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THE 2006 COMMUNITY REPORT ON HOMELESSNESS

# A Snapshot

Issued by the **Community Shelter Board**

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## INTRODUCTION

The Community Shelter Board (CSB), established in 1986, is a non-profit umbrella organization that coordinates community-based efforts, fosters collaboration, and funds services to assist families and individuals in Central Ohio to resolve their housing crises. CSB is funded by the City of Columbus, the Franklin County Board of Commissioners, the United Way of Central Ohio, The Columbus Foundation, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, the State of Ohio and other public and private donors.

Using an outcomes-based funding model, CSB measures performance standards to monitor the progress of partner agencies. The CSB Board of Trustees adopted these performance standards as part of their vision to create an overall strategy for improving the shelter system, providing an “open door” and working toward the ultimate goal of eliminating homelessness.

Columbus’ system of emergency services assists men, women and children who experience homelessness<sup>1</sup> in our community. A network of agencies, coordinated by CSB, provides shelter and services that are aimed at meeting individual needs and diminishing future homelessness. There are two separate emergency systems: services for families and services for single adults. A separate system of transitional and supportive housing is also available. Partner agencies are listed below:

- Community Housing Network
- Gladden Community House
- Homeless Families Foundation
- Lutheran Social Services / Faith Mission
- Maryhaven
- National Church Residences
- The Salvation Army
- Southeast, Inc. / Friends of the Homeless
- Volunteers of America
- YMCA of Central Ohio
- YWCA Columbus

### ***The 2006 Community Report on Homelessness: A Snapshot***

The report focuses on emergency shelter and housing services for families with children and single adults. A description of each component of the emergency shelter and housing system is followed by a summary of significant accomplishments and challenges. Demographic data on clients served by the system for Fiscal Year 2006 (July 1, 2005 to June 30, 2006) are also provided. Summarizing longer-term data trends from 1995 to present, the report then outlines results of the Point-In-Time Count conducted in January of 2006, which provides a census of both sheltered and unsheltered persons. The report concludes with overarching observations.

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<sup>1</sup> A person who experiences homelessness is one who lacks a fixed, regular and adequate nighttime residence and who has a primary nighttime residence that is a supervised shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations, an institution that provides a temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized, or a public or private place not designated for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.



## SERVICES FOR INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES

### *Overview*

Services for persons experiencing homelessness in Columbus and Franklin County encompass outreach, emergency shelter, housing placement services and permanent supportive housing. The purpose of these services is to help individuals and families quickly resolve their housing crisis through effective and responsive assistance. Toward this end, emergency shelter providers seek to ensure that individuals and families experiencing homelessness achieve all of the following outcomes:

- Have access to resources to avoid shelter admission and have housing stabilized
- Have their basic human needs met in a decent, secure environment
- Stay in a shelter for a temporary or short-term time period
- Move to positive, stable housing
- Not re-enter the emergency shelter system

Within the shelter system, programs generally collaborate and interact based on whether they serve single adults or families. The single adult emergency shelter system, though successfully meeting demand for shelter each year, is challenged due to several factors, including the high volume of clients served and the minimal integration of services that may negatively affect service efficiency and client outcomes. In contrast, the family shelter system is highly integrated and more efficient by establishing a single provider responsible for all initial triage, admission and referral. Permanent supportive housing programming connects residents with services designed to enable stable housing outcomes and improve the quality of their lives. In Columbus and Franklin County, permanent supportive housing includes nearly 800 units.

The geographic location of all emergency shelters and supportive housing is concentrated within Columbus but extends to other zip codes within the metropolitan area, as demonstrated visually by the maps in Appendix I: Maps of Emergency Shelters and Supportive Housing in Franklin County.

### ***Adult Emergency Shelter System***

The adult emergency shelter system is comprised of four men's shelter programs, two women's shelter programs, and a shelter program for inebriated men and women who are homeless. Together, these programs include a normal - or non-overflow capacity - of 417 beds for men and 97 beds for women. (See Table 1.)

In the adult emergency shelter system, each shelter operates a "front door" — meaning that clients can arrive at any shelter and receive assistance. This is based on a "no wrong door" philosophy in which any client presenting a need for shelter is assessed and admitted, referred to another shelter if appropriate, or diverted to alternative, safe housing and prevention assistance.



Adult shelter providers embrace a Housing First service philosophy that emphasizes linkage to housing planning, placement assistance and rapid re-housing. Resource specialists at each shelter provide individualized assistance for clients seeking employment and housing, as well as support for clients utilizing Resource Centers located at each shelter. For clients exiting to permanent or transitional housing, financial assistance for the first month's rent, a security deposit and/or any utilities is available through the Transition Program, administered by CSB.

As winter weather approaches and more individuals seek shelter from the cold, the demand for adult shelter increases from November to March. In response, the shelter system implements a Winter Overflow Plan that seeks to provide both additional overflow capacity for the system, as well as increased emphasis on coordinated service delivery and housing placement. With the additional capacity created for overflow, the system can shelter 532 men and 117 women. (See Table 1.)

**Table 1. FY2006 Single Adult Shelter Capacity, Including Overflow**

<b>Men's Programs</b>	<b>Regular Capacity</b>	<b>Seasonal Overflow Capacity</b>	<b>Total Capacity</b>
Faith Mission on 8 <sup>th</sup> Avenue	95		95
Faith Mission on 6 <sup>th</sup> Street*	110	50	160
Faith Mission on 6 <sup>th</sup> Street Emergency Overflow		30	30
Friends of the Homeless Men's Shelter	130	15	145
Maryhaven Engagement Center (Inebriate shelter)	42		42
Volunteers of America Men's Shelter	40		40
YMCA Housing Stabilization Beds		20	20
<b>Total Capacity</b>	<b>417</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>532</b>

<b>Women's Programs</b>	<b>Regular Capacity</b>	<b>Seasonal Overflow Capacity</b>	<b>Total Capacity</b>
Faith Mission Nancy's Place	42	8	50
Faith Mission Nancy's Place Emergency Overflow		5	5
Friends of the Homeless Rebecca's Place	47	7	54
Maryhaven Engagement Center (Inebriate Shelter)	8		8
<b>Total Capacity</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>117</b>

### **Family Emergency Shelter System**

The shelter system for families with children emphasizes efficient use of resources, close collaboration among partner agencies, streamlined admission and linkage to service and/or housing, and quick re-housing of families with appropriate supports. The model centers on a "front-door" approach to shelter admission, with a single shelter — the YWCA Family Center — managing all initial requests for shelter, including provision of immediate emergency shelter when safe, alternative housing is not available.

The YWCA Family Center opened in October of 2005 and replaced the YWCA Interfaith Hospitality Network and Hospitality Center as the front-door, or "Tier I," shelter program



for families. The Family Center is a state-of-the-art facility that accommodates up to 50 families on a daily basis and provides on-site daycare, meal services, and adult and child activities.

A critical component of the family shelter system is a “Housing First” approach to assessment and referral to the next stage of housing, with a focus on quickly moving families to housing and ensuring that appropriate supports are in place to ensure long-term housing stability.

Next-step housing options include “Tier II” shelters, transitional housing, permanent supportive housing and other permanent housing with or without transitional supports. For families exiting to permanent or transitional housing, financial assistance for the first month’s rent, security deposit and/or utilities is available through the Transition Program administered by the CSB.

Once assessed by the Family Center, families who need transitional supports are referred to the Family Housing Collaborative (FHC) for housing placement assistance, including financial assistance and short-term, in-home transitional services once housed. FHC supportive services are provided by four full-time case managers employed by the Salvation Army and are intended to assist families in locating permanent, affordable housing within three weeks of referral from the Family Center. To accomplish this, case managers assist with finding suitable and affordable housing and linking families to CSB administered assistance for security deposit, first month’s rent and utilities. Once the family is housed, case management services and linkage with supportive services in the community continue until the family has achieved a successful housing outcome — meaning that sufficient household income is available to afford housing — and/or until the family has ended contact with the provider.

Tier II shelters serve families who cannot be quickly re-housed in permanent or transitional housing due to various barriers. While in Tier II shelter, families work on securing income, budgeting, parenting and family issues, and other concerns inhibiting long-term housing stability. Within the family shelter system, two agencies provide Tier II shelter for families: the Homeless Families Foundation (HFF) and the Volunteers of America (VOA). Starting July 1, 2005, the Homeless Families Foundation initiated a shelter expansion (from 25 to 46 units) which was completed in the spring of 2006. The expansion, undertaken at the request of CSB, occurred in response to the closure of Catholic Social Services’ Barbara Bonner Family Shelter in June 2005. The total capacity of the family shelter system is 120 families. (See Table 2.)

**Table 2. FY2006 Family Shelter System Providers and Capacity**

Shelter Type	Agency	Program	Capacity (Families)
Tier I	YWCA	Family Center	50
Tier II	Homeless Families Foundation	Family Shelter	46
Tier II	Volunteers of America	Family Shelter	24
<b>Total Capacity</b>			<b>120</b>



## ***Housing Placement Services***

The Rebuilding Lives plan recognized that an effective strategy to manage emergency shelter resources would involve efforts to reduce the length of time persons spent homeless and facilitate quick movement to permanent housing. A cornerstone of this approach involves providing clients in emergency shelter with ready access to information and referral resources, for not only housing, but also employment, benefits, legal assistance, financial assistance and other essential services.

Housing placement services have become an incorporated part of shelter services. Each shelter in the adult and family shelter systems has a resource center for clients to use, including computers, housing lists, job readiness and search information, and other resources. Shelters also employ "Resource Specialists," who help clients use resource centers and/or provide individualized assistance for clients in need of more intensive housing placement assistance.

Financial assistance is available for homeless individuals and families for initial housing costs. The Transition Program provides financial assistance for the first month's rent, security deposit and utilities, as well as transportation-related expenses for clients accessing help from Material Assistance Providers, Inc. In FY2006, CSB provided \$346,634 in Transition Program assistance for 707 individuals and families leaving shelter for permanent housing. Financial assistance administered by CSB is also available for families participating in the Family Housing Collaborative, including for both housing placement and retention-related needs that arise during active program participation. In FY2006, a total of \$195,417 was issued for rent, utilities and other housing-related needs for 191 FHC families served by the Salvation Army.

## ***Permanent Supportive Housing***

Permanent supportive housing links residents to a range of support services designed to maintain stable housing and improve the quality of their lives. In Columbus and Franklin County, permanent supportive housing for persons who have experienced long-term homelessness and are disabled consists of nearly 800 units of housing operating within 16 different supportive housing programs. These programs, all part of a program called Rebuilding Lives, represent a diverse mixture of housing and supportive service models designed to best meet the needs of individuals and families and to promote long-term housing stability. In 2006, data for these programs became available for the first time and are included in the "FY2006 Clients Served" section of this report. Supportive housing providers seek to ensure that individuals and families experiencing homelessness achieve the following outcomes:

- Have their basic needs met in a non-congregate environment
- Move to positive, stable housing
- Have access to resources and services as needed to maintain housing
- Not re-enter the emergency shelter system



In 2006, 155 new supportive housing units became operational as a result of both new projects and the expansion of existing projects.

- Twenty-five Rebuilding Lives units for single adults became operational at the Community Housing Network's (CHN) Briggsdale Apartments on Harrisburg Pike. Briggsdale Apartments is a newly constructed project that includes a total of 35 units of affordable housing. Construction of the apartments was completed in March of 2006, with initial lease signings beginning the end of March and occurring through June. CHN contracts with Southeast, Inc. to provide on-site supportive services.
- Forty-two Rebuilding Lives units for single adults became operational through the Community ACT project, sponsored by the Community Housing Network. Southeast is the primary service partner in the project, which includes three master lease sites managed by CHN. Two sites have been master-leased, with a third site to be leased in early 2007.
- Thirty-eight additional units were designated for Rebuilding Lives eligible men and women at the CHN's St. Clair Hotel apartments (10 units) and Safe Haven apartments (three units), and for men at the YMCA Supportive Housing Program (25 units).
- Forty units for single adults and ten units for families with children opened at the Commons at Chantry. Developed, owned and managed by National Church Residences, the Commons at Chantry offers supportive services through Maryhaven.

An additional 90 units of supportive housing have been planned and are in various stages of development as part of both existing programs, through program expansion, and through new program development. It is anticipated that these additional units will become operational over the next two years. (See Table 3.)

Supportive housing programs typically use a "blended management" model of housing operations and supportive service management. In this model, property management and service staff coordinate efforts beginning with initial unit leasing. This allows for a more comprehensive view of residents and their needs, and coordination in response to lease compliance issues.

The services offered by supportive housing providers may be on- or off-site and vary depending on the needs of the residents. Services may include any combination of the following:

- Case management
- Health care
- Employment services, training and job placement
- Recovery services and support groups
- Independent living skills training, such as money management and housekeeping



All Rebuilding Lives supportive housing programs adhere to the “Housing First” services model, in that service participation is voluntary and is not a requirement for obtaining or maintaining housing. Voluntary services ensure that individuals and families resistant to service participation, or those who inconsistently participate, can maintain their housing so long as basic lease compliance is achieved. Supportive housing providers typically start engaging residents before move-in as part of the outreach and application process and report that the vast majority of residents choose to participate in services once stably housed.

Tenants of Rebuilding Lives supportive housing must have experienced long-term homelessness and have one or more disabilities. For Rebuilding Lives, the following definitions are used:

**Long-Term Homeless:** the individual or family has stayed 120 days or more in an emergency shelter, on the street, or a combination of the two OR has experienced at least 4 separate episodes of homelessness.

**Disabled:** the individual or a member of the family has one or more of the following: a serious mental illness, substance use disorder, long-term health disorder or developmental disability, or has experienced long-term unemployment.



**Table 3. Permanent Supportive Housing Program,  
Unit Summary as of December 1, 2006**

	Units Developed or Under Development		Total Units
	Rebuilding Lives	Other Populations	
<b>Operational</b>			
Briggsdale Apartments, Community Housing Network	25	10	35
Cassady Avenue Apartments, Community Housing Network	10		10
Community ACT Housing, Community Housing Network	42	33	75
East Fifth Avenue Apartments, Community Housing Network	38		38
North 22nd Street Apartments, Community Housing Network	30		30
North High Street Apartments, Community Housing Network	36		36
Parsons Avenue Apartments, Community Housing Network	25		25
Rebuilding Lives PACT Team Initiative	108		108
Safe Haven Apartments, Community Housing Network	16		16
Scattered Site Apartments, Southeast	75		75
St. Clair Hotel, Community Housing Network	26	5	31
Sunshine Terrace, YMCA	65	120	185
The Commons at Chantry, Maryhaven/National Church Residences	50	50	100
The Commons at Grant, National Church Residences	50	50	100
YMCA Supportive Housing	95		95
YWCA WINGS	69		69
	<b>760</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>1,028</b>
<b>Future Opening Date</b>			
<i>2008 or later</i>			
Southpoint Place, Community Housing Network	40	40	80
The Commons at Buckingham, National Church Residences	50	50	100
	<b>90</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>180</b>
<b>Total Units</b>	<b>850</b>	<b>358</b>	<b>1,188</b>
<b>Goal</b>	<b>800</b>		



## **FY2006 CLIENTS SERVED**

The Community Shelter Board's Housing and Homelessness Management Information System (HMIS) contains client-level data on all homeless persons who receive emergency shelter through CSB's network of partner agencies. These programs, as measured by bed capacity, represent 95 percent of the Columbus and Franklin County emergency shelter beds – with the remaining five percent being at CHOICES (serving survivors of domestic violence) and Huckleberry House (serving runaway youth). A complete list of agencies and programs is included in Appendix II: 2006 Shelter System Data Methodology. Since the family system operates year-round to admit all families in immediate need of shelter, and the adult system operates similarly most months of the year, the number served in shelter represents emergency shelter demand. Thus, the demographic and outcome data from these clients provide a picture of those who experience homelessness in our community.

### ***FY2006 Utilization, Demographics and Outcomes***

#### **Emergency Shelter System**

Table 4 summarizes emergency shelter client data from the HMIS for the period July 1, 2005 to June 30, 2006 (FY2006). Highlights of FY2006 utilization, demographics and outcomes are presented below.

