



## **2004 Census and Survey of Homeless Youths in Homer, Alaska**

Final Report to the  
Child Advocacy Coalition of Homer

by

André B. Rosay

Justice Center  
University of Alaska Anchorage



JC 0506.01

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## Acknowledgments

This project was conducted by André Rosay, Assistant Professor at the University of Alaska Anchorage Justice Center. This project was conducted without funding as part of the Justice Center's service commitment to the State of Alaska. For further information about this project, please contact André Rosay at (907) 786-1821 or at [afabr@uaa.alaska.edu](mailto:afabr@uaa.alaska.edu). For further information on the Justice Center and its commitment to provide a service to the State of Alaska, please visit our website at <http://justice.uaa.alaska.edu/>.

Data collection efforts were assisted by four undergraduate students in Justice. I thank Toni Jabas, Jerod Perron, Shana Valente, and Rose Wallin for their assistance. Data collection efforts were also supervised by Sharon Whytal, Jennifer Reinhart, Claudia Ehli, and Helen Strothers. I thank them for their time and assistance. We also thank Jason Hahn of Covenant House for his insights during the development of this project.

This project was developed from a request by the Child Advocacy Coalition of Homer to learn more about the homeless youth population in Homer so as to improve services for these youths. This effort was spearheaded by Sharon Whytal of Homer Public Health. Her guidance and assistance throughout the project was both invaluable and remarkable. The town of Homer should be proud to have such a dedicated youth advocate.

The design of this project closely follows one developed by Applied Survey Research for the San Bernardino County 2003 Homeless Census and Survey (available at <http://www.appliedsurveyresearch.org/homeless-sbc.htm>). We thank Applied Survey Research for making their design and instruments publicly available on the worldwide web. Our design and instruments were greatly informed by their expertise.

We would also like to thank the many businesses in Homer that provided incentives to the youths for participating in this survey.

Results of this census and survey are based on responses from 29 agencies and 18 homeless youths. We thank each of them sincerely for their responses. Though the youths that we talked to cannot be recognized by name, we do greatly appreciate their forthrightness and interest in this project. We sincerely hope that the results presented herein are an accurate depiction of their thoughts, beliefs, and attitudes.

Finally, we would like to thank many members of the Child Advocacy Coalition of Homer and others who provided comments on rough drafts of this report. Their comments were invaluable to finalize this report and its contents.

There is no doubt that the results of this census and survey can be used to improve the lives of young people in Homer. Whether that actually happens is up to you. I encourage you to use this report as a platform from which to energize and mobilize the Homer community to improve the well-being of its young people.

## Executive Summary

In the spring and summer of 2004, we conducted a homeless youth survey and assessed the services available to these youths in order to identify gaps in services. As we interviewed youths, it became clear that we interviewed youths at vastly different stages of homelessness. At the first stage were youths who had less experience being homeless or had just begun their homeless experience. We categorized these youths as runaways. At the second stage were youths who experienced longer, more extensive, or more intense periods of homelessness. We categorized these youths as chronic homeless youths. Runaway youths became homeless primarily because of problems at home, suggesting a need for greater family counseling in Homer. Runaway youths were also heavily involved in drug and alcohol use, suggesting a need for greater drug and alcohol programming. When runaway youths were directly asked about needed services, most expressed needs for additional recreational activities, particularly in terms of places where youth would be welcome.

As homelessness progresses from the runaway stage to the chronic homelessness stage, the needs of homeless youths changed. Once at the chronic homelessness stage, the needs of homeless youths become more focused on employment assistance. Chronic homeless youths were homeless because they simply could not afford housing in Homer due to a lack of meaningful employment with decent pay and benefits. Compared to runaways, it is more difficult for chronic homeless youths to transition back into permanent housing. However, employment assistance would allow these youths to transition back into permanent housing.

Results from the services survey indicate that many services are already available to homeless youths in Homer. In particular, the basic physical needs of homeless youths appear to be adequately satisfied. Few youths expressed needs for these services. Youths who did express such needs were able to receive these services and held favorable opinions about the services they had received. However, fewer agencies provided employment assistance, drug and alcohol programming, family counseling, or recreational opportunities to homeless youths. At the same time, these were significant needs expressed either directly or indirectly by the homeless youths surveyed.

The recommendations that emerge from this study are therefore to enhance employment assistance (particularly for chronic homeless youths) and to enhance drug and alcohol programming, family counseling, and recreational opportunities (particularly for runaway youths). Employment assistance should be designed to lead youths into productive and meaningful careers that provide enough pay to afford housing. All services should be developed so that they are available during the summer (when youths are out of school) and to all youths, including ones who have stopped going to school. Furthermore, it is critical to keep the costs of these services as low as possible, as most of these youths (and their families) have few financial resources. Finally, more should be done to make available services known to homeless youths, particularly to runaway youths. Although many services are already provided to youths in Homer, most runaway youths were unaware of these services. With help and guidance, all youths can successfully transition back into permanent housing. At the same time, these services may prevent youths from becoming homeless.

## Disclaimer

One of the key recommendations is to enhance the Boys and Girls Club of Homer to incorporate programming for adolescents. Readers should be aware that the author, André Rosay, is currently paid by Boys and Girls Clubs of America (BGCA) to perform an evaluation of a re-entry initiative in Anchorage. Readers should be reassured, however, that these two projects are completely independent. Although the author has a relationship with the BGCA national office and with BGCA clubs in Anchorage, no relationship exists between the author and the Homer club. In fact, the author never received a survey from the Boys and Girls Club of Homer. As a result, all recommendations are entirely based on the youths' answers to the Homeless Youth Survey and to the author's knowledge of what the Boys and Girls Club could offer.

All agencies should strive to enhance recreational opportunities for adolescents while simultaneously discouraging drug and alcohol use, providing family counseling, enhancing employment opportunities for youths, and making available services known to homeless youths. Clearly, this is beyond the purpose or scope of most agencies. However, much of this does fit completely within the realm of the Boys and Girls Club's mission. If other agencies in Homer can provide these services during the summer and to youths who are not in school, the author would strongly support their enhancement as well. Similarly, the author would strongly support the creation of other programs that could provide these services (e.g., grassroots efforts), as long as these opportunities were available to youths in the summer, as long as these opportunities were available to youths that are not in school, as long as these activities are supervised by responsible adults, and as long as these programs are sustainable.

