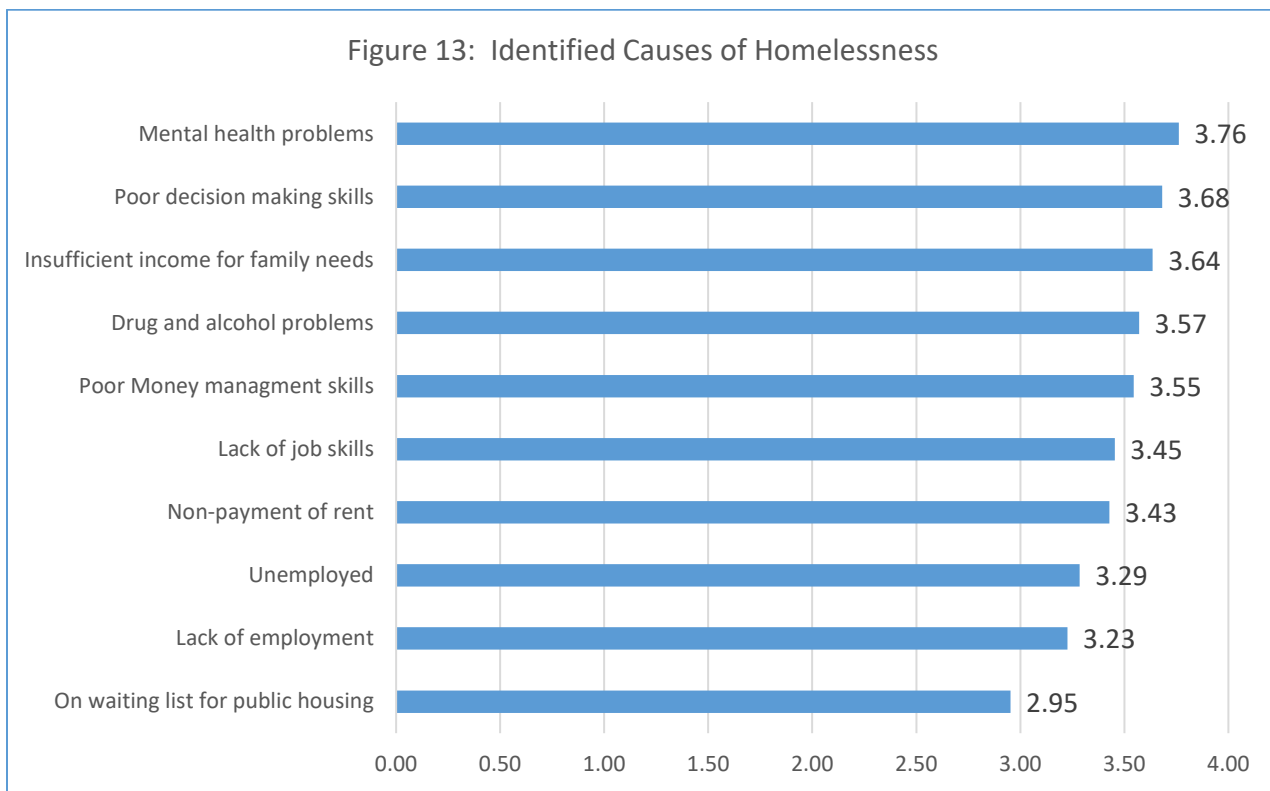
Housing Needs Survey

The Housing Needs Survey was developed by the Home Team to collect information from homeless persons (including individuals and families) regarding why they are homeless and what they need to improve their situation. The survey also gives the respondents an opportunity to report those services that have been most and least helpful to them. One hundred and forty seven (147) homeless individuals completed the survey. Respondents were asked to identify emergency and transitional shelters that they have stayed at during the past year. The individuals were also asked a series of questions in which they were instructed to check off all answers that apply to their situation.

Question 1. Causes of Homelessness. Not Having Enough Money was cited most frequently as the cause of homelessness (90), followed by Lack of Employment (63), Health Problems (36), Evictions (33), and Domestic Violence (33), as shown in Figure 14. In addition, individuals were given the opportunity to write in 'other' answers, which represent a wide-array of responses and reasons. Those answers can be found in the Appendix.