- The shelter system **served** 3,684 men, 1,252 women and 731 families.
- **Average length of stay** in emergency shelter for men was 41 days, while women stayed an average of 31 days.
- **Single adult men** represent the largest number of households and the largest number of persons.
  - Of the 4,936 persons who accessed a single adult shelter, more than 75 percent were male.
  - Eighteen percent of the male clients were veterans.
  - The majority of all sheltered clients served were non-Hispanic black males with an average age of 42.
  - On average, men who entered the adult shelters were three years older than women and 11 years older than the family head of household.
- The **average family size** was 3.6 members with the majority (85 percent) of families headed by women.
- The **number of children** who experienced homelessness and received emergency shelter was 1,637, and over half of the children were seven years old or less.
- Blacks were the largest **racial group** within all three systems, at 56 percent in the women's shelters, 61 percent in the men's and 70 percent in family shelters.
- Upon admission into the shelter system, the **top crisis reasons** varied among men, women and families. For both men and women, the top reason (33 percent of men



and 30 percent of women) was drinking or drugs. For almost half of the families, the top reason was loss of or inadequate income (46 percent). Family or relationship problems played a role for families (23 percent) and women (22 percent) more than for men (15 percent).

- All population types had substantially less **monthly income** than the amount needed to rent a typical apartment in Columbus.
  - For families with children, the average monthly income per family member was \$109/month at the time of intake to emergency shelter.
  - Single men and single women, respectively, had an average monthly income of \$314 and \$279. In Franklin County, the Fair Market Rent for a two-bedroom unit is \$674<sup>2</sup>.
- Overall **rates of employment** across all populations were very low. Single adult women — with just seven percent working at admission — had the lowest rate of employment. Fifteen percent of men were working at admission, and 19 percent of family heads-of-household were working.
- Those experiencing **successful housing outcomes** were lowest among the men, at 19 percent and slightly higher among women, at 24 percent. Remarkably, 62 percent of family households exited emergency shelter to stable housing.
- **Typical destinations upon exit** for emergency shelter clients included unknown locations for large groups of men (36 percent), women (27 percent) and families (30 percent). Most families exited shelter for rental houses or apartments (38 percent), while only 11 percent of men and 12 percent of women did. Among women, 21 percent moved in with family or friends, while this was not a common occurrence for men or families. For both men and women, noteworthy percentages — 22 percent and 15 percent, respectively — moved into places not meant for habitation, such as the streets.
- Recidivists are those individuals who leave the shelter system with a successful housing outcome and return to shelter within two weeks to three months. The family system also experienced the most positive outcome for this measure, with the lowest percentage of **recidivism**, at only two percent. Recidivism was six percent for men and four percent for women.

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<sup>2</sup> *Out of Reach 2006*, National Low Income Housing Coalition, Web site: [www.nlihc.org](http://www.nlihc.org).



**Table 4. Individuals and Families Served at Emergency Shelters, July 1, 2005 through June 30, 2006<sup>3</sup>**

<b>Data Elements</b>	<b>Men</b>	<b>Women</b>	<b>Families</b>	<b>Total</b>
Total unduplicated households	3,684	1,252	731	5,667
Total unduplicated clients	3,684	1,252	2,601	7,537
Total unduplicated adults	3,684	1,252	964	5,900
Total unduplicated children	N/A	N/A	1,637	1,637
Total shelter units	156,885	38,354	139,437	334,676
Average age for Head of Household (HOH)	42	39	31	N/A
Veterans (Adults)	18%	2%	4%	13%
Gender - family (HOH)				
Female			85%	
Male			15%	
Gender - single adults (HOH)				
Female		25%		
Male	75%			
Race (HOH)				
Black	61%	56%	70%	
White	35%	41%	28%	
Other	4%	3%	2%	
Ethnicity				
Hispanic	4%	2%	3%	
Non-Hispanic	96%	98%	97%	
Mean Family Size			3.6	
Average # of children			2.2	
Ages of Children				
0 to 2			26%	
3 to 7			33%	
8 to 12			24%	
13 to 17			17%	
Mean Monthly Income at intake	\$314	\$279	\$392	\$316
% working at intake	15%	7%	19%	14%
Successful housing outcome ( #)	405	272	388	1,065
Successful housing outcome (%)	19%	24%	62%	21%
Recidivism	6%	4%	2%	

<sup>3</sup> Fiscal Year 2005-06 housing outcomes data for the Faith Mission men's programs are not reliable; consequently, Faith Mission on 6th and Faith Mission on 8th have been excluded from the men's system calculations for successful outcomes[0].



**Table 5. Emergency Shelters -- Top Five Primary Crisis Reasons by Population Type, July 1, 2005 through June 30, 2006**

Men (N = 3,684)			Women (N = 1,252)			Families (N = 731)		
Most Common Crisis Reasons for Men	#	%	Most Common Crisis Reasons for Women	#	%	Most Common Crisis Reasons for Families	#	%
Drinking/Drugs	1,210	33%	Drinking/Drugs	376	30%	Loss of income/ Inadequate income	338	46%
Loss of income/ Inadequate income	956	26%	Family relationship problems	273	22%	Family relationship problems	170	23%
Family relationship problems	538	15%	Loss of income/ Inadequate income	245	20%	Sub-standard housing/Bad environment	83	11%
Poor money management/ Unexpected financial crisis	274	7%	Sub-standard housing/Bad environment	87	7%	Relocated to find work/Decided to move here	56	8%
Arrested/Went to jail	206	6%	Relocated to find work/Decided to move here	67	5%	Poor money management/ Unexpected financial crisis	41	6%

**Table 6. Emergency Shelters -- Top Five Destinations for Exited Clients by Population Type, July 1, 2005 through June 30, 2006**

Men (N = 3,321)			Women (N = 1,157)			Families (N = 614)		
Most Common Destinations for Men	#	%	Most Common Destinations for Women	#	%	Most Common Destinations for Families	#	%
Unknown	1205	36%	Unknown	317	27%	Rental house/apartment (no subsidy)	232	38%
Other: Places not meant for habitation (street)	744	22%	Moved in with family/friends	246	21%	Unknown	185	30%
Rental house/ apartment (no subsidy)	351	11%	Streets	179	15%	Public Housing	54	9%
Emergency shelter	195	6%	Rental house/apartment (no subsidy)	143	12%	Other subsidized house/apartment	52	8%
Transitional housing for homeless	193	6%	Institutional facility	53	5%	Moved in with family/friends	34	6%



## **Permanent Supporting Housing**

For the first time, this report includes data on permanent supportive housing and the Rebuilding Lives program. Table 7 summarizes supportive housing client data from the HMIS for the period July 1, 2005 to June 30, 2006 (FY2006). Table 8 describes the top income or benefit sources for these clients. Table 9 lists the top prior living conditions, and Table 10 enumerates the top destinations for exited clients. Highlights of FY2006 utilization, demographics and outcomes are presented below.

- Supportive housing **served** 542 men and 256 women.
- The **average age** of men served was 46 and of women served was 42. The range of ages was very broad, from 18 to 89 years old.
- Twenty-one percent of men served in permanent supportive housing were **veterans**.
- Men and women residing in permanent supportive housing achieved a **successful housing outcome** of 87 percent and 90 percent, respectively.
- The majority of clients served indicated their **race** as black, at 67 percent. Only one percent of the clients were Hispanic.
- Both men (at \$221) and women (at \$195) averaged substantially less **monthly income** than the amount needed to rent a typical apartment in Columbus. In fact, 61 percent of the clients had no income upon intake. Only 11 percent of the clients served were working at admission into housing, with little variation between women and men.
- The **typical prior living conditions** for men and women in supportive housing included emergency shelter (46 percent of men vs. 36 percent of women) or the streets (40 percent of men and 42 percent of women).
- The **top income or benefit sources** for permanent supportive housing clients were SSI (13 percent of men vs. 16 percent of women), employment income (11 percent of men vs. 9 percent for women), SSDI (four percent for both) or food stamps (14 percent for women).
- **Top destinations upon exit** for permanent supportive housing clients included permanent housing (45 percent for men and 55 percent for women), moving in with family or friends (20 percent for men and 28 percent for women), institutional facilities (15 percent for men and five percent for women), and emergency shelter (three percent of men and five percent of women).
- **Retention rates** were very high in permanent supportive housing, at 97 percent overall and for men, and virtually the same for women, at 96 percent.
- **Housing stability** averaged 21 months overall. The number was higher for men, at 22 months, compared to 17 months for women.
- **Recidivism** was seven percent for men and six percent for women.



**Table 7. Clients Served at Permanent Supportive Housing Programs, July 1, 2005 through June 30, 2006**

Data Elements	Men		Women		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
Total unduplicated clients	542	68%	256	32%	798	100%
Mean age (Head of Household, or HOH)	46	N/A	42	N/A	44	N/A
Median age (HOH)	46	N/A	44	N/A	45	N/A
Age Range						
Minimum	18	N/A	19	N/A	18	N/A
Maximum	89	N/A	63	N/A	89	N/A
Veterans (HOH) #	112	95%	6	5%	118	100%
% of Total		21%		2%		15%
Race (HOH)						
Black	370	68%	163	64%	533	67%
White	159	29%	88	34%	247	31%
Other	13	2%	5	2%	18	2%
Ethnicity						
Hispanic	5	1%	4	2%	9	1%
Non-Hispanic	537	99%	252	98%	789	99%
Mean Monthly Income at intake (including clients with zero income)	\$221	N/A	\$195	N/A	\$212	N/A
Mean Monthly Income at intake (excluding clients with zero income)	\$553	N/A	\$524	N/A	\$544	N/A
Clients with \$0 income at intake	320	59%	163	64%	483	61%
Working at intake	62	11%	25	10%	87	11%
Successful housing outcome	468	87%	230	90%	698	87%
Recidivism	4	7%	2	6%	6	7%
Exits with successful housing outcomes	60	45%	32	55%	92	48%
Retention	524	97%	247	96%	771	97%
Housing Stability (in months)	22	N/A	17	N/A	21	N/A



**Table 8. Permanent Supportive Housing  
Top Five Income/Benefit Sources by Population Type at Intake, July 1, 2005  
through June 30, 2006**

Men's Primary Income/Benefit Sources	Men (N=557)		Women's Primary Income/Benefit Sources	Women (N=290)	
	#	%		#	%
No Income	320	57%	No Income	141	49%
SSI	73	13%	SSI	47	16%
Employment Income	62	11%	Food Stamps	42	14%
SSDI	21	4%	Employment Income	25	9%
Social Security	20	4%	SSDI	11	4%

**Table 9. Permanent Supportive Housing Clients  
Top Five Prior Living Situations by Gender, July 1, 2005 through June 30, 2006**

Prior Living Situations for Men	Men (N = 542)		Prior Living Situations for Women	Women (N = 256)	
	#	%		#	%
Emergency Shelter	250	46%	Streets	107	42%
Streets	216	40%	Emergency Shelter	93	36%
Other	76	14%	Other	56	22%

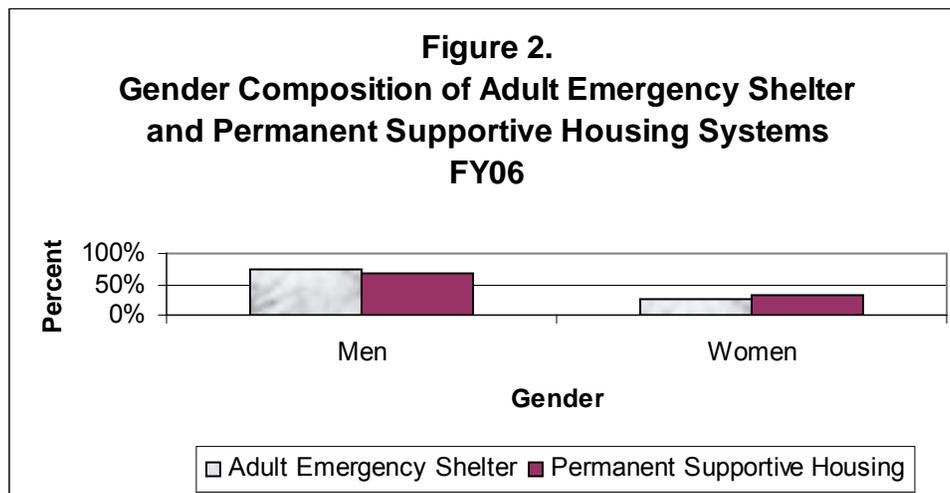
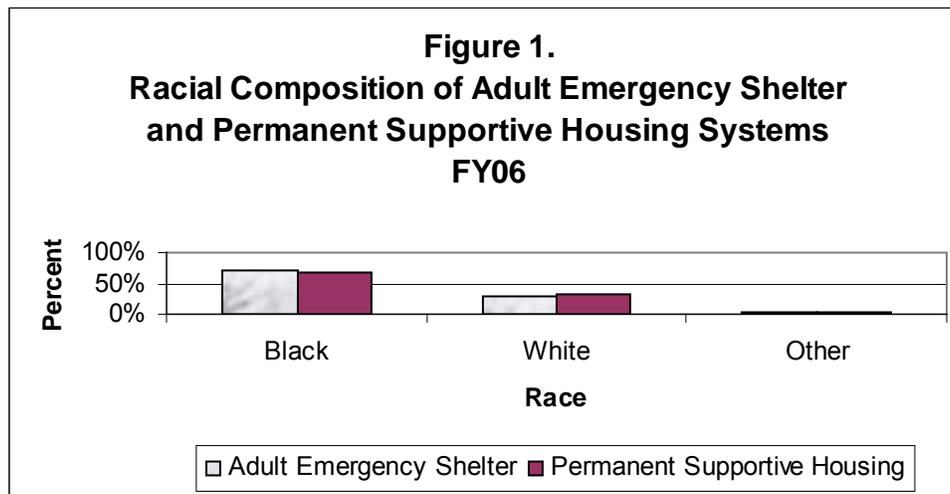
**Table 10. Permanent Supportive Housing Clients  
Top Destinations for Exited Clients by Gender, July 1, 2005 through  
June 30, 2006**

Most Common Destinations for Men	Men (N=134)		Most Common Destinations for Women	Women (N=58)	
	#	%		#	%
Permanent Housing	60	45%	Permanent Housing	32	55%
Moved in with family/friends	27	20%	Moved in with family/friends	16	28%
Institutional facility	20	15%	Institutional facility	3	5%
Other	14	10%	Emergency Shelter	3	5%
Street/Unknown	9	7%	Street	3	5%
Emergency Shelter	4	3%	Other	1	2%

## Comparative Analysis

Analysis of gender and race data comparing the populations in emergency shelter and permanent supportive housing yielded very little difference between the groups. Figures 1 and 2 help to illustrate the similarities.

- For both populations, **racial composition** was similar. The majority of clients were black – 70 percent for emergency shelter and 67 percent for permanent supportive housing. Whites comprise the majority of the balance for both groups, with 28 percent of clients in emergency shelter and 31 percent in permanent supportive housing being white.
- **Gender** proportions between both groups of clients were also comparable. In emergency shelters, 75 percent of the clients were male, compared to 68 percent in permanent supportive housing.



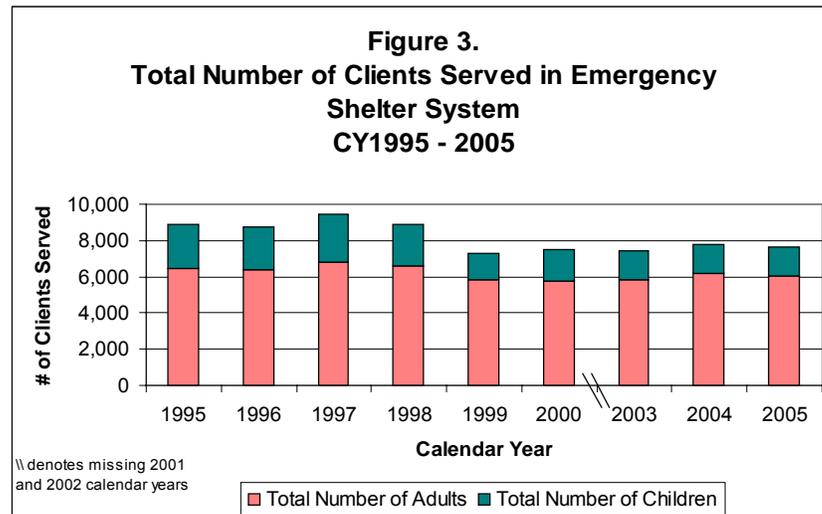
## Trend Data, 1995 - 2005

Table 11 summarizes key variables for utilization, client demographics and outcomes for the periods 1995 – 2001 and 2002 – 2005. Figures provide visual schematics to help tell the story, and additional details can be referenced in Appendix III: Supplemental Charts with Summary Points. Unlike the previous section of highlights for FY2006, this section compares trends based upon calendar year data. Please note the following additional data limitations:

- Limited methodological information is available regarding data from 1995 to 2000.
- Due to a database conversion, data are unavailable for calendar years 2001 and 2002.
- Statistical trending is not possible due to the limited amount of consecutive-year data.