# Table of Contents

<b>I.</b>	<b>Project Overview</b>	<b>2</b>
	A. Project Objectives	2
	B. Homeless Definition	2
	C. Stages of Homelessness	2
	D. Project Design	3
	1. Homeless Youth Census	3
	2. Homeless Youth Survey	4
	3. Services Survey	6
	4. Gaps Analysis	9
<b>II.</b>	<b>Census Results</b>	<b>10</b>
	A. Homer Population Estimates and Characteristics	10
	B. Total Homeless Population in Homer	12
	C. Youth Homeless Population in Homer	13
	D. Summary	15
<b>III.</b>	<b>Youth Survey Results</b>	<b>18</b>
	A. Youths at Different Stages of Homelessness	18
	B. Demographics	20
	C. Residential History	20
	D. Alcohol and Drug Use	25
	E. Income	27
	F. Daily Activities	29
	G. Health	32
	H. Legal and Safety Issues	34
	I. Opinions Regarding Available Services	34
	J. Summary	38
<b>IV.</b>	<b>Services Survey Results</b>	<b>43</b>
	A. Services Provided	43
	B. Summary	43
<b>V.</b>	<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>45</b>
	A. Summary of Youth Survey Results	45
	B. Summary of Services Survey Results	45
	C. Identifying Gaps in Services	46
	D. Recommendations	46
<b>VI.</b>	<b>Appendices</b>	<b>49</b>
	A. Youth Survey	49
	B. Youth Survey Results	75
	C. Services Survey	121
	D. Services Survey Results	127

## **2004 Census and Survey of Homeless Youths in Homer, Alaska**

The Child Advocacy Coalition of Homer (CACH) was formed by a collection of agencies seeking to support youths in making healthy choices. During the summer and fall of 2003, many in Homer became concerned about youths making unhealthy choices and CACH quickly responded. As part of its response, CACH formed a Homeless Teen Committee. The tasks of this committee were to investigate the problems that homeless teens were facing and to subsequently develop plans to improve healthy choices made by homeless teens. A primary concern about homeless teens was whether the City of Homer should invest resources in the building and operation of a homeless shelter. Before making recommendations, CACH clearly understood the need for empirical data describing the homeless youth population in Homer. In the absence of such empirical data, it would have been difficult to develop sensible and sustainable assistance for homeless youths. CACH also believed that an independent research organization would be able to obtain more valid, or unbiased, empirical data from homeless youths. As such, CACH contacted the Justice Center at the University of Alaska Anchorage for assistance.

The Justice Center is an academic unit at the University of Alaska Anchorage that has statewide responsibility for higher education in the areas of crime, law, and the administration of justice. In addition, the Justice Center has professional research and service obligations. The Justice Center takes these obligations very seriously and continually seeks to provide valuable services in Alaska. Given the importance of youth homelessness in Homer and CACH's dedication to helping homeless youths, we were delighted to offer free professional research and service assistance toward this initiative.

This report consists of five parts. In Part I, we review the project's objectives and design. In Part II, we estimate the number of homeless youths in Homer. In Parts III and IV, we describe the homeless youth population in Homer and the services that are available to them. Finally, in Part V, we compare the needs of the homeless youth population in Homer to available services in order to identify gaps in services. After identifying gaps in services, we conclude with specific recommendations to assist homeless teens.

It is important to note that not all homeless youths were interviewed for this project. Instead, we only surveyed 18 youths who either were homeless or had been homeless in the past year. However, we know of at least 33 youths who had been homeless after June 2004. The 18 surveyed youths are likely to differ substantially from those not interviewed. In particular, they are likely doing better than those not interviewed. Consequently, the results herein must be interpreted with great caution. The true face of homelessness remains unknown and is likely worse than depicted here. Furthermore, the description of youth homelessness presented here is entirely based on youths' perceptions, thoughts, and beliefs. These perceptions, thoughts, and beliefs may be inaccurate and may not represent the true problems faced by homeless youths in Homer. Nonetheless, much can be learned from the results of this survey. Clearly, these 18 youths represent an important segment of the homeless youth population and their perceptions, thoughts, and beliefs are important as they likely affect their behaviors.

## **I. PROJECT OVERVIEW**

### **A. Project Objectives**

The purpose of this research was to assist CACH in obtaining an empirically valid description of homeless youths in Homer. The ultimate goal was then to use this empirically valid description to develop promising interventions for homeless teens. More specifically, the following six goals were identified:

- (1) To document the extent of homelessness among youths,
- (2) To describe the characteristics of homeless youths,
- (3) To assess the most relevant needs of homeless youths,
- (4) To ascertain the youths' perceptions of available resources,
- (5) To identify gaps in resources, and
- (6) To develop promising solutions.

### **B. Homeless Definition**

Homeless youths were defined as youths (21 years of age or younger) who (1) lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence and (2) have a primary nighttime residence that is (a) a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations, (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. This definition is based on the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act signed by President Ronald Reagan in 1987 (42 USC 11302). For this project, we surveyed youths (21 years of age or younger) in Homer that were currently homeless or had been homeless in the past year (since June 2004).

### **C. Stages of Homelessness**

As we surveyed the homeless youths, it became clear that the youths we surveyed were at two qualitatively distinct stages of homelessness. These youths differed greatly in the intensity of their homeless experience. Some youths had substantially more experience with homelessness than others and their homeless experiences were far more severe than those of others. While some youths had limited experiences with being homeless or had just begun their homeless experience, others had been homeless many times or had been homeless for long periods of time. These distinct groups of homeless youths reflect youths at different stages of homelessness, with one group having substantially longer, more extensive, and more intensive histories of homelessness than the other. At the early stages of homelessness were youths that we will refer to as "runaways." As some runaways accumulate more homeless experiences or accumulate longer homeless experiences or endure more intense homeless experiences, they eventually move into the second stage of homelessness (while others do move into permanent housing). At this second stage of homelessness were youths that we will refer to as "chronic homeless youths." Fortunately, many runaways do not become chronic homeless youths. Unfortunately, this survey was not designed to understand the

transition from running away to chronic homelessness or from running away to permanent housing or from chronic homelessness to permanent housing or from chronic homelessness to other more intense stages of homelessness. Instead, this survey was designed to assess the needs of these homeless youths.

The main reason for distinguishing between runaways and chronic homeless youths is that the needs of these homeless youths are substantially different. As homeless experiences become more intense, it is clear the relevant needs change. As a result, it becomes important to differentiate between these two groups. Youths at earlier stages of homelessness have substantively different needs than youths at later stages of homelessness. We will return to this distinction between chronic homeless youths and runaway youths in greater detail in Section III. It is in this section that we elaborate on the needs of the total homeless population and of those specific to runaway youths and chronic homeless youths.