Figure 14: The causes of my homelessness are...
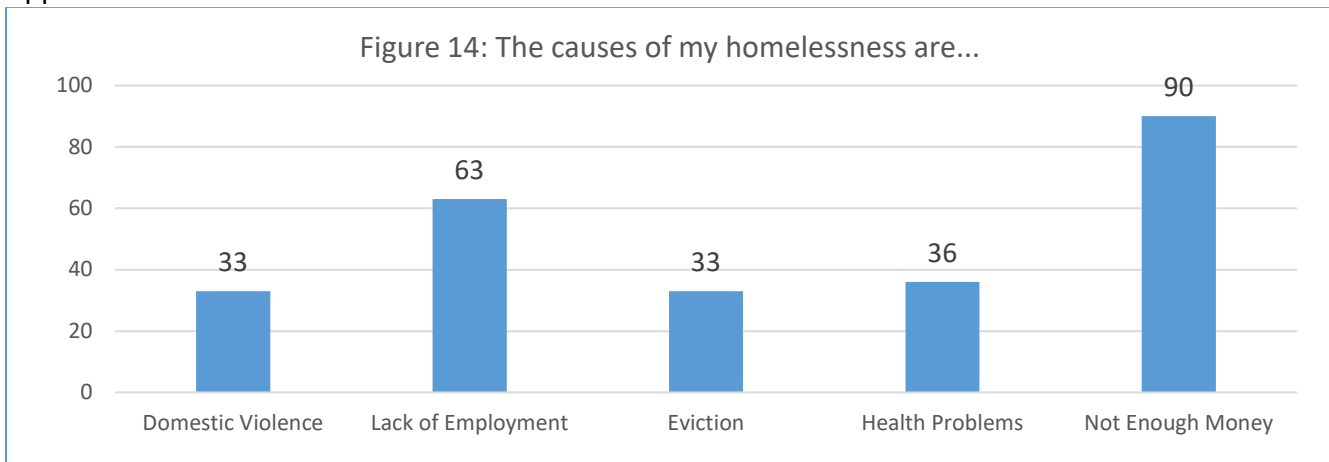
Question 2. Living Arrangements. Respondents were asked to identify what types of places they have resided in within the past 24 months. Individuals reported that in the past 24 months they predominantly lived in either a Shelter (89), with Relatives (56), and/or in Rental Property (55), as shown in Figure 15.

Figure 15: In the past 24 months, I have resided...
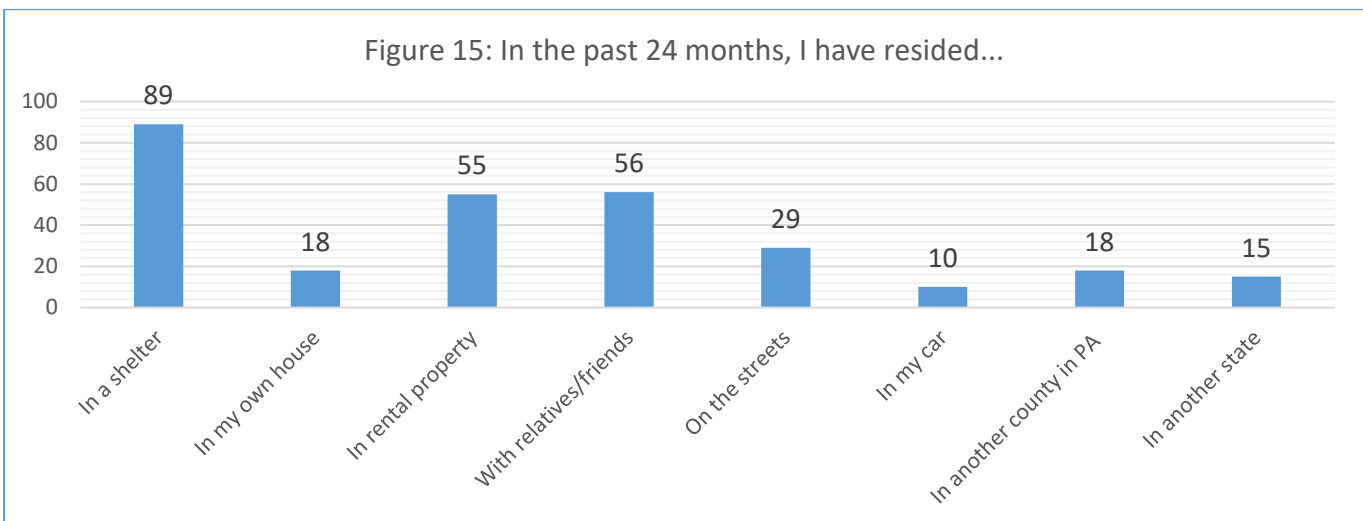
Question 3. Skills to Get Back on their Feet. Skills related to Income Issues (81) were listed as the most commonly reported need for the respondents to get back on their feet. This was followed by Decision-Making Skills (57) and Employment Skills (49), as shown in Figure 16.