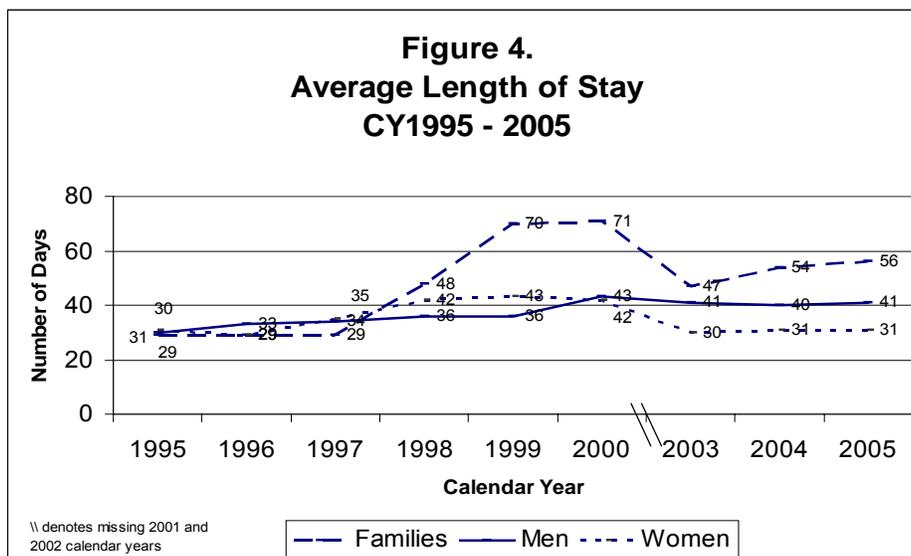
Trends over the last decade are encouraging, but are not definitive due to the two years of missing data. Below is a summary of key indicators across the ten-year period.

- Overall, the **demand for emergency shelter appears to have decreased**, from a high of 9,414 people sheltered in 1997 to 7,609 in 2005. Figure 3 illustrates the trend.



- This trend is also documented by the **decrease in the annual number of nights of service** provided, which peaked with 397,008 units in 2000 compared to 337,826 units in 2005.
- Those numbers translate to a **decrease in the number of clients served per night**, from 1,088 (2000) to 926 per night (2005). The average number served per night in 2005 was 103 single adult women, 442 single adult men, and 101 families. However, for 2004 and 2005 both the number of persons sheltered per night and the average daily shelter units were greater than both measures in 2003.

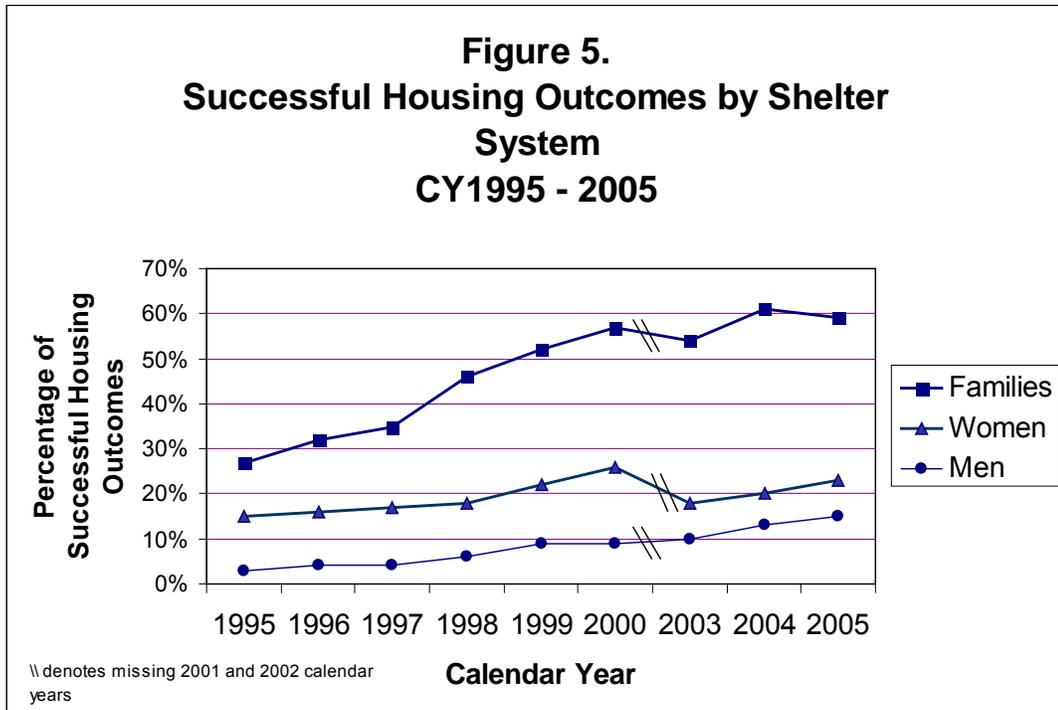
- **Declines in family shelter demand** drive this overall decline in demand. A high of 1,217 family households were sheltered in 1997 compared to 678 family households in 2005. The number of families experiencing homelessness and admitted to shelter in 2005 was only 58 percent of the number in 1995. Encouragingly, the number of children sheltered in 1995 (2,456) has decreased in 2005 (1,578).
  - This is most likely due to the improved emergency response initiated in 1998 with the establishment of the YWCA Interfaith Hospitality Network (YIHN) – now the YWCA Family Center – as the “front door” to family services.
  - Concurrent with adopting a single point of entry, the YWCA created a process to link families to community resources, thus preventing a need for families to enter the shelter system to receive services.
- An area for concern is the **increase in single adult women** experiencing homelessness and accessing shelter. The number of women appears to be steadily increasing since 1995.
  - Despite this negative trend, **women experienced higher rates of successful housing outcomes** than in 1995.
- The number of **men served has been consistent** since 1995, and encouragingly the **percentage of successful housing outcomes has increased**.



- The **average length of stay in emergency shelter increased for families and single adult men** while remaining constant for single adult women. Figure 4 illustrates the trend. The peak for the average length of stay for all populations occurred from 1998 to 2000. Since that time, the average length of stay has

decreased across all populations. When comparing the average length of stay for women for 1995 with 2005, it is the same (31 days). Making the same comparison for men and families, the increase was 11 days and 27 days respectively.

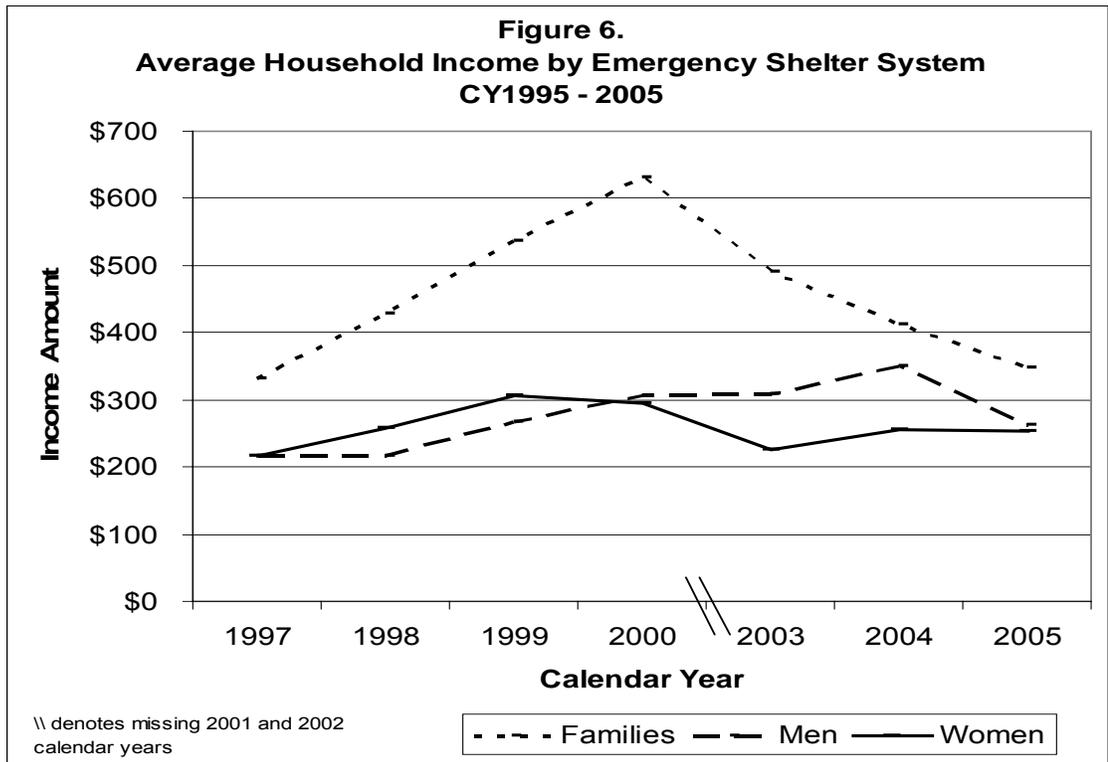
- One possibility that may have affected the average length of stay for families is the 1998 implementation of prevention and diversion services by the YWCA Family Center.
- By program design, the YWCA Family Center diverted families from the shelters by giving them alternative housing options, such as sufficient income to rent an apartment with limited financial assistance.
- Diverted families are more able to benefit from prevention services. Those entering into shelter would be more likely to have long-term needs, which prevention services cannot address.
- When the shelter serves a greater proportion of families or individuals with long-term needs, the average length of stay will increase to reflect the population served.



- **The rate of positive housing outcomes for families also more than doubled from 1995 to 2005.** (See Figure 5.) Although not as dramatic, the men’s and women’s shelter systems have seen an increase in percentage of successful outcomes as well. In 2005, the men’s shelter system achieved a 12 percentage-point increase in successful outcomes when compared with 1995. The women’s

shelter system also achieved noteworthy improvement, with an eight percent increase from 1995 to 2005.

- One change in the services delivery system that may have contributed to this increase is the development of the Family Housing Collaborative in 1998.
- Created in response to the high number of families experiencing homelessness, the Collaborative focuses on rapidly re-housing families and providing transitional services to prevent repeated homelessness.
- Other improvements since 1998 have included an increased focus on housing placement for all family shelters.
- While the **percent working at intake appears to have declined**, the statistic for 1995 to 2000 was calculated differently than for 2003 to 2005. Thus, more data are required before a conclusion can be made.



- The **average household income** has remained relatively constant since 1995, with little change even with inflation. Figure 6 demonstrates the trend. The difference between families and single adults is noteworthy.

**Table 11a. Summary of All Emergency Shelter Clients, Families, and Individuals Served, 1995 through 2005**

<b>All Clients</b> (men, women & children)	<b>1995</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>
Total Clients Served	8,890	8,764	9,414	8,893	7,275	7,513	7,437	7,766	7,609
Total Number of Households Served	6,116	6,052	6,461	6,309	5,638	5,540	5,648	6,000	5,814
Total Number of Children	2,456	2,392	2,623	2,269	1,444	1,724	1,576	1,552	1,578
Total Number of Adults	6,434	6,372	6,791	6,624	5,831	5,789	5,858	6,212	6,030
Percent Working (HOH)	18%	21%	20%	21%	24%	26%	16%	15%	12%
Successful Outcomes (Households)	9%	11%	12%	14%	16%	18%	17%	20%	23%
Total Shelter Units <sup>4</sup>	268,026	274,065	302,798	380,755	350,136	397,008	306,225	333,708	337,826
Average Served per Night	734	750	830	1,043	959	1,088	839	914	926

<b>Families</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>
Families Served	1,168	1,098	1,217	974	612	740	698	696	678
Individuals in Families <sup>5</sup>	3,942	3,810	4,170	3,558	2,249	2,713	2,487	2,462	2,473
Number of Adults	1,486	1,418	1,547	1,289	805	989	908	908	894
Number of Children	2,456	2,392	2,623	2,269	1,444	1,724	1,576	1,552	1,578
Average Family Size	3.4	3.5	3.4	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.6	3.5	3.6
Average Income	-----	-----	\$332	\$428	\$537	\$630	\$491	\$413	\$347
Percent Working	11%	15%	14%	20%	30%	33%	16%	16%	12%
Successful Outcomes	27%	32%	35%	46%	52%	57%	54%	61%	59%
Average Length of Stay (Days)	29	29	29	48	70	71	47	54	56
Total Shelter Units	117,709	114,656	124,619	183,903	163,551	189,856	115,976	133,550	138,851
Average Households Served per Night	95	89	100	136	121	144	102	104	101

<sup>4</sup> Shelter unit = one person sheltered for one night.

<sup>5</sup> The number of adults plus number of children will not necessarily equal Individuals in Families. This is because the former categories are dependent upon an age calculation, which requires a valid date of birth.



**Table 11b. Summary of All Emergency Shelter Clients, Families, and Individuals Served, 1995 through 2005, cont.**

<b>Men</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>
Men Served	4,013	3,995	4,281	4,414	4,167	3,869	3,881	4,144	3,935
Average Income	-----	-----	\$217	\$217	\$267	\$307	\$308	\$351	\$262
Percent Working	20%	23%	22%	21%	24%	27%	18%	17%	13%
Successful Outcomes	3%	4%	4%	6%	9%	9%	10%	13%	15%
Average Length of Stay (Days)	30	33	34	36	36	43	41	40	41
Total Shelter Units	120,873	131,959	143,916	157,533	149,317	168,261	158,120	164,350	161,250
Average Served per Night	331	361	394	432	409	456	433	450	442
<b>Women</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1999</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2004</b>	<b>2005</b>
Women Served	935	959	963	921	859	931	1,069	1,160	1,201
Average Income	-----	-----	\$216	\$257	\$307	\$294	\$226	\$256	\$253
Percent Working	17%	18%	17%	20%	17%	15%	11%	9%	6%
Successful Outcomes	15%	16%	17%	18%	22%	26%	18%	20%	23%
Average Length of Stay (Days)	31	29	35	42	43	42	30	31	31
Total Shelter Units	29,444	27,450	34,263	39,319	37,268	38,891	32,129	35,808	37,725
Average Served per Night	81	75	94	108	102	107	88	98	103



## POINT-IN-TIME AND STREET COUNT CENSUS

### Overview

The Columbus and Franklin County Continuum of Care Steering Committee assumes the responsibility of planning and preparation of an annual application to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for McKinney-Vento Act funding for homeless services and housing. One component of the application is an inventory of facilities, services and housing provided to persons experiencing homelessness. A “point-in-time” count of persons utilizing these programs and the “street count” of persons who are not accessing emergency shelter are also provided.

Previous point-in-time census processes have provided the committee with experience to help inform and improve upon future processes. Based upon recommendations from previous counts, this year’s process was fine-tuned in order to provide better data. The full report can be referenced in Appendix IV: Point-In-Time Count of Homeless Persons Report.

Table 12 describes the plan for the 2006 point-in-time count of homeless persons, including sheltered (i.e., those using facilities, services and housing) and unsheltered (i.e., those living on the street) homeless individuals.

**Table 12. Plan for the 2006 Point-in-Time Count of Homeless Persons**

Population	Location	Count Type	Source/Methodology
Sheltered Homeless	Shelters & transitional housing programs	Administrative Records and Enumeration	CSB’s HMIS data system; CSB survey of programs not part of HMIS
Unsheltered Homeless	“Street” count at known locations (homeless camps, street areas, riverbanks, railroad tracks, etc.)	Enumeration	15 volunteer teams assigned to 36 sites to count unsheltered homeless persons from 4 a.m. to 7 a.m. on January 25, 2006.
Unsheltered Homeless	Emergency service providers & 24/7 storefront locations	Enumeration	Volunteers respond in person to calls from hospitals, emergency services, police, jails, and selected storefront locations from 4 a.m. to 7 a.m. on January 25, 2006.
Unsheltered Homeless	Free lunch providers	Screening and enumeration	Volunteer teams attend the 6 largest free lunch locations to screen and count unsheltered homeless persons during their regular hours of operation on January 25, 2006.



## Methodology

### Sheltered Count

CSB maintains a data system known as the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) for emergency shelters, permanent supportive housing and other homeless programs that are funded by CSB or otherwise agree to enter data into HMIS. Emergency shelter staff members enter data when people enter and exit the shelter system. The HMIS data system can provide an accurate count of the number of people in programs entering data into HMIS at any point in time.