The decision to split the sample of homeless youths into runaway youths and chronic homeless youths was not anticipated prior to data collection. However, it became obvious when we interviewed the youths that some were at a substantially higher stage of homelessness than others. There is no single criterion that was used to determine which youths were runaways and which were chronic homeless youths. Generally speaking, chronic homeless youths have more histories of homelessness, longer histories of homelessness and more intensive histories of homelessness. Contrary to runaways, chronic homeless youths are homeless because permanent housing options are simply no longer available for them. But the decision to categorize some youths as runaways and others as chronic homeless youths was not based on one or a few quantifiable characteristics. Instead, this decision was based on qualitative assessments of the youths' entire story as it was presented to us. It is important to note that this was a completely subjective decision. The stories told by the youths paint substantially different pictures of youth homelessness. While all pictures show important needs, those painted by chronic homeless youths show different needs than those painted by runaway youths.

#### D. Project Design

To complete this project, we focused on four tasks – a homeless youth census, a homeless youth survey, a services survey, and a gaps analysis.

##### 1. *Homeless Youth Census*

The purpose of the homeless youth census was to estimate the number of youths in Homer that are homeless. Census estimates were derived from service provider surveys administered by the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC), our own service provider surveys, our homeless youth surveys, and from the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District's liaison for homeless students in the Homer area. Given the transience of the homeless population, census estimates are inherently difficult to obtain. Nonetheless, we used a variety of data sources to obtain plausible estimates of the homeless youth population in Homer.

The AHFC service provider survey provides "point-in-time enumeration" estimates. "The purpose of this survey is to gather demographic information on the

homeless who receive services from particular homeless agencies at ‘any given point in time’.”

Our service provider surveys asked agency representatives in Homer to estimate the total number of youths in Homer as well as the total number of homeless youths. We further asked each agency representative to estimate the total number of homeless youths during the spring, summer, fall, and winter in order to detect seasonal variations in the number of homeless youths. Finally, we asked each agency representative to estimate the total number of youths and the total number of homeless youths in the past year that their agency had provided services to, had provided services to more than once, had placed on a waiting list, and had turned away.

Census estimates were also derived from our homeless youth survey. Each homeless youth that was surveyed was asked to estimate the total number of youths who live in Homer, the total number of homeless youths in Homer, and the number of homeless youths that they personally know. As with the service providers, we asked each youth to estimate the total number of homeless youths in the spring, summer, fall, and winter in order to detect seasonal variations in the number of homeless youths.

Finally, census estimates were also derived from the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District’s liaison for homeless students in the Homer area. The liaison for homeless students keeps detailed records on the number of unaccompanied homeless students in Homer schools for each school year.

Again, none of these estimates are perfect but together they can give us a plausible estimate of the homeless youth population. The results of the homeless census are described in Section II.

## *2. Homeless Youth Survey*

Our homeless youth survey (shown in Appendix A) was developed in consultation with CACH and was greatly informed by the San Bernardino County 2003 Homeless Survey by Applied Survey Research. Our homeless youth survey was designed to obtain information on demographic characteristics, residential history, alcohol and drug use, income, daily activities, health, legal and safety issues, other youths in Homer, and opinions regarding available services. This was a lengthy 25-page questionnaire and it was designed specifically to assess youths’ needs and to determine the extent to which these needs were met.

Youths were recruited for this survey using a variety of methods. Some youths were known by CACH members to be homeless. CACH members contacted these youths directly to see if they would be interested in participating in the survey. After surveying known homeless youths, we actively searched for unknown homeless youths. Searches were conducted on foot at Bishop’s Beach, the municipal campground, along the Homer Spit, at Ben Walters Park, and residences where we believed homeless youths were staying. In addition, flyers were posted around Homer, particularly at Ben Walters Park, describing the study and asking homeless youths to participate. To do so, we told youths that we were conducting a study of “youths who at some point had not lived at home.” By the end of the project, we believe that we had surveyed most of the homeless youth population that could be easily found. There is no doubt, however, that our sample of homeless youth is not representative of all homeless youths in Homer. Specifically,

we clearly over-sampled homeless youths who were visible and under-sampled ones who were less likely to hang out in public places (e.g., those institutionalized). As a result, this survey likely underestimates the true severity of the needs of homeless youths in Homer. It is likely that our survey over-sampled youths at earlier stages of homelessness and under-sampled youths at later stages of homelessness. This inherently biases our results. The sample of homeless youths in this survey is not representative of all homeless youths in Homer or of all youths in Homer who have been homeless in the past. Nonetheless, this limitation should not minimize the value of the responses from the youths that were surveyed. Their responses do provide a valuable description of an important segment of the homeless youth population, particularly if youths at later stages of homelessness were once runaways and chronic homeless youths. Stated differently, this survey provides a better representation of the needs of youths at early stages of homelessness than those of youths at later stages of homelessness.

Youths were surveyed on March 25<sup>th</sup>, April 9<sup>th</sup>, July 23<sup>rd</sup>, and August 13<sup>th</sup>, 2004. A total of 18 youths were surveyed. Interviews took place at Homer Public Health, Bishop's Beach, and Ben Walters Park. When possible, interviews were conducted in private to semi-private settings so as to maximize the confidentiality of the surveys. All interviews were conducted in person. In most cases, the survey questions were read to the participants and answers were recorded by the interviewer. On average, interviews lasted 42 minutes. It is our impression that youths candidly answered all questions. We have no reason to doubt the veracity of youths' answers. All youths were required to sign assent forms to participate in this survey. If youths were not homeless, they were also required to have their parents or guardians sign a consent form. In only one case was a youth willing to participate in the survey but lacked the necessary parental consent form.

When necessary, transportation assistance was provided to the youths so that they could participate in the survey. Youths who participated in the survey were rewarded with gift certificates donated by local businesses. We also offered pizza and soft drinks to youths who completed the survey. Results from the homeless youth survey are summarized in Section III. Detailed results are available in Appendix B.

We again caution the readers that the generalizability of the homeless youth survey is inherently limited. First, we only surveyed 18 homeless youths and clearly over-sampled youths in early stages of homelessness. Though all youths we talked with showed significant signs of needs, few had intensive histories of homelessness. As youths progress through stages of homelessness, they become increasingly more difficult to find. Many of these youths become institutionalized and we were unable to survey institutionalized youths. Although we had permission from parents and superintendents to survey institutionalized youths, unit leaders did not return our phone calls to set up interview times. These youths were likely at a higher stage of homelessness than those surveyed. So again, we likely underestimated the true needs of the homeless youth population. Furthermore, many of the youths were surveyed after their homeless experience (rather than during their homeless experience). It is unclear whether youths expressed current needs or needs they had when they were homeless. Stated differently, these may not be the needs of homeless youths but the needs of youths who had been homeless in the past. At the same time, this survey relies on the thoughts, beliefs, and attitudes of homeless youths, as these were reported by the homeless youths themselves. Although we have no reason to doubt the veracity of those thoughts, beliefs, and

attitudes, it is likely that the thoughts, beliefs, and attitudes of homeless youths (and of youths in general) can be distorted. For example, it is unlikely that a drug-using youth would identify drug treatment as an important need. We did not survey parents of homeless youths. It is clear, however, that parents of homeless youths would have expressed different thoughts, beliefs, and attitudes than the homeless youths themselves.