Figure 16: I need the following skills to get back on my feet...

Category	Value
Employment skills	49
Education skills	36
Parenting skills	8
Conflict resolution skills	29
Decision-making skills	57
Income issues	81
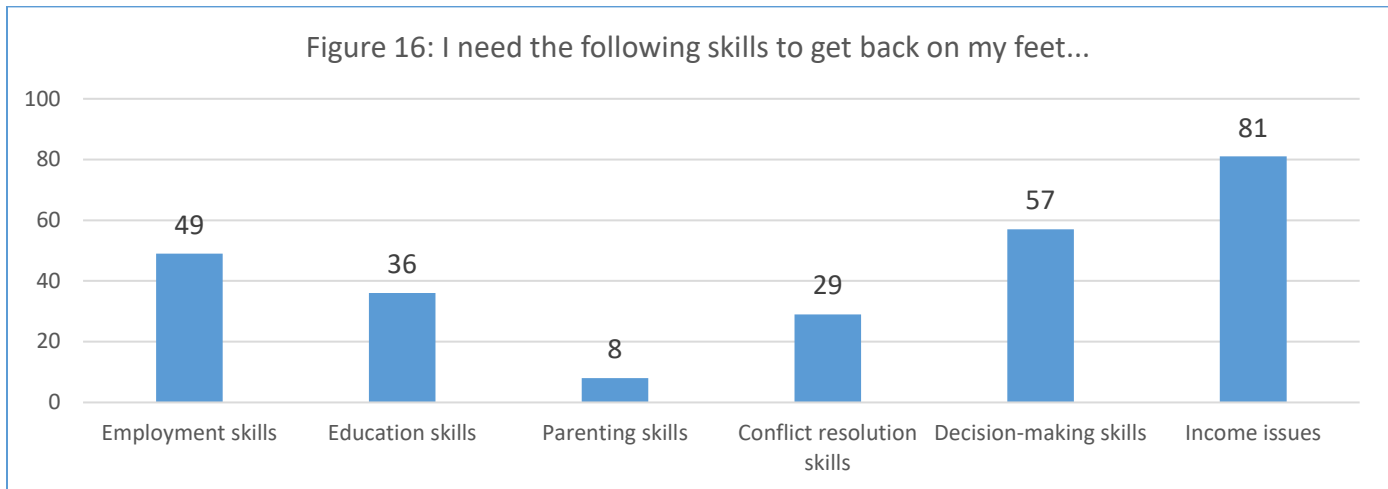
Question 4. To Gain Independence. The majority of the respondents reported that they needed the following to gain independence: Housing (96), Employment (76), and Transportation (65), as shown in Figure 17.

Figure 17: I need the following to be independent....