CSB used the HMIS system to generate a count of persons in emergency shelter in Franklin County on the night of January 24, 2006. CSB also conducted a telephone survey of other emergency shelter and transitional housing programs for the homeless in Franklin County that do not enter data into the HMIS data reporting system to determine the number of homeless persons residing in their facilities on the night of the count. Table 13 lists the programs included in the sheltered count

**Table 13. Sheltered Count-Emergency Shelter & Transitional Housing Programs**

<b>Emergency Shelter Programs</b>		
<b>Agency</b>	<b>Program</b>	<b>Source</b>
CHOICES	Domestic Violence Shelter	Survey
Friends of the Homeless	Rebecca's Place	HMIS
Friends of the Homeless	Men's Shelter	HMIS
Homeless Families Foundation	Family Shelter	HMIS
Huckleberry House	Youth shelter (ages 12-18)	Survey
Lutheran Social Services-Faith Mission	Nancy's Place	HMIS
Lutheran Social Services-Faith Mission	Faith on 6th Street	HMIS
Lutheran Social Services-Faith Mission	Faith on 8th Avenue	HMIS
Maryhaven	Engagement Center	HMIS
Volunteers of America	Family Shelter	HMIS
Volunteers of America	Men's Transitional Residence	HMIS
YMCA	Housing Stabilization Beds	HMIS
YWCA	Family Center	HMIS

<b>Transitional Housing Programs</b>		
<b>Agency</b>	<b>Program</b>	<b>Source</b>
Amethyst	Amethyst Rapid Stabilization	Survey
Friends of the Homeless	New Horizons	Survey
Huckleberry House	Transitional Living Program	Survey
Pater Noster House	Pater Noster House	Survey
Volunteers of America	Support, Recovery, & Education	Survey

The programs listed above represent those that exclusively serve homeless individuals and/or families. The count did not include homeless persons whose primary nighttime



residence is an emergency shelter, but who were temporarily housed in a health care facility, substance abuse treatment facility or correctional facility. Residential treatment facilities and group homes for persons with mental illness, which were included in the 2005 count as transitional programs, were excluded in the 2006 count in order to ensure the count included only those persons who meet the HUD homeless definition.

### **Unsheltered Count**

Three primary methods were chosen to count unsheltered homeless persons, as follows:

- “Street” count with teams of volunteers searching in known or probable locations;
- Screening at free lunch providers;
- Screening at emergency service providers and “storefront” locations open between 4:00 a.m. and 7:00 a.m.

Staff acknowledged that despite the best efforts of the workgroup and volunteers, *any count of homeless persons is bound to be limited and incomplete*. It is not possible to find every homeless person in any geographic area the size of Franklin County at a single point in time with limited resources.

Some of the major barriers to achieving a complete count include:

- **Geography** — Franklin County includes 540 square miles of area and thousands of linear miles of roadways, railroads and riverbanks. It is not possible to search every place in the county.
- **Access/Visibility** — Homeless persons who sleep in abandoned buildings, cars and other locations may not be accessible or visible to volunteers. Many unsheltered homeless persons do not want to be found.
- **Movement** — Homeless camps and other locations are constantly changing. While outreach workers know about most established camp locations, new camps and smaller sites may not be identified.
- **Season/Time of Day** — Sending volunteers out in the early winter morning to count homeless persons increases the likelihood of finding only those who are truly homeless and unsheltered, but it also creates the potential for error. In some cases volunteers must estimate the number of people in tents or camps, since they are not able to wake people up. Darkness makes it difficult to see in some locations.

### ***Results***

Table 14 includes results of the sheltered and unsheltered count of homeless persons. Figures 7, 8 and 9 help to describe the locations of all persons, single adults and families in the census. Table 15 provides the unsheltered count by location type. A bulleted summary of the results follows:

- The vast majority of clients in the census — **86 percent** — **were in the shelter system** and not living without shelter.
- **No families were located without shelter at the time of the census.** The 189 persons living on the streets were all single adults.
- Of the individuals included in the unsheltered count, 66 percent were found on the streets; 32 percent were located through free lunch programs.

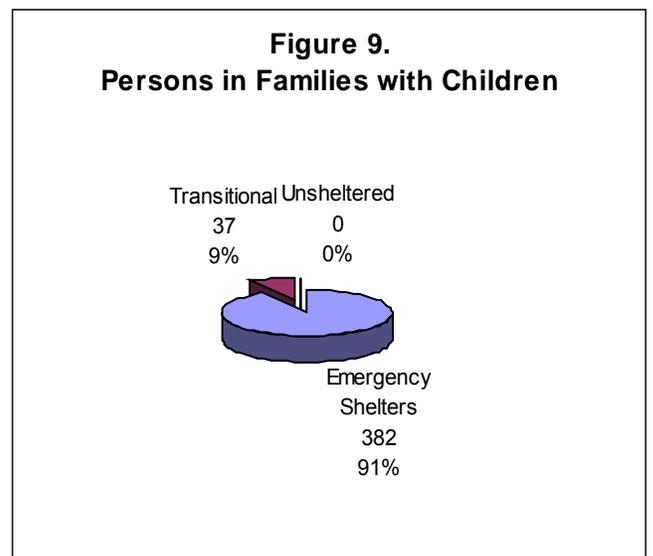
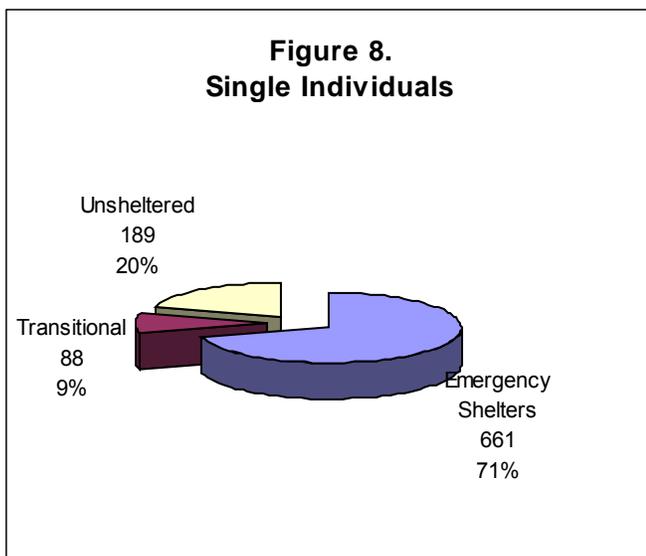
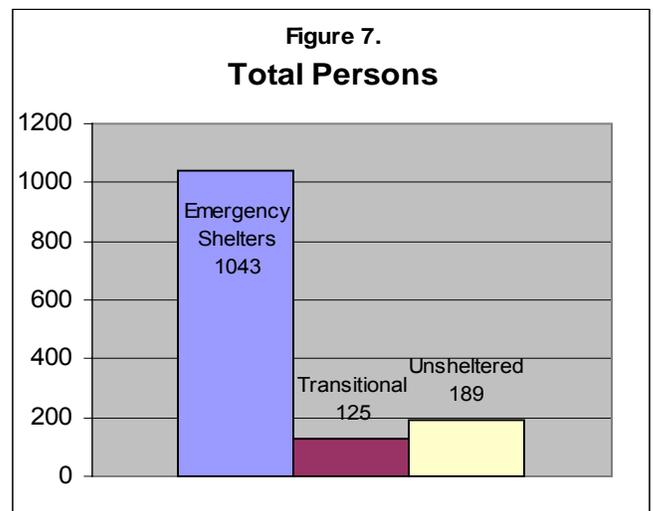


**Table 14. 2006 Point-in-Time Count of Sheltered & Unsheltered Homeless Persons**

	Sheltered		Unsheltered	Total
	Emergency	Transitional		
Number of Families with Children (Family Households):	107	17	0	124
1. Number of Persons in Families with Children:	382	37	0	419
2. Number of Single Individuals and Persons in Households without Children:	661	88	189	938
<b>Total Persons (Line 1 + Line 2):</b>	<b>1,043</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>1,357</b>

**Table 15. 2006 Point-in-Time Count Unsheltered Homeless Persons by Location Type**

Method	Total
"Street" Count	124
Free Lunch Program Screening	60
Emergency Service Provider / Storefront Locations	5
<b>Total unsheltered</b>	<b>189</b>



## ***Analysis***

### **Sheltered Count**

The count of sheltered homeless persons in 2006 was substantially less than the number counted in 2005 (1,168 in 2006 vs. 1,862 in 2005). This is due primarily to the decision to exclude 10 programs that only incidentally serve homeless persons and are therefore not considered transitional housing for the homeless. The elimination of these programs creates a more accurate count of persons who meet the HUD homeless definition. In 2005, these programs accounted for 579 of the 1,862 persons counted. The 2006 sheltered homeless total of 1,168 represents 86 percent of all homeless persons counted.

### **Unsheltered Count**

The 2006 unsheltered count process resulted in triple the number of unsheltered homeless persons counted when compared with last year (189 vs. 62). Several factors contributed to this increase, including:

- **Experience** — This was the second consecutive year for the group to coordinate the point-in-time count of homeless persons. Experience and lessons learned from last year's count resulted in a better process.
- **Warmer Weather** — Weather conditions during the 2006 count were better than last year. While it was brisk this year during the night of the count (low of 31° F), it was much colder during both nights of last year's count (low of 17° F on Jan. 26 and 7° F on Jan. 27). During extremely cold weather, fewer homeless persons are outdoors.
- **Free Lunch Provider Screening** — More emphasis on the lunch screening process and four additional sites resulted in a higher count for 2006.
- **More Volunteers and Teams** — More than 90 volunteers were organized into 15 teams for this year's unsheltered count, compared to 70 volunteers organized into 10 teams last year. Volunteers were solicited from Steering Committee member agencies, CSB partner agencies, FirstLink and The Ohio State University School of Social Work.
- **Accuracy of Known Locations** — The workgroup had additional information about where to search from outreach workers and volunteers who were involved in the count last year. The workgroup added several new locations and routes to search.
- **Emergency Service Providers and 24/7 Storefront Locations** — Outreach to these providers was added this year. While there were no calls from emergency service providers, the storefront locations referred five people who were included in the count.



## CONCLUSION

The *2006 Community Report on Homelessness: A Snapshot* provides an overview of the community's emergency shelter system and the men, women and children who experience homelessness. Summary points from the report are listed below.

- The magnitude of **7,537 persons experiencing homelessness** and accessing the emergency shelter system during a twelve-month period is difficult to comprehend. **Every day, over 900 people** grapple with homelessness. With **1,637 homeless children** in our community, the problem is a challenge for our citizens and leaders.
- It is no surprise that households experiencing homelessness have very low incomes; what may be surprising is that a portion is working at the time of shelter admission. **All household types had substantially less monthly income than the amount needed to rent a typical apartment in Columbus.**
- Remarkably, **62 percent of family households exited emergency shelter to stable housing, with only two percent returning to shelter.** Unfortunately, positive housing outcomes for single adult men and single adult women were only 19 percent and 24 percent, respectively.
- Overall, the **demand for emergency shelter** — as shown by the number of clients served — **has decreased from a high of 9,414 people sheltered in calendar year 1997 to 7,609 in calendar year 2005.** This is promising, but the quantity of individuals in the system persists, and our efforts to address the root causes of homelessness must continue.
- **An area for concern is the increase in single adult women experiencing homelessness and accessing shelter.** The number of women living on the streets prior to shelter intake is equally troubling.
- **It is promising to note the progress of many clients with the assistance of the Permanent Supportive Housing and Rebuilding Lives program.** Recidivism was minimal, at just 7 percent for men and 6 percent for women, and retention rates were very high, at 97 percent for men and 96 percent for women.

Overarching conclusions from these data mirror those established in previous years, as follows:

- ✓ Homelessness is a serious problem in Columbus and Franklin County, and it affects men, women and children.
- ✓ The emergency shelter system continues to improve the services provided to those who experience homelessness.
- ✓ While there are indications of progress, such as improving housing outcomes, there are still areas in which improvement is needed.

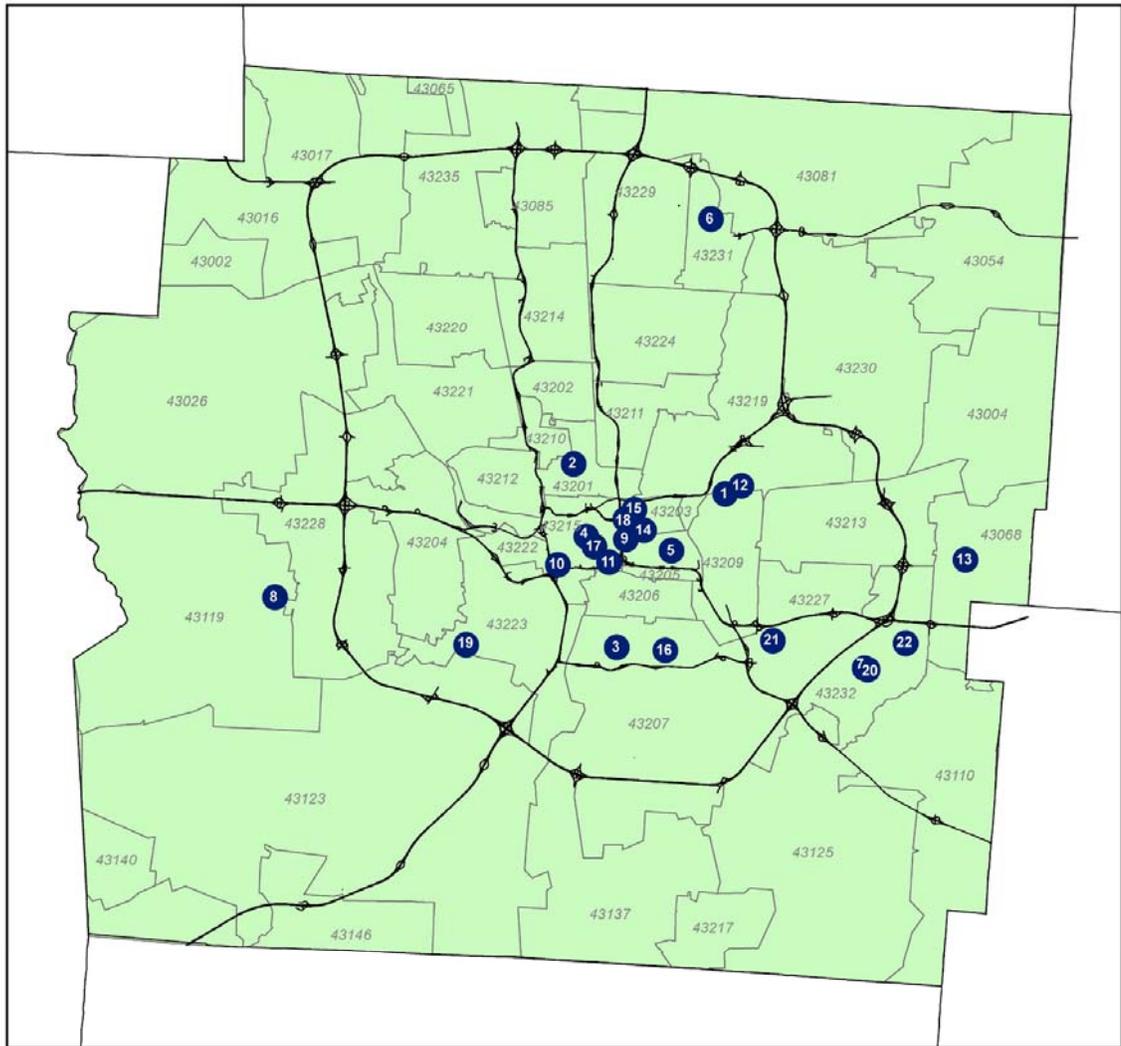
The results of this report will be used to improve planning and implementation of emergency services for men, women and children affected by homelessness. Most importantly, it will have the potential to sway public and community policy toward our community goal of ending homelessness.