Although this survey possesses inherent limitations, it is certainly not without merit. Understanding the needs of young people is important, regardless of when the youths were homeless or of what stage of homelessness the youths were in. Even if the thoughts, beliefs, and attitudes revealed by the youths are inaccurate, understanding these thoughts, beliefs, and attitudes is important as these have been documented to affect their behaviors. As W.I. Thomas stated, "if situations are defined as real, they are real in their consequences." We have no reason to doubt that the situations described by youths were defined as real by the youths themselves. At the very least, the results of this survey are capable of describing the early stages of homelessness.

### *3. Services Survey*

Our services survey (shown in Appendix C) was adapted from the San Bernardino County 2003 Services Survey by Applied Survey Research. This survey was developed to determine which services were already available in Homer for homeless youths. More specifically, this survey was designed to obtain a comprehensive inventory of supportive services that agencies in Homer provide to homeless youths. Supportive services included basic physical needs (soup kitchen / food, clothing, medical assistance, transportation, emergency shelter, transitional housing, and permanent supportive housing), counseling and treatment (case management, substance abuse treatment, crisis counseling, domestic violence counseling, mental health treatment, mentoring, and family planning), vocational and educational training (employment / educational / life skills training, mentoring, job placement, financial assistance, and legal / court services), and youth recreation (after-school activities, weekend activities, sports, and clubs). As aforementioned, we also asked each agency to estimate the size of the homeless youth population in Homer.

We began by searching for agencies in Homer that we believed may provide services to homeless youth. A total of 75 agencies were identified from the Homer phonebook, from worldwide web searches, and from conversations with CACH members. We purposefully created an over-inclusive list so as to not miss any relevant agency. The survey was sent to each agency in February 2004. Agencies returned the survey either by mail, email, or FAX. A second mailing was sent to non-responding agencies in April 2004. We also called them to let them know that a second survey was being mailed to them. A final third survey was mailed in February 2005. From the original list of 75 agencies, we eliminated 14 churches, four duplicate agencies, and 13 agencies that did not provide youth services or were not located in the Homer vicinity. Churches were eliminated from our sample because only one responded to the survey. Our final sample therefore includes 44 agencies in Homer that provide services to youth. Of these 44 agencies, 18 (40.9%) responded after the first mailing, 10 (22.7%) responded after the second mailing, one (2.3%) responded after the third mailing, and 15 (34.1%) never responded. Of the 29 agencies that responded, 20 (69.0%) indicated that they have

provided services to homeless youths while the other nine (31.0%) indicated that they had not. Table 1 identifies the responding and non-responding agencies and shows which responding agencies have provided services to homeless youths.

**Table 1. Responses to Services Survey (N = 44)**

<b>Responding Agencies</b>	<b>Non-Responding Agencies</b>
<i><b>That have provided services to homeless youths:</b></i>	Alcoholics Anonymous
Adult Basic Education	Benefits and Food Stamps
Alaska State Troopers	Boys and Girls Club
Choices for Teens	Division of Public Assistance
Community Mental Health Center	Family Learning Center
Division of Juvenile Justice	Helping Hand Food Pantry
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation	Homer Children's Services
Family Solutions	Homer Hostel
Homer Community Food Pantry	Homer Job Center
Homer Head Start	NAMI Homer
Homer High School	Refuge Chapel
Homer Middle School	Salvation Army
Kachemak Bay Family Planning Clinic	Share the Spirit
Kenai Peninsula Borough School District	South Peninsula Women's Services
Paul Banks Elementary School	Work Services
Public Health Center	
Seldovia Village Tribe Health Center	
South Peninsula Hospital	
TEENs Up Front	
Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)	
West Homer Elementary School	
<i><b>That have <u>not</u> provided services to homeless youths:</b></i>	
Alaska Housing Finance Corporation	
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Homer	
Consumer Credit Counseling	
Cook Inlet Counsel on Alcohol and Drug Abuse	
Homer Community Schools	
Homer Crisis Pregnancy Center	
Homer Police Department	
McNeil Canyon Elementary School	
Pick 'N Pay	

To summarize, we began with a list of 75 agencies. We subsequently narrowed that list to 44 non faith-based agencies in Homer that provide services to youths. Of those 44, 29 (65.9%) responded to the services survey and 15 (34.1%) did not. It is important to note that several of the agencies that have not provided services to homeless youths clearly indicated that they would do so if their services were needed. Furthermore, it is important to note that these agencies may have actually provided services to homeless youths without knowing it. In other words, if an agency has not provided services to homeless youths, it simply means that no known homeless youth has sought services from these agencies. It does not imply that these agencies do not have services that would be valuable to homeless youths. Only the agencies that provided services to

homeless youth were asked to complete the survey, as they would generally know more about homeless youths than others. In all subsequent sections, we focus on the responses from the 20 agencies that provided services to homeless youths in Homer and responded to our survey.

Some of the non-responding agencies never responded because an accurate address and phone number could not be found for them. It is possible that some of these agencies are no longer in operation. If a team of researchers assisted by service providers in Homer cannot locate or contact an agency, it is safe to assume that homeless youths will have a difficult time doing that on their own (a result which we return to in Section III). Most of the non-responding agencies, however, simply refused to participate. They simply did not want to participate in this survey or believed that they could not reveal the services that they offered. It is possible that some non-responding agencies did not return a survey because they had not provided services to homeless youths (even though all agencies were asked to return a portion of the survey, regardless of whether they had or had not provided services to homeless youths). However, many of these agencies obviously do provide services to homeless youths. Again, a critical limitation of the services survey is that many key agencies did not return a survey. As a result, we clearly do not have a complete inventory of services that are provided to homeless youths in Homer. And consequently, our gaps analysis may be inaccurate. Although the gaps analysis identifies services that the City of Homer should offer to homeless youths, it is possible that these services are already offered by non-responding agencies. We unfortunately have no way to determine whether that is true.