Category	Value
Child Care	15
Transportation	65
Employment	76
Housing	96
Clothing	28
Food	30
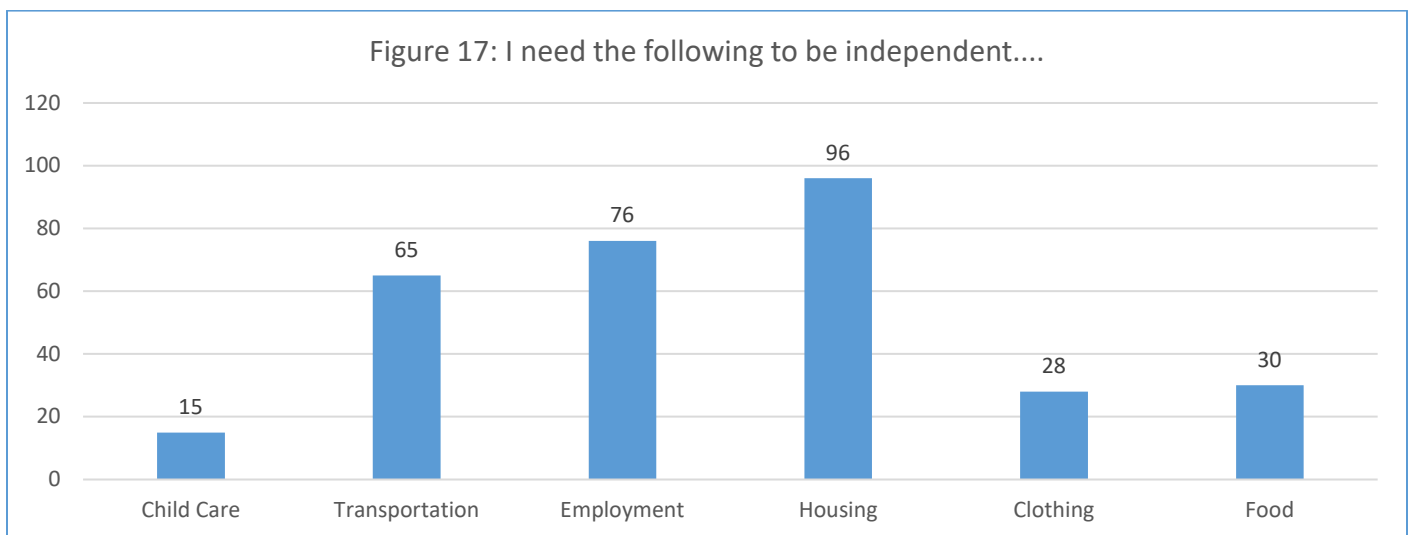
Appendices

Appendix A: Table of Identified Persons Included in SPIT count, including Sheltered and Unsheltered Counts

Appendix B: Causes of Homelessness Survey – 2018

Appendix C: Housing Needs Survey – 2018

Appendix D: Agencies that Responded to the 2018 SPIT Survey

Appendix A: Table of Identified Persons Included in SPIT count, including Sheltered and Unsheltered Counts

	Unsheltered		Emergency Shelter		Transitional Housing		Permanent Housing		COMBINED TOTALS	
	Total	Vets	Total	Vets	Total	Vets	Total	Vets	Total	Vets
Total # of Households with *ADULTS AND CHILDREN TOGETHER*	0	0	25	0	11	0	117	13	153	13
Of those, the total # of people residing in these households	0	0	72	0	30	0	415	13	517	13
# of People 17 or younger	0	0	42	0	19	0	235	0	296	0
# of People 18-24	0	0	6	0	3	0	17	0	26	0
# of People age 25 and older	0	0	24	0	8	0	110	2	142	2
Female	0	0	30	0	21	0	194	1	245	1
Male	0	0	33	0	9	0	168	1	210	1
Transgender	0	0	9	0	0	0	0	0	9	0
Unspecified	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Non-Hispanic	0	0	61	0	29	0	316	2	406	2
Hispanic	0	0	11	0	1	0	46	0	58	0
White	0	0	33	0	24	0	162	2	219	2
Black/African American	0	0	29	0	2	0	183	0	214	0
Asian	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
American Indian/Alaska Native	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
Multiple Races	0	0	7	0	4	0	34	0	45	0
Total # of Households that are Chronically Homeless (see definition of chronically homeless)	0	0	3	0	0	0	18	0	21	0
Of the households in row 18, the total number of people who reside in these households (adults and children combined)	0	0	8	0	0	0	61	0	69	0