# **APPENDIX I SUPPORTIVE HOUSING AND EMERGENCY SHELTER MAPS**



# Rebuilding Lives Supportive Housing in Franklin County, OH: 2006



Source: Community Shelter Board

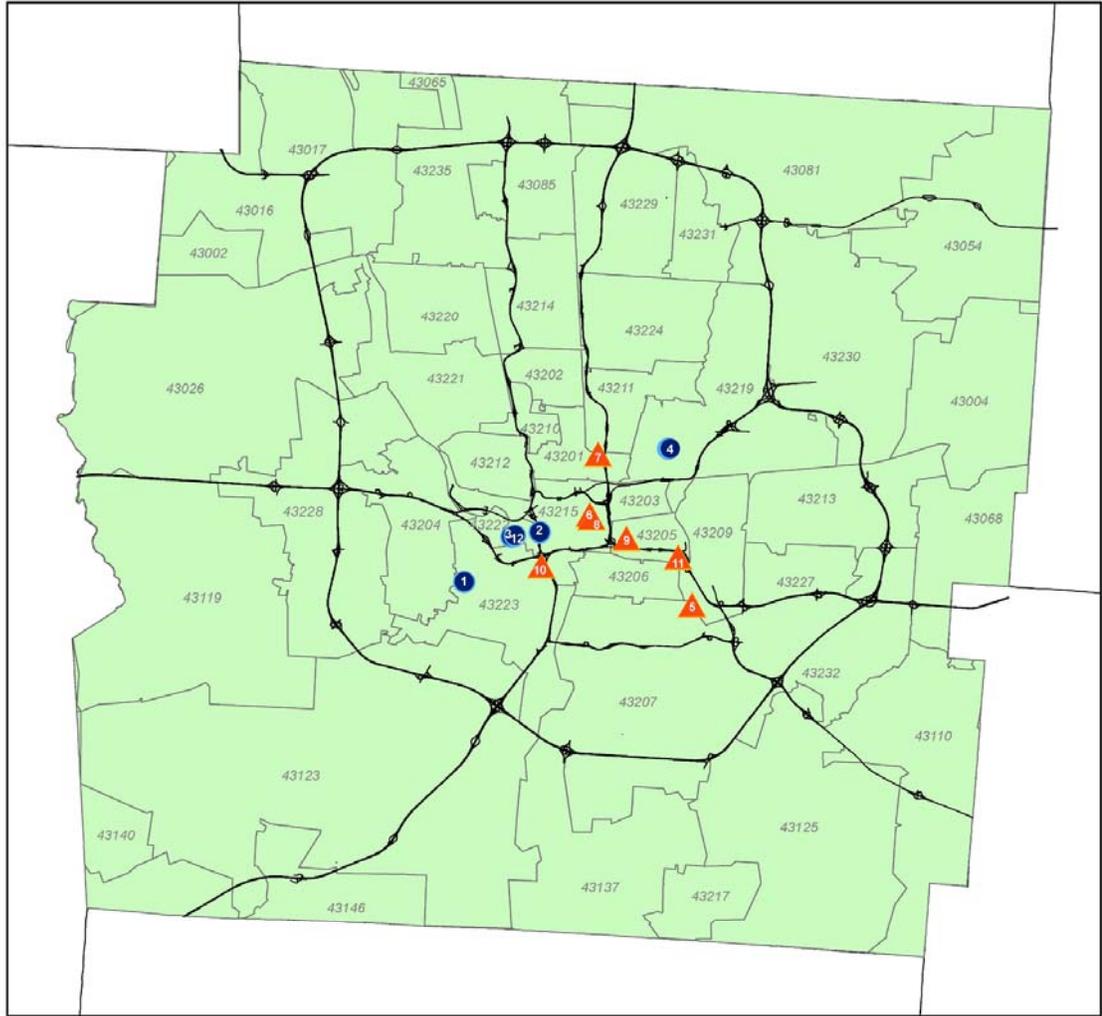
● Supportive\_Housing\_2006

- 1: Community Housing Network Cassidy Avenue Apartments: 10 units
- 2: Community Housing Network North High Street Apartments: 36 units
- 3: Community Housing Network Parsons Avenue Apartments: 25 units
- 4: YMCA Permanent Supportive Housing: 70 units
- 5: Rebuilding Lives PACT Team Initiative (RLPTI): 16 units
- 6: Rebuilding Lives PACT Team Initiative (RLPTI): 16 units
- 7: Rebuilding Lives PACT Team Initiative (RLPTI): 16 units
- 8: Rebuilding Lives PACT Team Initiative (RLPTI): 16 units
- 9: Community Housing Network Safe Haven: 16 units
- 10: YMCA Sunshine Terrace: 65 units
- 11: National Church Residences Commons at Grant: 50 units
- 12: Community Housing Network East Fifth Avenue Apartments: 38 units
- 13: Rebuilding Lives PACT Team Initiative (RLPTI): 16 units
- 14: Community Housing Network North 22nd Street Apartments: 30 units
- 15: Rebuilding Lives PACT Team Initiative (RLPTI): less than 10 units
- 16: Rebuilding Lives PACT Team Initiative (RLPTI): less than 10 units
- 17: YWCA WINGS: 69 units
- 18: Community Housing Network St. Clair: 26 units
- 19: Community Housing Network Briggsdale Apartments: 25 units
- 20: Community Housing Network Community ACT: 15 units
- 21: Community Housing Network Community ACT: 10 units
- 22: Maryhaven / National Church Residences-Commons at Chantry: 50 units

\* RLPTI has 108 total units  
 \* Southeast-Scattered Sites: 75 units  
 \*Community ACT has 42 units at multiple sites



# Emergency Shelters in Franklin County, OH: 2006



Source: Community Shelter Board

### Emergency Shelter

- Family
- ▲ Single Adult

- 1 Homeless Families Foundation Family Shelter: 11 families
- 2 Homeless Families Foundation Family Shelter: 25 families
- 3 Volunteers of America Family Shelter: 24 families
- 4 YWCA Family Center: 50 families
- 5 Maryhaven Engagement Center: 42 men; 8 women
- 6 Faith Mission on 6th Street: 110 men
- 7 Faith Mission on 8th Avenue: 95 men
- 8 Faith Mission Nancy's Place: 42 women
- 9 Friends of the Homeless Men's Shelter: 135 men
- 10 Volunteers of America Men's Shelter: 40 men
- 11 Friends of the Homeless Rebecca's Place: 47 women
- 12 Homeless Families Foundation Family Shelter: 10 families



# **APPENDIX II**

## **2006 SHELTER SYSTEM DATA METHODOLOGY AND HOUSING OUTCOMES**



## 2006 Shelter System Data Methodology



## **2006 Shelter System Data Methodology**

All data are retrieved from the HMIS database, using either Crystal Reports or MS Query Analyzer. The Homeless Census Report, which is generated using Crystal Reports, tracks various demographic elements for the emergency shelter programs. An HMIS custom report constitutes the data source for the permanent supportive housing programs. Each system and its constituent programs are listed below:

### **Family Shelters**

- YWCA Family Center
- Catholic Social Services Barbara Bonner Family Shelter
- Homeless Families Foundation Family Shelter
- Volunteers of America Family Shelter

### **Women's Shelters**

- Friends of the Homeless – Rebecca's Place
- Faith Mission/Faith Housing – Nancy's Place
- Maryhaven Engagement Center – women only

### **Men's Shelters**

- Friends of the Homeless – Men's Shelter
- Faith Mission/Faith Housing – Faith on 6<sup>th</sup>
- Faith Mission/Faith Housing – Faith on 8<sup>th</sup>
- Faith Mission/Faith Housing – Winter Overflow Center
- YMCA – Overflow
- Volunteers of America – Men's Shelter
- Maryhaven Engagement Center – men only

*Maryhaven Engagement Center was divided by gender in order to be assessed within the systems. Client data are limited to the period of the report.*

### **Permanent Supportive Housing**

- CHN - Briggsdale
- CHN - Cassidy
- CHN - Community ACT
- CHN - E. 5th Avenue



- CHN - North 22nd
- CHN - North High
- CHN - Parsons
- CHN – RLPTI
- CHN – Safe Haven
- CHN - St. Clair Hotel
- NCR Commons at Grant
- SE Scattered Sites
- YMCA - PSH@40 W. Long
- YMCA - Sunshine Terrace
- YWCA WINGS

### **Data Requirements**

Client data are determined by the following conditions:

- It is within the report period
- It contains the data from the program that the client exited last.
- It is a valid response. If invalid or blank, it is not included within dataset.
- It is set to “active” within the database.

## Data Element Definitions

Data Element	Definition	NULL <sup>1</sup> handling
Ages of children (Family emergency shelters only)	Percentages (based on total children) of children within 0-2, 3-7, 8-12, 13-17 age.	Null values in the clients' birth date field will prohibit age calculation, excluding those records from this metric.
Average Age of Head of Household	For family emergency shelters, the average age is calculated for only those clients who are the head of household. For adult emergency shelters and permanent supportive housing, this is the average age for all clients. Includes only unique clients. (For those clients with multiple visits, only last visit is considered.)  Age is calculated based on the difference in days between the client's birth date and the entry date of the client's last visit in the report period. This difference is then divided by 365 to determine age for each client. Finally, an average is calculated based on the calculated ages of all the clients within each system.	Null values in the clients' birth date field will prohibit age calculation, excluding those records from this metric.
Average Households Served per Night	Average number of households that were served during the report period. It is calculated by dividing the number of distinct households into the total shelter units used by heads of household.	N/A
Average monthly household income at entry	Calculated by adding the entry income fields together for each client and then dividing that sum by the number of clients. The HMIS allows for a maximum of six income amounts (one to correspond with each of the six income sources) for each client.	Entry income fields which are NULL are converted to 0 (zero), in order to be included in the average calculation.
Average Number of Children (Family emergency shelters only)	Calculated by summing the total number of children and dividing the sum by the number of unique households.	Null values in the client birth date field will prohibit age calculation, excluding those records from this metric.
Clients Served	A count of clients who were served within the specified period. Includes only unique clients.	N/A
Destinations for Exited Households	Upon exiting, each household is asked to divulge its destination. These responses are then counted and the top five destinations are reported for each population type.	Null values are discouraged through CSB's QA policy; however, in the event that they show up in the counts for this data element, they are ignored.
Ethnicity	Hispanics and Non-Hispanics as a percentage of total clients. For family shelters, only head of household is considered. For adult shelters and permanent supportive housing, all clients are considered.	Null entries are considered 'Non - Hispanic'

<sup>1</sup> Null is defined in the context of this report as any blank or unusable data.



<b>Data Element</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>NULL <sup>1</sup> handling</b>
Gender Percentage	The number of men and women as percentages of the total for the men's and women's emergency shelters combined. Transgender, unknown and NULL gender types are ignored. For family shelters, this is calculated only for head of household. For adult emergency shelters and permanent supportive housing, all clients are considered.	Null gender types are ignored.
Housing Retention (Permanent supportive housing only.)	The percent of clients who maintained their housing, whether or not as part of the Permanent Supportive Housing program. Housing retention is measured based on those who did not exit plus those who exited the program and did not enter shelter within two weeks to three months after exit or as of date of report, divided by the total number of distinct households served during the evaluation period.	N/A
Housing Stability (PSH only)	The average length of time measured in months that distinct clients reside in a permanent supportive housing unit.	N/A
Mean Family Size (Family emergency shelters only)	Calculated for Family Shelters only. Formula divides the Total Individuals in Family by the number of households.	N/A
Median age (Permanent supportive housing only)	The median is the point at which exactly half of the data are above the median age and half below the median age. The ages for all the clients are ranked in ascending order so that the midpoint can be determined. In the event of an odd number of records, the lower number is used as the median.  Clients' ages are based on their entry date into the program.	Null values in the clients.date_birth field will prohibit age calculation, excluding those records from this metric.
Percent Working at Entry	For Adult Shelters & PSH, clients flagged as working at entry as a percentage of the total number of clients. For Family Shelters, this percentage is calculated only on those clients marked head of household.	Null values are considered 'Non Working'.
Primary Income Sources at Intake (PSH only)	Each household can have up to six responses or income types. Percentages are obtained by summing the number of income sources indicated by household for that income source category and then dividing the sum by the total number of responses.	Null values for income source 1 at intake are included in the calculations.



<b>Data Element</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>NULL <sup>1</sup> handling</b>
Primary Crisis Reasons	Each household at intake is asked to select one primary crisis reason. These responses are counted for each population type and the top five are reported.	Null values are discouraged through CSB's QA policy; however, in the event that they show up in the counts for this data element, they are ignored.
Race of head of household	Black, White, and Other clients as a percentage of total clients. For Family Shelters, only head of household is considered. For Adult Shelters, all clients are considered. The Other group includes all clients that are neither Black nor White.	Null entries are included in the 'Other' category.
Recidivism	Recidivists are clients who re-enter any shelter within 14-90 days after successfully exiting a program. A count of recidivists is divided by the number of all clients who successfully exited during the reporting period.	N/A
Shelter Units (System)  (Emergency shelters only)	Shelter units are calculated by determining length of stay (in days) for each client. Each client's length of stay is then summed to obtain the total for each program/system. Only the length of stay within the reporting period is considered.	Shelter Units (System)
Total Unduplicated Adults  (Emergency shelters only)	A count of those clients aged 18 years and older. Includes only unique clients.	Null values in the clients' birth date field will prohibit age calculation, excluding those records from this metric.
Total Unduplicated Children  (Emergency shelters only)	A count of those clients aged 17 years and younger. Includes only unique clients.	Null values in the clients' birth date field will prohibit age calculation, excluding those records from this metric.
Total Unduplicated Households	For Adult Shelters, a count of unique clients who were served during the reporting period. For Family Shelters, a count of unique families that were served during the reporting period. Includes only unique clients.	N/A
Veteran Status	A count of all clients aged 18 years and older who reported that they are U.S. veterans. Unlike the other data elements that consider only heads of households within families, the data element includes all adults, including non-heads of households.	Null values are considered non-veterans.

<sup>1</sup> Null is defined in the context of this report as any blank or unusable data.

## Evaluation Definitions and Methodology

This adapted version of the Evaluation Definitions and Methodology document incorporates methodologies that are applicable to all variables assessed by the Homeless Management Information System. The full methodology is available at [www.csb.org](http://www.csb.org).

### 1. Average Length of Stay (Emergency Shelters only)

**Source:** HMIS via Crystal Reports

**Defined:** The average number of days all clients were enrolled in or received services by the program from entry or beginning of period to exit or end of period;  
*Note: cumulative total for clients with multiple instances of service during the period.*

**Calculated:**  $\sum(\text{exit date or end of period} - \text{entry date or beginning of period}) / \text{total unduplicated clients served}$

### 2. Households Served

**Source:** HMIS via Crystal Reports for Emergency Shelters; HMIS custom report for PSH.

**Defined:** Number of unduplicated households served by the program during the period.

**Calculated:** Number on the first day plus number that entered the program.

### 3. Housing Retention (PSH)

**Source:** HMIS Custom Report

**Defined:** The percent of clients who maintained their housing, whether or not as part of the Permanent Supportive Housing program. Housing retention is measured based on those who did not exit plus those who exit the program and do not enter shelter within two weeks to three months after exit or as of date of report, divided by the total number of distinct households served during the evaluation period.

**Calculated:**  $\sum(\text{distinct households served} - \text{households that exited program and entered shelter within 14 to 90 days}) / \text{total distinct households served}$

### 4. Recidivism

**Source:** HMIS via Crystal Reports for Emergency Shelters; HMIS custom report for PSH.

**Defined:** All unduplicated households with a successful housing outcome who re-enter emergency shelter within two weeks to three months after exit. The recidivism rate is measured by dividing the total unduplicated households who re-enter shelter by the total unduplicated successful household exits. Refer to the Housing Outcomes Appendix for a list of destinations and their correlation to housing and shelter outcomes.

**Calculated:**  $\text{Unduplicated households returning within 14 to 90 days to a shelter (last exit)} / \text{total unduplicated successful household exits}$



## 5. Successful Housing Outcomes

### Tier I Adult Emergency Shelters and Tier II Family Emergency Shelters

**Source:** HMIS via Crystal Reports

**Defined:** All unduplicated household exits with a 'Permanent' or 'Transitional' housing exit, excluding exits to family or friends. Refer to the Housing Outcomes Appendix for a list of destinations and their correlation to housing and shelter outcomes.

**Calculated:** Successful housing exits (last exit) / total unduplicated household exits

### Tier I Family Emergency Shelter & Outreach

**Source:** HMIS via Crystal Reports

**Defined:** All unduplicated household exits with a 'Permanent' or 'Transitional' or 'Emergency Shelter' housing exit, excluding exits to family or friends. Refer to the Housing Outcomes Appendix for a list of destinations and their correlation to housing and shelter outcomes.

**Calculated:** **Successful housing exits (last exit) / total unduplicated household exits**

### Permanent Supportive Housing

**Source:** HMIS Custom Report

**Defined:** The number of distinct households that are in Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) or have a 'Permanent' housing exit, excluding exits to family or friends. Refer to the Housing Outcomes Appendix for a list of destinations and their correlation to housing and shelter outcomes. Deceased clients are excluded from the calculation.

**Calculated:** (The number of households in PSH + the number of successful housing exits (based on the last exit)) / the number of total distinct households served.

## FY2006 Housing Outcomes



## FY2006 Housing Outcomes

The following chart identifies various destinations, including successful housing and shelter outcomes, as identified in the CSB HMIS Data Definitions for 2004-05. Housing/shelter outcomes correspond to ServicePoint pick list choices for 'destination' and are used to determine shelter and/or housing outcomes.