This is particularly problematic because our conclusions focus on services that may be offered by non-responding agencies. For example, we have no information from agencies in Homer that provide job assistance and recreation to youths. Repeated attempts to contact these agencies were unfortunately not successful. It is important to emphasize that our gaps analysis is entirely based on the services surveys that were received. No inferences were made about services provided by non-responding agencies. In other words, the gaps analysis essentially assumes that non-responding agencies provide no services to youth. The reader is cautioned to account for non-responding agencies when interpreting results from both the services survey result and the gaps analysis. To be able to interpret the gaps analysis in context, readers must refer to Table 1 listing the responding and non-responding agencies.

Agencies were asked whether they provided services to homeless youths in Homer. If they provided services to homeless youths in Homer, agencies were asked to specify which types of services they provided. We did not gather information from agencies that did not provide services to homeless youths in Homer. These agencies still provide youth services, but their services do not reach the homeless youth population. By restricting our services survey in this manner, we assessed the extent to which services are used by (rather than simply available to) homeless youths. Consequently, our services survey measures what services are used by homeless youths but does not measure what services are available to homeless youths. Examining the services that are actually used by homeless youths allowed us to perform a more detailed gaps analysis. Of course, homeless youths may receive services from agencies without notifying the agency that they are homeless. Some agencies likely provide services to homeless youths

without knowing it. Results from the services survey are summarized in Section IV. Detailed results are available in Appendix D.

#### *4. Gaps Analysis*

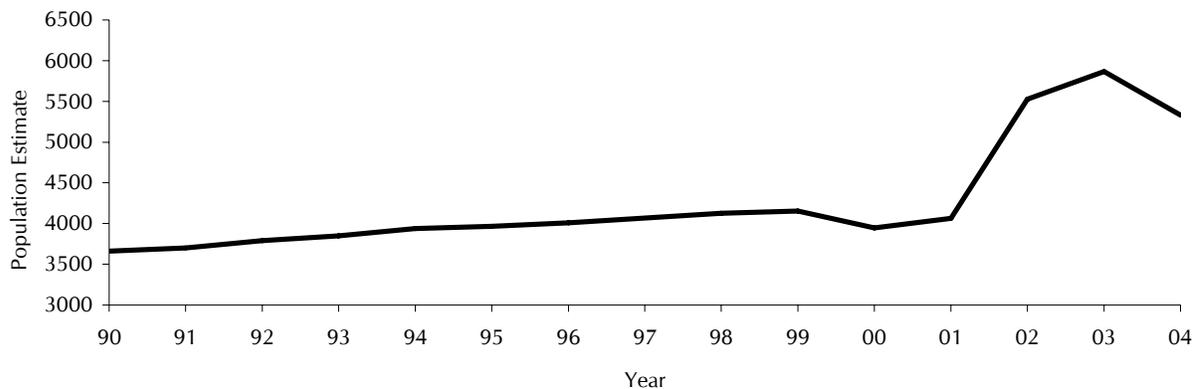
In order to determine which needed services were not provided to homeless youths, a gaps analysis was performed. This gaps analysis simply compared the results from the homeless survey to those of the services survey. By performing this comparison, specific unmet needs were identified. In addition, we relied on the homeless youth survey to document the perceptions of available services and how these perceptions may affect service delivery. All recommendations included in this report emerge from this gaps analysis. Results from the gaps analysis are presented in Section V. Again, the reader is cautioned that the gaps analysis relies exclusively on completed surveys. No information from non-responding agencies or non-surveyed youths is included in this analysis and youth responses may be inaccurate. Given the youths that were surveyed, the gaps analysis is more valid for youths at early stages of homelessness than for youths at advanced stages of homelessness.

## II. CENSUS RESULTS

### A. Homer Population Estimates and Characteristics

Population estimates for the City of Homer are available from the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development (at <http://almis.labor.state.ak.us/>). The 2004 estimate shows that 5,332 people lived in Homer. The following graph depicts changes in the Homer population from 1990 to 2004. Some of these changes are due to annexations while others represent true population changes. The City of Homer annexed part of Diamond Ridge and all of Millers Landing in March 2002.

**Figure 1. Homer Population Estimates, 1990-2004**



*Source of Data:* Alaska Department of Workforce & Development <<http://almis.labor.state.ak.us/>>

Data from the 2000 US Census (available at <http://www.census.gov>) show that 27.6% of the Homer population was less than 18 years of age and 31.4% of the population was less than 21 years of age. Over 90% of the population was White. A total of 1,873 housing units were available, with a homeowner vacancy rate of 2.9% and a rental vacancy rate of 10.9%. Of the occupied housing units in Homer, 612 (or 38.3%) were rented. Most adults 25 years of age or older (92.4%) obtained at least a high school degree or equivalent and almost a third (29.2%) obtained at least a bachelor's degree. In 2000, 32.7% of the population 16 years of age or older was not employed (this includes the population not seeking employment [e.g., retirees]). Among those employed, 33.2% were in management, professional, and related occupations, 18.6% were in service occupations, 22.2% were in sales and office occupations, 3.1% were in farming, fishing, and forestry occupations, 9.6% were in construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations, and 13.3% were in production, transportation, and material moving productions.

US Census data are also available on household income in 1999. The median household income was \$42,821. Of the households in Homer in 1999, 7.4% earned less than \$10,000, 27.7% earned less than \$25,000, and 57.1% earned less than \$50,000. Families did slightly better than households. The median family income was \$53,571. Of the families in Homer in 1999, 4.6% earned less than \$10,000, 18.3% earned less than \$25,000, and 45.6% earned less than \$50,000. The median income for a male full-time

year-round worker was \$38,062 whereas for a female full-time year-round worker, it was \$30,494. It is estimated that 11.2% of families with related children under 18 years of age and 19.8% of families with related children under five years of age were below the poverty level.

Data from the 2000 US Census can also be used to describe housing characteristics in Homer. The median rent of the 602 renter-occupied housing units was \$638 per month, or \$7,656 per year. The following table shows the monthly rent for these 602 housing units in 1999.

**Table 2. Gross Monthly Rent for Renter-Occupied Units in Homer, 1999**

<u>Gross Rent</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Less than \$200	21	3.5 %
\$200 to \$299	25	4.2
\$200 to \$499	92	15.3
\$500 to \$749	254	42.2
\$750 to \$999	111	18.4
\$1,000 to \$1,499	47	7.8
\$1,500 or more	2	0.3
No cash rent	50	8.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>602</b>	

*Source of Data:* 2000 U.S. Census <[www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)>

By comparing this information to income information, we can estimate gross monthly rent as a percentage of household income in 1999. The percentage of household income that was spent on rent is shown in the following table.