	Unsheltered		Emergency Shelter		Transitional Housing		Permanent Housing		COMBINED TOTALS	
	Total	Vets	Total	Vets	Total	Vets	Total	Vets	Total	Vets
Total # of Households *WITHOUT CHILDREN*	4	2	166	7	68	2	233	80	471	91
Of the households in row 21, the Total # of people who reside in these households.	4	2	166	7	68	2	235	80	473	91
# of people age 18-24	0	0	14	1	2	0	3	0	19	1
# of people age 25 or older	4	0	152	6	63	2	165	12	384	20
			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Female	3	0	36	0	10	0	64	3	113	3
Male	1	0	128	7	44	0	103	9	276	16
Transgender	0	0	0	0	14	2	1	0	15	2
Non-Hispanic	0	0	147	7	50	0	160	10	357	17
Hispanic	0	0	17	0	18	2	8	0	43	2
White	3	0	111	6	33	0	120	5	267	11
Black/African American	0	0	49	1	25	2	38	5	112	8
Asian	0	0	0	0	8	0	0	0	8	0
American Indian/Alaska Native	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	0
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Multiple Races	0	0	3	0	2	0	8	0	13	0
Total # of Households that are Chronically Homeless (see definition of chronically homeless)	3	3	5	1	7	0	41	5	56	9
Of the households in row 18, the total number of people who reside in these households (adults and children combined)	3	3	5	1	7	0	43	5	58	9
Seriously Mentally Ill	0	0	42	9	27	0	223	0	292	9
Substance Use Disorder	0	0	36	1	49	0	112	0	197	1
Persons with HIV/AIDS	0	0	7	0	1	0	1	0	9	0
Victim of Domestic Violence	0	0	4	7	2	0	50	0	56	7
Released from the Criminal Justice System within the past 30 days	0	0	3	0	3	0	2	0	8	0
Released from Behavioral Health System within the past 30 days	0	0	6	0	3	0	0	0	9	0
Release from Health Care System within the past 30 days	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	3	0

	Unsheltered		Emergency Shelter		Transitional Housing		Permanent Housing		COMBINED TOTALS	
	Total	**Vets**	**Total**	**Vets**	**Total**	**Vets**	**Total**	**Vets**	**Total**	**Vets**
Total # of Households consisting of *ONLY CHILDREN*	0	0	0	0	8	0	6	0	14	0
Of the households in row 38, the Total # of children who reside in these households.	0	0	0	0	16	0	20	0	36	0
			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Female	0	0	0	0	10	0	12	0	22	0
Male	0	0	0	0	6	0	8	0	14	0
Transgender	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Unspecified	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Non-Hispanic/Non-Latino	0	0	0	0	16	0	17	0	33	0
Hispanic/Latino	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	3	0
			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
White	0	0	0	0	12	0	6	0	18	0
Black/African American	0	0	0	0	2	0	11	0	13	0
Asian	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
American Indian/Alaska Native	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Multiple Races	0	0	0	0	2	0	3	0	5	0
Total # of Households that are Chronically Homeless (see definition of chronically homeless)	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	2	0
Of the households in row 52, the total number of people who reside in these households	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	4	0

NOTE: all numbers reported are from Direct Service Providers, except for those in the Unsheltered Count. Figures returned to the Mercyhurst University Civic Institute on SPIT forms were reconciled against HMIS data, and if adjustments made, they were edited on the forms and recorded in the table above. There are some instances in which certain providers do not have all demographic information available; therefore, there are some instances where categories such as race, age, etc do not equal the total numbers for each. The Vets column denotes the number of identified veterans that were inclusive of the Total for each housing type.

Appendix B: Causes of Homelessness Survey – 2018

Responses were rated using the following scale to measure the impact each cause of homelessness has on clients:

4 = Significant Impact; 3 = Moderate Impact; 2 = Little or Some Significance; 1 = No Significance

	2017 Mean	2018 Mean
Employment Issues	**Mean**	**Mean**
Lack of employment	3.53	3.23
Lack of job skills	3.25	3.45
Unemployed	3.25	3.29
Unobtainable public transportation	2.4	2.32
Lack of child care	2.9	2
Income Issues	**Mean**	**Mean**
Insufficient income for family needs	3.53	3.64
On waiting list for public housing	2.75	2.95
Change in family structure (divorce, separation, jail)	2.68	2.81
Loss of Welfare from Non-Compliance	1.8	1.67
Loss of Welfare from Got a job	1.78	1.86
Loss of Welfare from Maxed out	1.65	1.62
Benefits change	2.87	2.1
Pregnancy	1.93	2.14
Aging issues	1.87	1.81
Death—Loss of income	2.03	1.57
Eviction	**Mean**	**Mean**
Poor money management skills	3.68	3.55
Poor decision-making skills	3.65	3.68
Non-payment of rent	3.31	3.43
Poor housekeeping skills	2.5	2.76
Non-renewal of lease	1.87	2.24
Damage of rental property	2.03	2.19
Code enforcement	1.68	1.76
Landlord sells property	1.37	1.71
Domestic Violence	**Mean**	**Mean**
Individual/Family affected by domestic violence	2.83	2.76
Health Issues	**Mean**	**Mean**
Mental Health Problems	3.67	3.76
Drug & Alcohol Abuse	3.16	3.57
Medical/Physical reasons	2.45	2.71
Other	**Mean**	**Mean**
Just got out of jail/prison	2.5	2.84
Natural disaster	1.33	1.52

In addition, responding staff were asked to provide Other Reasons that Lead to Clients Being Homeless. Write-in responses are as follow.