<b>ServicePoint Destination</b>	<b>CSB Definition</b>	<b>Client Control of Housing? (1)</b>	<b>CSB Evaluation Element – Housing Outcome</b>
Permanent Housing: Rental house/apartment (no subsidy)	Privately owned, market rent housing (not subsidized)	Yes	Successful
Permanent Housing: Public Housing	Housing owned and subsidized by CMHA	Yes	Successful
Permanent: Section 8	Housing owned by a private landlord or partner agency and subsidized through a CMHA Section 8 Voucher or through Section 8 project-based subsidy	Yes	Successful
Permanent: Shelter Plus Care	Housing owned by a private landlord or partner agency and subsidized through the Shelter Plus Care program administered by CMHA	Yes	Successful
Permanent: HOME subsidized house/apartment	The YMCA Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) program at 40 West Long Street or SE Scattered Site Permanent Supportive Housing	Yes	Successful
Permanent: Other subsidized house/apartment	Housing owned by a private landlord or partner agency that has an on-going subsidy through HUD 202 or 811 program, tax credits, or other sources, including HUD and CSB	Yes	Successful
Permanent: Home ownership	Housing that is owned by the client	Yes	Successful Housing Outcome
Permanent: Moved in with Family/Friends	DO NOT USE	N/A	Unsuccessful
Transitional: Transitional housing for homeless	Transitional (i.e. New Horizons)	Varies	Successful (except for FHC and PSH)
Transitional: Moved in with Family/Friends	Temporary housing with family or friends	No	Unsuccessful
Institution:	Temporary/indefinite residence in a	No	Unsuccessful



Psychiatric hospital	psychiatric hospital for the treatment of severe mental illness		
Institution: Inpatient alcohol/drug facility	Temporary/indefinite residence in an inpatient facility for treatment of alcohol and/or drug addiction	No	Unsuccessful
Institution: Jail/prison	Incarceration in local, state or federal prison	No	Unsuccessful
Emergency Shelter	Emergency Shelter (all including Tier II shelters)	No	Unsuccessful (except for Outreach and YWCA Family Center)
Other: Other Supportive Housing	DO NOT USE	N/A	Unsuccessful
Other: Places not meant for habitation (street)	Street, condemned buildings, etc.	No	Unsuccessful
Other	Hotel, other	No	Unsuccessful
Unknown		N/A	Unsuccessful

(1) Client is determined to be in control of his/her housing if the lease/mortgage is in his/her name or if he/she otherwise has a written agreement that gives him/her a right to reside in his/her housing, such as a roommate agreement.

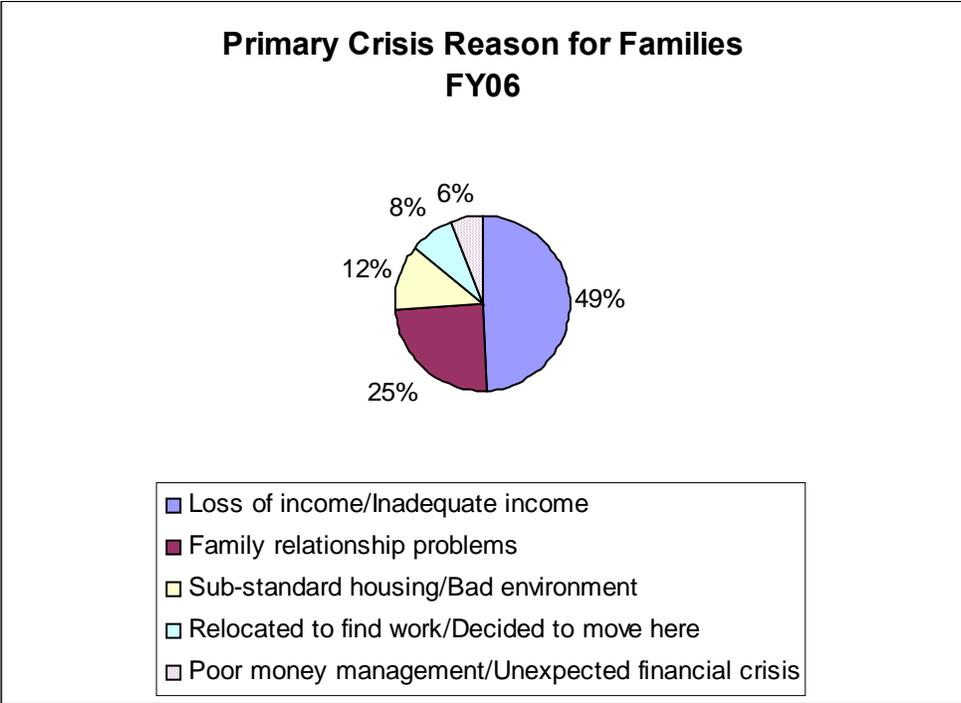
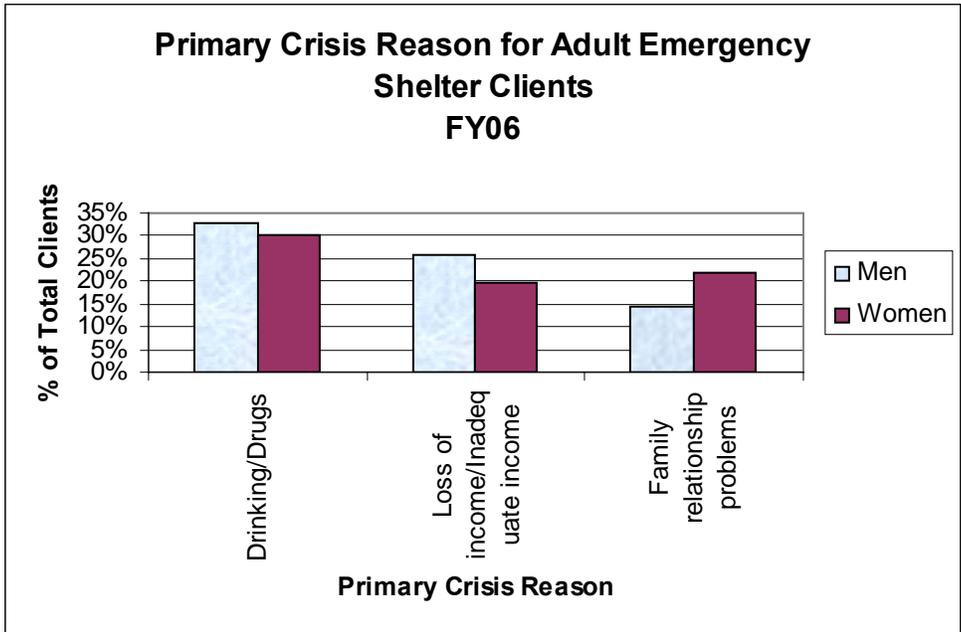
# **APPENDIX III**

## **SUPPLEMENTAL CHARTS WITH SUMMARY POINTS**



## FY2006 Utilization, Demographics and Outcomes Emergency Shelter Clients

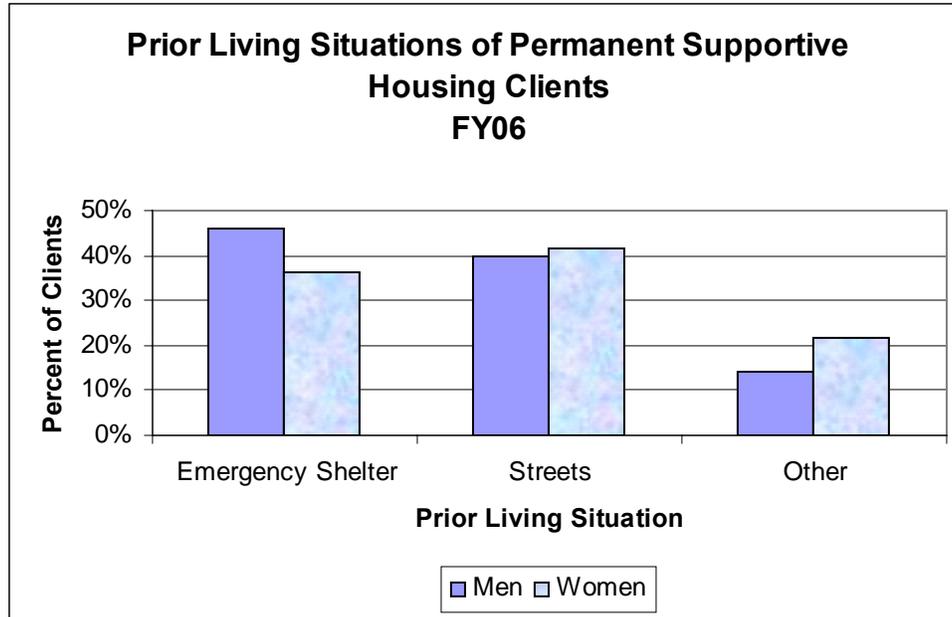




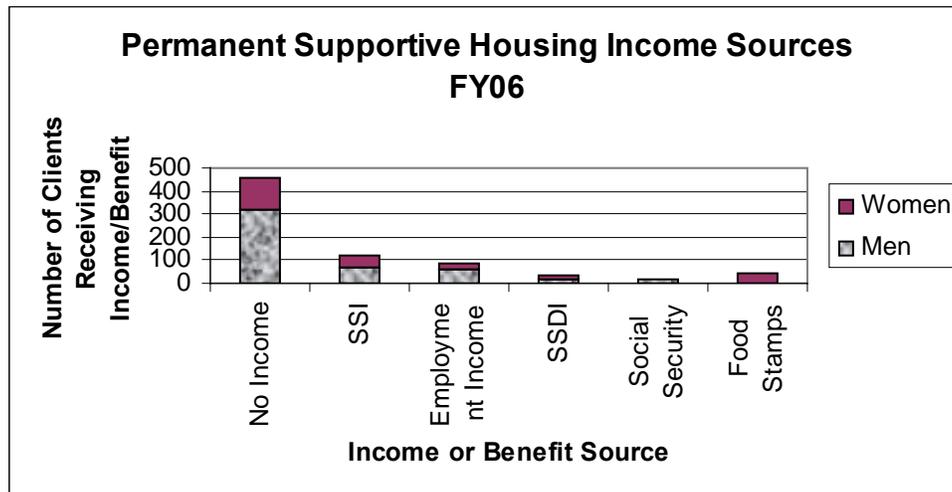
- For both men and women, the top crisis reason (33 percent of men and 30 percent of women) was **drinking or drugs**.
- For almost half of the families, the top reason was **loss of or inadequate income** (46 percent).
- **Family or relationship problems** played a role for families (23 percent) and women (22 percent) more than for men (15 percent).

## FY2006 Utilization, Demographics and Outcomes Permanent Supportive Housing Clients



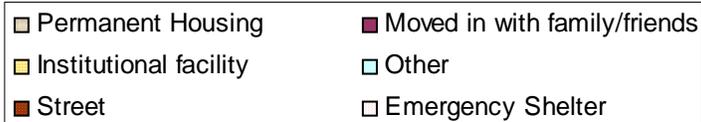
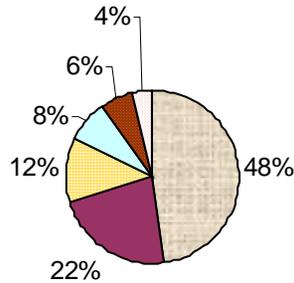


- The **typical prior living conditions** for men and women in supportive housing included emergency shelter (46 percent of men vs. 36 percent of women) or the streets (40 percent of men and 42 percent of women).



- Both men (at \$221) and women (at \$195) averaged substantially less **monthly income** than the amount needed to rent a typical apartment in Columbus. In fact, 61 percent of the clients had no income upon intake. Only 11 percent of the clients served were working at admission into housing, with little variation between women and men.
- The **top income or benefit sources** for permanent supportive housing clients were SSI (13 percent of men vs. 16 percent of women), employment income (11 percent of men vs. 9 percent for women), SSDI (four percent for both) or food stamps (14 percent for women).

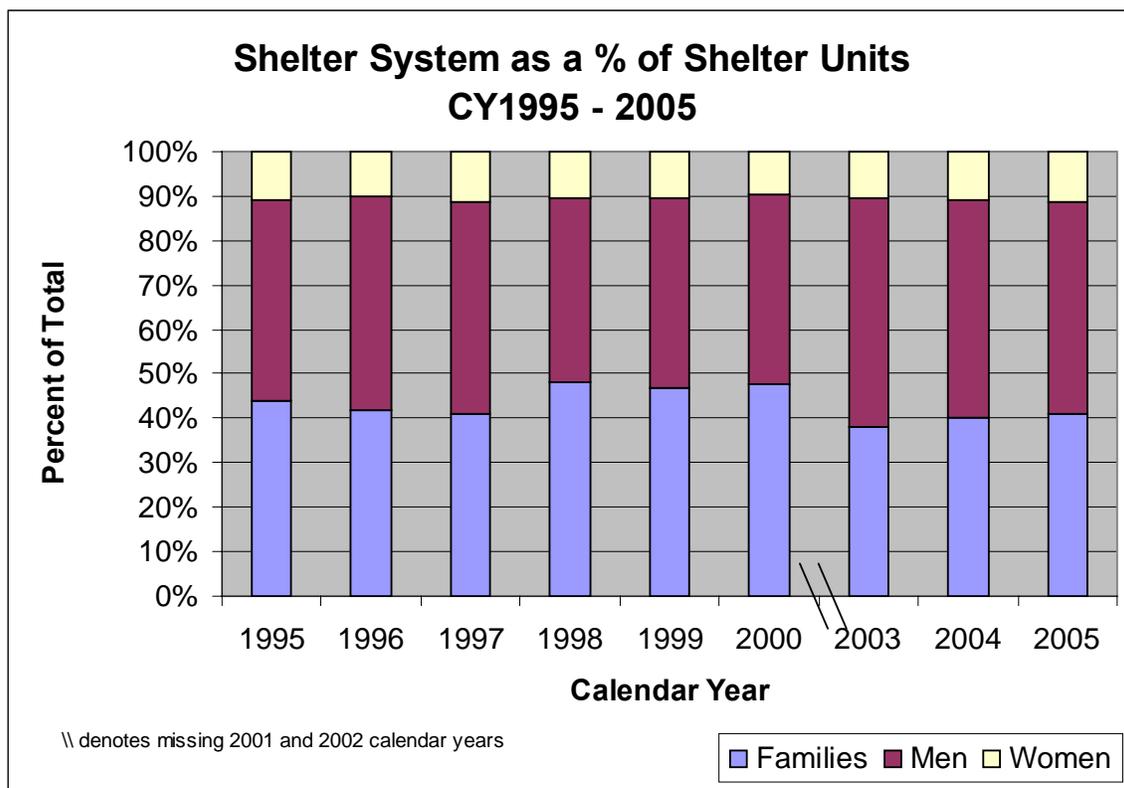
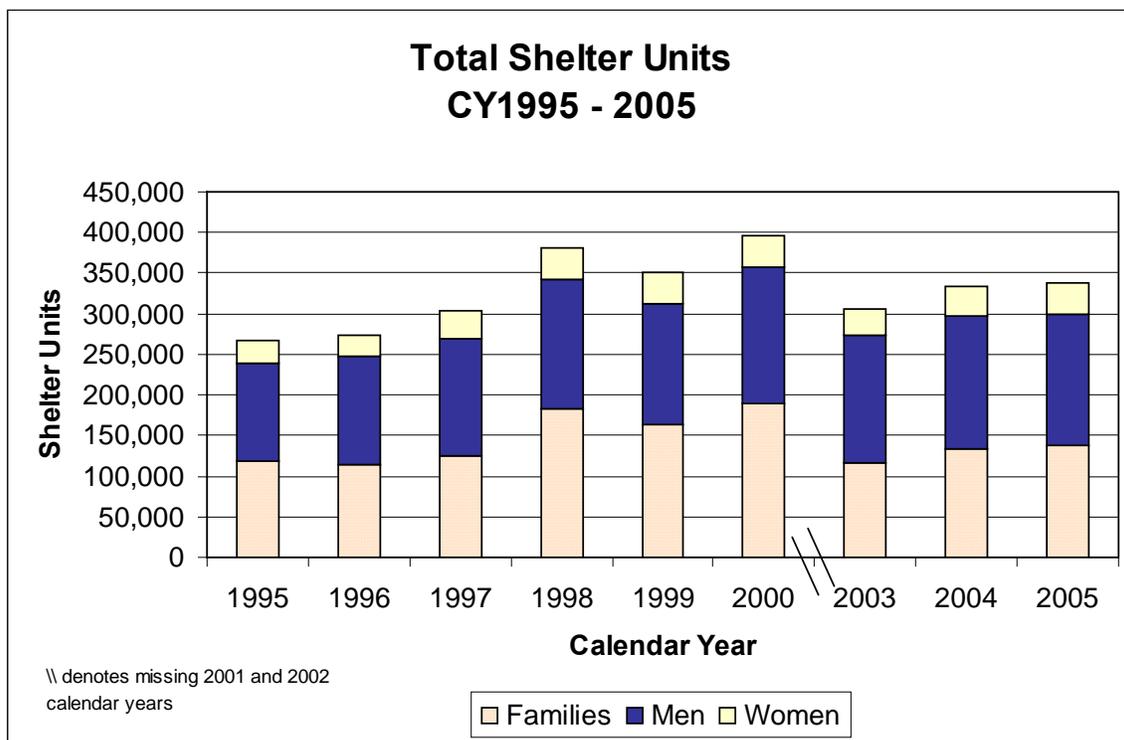
### Destinations of Exited Permanent Supportive Housing Clients FY06



- About half of both men and women exit permanent supportive housing for **permanent housing** (45 percent for men and 55 percent for women).
- **Moving in with family or friends** is also frequent for both but less popular for men (20 percent for men and 28 percent for women).
- **Institutional facilities** are another frequent destination (15 percent for men and five percent for women).
- For a small percentage of both men and women, **emergency shelter** is the destination after permanent supportive housing (three percent of men and five percent of women).