**Table 3. Gross Monthly Rent for Renter-Occupied Units in Homer, 1999**

<u>Gross Rent as a Percentage of Household Income</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>%</u>
Less than 15.0 percent	100	18.3 %
15.0 to 19.9 percent	95	17.4
20.0 to 24.9 percent	62	11.4
25.0 to 29.9 percent	48	8.9
30.0 to 34.9 percent	53	9.7
35.0 percent or more	187	34.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>545</b>	

*Source of Data:* 2000 U.S. Census <[www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)>

Although the City of Homer appears to have a sufficient number of housing units, many households and families have limited income and housing will be a costly part of their monthly budgets. Relatively few (7.7%) of housing units cost less than \$300 a month and 34.3% of households spent 35.0% or more of their income on rent alone.

By comparison, there were relatively more renter-occupied housing units that cost less than \$300 a month in Homer than in Alaska. More specifically, the percentage of renter-occupied housing units that cost less than \$300 a month was 92.5% higher in Homer than in Alaska (7.7% in Homer compared to 4.0% in Alaska). However, household income was higher in Alaska than in Homer. More specifically, the median household income was 20.4% higher in Alaska than in Homer (\$51,571 in Alaska compared to \$42,821 in Homer). As a result, the percentage of households that spent 35.0% or more of their income on gross rent was higher in Homer than in Alaska. More specifically, the percentage of households that spent 35.0% or more of their income on gross rent was 35.0% higher in Homer than in Alaska (34.3% in Homer compared to 25.4% in Alaska).

In Section III, we will examine the extent to which housing costs and income are related to youth homelessness. However, the aforementioned statistics by themselves reveal that monthly income is likely to be of more concern than housing costs. Relative to other places in Alaska, the City of Homer offers more low-rent housing units. However, relative to other people in Alaska, people in Homer are less likely to be able to afford these low-rent housing units. To summarize, income or housing affordability seems a more important issue than housing availability.

#### B. Total Homeless Population in Homer

Estimates of the total homeless population in Homer are available from the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation (AHFC; <http://www.ahfc.state.ak.us/>). These estimates were gathered from service provider surveys submitted to Choices for Teens, the Community Mental Health Center, the Homer Community Food Pantry, the Homer Department of Public Health, Share the Spirit, South Peninsula Womens Services, and The Salvation Army. These estimates are “point-in-time enumeration” estimates. “The purpose of this survey is to gather demographic information on the homeless who receive services from particular homeless agencies at ‘any given point in time’.” The following table summarizes AHFC’s results.

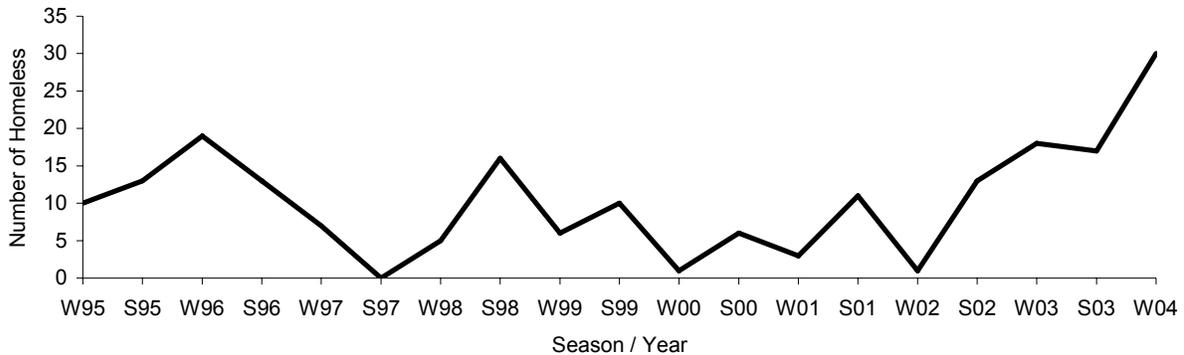
**Table 4. Total Homeless Population Estimates, Summer 2002 – Summer 2004**

Agency	Number of Homeless				
	Summer 2002	Winter 2003	Summer 2003	Winter 2004	Summer 2004
Choices for Teens	0	5	6	--	--
Community Mental Health Center	9	--	--	23	18
Homer Community Food Pantry	2	10	4	4	7
Homer Department of Public Health	--	--	--	1	3
Share the Spirit	--	--	--	--	6
South Peninsula Womens Services	--	0	--	--	--
The Salvation Army – Homer	--	--	--	1	--

*Source of Data:* Alaska Housing Finance Corporation <<http://www.ahfc.state.ak.us/>>

Given the sporadic nature of agency responses, little can be generalized from these results. Furthermore, these point-in-time enumeration estimates may overestimate the real number of homeless as some may be counted more than once (if they seek services from more than one agency). To correct for this problem, unduplicated estimates are available. These unduplicated estimates from winter 1995 (W95) to winter 2004 (W04) are shown in the following graph.

**Figure 2. Total Unduplicated Homeless Population Estimates**



*Source of Data:* Alaska Housing Finance Corporation <<http://www.ahfc.state.ak.us/>>

Note that the increase in the homeless population that starts in winter 2004 may not reflect an actual increase in the homeless population. Rather, it may reflect a change in research methodology. Starting in winter 2004, the “point-in-time” estimates were changed from a single day to an entire week. These new estimates are thought to be more valid estimates of the total homeless population.

The most recent AHFC results (summer 2004) show that there were 54 homeless individuals in Homer. This includes 4 families (for a total of 9 homeless), 8 families with children (for a total of 23 homeless), and 22 single homeless. Of these 54 homeless individuals, 28% were in an emergency shelter, 41% were with family and friends, 24% were in transitional housing, and 7% were unsheltered.

### C. Youth Homeless Population in Homer

The Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development estimates that there was a total of 1,525 youths 21 years of age or younger living in Homer in 2004 (personal conversation, 2/17/2005). The Alaska Housing Finance Corporation does not tabulate the number of homeless that are 21 years of age or younger. However, the Alaska Housing Finance Corporation does tabulate the number of homeless that are under 18 years of age. In the summer of 2004, AHFC estimated that there were two homeless youths in Homer. This represents 4% of the homeless population in Homer. Statewide, 9% of the homeless population is under 18 years of age. When excluding Anchorage, 5% of the homeless population in Alaska is under 18 years of age. Data from AHFC, however, are inherently limited in that (1) data are gathered from only seven agencies in Homer and (2) agency response rates are low.