- Clients coming out of D&A treatment needing a supportive environment & unable to return to families or old neighborhood (unsafe)
- Don't care, no desire to improve
- Landlords refusing to rent to individuals w/poor credit history, criminal history, mental health issues, substance abuse disorders, public housing authorities refusing to rent to or issue Section 8 housing to individuals w/ one or more of the above
- Relocated or moving
- Some people just do not have positive support in place to advocate for them
- Unable to obtain legal documents due to insufficient funds (photo ID, birth certificate, SS cards), back utility bills, moving support (transportation, furniture)

Appendix C: Housing Needs Survey – 2018

Results are based on 147 surveys returned. The following contains the questions posed to clients of homeless programs. Numbers shown by each answer identify the number of clients who marked this response. In addition, respondents were also asked various open-ended questions. These responses are provided verbatim on how they were given.

EMERGENCY SHELTERS respondent is <u>currently staying</u> at and/or has stayed during this past year.

Shelter	# responses
City Mission	42
Community of Caring	30
Community Shelter Services	31
Crisis Residential Unit	0
St Patrick's Haven	19
Safe Journey (Union City)	5
SafeNet/Hospitality House	16
Salvation Army	1
The Refuge	11
Other	14

Respondents who marked 'other' stated the following:

- Grace House for Women (City Mission)
- Hotel
- Light of Life - Pittsburgh
- Maria House Project
- MHA overflow
- Overflow
- Yes, but not listed

TRANSITIONAL HOUSING respondent is currently staying at and/or has stayed during this past year.

Transitional Housing	# responses
City Mission	30
Community House	5
Erie Dawn	3
Hope House	0
Liberty House	4
Mercy Center	5
SafeNet/Bridge	2
SafeNet/TLC	5
Stairways	6
Other	13

Respondents who marked 'other' stated the following:

- Churches
- Family, friends & warming shelter
- Hotel voucher through Salvation Army
- Overflow
- Overflow shelter
- Overflows
- RTFA
- Snow House
- St. Patrick's Haven

Causes of respondent homelessness are:

Causes	# responses
Domestic Violence	33
Lack of Employment	63
Eviction	33
Health Problems	36
Not Enough Money	90

Respondents were asked to note additional causes of homelessness. The following reasons were given:

- Addiction
- Addiction
- Addiction issue
- Alcohol
- Black mold - mice - roaches
- Boyfriend went to jail for a short time
- Daughter & husband separated, no place to go
- Drug & alcohol addiction
- Drug addiction
- Drug addiction
- Drug/Alcohol dependence
- Family problems
- Got custody of my 5 kids & needed help w/housing
- Got out of jail
- Had to leave a very codependent relationship, all drugs were involved
- Housing
- Incarceration & drug rehabs, park bench
- Jail
- Language
- Lost my job
- Mental health
- Mental health issues

- Mom was moving
- Natural disaster
- Need referral
- Needed larger apartment so son could return home from placement
- No family support
- None
- Not from here & came to get treatment for methadone & almost done & headed back home
- Out of prison
- Physical altercations with another person
- Pipes froze, house flooded
- Relocated
- Separation from wife
- Uninhabitable living, rats, bugs, house fire
- Waiting on program for housing
- Wife's death
- Yes, but not listed

Places where respondent has lived in the past 24 months: Note: respondents were able to select more than one answer.

Location	# responses
In a shelter	89
In my own house	18
In rental property	55
With relatives/friends	56
On the streets	29
In my car	10
In another county in PA	18
In another state	15

Clients were asked to note any additional places they have lived within the past 24 months. The following answers were given.

- Erie Dawn housing
- Grace House
- Hotel
- Hotel voucher
- In a program
- In church
- Incarcerations & drug rehabs, park bench
- Jail
- People's couch-surfing
- Prison
- PSH

- PSH
- Warming shelter
- Yes, but not listed
- Tent

Needed skills to get back on respondent's feet: Note: respondents were able to select more than one answer.