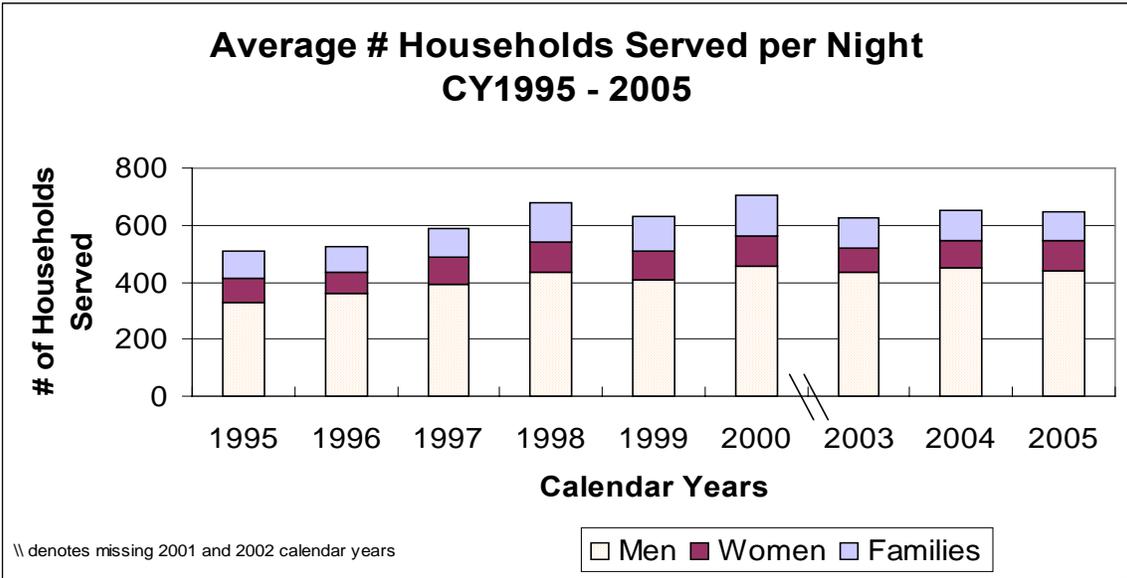
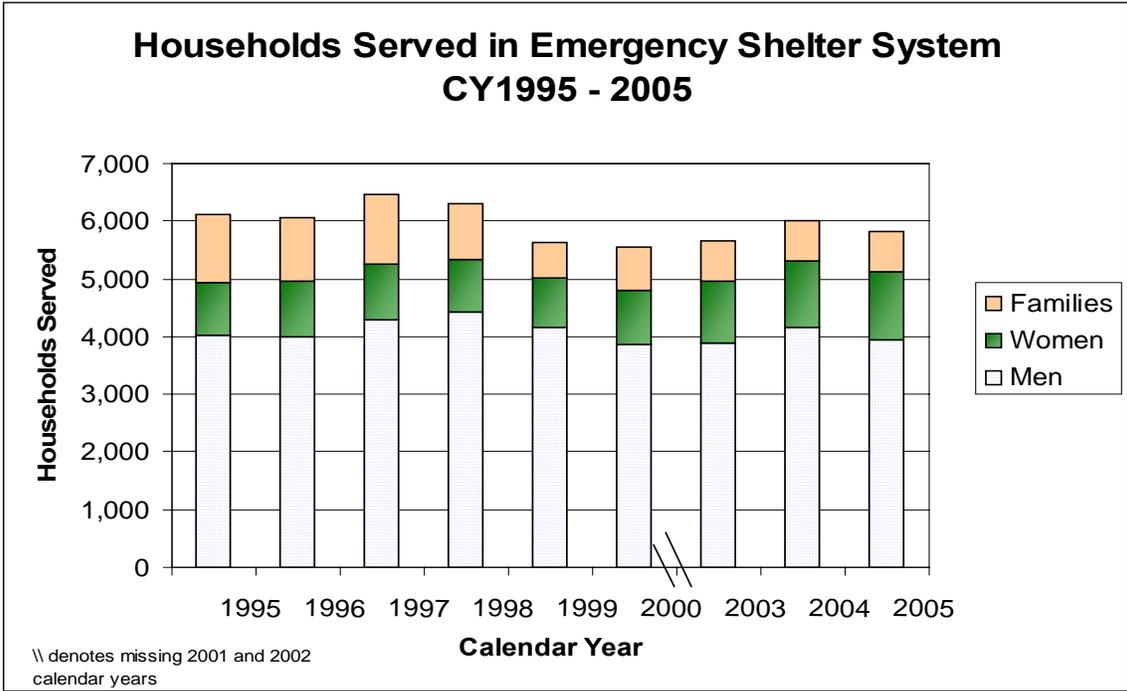
## Trend Data, 1995-2005





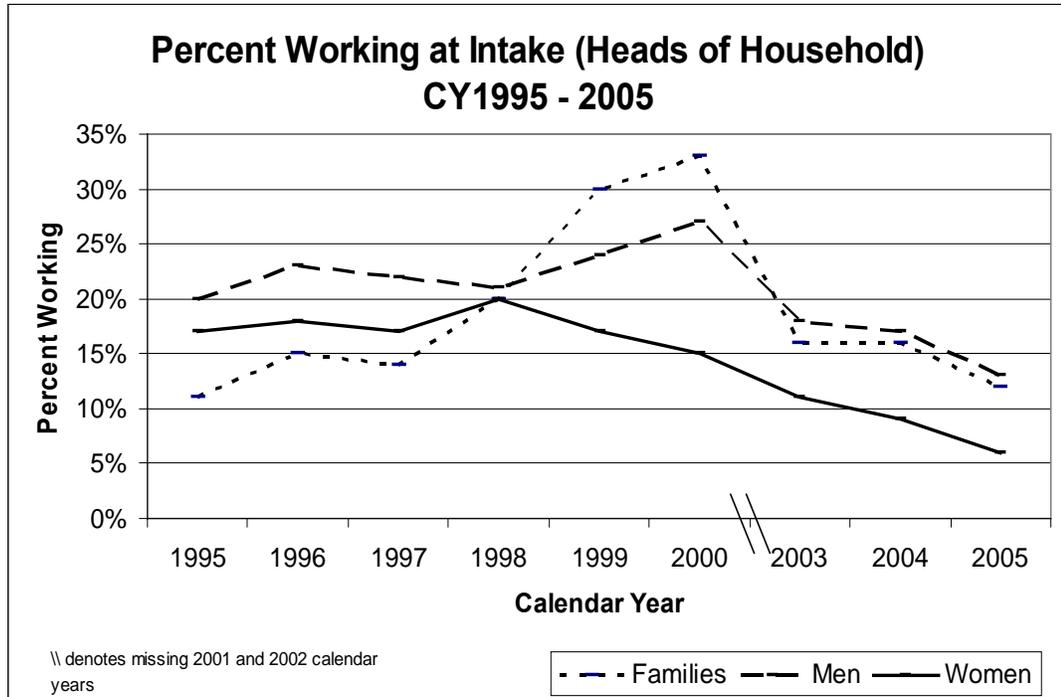
- The **demand for emergency shelter appears to have decreased**, from a high of 397,008 units in 2000 compared to 337,826 units in 2005.
- The **systems for families and men serve more** than the system for single adult women.





- **Declines in family shelter demand** drive the overall decline in demand. A high of 1,217 family households were sheltered in 1997 compared to 678 family households in 2005.
- The **number of families experiencing homelessness** and admitted to shelter in 2005 was only 58 percent of the number in 1995. An area for concern is the **increase in single adult women** experiencing homelessness and accessing shelter. The number of women appears to be steadily increasing since 1995.





- While the **percent working at intake appears to have declined**, the statistic for 1995 to 2000 was calculated differently than for 2003 to 2005. Thus, more data are required before a conclusion can be made.

**APPENDIX IV**  
**2006 POINT-IN-TIME COUNT OF HOMELESS**  
**PERSONS REPORT**



## **I. Background on the Homeless Count**

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires local communities to conduct a point-in-time count of sheltered and unsheltered persons experiencing homelessness at least once every two years as part of HUD's application process for Continuum of Care funding for homeless services. The HUD requirement to count homeless persons is also intended to help HUD and local communities assess gaps in homeless housing and service programs.

For the purposes of Continuum of Care funding, HUD defines a homeless person as: (1) an individual who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence; and (2) an individual who has a primary nighttime residence that is--

- (A) a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations (including welfare hotels, congregate shelters, and transitional housing for the mentally ill);
  - (B) an institution that provides a temporary residence for individuals intended to be institutionalized; or
  - (C) a public or private place not designed for, or ordinarily used as, a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings.
- (3) HUD also categorizes persons as 'homeless' if they are residing in transitional housing for the homeless.

For Columbus and Franklin County, the Continuum of Care Steering Committee assumes the responsibility of planning and conducting the point-in-time count, with technical assistance and support from the Community Shelter Board (CSB). The Steering Committee conducted its first point-in-time count in January of 2005. CSB included summary information about the point-in-time count in their report to the community entitled *The 2005 Community Report on Homelessness: A Snapshot*.

## **II. The Planning Process**

The Continuum of Care (CoC) Steering Committee decided to conduct another point-in-time count during 2006, and selected the last week in January for the count as required by HUD and to be consistent with the 2005 time period. The Steering Committee formed a Homeless Count Workgroup in order to plan and implement the count of unsheltered persons. The workgroup included a wide range of organizations who work with homeless persons, including street outreach providers, shelter providers, housing providers, Steering Committee members, consumers and former consumers, and other groups. The workgroup met three times during the count process, twice before the count and once afterward, and received input from a total of 29 people (see section VII for a list of workgroup members). The workgroup was organized and chaired by Tom Albanese, Director of Programs and Planning for CSB, with assistance from Keith McCormish, consultant to CSB.

The workgroup used last year's point-in-time count plan as a starting place. Last year's plan was developed using a report from a local consultant, a 2004 report from HUD entitled *A Guide to Counting Unsheltered Homeless People*, and a review of best



practices from other communities. The workgroup listened to volunteers who worked on the count last year, reviewed notes from last year’s planning process, and discussed ways to strengthen the count process. The workgroup added or strengthened several components to make the point-in-time count process more comprehensive.

### **III. Homeless Count Plan & Methodology**

On November 15, 2005, the Continuum of Care Steering Committee approved the following plan for the 2006 point-in-time count of homeless persons:

<b>Population</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Count Type</b>	<b>Source/Methodology</b>
Sheltered Homeless	Shelters & transitional housing programs	Administrative Records and Enumeration	CSB’s HMIS data system; CSB survey of programs not part of HMIS
Unsheltered Homeless	“Street” count at known locations (homeless camps, street areas, riverbanks, railroad tracks, etc.)	Enumeration	15 volunteer teams assigned to 36 sites to count unsheltered homeless persons from 4 a.m. to 7 a.m. on January 25, 2006.
Unsheltered Homeless	Emergency service providers & 24/7 storefront locations	Enumeration	Volunteers respond in person to calls from hospitals, emergency services, police, jails, and selected storefront locations from 4 a.m. to 7 a.m. on January 25, 2006.
Unsheltered Homeless	Free lunch providers	Screening and enumeration	Volunteer teams attend the 6 largest free lunch locations to screen and count unsheltered homeless persons during their regular hours of operation on January 25, 2006.

#### **A. Sheltered Count**

##### **i. Methodology**

CSB maintains a data system known as the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) for emergency shelters, permanent supportive housing, and other homeless programs that are funded by CSB or otherwise agree to enter data into HMIS. Emergency shelter staff members enter data when people enter and exit the shelter system. The HMIS data system can provide an accurate count of the number of people in programs entering data into HMIS at any point in time.

CSB used the HMIS system to generate a count of persons in emergency shelter in Franklin County on the night of January 24, 2006. CSB also conducted a telephone



survey of other emergency shelter and transitional housing programs for the homeless in Franklin County that do not enter data into the HMIS data reporting system to determine the number of homeless persons residing in their facilities on the night of the count.

## ii. Programs

The following programs were included in the sheltered count:

**Table I: Emergency Shelter & Transitional Housing Programs**

<b>Emergency Shelter Programs</b>		
<b>Agency</b>	<b>Program</b>	<b>Source</b>
CHOICES	Domestic Violence Shelter	Survey
Friends of the Homeless	Rebecca's Place	HMIS
Friends of the Homeless	Men's Shelter	HMIS
Homeless Families Foundation	Family Shelter	HMIS
Huckleberry House	Youth shelter (ages 12-18)	Survey
Lutheran Social Services-Faith Mission	Nancy's Place	HMIS
Lutheran Social Services-Faith Mission	Faith on 6th Street	HMIS
Lutheran Social Services-Faith Mission	Faith on 8th Avenue	HMIS
Maryhaven	Engagement Center	HMIS
Volunteers of America	Family Shelter	HMIS
Volunteers of America	Men's Transitional Residence	HMIS
YMCA	Housing Stabilization Beds	HMIS
YWCA	Family Center	HMIS

<b>Transitional Housing Programs</b>		
<b>Agency</b>	<b>Program</b>	<b>Source</b>
Amethyst	Amethyst Rapid Stabilization	Survey
Friends of the Homeless	New Horizons	Survey
Huckleberry House	Transitional Living Program	Survey
Pater Noster House	Pater Noster House	Survey
Volunteers of America	Support, Recovery, & Education	Survey

## iii. Limitations

The programs listed above represent those that exclusively serve homeless individuals and/or families. The count did not include homeless persons whose primary nighttime residence is an emergency shelter, but who were temporarily housed in a healthcare facility, substance abuse treatment facility, or correctional facility. Residential treatment facilities and group homes for persons with mental illness, which were included in the 2005 count as transitional programs, were excluded in the 2006 count in order to ensure the count included only those persons who meet the HUD homeless definition.

## **B. Unsheltered Count**

### **i. Methodology**

Homeless Count Workgroup members met twice prior to the count to discuss the best method for conducting this year's count of homeless persons. The workgroup reviewed the 2005 count process and results, and discussed the advantages and disadvantages of different counting and statistical methods. While conscious that there will always be some limitations, the workgroup selected three primary methods to count unsheltered homeless persons based on the general count plan approved by the CoC Steering Committee:

- “Street” count with teams of volunteers searching in known or probable locations;
- Screening at free lunch providers;
- Screening at emergency service providers and “storefront” locations open between 4:00 a.m. to 7:00 a.m.

### **“Street” Count**

The workgroup identified camps and locations in Franklin County where homeless persons were known or believed to stay, the number of volunteers and team leaders needed to cover those areas, training needs for volunteers, the team coordination process, and safety issues. A total of 36 sites were identified and highlighted on street maps with a designated search route. This represented a 50% increase in the number of sites visited compared to last year's count process.

The workgroup determined the number of volunteers and teams needed to search each of the sites. A “Count Tool” was developed for volunteers to use in the field for data collection that had data fields for the type of homeless person(s) encountered (single, couple, or family), the number of homeless persons found at each site, and observations about gender, race/ethnicity, location, and other notes. Volunteers were instructed not to disturb or wake persons who were encountered. However, volunteers were instructed to offer immediate emergency shelter to persons who were awake.

The “street” count of unsheltered homeless persons occurred from 4:00 a.m. to 7:00 a.m. on the morning of January 25<sup>th</sup>. In 2005, the count was conducted on two dates, January 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>, during the same time period as it was unknown how much time would be needed to survey identified areas. Based on the 2005 experience, the Homeless Count Workgroup determined that one day was sufficient to complete the count. The time period of 4:00-7:00 a.m. was chosen for a number of reasons, including:

- Probability of being homeless—It is likely that people who appear to be homeless during the early morning hours do not have any other place to sleep or reside. Persons with a place to sleep indoors, including shelter residents, are likely to be out of the elements during this time period.



- Less movement— Few stores, businesses, restaurants, and taverns are open during this time period. There are fewer people moving from place to place.
- Consistency—The time period is the same as that used during last year's count process.