Data on the youth homeless population in Homer are also available from the 2004 Services Survey and the 2004 Homeless Youth Survey. The 2004 Services Survey asked the following two questions: (1) Please estimate the total number of youths (21 years old or younger) in Homer and (2) Of these, how many were homeless? For comparison purposes, we also asked agencies to estimate the total number of homeless youths (21 years old or younger) in Homer during the spring, summer, fall, and winter months. Results are summarized in Table 5 (detailed results are available in Appendix D).

**Table 5. Youth Population Estimates**

<b>Estimate (# of Responses)</b>	<b>Min.</b>	<b>Max.</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>St. Dev.</b>	<b>Median</b>
Total number of youths in Homer (13)	750	3300	1699.5	726.5	1500.0
Total number of homeless youths (13)	10	100	39.1	30.2	28.0
# of homeless youths in Spring (10)	4	100	33.1	28.5	22.5
# of homeless youths in Summer (11)	18	100	53.4	26.5	50.0
# of homeless youths in Fall (11)	10	100	33.6	26.0	25.0
# of homeless youths in Winter (12)	2	100	27.0	27.6	15.0

*Source of Data: 2004 Services Survey*

Agencies were fairly accurate about the total number of youths (21 years old or younger) in Homer. On average, agencies estimated that there were 1,699.5 youths in Homer, when the census 2004 estimate was 1,525. However, agency responses varied greatly from a minimum estimate of 750 to a maximum estimate of 3,300. Half of the agencies estimated that there were more than 1,500 youths in Homer while half estimated that there were less than 1,500. Similarly, the estimates for the total number of homeless youths varied greatly from a minimum of 10 to a maximum of 100. On average, agencies estimated that there were 39.1 homeless youths in Homer, with slightly more in the summer (for an average of 53.4) than in the winter (for an average of 27.0). Half of agencies estimated that the total number of homeless youths was 28 or less (while half estimated it was 28 or more). Clearly, the 2004 Services Survey created larger estimates of the total homeless youth population than the AHFC surveys.

Estimates were also gathered from the 2004 Homeless Youth Survey and are shown in Table 6.

**Table 6. Youth Population Estimates**

<b>Estimate (# of Responses)</b>	<b>Min.</b>	<b>Max.</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>St. Dev.</b>	<b>Median</b>
Total number of youths in Homer (11)	200	5000	1780.3	1322.1	1500
Total number of homeless youths (16)	2	1000	181.7	264.3	87.5
# of homeless youths in Spring (10)	0	2500	335.1	767.1	78.5
# of homeless youths in Summer (11)	3	4000	462.6	1179.1	50.0
# of homeless youths in Fall (10)	0	2000	288.1	612.0	78.5
# of homeless youths in Winter (11)	0	2500	314.4	735.1	7.5

*Source of Data: 2004 Homeless Youth Survey*

The same questions that were asked to the agencies were also asked to the homeless youths. Their answers are summarized in Table 6 (detailed results are available in Appendix B). Data from the Homeless Youth Survey are far less valid than data from the Services Survey. Although youths were, on average, able to estimate the total youth population in Homer (1,780.3), their answers varied significantly more than the agency responses ( $s = 1,322.1$  versus 726.5). Furthermore, youths grossly misestimated the homeless youth population. They often indicated that there were more homeless youths in Homer than the actual number of youths (1,525). Little can be generalized from the Homeless Youth Survey to obtain estimates of the homeless youth population.

The liaison for homeless students in the Homer area from the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District also keeps records on the number of unaccompanied homeless youths enrolled in school. School records show that there were 18 unaccompanied homeless youths during the 2003/2004 school year and 16 unaccompanied homeless youths during the 2004/2005 school year. Of the 18 unaccompanied homeless youths in 2003/2004, five (28%) were still in school at the end of the 2005 school year. Ten (56%) had dropped out and three (17%) had disappeared. Of the 16 unaccompanied homeless youths in 2004/2005, six (37%) were still in school at the end of the 2005 school year. Ten (62%) had dropped out by the end of the 2005 school year (although one had received a GED). These estimates of the homeless youth population are clearly too low, as youths in later stages of homelessness are not likely to be enrolled in school and as accompanied homeless youths are not represented in these numbers. As youths progress through stages of homelessness, the likelihood of remaining in school precipitously decreases.

Finally, we can obtain estimates of the homeless youth population simply from the number of known homeless youths that were surveyed and the number of known homeless youths that were not surveyed. We surveyed 18 youths that were known to be or to have been homeless for some period of time. In addition to these 18, we know that there were an additional 15 that we could not survey, for a total of 33. These additional 15 were known to have been homeless after June 2004. Some were incarcerated while the survey was being conducted; some did not have the necessary parental consent; some had left Homer; and others simply could not be located. Furthermore, we know that during the time the survey was being conducted, there were 61 Homer area youths in state custody. Their needs are undoubtedly similar to those of the youths that we did survey, and may even be significantly higher.

#### D. Summary

Census estimates of homeless populations are inherently difficult to obtain. No single estimate can accurately reflect the magnitude, diversity, and fluidity of the homeless population in any given locale. In addition to having their own unique limitations, the aforementioned homeless youth estimates share one key limitation. All underestimate the true number of homeless youths because only known and visible homeless youths were counted. None of the estimates that we rely on take into account the unknown or invisible homeless population. This is the population of homeless youth that nobody is aware of. This can occur, for example, because these youths do not seek services from agencies that provide services to homeless youths or because these youths

are not enrolled in school. It can also occur because these youths are quickly taken into state custody. More simply, it can occur because the youths were simply not visible when we were searching for them (e.g., they were not in public places). As such, important and potentially large portions of the homeless youth population are not included in this survey.

Many of these youths are likely to be at higher stages of homelessness than those counted. The results from this survey therefore cannot be generalized to all homeless youths. Again, this census (and the following survey) can only be applied to the youths who were counted or surveyed. No information is available from youths that were not counted or not surveyed. Furthermore, these estimates combine the population of chronic homeless youths with runaway youths. Again, as will be explained in greater detail in the following section, these youths are qualitatively different and have substantially different needs. Unfortunately, our surveys were not designed to measure the number of youths at each stage of homelessness. Although we did obtain estimates of the total homeless youth population, these estimates cannot be disaggregated to document the number of homeless youths at each stage of homelessness.

With these limitations in mind, here is a summary of the key results from our census of homeless youths in Homer.