Needed Skill	# responses
Employment skills	49
Education skills	36
Parenting skills	8
Conflict resolution skills	29
Decision-making skills	57
Income issues	81

Clients were asked to note any additional skills they need to help them get back on their feet. The following answers were given.

- A job
- Addiction issues
- Addiction recovery
- Drug & alcohol treatment
- Getting a sit-down job
- Health
- Health issues
- Health, sober
- Housing
- I don't need any skills
- Just had baby
- Mental health
- Mental stability
- More money
- My health
- Needs photo ID - SS cards & birth certificate
- None
- Patience
- Physical therapy, housing
- Sobriety
- Social skills - especially w/opposite sex
- Yes, but not listed

Identified Needs to be independent

Identified Needs	# responses
Child Care	15
Transportation	65
Employment	76
Housing	96
Clothing	28
Food	30

Respondents were asked what else they needed to become independent. The following were given:

- Better job
- Car
- Education
- FT work & Section 8
- Health
- Housing assistance
- I am
- I am independent
- Income
- Income from some source (SSDI)
- Increase in employment & Section 8
- Mental Health status
- Monetary assistance
- Money
- More money
- N/A
- Need a car
- Need FT work & Section 8 after program
- None
- Photo ID - SS cards, birth certificate
- Section 8
- Stable employment, Section 8 & support
- Yes, but not listed

Least helpful services current organization has provided.

- All services were helpful
- Case worker from Lakeshore
- City Mission
- Community Action, front desk personnel were rude & unhelpful
- Everything is helpful
- Everything they have done has been helpful
- Everything was good
- Gateway Rehab
- Haven't found any yet
- Helping with rent
- Housing availability & sources for low income never presented to me - heard thru other people
- Housing, too long in getting a place that is clean, decent, efficiency, semi-furnished
- I don't know
- I have tried to have a BCM contact me. I have had no luck with this. I can make decisions on my own, I don't have confidence in these decisions. It would be helpful to have someone to talk to.
- I live at the overflow shelter
- I was sent away from a program because of my MH issues
- Lack of freedom (in jail)
- Limited time in shelters
- Medicare is sometimes lacking in its coverage
- Money, housing, training
- N/A
- No assistance provided for over the counter vitamins/medications/supplements, No free laundry service (twice monthly @ MHA only), No assistance w/fees for driver license, address change. No transportation assistance to work & AA meetings
- None
- Not enough $ for my own place
- Nothing
- Nothing, everything has been helpful
- Nothing, everything is helpful
- Permanent housing
- Pittsburgh's homeless shelters, they don't really provide you with any resources
- Referring me to a BCM? They never returned my calls!
- Referral for ECCM, they can't help
- Same answer "Make It A Home Always II", getting connected to community services for needed services like MH needs, OUR - employment training & other medical providers
- Shelter
- St. Patrick
- Stairways Behavioral Health
- The Internet!, Erie County Adult Probation
- The mission, they just got me off the streets, no help for housing & a place to live
- There is none
- They don't allow me to go anywhere that might hurt me

- This situation is recent. I have a job & working on finding a safe place.
- Too short a stay
- Transportation
- Transportation for school/school bullying

Most helpful services current organization has provided.

- A place to stay to help me get back on my feet
- A place to stay, clothing, food, help with rent for an apartment, case management/relationship with staff
- A referral for GECAC to assist w/first month's rent & security
- A safe home, support, encouragement
- A stable place to stay
- Addiction recovery, life skills
- An ear to listen
- Application for the Lodge on Sass
- Barb Lewis @ EUMA, healthcare for Homeless Partnership, Welfare (SNAP)
- BCM
- BCM - Stairways
- Budgeting
- By far the NLP, it allows me a safety net to work on my issues & focus on the spiritual
- Case management, referral services, ongoing support
- City Mission
- City Mission - a spiritual base approach to recovery & mental illness, Salvation Army
- COC
- Columbus apartments by giving me a place to call my own and lay my head
- Community of Caring
- Community of Caring has been the most helpful, they are a true Christian organization, helping me in many ways, especially telling me where to go to get help
- Community shelter
- ECM
- Emergency shelter, food pantry/clothing pantry, AA meetings, MHA, Soup kitchen, city mission, warming centers, food stamps, financial assistance w/medical bills for hospitalizations
- Emotional care from my transition from homelessness
- Erie City Missions, New Life program
- Erie County Care Management
- Everything
- Financial Assistance, furniture, kids school clothing & help w/Christmas
- Free meals at City Mission & Emmaus. Getting Ahead class at City Mission
- Gave me a place to stay
- GCAC
- Getting help with housing
- Good living and bad
- Haven't received services, just received medical
- Health services, welfare, Refuge