### **Free Lunch Provider Screening**

The workgroup discussed the likelihood that some unsheltered homeless persons would be missed by the “street count” during the night, especially those who were sleeping in abandoned buildings, cars, and other locations not visible or known to outreach providers. The workgroup felt it was likely that some of these individuals would visit free lunch provider locations to obtain food during the day, and felt it would make the count process more comprehensive to conduct a screening at free lunch provider locations. The workgroup identified six of the largest free lunch provider programs in Franklin County to visit, including:

- Faith Mission
- Holy Family
- Holy Cross
- Rehoboth Temple
- The Open Shelter
- St. John's Church

The workgroup determined that volunteers would screen lunch recipients at the six free lunch provider locations during their normal hours of operation on January 25<sup>th</sup>, which ranged from 10:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. There were four more free lunch provider locations included in the count this year and volunteers spent more time screening lunch visitors when compared with last year's count process.

The workgroup also developed a screening tool based on the tool used in 2005 to use at free lunch provider locations to determine if homeless persons receiving lunch were unsheltered the night before, if they believed they were already counted by volunteers, and observational data similar to the street count. The screening tool also asked for first and last names if people identified themselves as being unsheltered in order to conduct a cross reference check with HMIS data to avoid possible duplicate counting.

### **Emergency Service Provider and “Storefront” Locations**

The workgroup determined that outreach should occur with all emergency service providers in the county and selected “storefront” locations open from 4:00 a.m. to 7:00 a.m. that frequently serve homeless persons. This was a new method developed for this year's count. A memo was sent to all hospital emergency rooms, police departments, the Franklin County Sheriff's Department, crisis programs, and other emergency service providers one week in advance of the count. The memo explained the count process and asked emergency service providers to contact the count team to conduct a screening if a person believed to be homeless received services from 4:00 a.m. to 7:00



a.m. the night of the count. A follow-up call was placed to all emergency service providers a few days before the count as a reminder.

Selected storefront locations that frequently serve homeless persons were visited by a volunteer team the night of the count and asked to contact the team if persons believed to be homeless were present. As with the street count, homeless persons seeking shelter were offered shelter assistance and immediately admitted.

## ii. Limitations

The Homeless Count Workgroup discussed the inherent difficulty of conducting a point-in-time count of unsheltered homeless persons. Workgroup members acknowledged that despite the best efforts of the workgroup and volunteers, *any count of homeless persons is bound to be limited and incomplete*. It is not possible to find every homeless person in any geographic area the size of Franklin County at a single point in time with limited resources.

Some of the major barriers to achieving a complete count include:

- **Geography:** Franklin County includes 540 square miles of area and thousands of linear miles of roadways, railroads, and riverbanks. It is not possible to search every place in the county.
- **Access/Visibility:** homeless persons who sleep in abandoned buildings, cars, and other locations may not be accessible or visible to volunteers. Many unsheltered homeless persons do not want to be found.
- **Movement:** homeless camps and other locations are constantly changing. While outreach workers know about most established camp locations, new camps and smaller sites may not be identified.
- **Season/Time of Day:** sending volunteers out in winter between 4 a.m. and 7 a.m. to count homeless persons increases the likelihood of finding only those who are truly homeless and unsheltered, but also creates the potential for error. In some cases volunteers must estimate the number of people in tents or camps, since they are not instructed to wake people up. Darkness makes it difficult to see in some locations.

## iii. Other Methods Considered

The workgroup also considered other methods to counter the inherent limitations of conducting a point-in time count of unsheltered homeless persons. The workgroup considered sending volunteers to Port Columbus airport to determine if homeless persons were sleeping in the airport overnight. The airport was not included as a site due to increased security from the Transportation Security Agency at the airport and the likelihood of few if any homeless persons present. The workgroup also considered having a separate breakfast or lunch event for unsheltered homeless persons. The workgroup determined that the breakfast scheduled at St. John's Church the morning of the count could serve this purpose and a separate event was not necessary.

Statistical methods were also considered to supplement the physical count process. A suggestion was made to conduct a "shadow count" in which teams of "decoys" are



deployed throughout the city to determine whether volunteers successfully find and count visibly homeless persons in their assigned areas. The actual “street” count would then be adjusted to account for persons who may have been missed. This method was used in New York City for the first time in 2005. The shadow count method is not widely used and does not have a benchmark for improving accuracy at this point. This method may be more useful in larger metropolitan areas with more street homelessness and more fluid homeless gathering places than Columbus.

Another suggestion was to use statistical averages for the number of unsheltered homeless persons based on counts from other cities similar in size to Columbus. The number of unsheltered homeless persons can vary significantly depending on location, weather, and other conditions. Statistical adjustments based on other communities, therefore, did not appear to be a reliable means for achieving a more complete and accurate count. The workgroup determined that its primary interest was to have an actual number from a physical count, bearing in mind that not all persons would be counted.

#### IV. Unsheltered Count Process

The workgroup utilized the following organizational structure for the “street” count:



#### Training

Volunteer team leaders and count coordinators were required to participate in training prior to the count. The training was held at the Commons at Grant and included a review of the count process, data collection tools, sites to be surveyed, and safety guidelines.

#### Outreach Prior to the Count

Outreach teams made efforts to notify unsheltered homeless persons about the date, time, and purpose of the count. Fliers were sent to outreach workers, agencies, and

churches in advance to distribute to homeless persons in known camps and appearing for services to advise them of the count process and the option to report to St. John's Church the night of the count to be included and linked to shelter and other services. A poster was made available to place on bulletin boards at homeless service locations.

### **Central Gathering Place**

The homeless count workgroup determined that the central gathering place concept used in 2005 was useful as a staging area and base of operations for count activities. St. John's Church on Mound Street in downtown Columbus (an affiliate of the United Church of Christ) once again graciously agreed to serve as the central gathering place.

### **"Street" Count**

Over 90 volunteers were recruited for the count, including 15 team leaders. While not all team leaders had direct outreach experience, they all had substantial experience working with homeless persons. Volunteers participating in the count were asked to convene at the church at 3:30 a.m. on January 25<sup>th</sup>. Volunteers received a brief training, team and site assignments, count materials and reporting tools, and transportation, if needed, to each site. Count Coordinators were identified to help teams with transportation and provide immediate shelter access for persons encountered who desired shelter assistance. At the conclusion of the "street" count, teams reconvened at the church and turned in their count data collection tools. An appreciation breakfast for homeless persons and volunteers was planned but unfortunately did not occur due to a scheduling error.

### **Emergency Service Provider and Storefront Locations**

One Count Coordinator and a volunteer stayed on call at the central gathering place to field requests from emergency service providers and storefront locations. This team was kept busy with several requests from storefront providers, including the Greyhound bus station downtown, a White Castle restaurant, and a United Dairy Farmers store location. No requests were made by emergency service providers.

### **Free Lunch Provider Locations**

Ten volunteers were assigned to six of the largest free lunch provider locations during the day on January 25<sup>th</sup>. Volunteers used the screening tool to determine if unsheltered homeless persons were present who were not counted the night before. Volunteers were in place during regular lunch hours. Names were requested from persons who reported that they were unsheltered and checked against the HMIS to avoid duplication.

## **V. Count Results**

The Homeless Count Workgroup met on February 9<sup>th</sup> to review preliminary findings and discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the count process. Team Leaders from the count were asked to attend to clarify observational data from the count and determine whether persons counted as possibly homeless should be included. The workgroup discussed their experiences in the field, sites and routes, the length of time needed to cover each site, and the difficulty of terrain and other obstacles.



The following data includes results of the unsheltered count of homeless persons, as reviewed by the Homeless Count Workgroup, as well as the sheltered count of homeless persons.

**Table II: 2006 Point-in-Time Count of Sheltered & Unsheltered Homeless Persons**

	Sheltered		Unsheltered	Total
	Emergency	Transitional		
Number of Families with Children (Family Households):	107	17	0	124
1. Number of Persons in Families with Children:	382	37	0	419
2. Number of Single Individuals and Persons in Households without Children:	661	88	189	938
<b>Total Persons (Line 1 + Line 2):</b>	<b>1,043</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>189</b>	<b>1,357</b>

The following table shows the unsheltered count total by location type:

**Table III: 2006 Point-in-Time Count of Unsheltered Homeless Persons by Location Type**

Method	Total
“Street” Count	124
Free Lunch Program Screening	60
Emergency Service Provider / Storefront Locations	5
<b>Total unsheltered</b>	<b>189</b>

### “Street” Count

A few sites covered by volunteer teams in the “street” count produced large numbers of unsheltered homeless persons living in camps, but most produced very few or none. Homeless persons were observed at 18 of the 36 sites assigned. One team found 52 homeless persons (32 at one site and 20 at another site). Some team leaders visited sites in advance to scout the location and advise homeless persons of the count process. Some routes took longer than anticipated while others took less time. A few routes were re-assigned to different teams during the night of the count based upon available time.

### Free Lunch Program Screening

Two of the largest free lunch programs resulted in most of the unsheltered persons counted (28 persons counted at Holy Cross Church and 22 persons counted at The Open Shelter). CSB checked the names of unsheltered homeless persons reported against HMIS data for persons sheltered the night of the count to avoid duplications. Volunteers reported that many people interviewed at free lunch provider locations asked for information about material assistance (clothing, rent assistance, etc.).



## **Emergency Service Providers and Storefront Locations**

Volunteers responded to several requests from 24/7 storefronts, including the downtown Greyhound Bus Station, White Castle, and United Dairy Farmers. No requests came in from emergency rooms or police departments. Three persons came to St. John's Church during the night of the count seeking food and shelter.

## **VI. Analysis**

### **A. Sheltered Count**

The count of sheltered homeless persons in 2006 was substantially less than the number counted in 2005 (1,168 in 2006 vs. 1,862 in 2005). This is due primarily the decision to exclude 10 programs that only incidentally serve homeless persons and are therefore not considered transitional housing for the homeless, which creates a more accurate count of persons who meet the HUD homeless definition. In 2005, these programs accounted for 579 of the 1,862 persons counted. The 2006 sheltered homeless total of 1,168 represents 86% of all homeless persons counted.

### **B. Unsheltered Count**

The 2006 unsheltered count process resulted in triple the number of unsheltered homeless persons counted when compared with last year (189 vs. 62). Several factors contributed to this increase, including:

- Experience—This was the second consecutive year for the Steering Committee and its Homeless Count Workgroup to coordinate the point-in-time count of homeless persons. Experience and lessons learned from last year's count resulted in a better process.
- Warmer Weather—Weather conditions during the 2006 count were better than last year. While it was brisk this year during the night of the count (low of 31° F), it was much colder during both nights of last year's count (low of 17° F on Jan. 26 and 7° F on Jan. 27). During very cold weather, fewer homeless persons are outdoors.
- Free Lunch Provider Screening—More emphasis on the lunch screening process and four additional sites resulted in a higher count for 2006.
- More Volunteers and Teams—over 90 volunteers were organized into 15 teams for this year's unsheltered count. Last year there were 70 volunteers organized into 10 teams. Volunteers were solicited from Steering Committee member agencies, CSB partner agencies, FirstLink, and The Ohio State University School of Social Work.
- Accuracy of Known Locations—The workgroup had additional information about where to search from outreach workers and volunteers who were involved in the count last year. The workgroup added several new locations and routes to search.



- Emergency Service Providers and 24/7 Storefront Locations—Outreach to these providers was added this year. While there were no calls from emergency service providers, the storefront locations referred five people who were included in the count.

### **C. Process Assessment and Recommendations**

At the February 9<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Homeless Count Workgroup the 2006 process and methodology was discussed, along with areas for future improvement. The following is a summary of comments recorded during the meeting:

#### **i. Strengths**

- Six large free lunch provider locations were included with a better screening process.
- Emergency service and 24/7 storefront provider locations were included.
- 12 new sites were added for the “street” count.
- More volunteers were on hand to staff teams.
- Experienced homeless count workgroup built a good count process using last year’s process and materials as a starting point.
- Training for Team Leaders and volunteers

#### **ii. Challenges**

- Team Leader experience with outreach to homeless persons varied.
- Some routes were too long, others too short. Travel directions could be clarified.
- Providing advance notice to all street count sites.
- More specific topics for Team Leader and volunteer training, such as typical field experiences (finding tents vs. people, etc.) and documenting questions or concerns.
- Providing information about community resources for free lunch program participants.

#### **iii. Suggestions to Address Challenges**

##### **Overall Count Process**

- Expand homeless count workgroup to include other key constituent groups. Add law enforcement, outreach providers, churches, material assistance providers, outreach cluster and related providers, etc.
- Develop a consistent strategy to use for the count each year. Determine a regular cycle for the count (annual, once every two years, etc.).



## **“Street” Count**

- Scout sites in advance to gather more specific travel directions and advise homeless persons of the count process.
- Improve training for Team Leaders with more emphasis on typical field experiences and documentation of questions or concerns.
- Meet with law enforcement officers, church groups, outreach groups, and the outreach cluster of the Columbus Coalition for the Homeless to mark probable locations for homeless camps in advance.
- Keep same Team Leaders on same routes when possible. Survey volunteers regarding experience, mobility, and desired assignments in advance.
- Keep one team in reserve to go out in the field on an “as needed” basis with a healthcare professional and case manager.

## **Free Lunch Provider Screening**

- Provide resource lists for homeless persons at lunchtime count locations.
- Consider holding lunchtime count on a Monday when more people seek food assistance.

## **VII. Acknowledgments**

### **Homeless Count Workgroup Participants**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organization</b>
Tom Albanese	Community Shelter Board
Ronald Baecker	Citizen’s Advisory Council
Owen Bair	Citizen’s Advisory Council
Gregg Banks	Netcare Reach-Out
Kent Beittel	The Open Shelter
Chad Coldiron	Volunteers of America
Shawn Daniels	Huckleberry House
Dave Davis	Community Shelter Board
Pauline Edwards	Franklinton Area Commission
Melanie Glenn	Huckleberry House
Elaine Haines	ADAMH Board
Caroline Holmes	YWCA of Columbus
Terence Hudson	Volunteers of America
Cheryl Johnson	YMCA of Central Ohio



Gloria Kilgore	Housing Program Resident
Carl Landry	Southeast
Gary Lee	Maryhaven Engagement Center
Tanya Long	Citizen's Advisory Council
Keith McCormish	Public Service Consulting
Joe McKinley	United Way of Central Ohio
Gail Meyers	Commons at Grant
Robyn Morris	Commons at Grant
Connie Pack	YMCA of Central Ohio
Leondra Perry-Gaye	YWCA Family Center
Jerry Pierce	Maryhaven Engagement Center
Alyson Poirier	Capitol Crossroads
Zack Reat	Columbus Coalition for the Homeless
Don Strasser	Columbus Coalition for the Homeless
Mary Wehrle	Faith Mission

### **Special Thanks**

- Keith McCormish, Consultant--provided guidance, process support and overall coordination of the unsheltered count activities and reporting.
- St. John's Church—The church was the gracious host and headquarters for volunteers the night of the count for the second year. Thanks to Pastor Kathy Dwyer and super volunteer Mike Rangle.
- FirstLink—made the count the “volunteer opportunity of the month” on the FirstLink website. Thanks to JoAnna Huffer for her assistance.
- Ohio State University School of Social Work—posted volunteer opportunity to all social work students and provided 8 volunteers. Thanks to Tom Gregoire for his support.
- Homeless Families Foundation—provided 5 volunteers and transportation. Thanks to all volunteers.
- Huckleberry House—provided 20 volunteers and participated in several planning meetings. Thanks to everyone at Huck House for their fine support.
- Maryhaven—provided transportation and super volunteers Jerry Pierce and Gary Lee.
- Southeast—provided 6 volunteers including Chief Clinical Officer Dr. Mike Unger.
- Volunteers of America—provided 5 volunteers. Thanks to all volunteers.
- CSB—provided 7 volunteers. Thanks to all volunteers.



### **Free Lunch Provider Locations and Coordinators**

Special thanks to all of the following free lunch program coordinators for hosting volunteers:

Faith Mission—Mary Wehrle and Erin Martin

Holy Family—Frances Carr

Holy Cross—Tim Hickey

Rehoboth Temple—Jean King

The Open Shelter—Kent Beittel

St. John's Church—Pastor Kathy Dwyer



# **APPENDIX V**

## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**



## List of Abbreviations

<b>Abbreviation</b>	<b>Full Name</b>
CHN	Community Housing Network
CSB	Community Shelter Board
DCA	Direct Client Assistance
FHC	Family Housing Collaborative
HFF	Homeless Families Foundation
HMIS	Homelessness Management Information System
HOH	Head of Household
VOA	Volunteers of America