- Help from parents & friends, food banks
- Help with rent & utilities, furniture & household items
- Help with rent, kids, school clothing, Christmas
- Helping with a place and rent
- Helping with rent
- Homeless case manager
- Housing
- Housing assistance
- Housing subsidy, utility assistance, furniture, moving help
- Housing, a place to stay at the shelter, cash assistance pending
- Housing, food - kindness by staff everywhere, I have not experienced kindness on such a level for 21 years
- Housing, food, clothing
- I am thankful for Community of Caring that give me a place to stay
- I have lived at the overflow shelter
- I have received housing & health services from my insurance & medical benefits
- I really don't know yet
- I received services from St. Vincent's MH unit, RTFA & the Erie City Mission. Housing & counseling were the most helpful services.
- Income assistance, budgeting, transportation, assistance to get back into school
- It got me out of an unsafe environment; provide safe housing for me and my child
- Job listings, transportation
- Job searching skills, resources to help deal with my addiction, support on my recovery
- Medical
- Medical - I have a brain injury
- Mercy Center
- Mercy Center for Women & Shelter Plus programs
- Mercy Center for Women helped me with everything I need
- MHA
- None
- OCY, ECCM, Lakeshore services
- Overflows
- Receiving service from "Make It a Home Always II", permanent housing program through MHA, housing, MH referral services, connected to other community resources
- Referrals to other services
- Rent & security, furniture, household items
- Rent & utility assist, furniture, household items, moving help, kids clothing & Christmas gifts
- Rent & utility assistance, furniture & appliances, school & Christmas for the kids
- Rent help & utilities, clothing for son, furniture, Christmas for son
- Rent, clothing for my kids, furniture
- Rent, subsidy, furniture, help moving
- Roof over the head, food in stomach
- RTFA
- Safe Journeys, Corry Counseling Services (BCM), Erie County Homeless Care Management
- Shelter

- Shelter and food
- Shelter, food, clothing
- Stairways
- Stairways counseling & tips on reducing recurrent homelessness
- Support, financial resources, housing
- Supportive services, utility assistance, rental assistance, financial/budgeting education
- The addiction education program I'm in which is the New Life program at Erie City Mission
- The City Mission has pointed as still is pointing me in the right direction
- The Erie City Mission is a great program that will help you get back to being a human being & become a productive member of society, GECAC is also a big help
- The new life program the way of transitioning myself through drug & alcohol treatment & mentoring. The rehab services provided through Erie County Drug & Alcohol
- The overflow shelter and MHA
- The Refuge and the services they provide, welfare (SNAP)
- The vets helped me more than I can thank
- TLC, food stamps, WIC, Dress for Success
- Transportation, food, shelter, clothing
- Welfare
- Welfare - cash assistance & food stamps
- Welfare (SNAP program), Safe Harbor (PTSD), The Refuge
- Welfare, coordinated entry program, the Refuge, OCY

Appendix D: Agencies that Responded to the 2018 SPIT Survey

DIRECT SERVICE PROVIDERS (Agency and Program)	
Community of Caring	*Emergency Shelter*
	Shelter Plus Care
	Transitional Living Center
Community Shelter Services	*Columbus Apartments*
	Homeless Shelter
	Lighting the Candle I
	Lighting the Candle II
	Lodge on Sass
	Our Neighbors Place
Erie City Mission	*Emergency Shelter*
	Independent Living Program
	New Life Program
Erie County Care Mgmt	*Self-Start I, II, and III*
	Shelter+ Care
Erie Dawn	*Rapid Rehousing*
	Transitional Housing Programs
Erie United Methodist Alliance	*Hope House*
	Liberty House
	My Way Home
	The Refuge
Erie Veterans Affairs Medical	*HUD VASH*
Gaudenzia	*Fresh Start*
MHA of NWPA	*Make it a Home Always I and II*
Mercy Center for Women	*Heritage House*
Safe Journey	
SafeNet	*Bridge House*
	Shelter
	Transitional Living Center
St. Patrick's Haven	
Stairways Behavioral Health	*RTFA*