- From AHFC, we know that the homeless population is approximately 54. Of those 54, two are under 18 years of age. These estimates, however, are flawed in that (1) only seven agencies were surveyed, (2) only four agencies returned the survey, and (3) only homeless who received services were counted.
- From the 2004 Services Survey that we conducted, we know that the homeless youth population (less than 21 years of age) was approximated to be between 10 and 100. On average, agencies estimated the homeless youth population to be 39.1. Similar to the AHFC survey, our survey is flawed in that (1) only 20 agencies were surveyed, (2) 15 agencies (including key ones such as Refuge Chapel) never returned a survey, and (3) only homeless who received services were counted.
- From our 2004 Homeless Youth Survey, valid estimates of the homeless youth population cannot be obtained. Youths often estimated that there were more homeless youths in Homer than the actual number of youths.
- From the Kenai Peninsula Borough School District, we know that 18 students in Homer schools were unaccompanied homeless youths in 2003/2004 and 16 students were unaccompanied homeless youths in 2004/2005. However, many homeless youths are likely to be out of school and therefore would not be counted by the School District. This will be particularly true for youths at later stages of homelessness. Furthermore, these numbers reflect unaccompanied homeless youths only.
- From counting the number of homeless youths we surveyed and the number of homeless youths we could not survey, we know that 33 youths had been homeless

in Homer after June 2004. Furthermore, we know that 61 youths were under state custody while the survey was being conducted. Unfortunately, we know nothing about their homelessness (or even if these youths were ever homeless).

The reader is again cautioned that these estimates represent known homeless youths only. The needs of unknown or invisible homeless youths are likely to be different than those of visible homeless youths (and are likely to be more intense). This survey focuses on visible homeless youths only and its results should be applied to improve services for visible homeless youths only. We now describe these youths in greater detail in the following section.

### III. HOMELESS YOUTH SURVEY RESULTS

In this section, we summarize the results from the 2004 Homeless Youth Survey. Detailed results are available in Appendix B. Again, we remind the reader that the responses described in this section come from a limited segment of the homeless youth population. Many homeless youths were not surveyed. The needs of these homeless youths remain unknown, although they are likely to be significantly more intensive than those of surveyed youths. Similarly, we remind the reader that the responses described in this section come from the youths themselves. Many of these responses may be inaccurate. Nonetheless, their responses again provide an important description of the thoughts, beliefs, and attitudes of an important segment of the homeless youth population.

#### A. Youths at Different Stages of Homelessness

Survey results clearly indicate that we surveyed two distinct groups of homeless youth. In this section, we briefly describe these two distinct groups. Details on differences between these two groups are found in the following sections, B through I, and are summarized in Section J. These differences will dramatically affect the gaps analysis and recommendations that emerge from that analysis.

Some of the youths we surveyed were at a more advanced stage of homelessness than others. Again, this decision was not reached from a single quantitative indicator or from a combination of quantitative indicators. Instead, it was based on a qualitative assessment of the youths' entire stories. Some youths had more extensive and intensive histories of homelessness or had been homeless substantially more often than others. The other homeless youths had relatively less experience being homeless or had just begun their homeless experience. The needs of these youths were categorically different. This distinction between youths at different stages of homelessness has been theoretically and empirically documented. That documentation, however, will not be found in this report. Instead, we use these prior theoretical and empirical distinctions to create a more nuanced understanding of homelessness in Homer. Whether a youth was categorized as a chronic homeless youth or a runaway youth was a qualitative decision based on the totality of the youth's survey responses. The decision to categorize a youth as a chronic homeless youth could not be based on responses to a single question. Instead, we examined the entire story of each youth to determine which stage of homelessness best characterized their lives. For more information on the creation of these stages, please refer to Section I.C. Of the 18 youths who completed the 2004 Homeless Youth Survey, four (22.2%) could reasonably be categorized in the chronic homelessness stage, 13 (72.2%) could reasonably be categorized in the runaway stage, and 1 (5.6%) could not be categorized.

We named the youths in the more advanced stage of homelessness "chronic homeless youths". These youths displayed severe unmet needs. Homeless youths at this stage had a difficult time addressing these problems either individually or with the assistance of agencies in Homer. For all youths at the chronic homelessness stage, homelessness was not a choice. These youths were forced to become homeless, against their will. All seek permanent and stable housing situations, but none could find such arrangements. It is important to note that chronic homeless youths are not always

homeless (many do find temporary living situations). However, even when these youths find living situations, their needs are still present. The presence of these unmet needs eventually leads these youths back into homelessness. In most cases, this was caused by a lack of financial resources. Nonetheless, these youths can transition back into permanent housing rather than transitioning into a more advanced stage of homelessness. In the discussion that follows, we expand these findings to document what services are needed to facilitate such a transition.

We named the youths in the less advanced stage of homelessness “runaways.” Similar to chronic homeless youths, runaway youths also have severe unmet needs and have a difficulty addressing these needs either individually or with the assistance of agencies in Homer. However, their needs are substantially different than those of the chronic homeless youths (and hence the necessity of this distinction). Runaway youths directly expressed a need for additional recreational opportunities and indirectly identified needs for drug and alcohol programming and family counseling. The most prevalent need identified by runaway youths was recreation. Again, this survey relies on the youths’ answers and therefore may not match the perceptions of others. From the youth’s point of view, however, recreation was the most important need. These youths lack adequate prosocial recreational opportunities and, as a result, spend much of their time bored or engaged in self-destructive behaviors. This engagement in self-destructive behaviors leads to secondary needs that are currently not addressed. Most of these needs revolved around drug and alcohol use. Rates of drug and alcohol use were substantially higher for runaways than for chronic homeless youths. Most of these youths became homeless because of problems at home. Obviously then, family counseling will be required both to prevent youths from becoming runaways and to prevent runaway youths from transitioning to chronic homelessness.

Although runaway youths were not staying at home, all had a place to stay at the time of the survey. None of them were truly “on the streets.” Their daily needs were generally met. None expressed concerns about hunger, clothing, or shelter. Although these youths experienced what we may consider an atypical or difficult adolescence, there is little doubt that their opportunities for prosocial engagement have not been systematically limited, as demonstrated by their schooling and employment status. Some of these youths may eventually become chronic homeless youths. But much can be done to prevent their transition to chronic homelessness. Opportunities do exist to facilitate their transition to permanent housing. Furthermore, many of these youths may transition to permanent housing with little assistance. Contrary to the chronic homeless youths, runaway youths still possess many opportunities for advancement, including education and employment. This obviously makes the transition to permanent housing easier. As youths progress through stages of homelessness, their transition to permanent housing becomes increasingly more difficult.

An important difference between chronic homeless youths and runaway youths is whether these youths have the opportunity to go live with parents, relatives, or friends. Chronic homeless youths no longer have that opportunity. They do not have parents, relatives, or friends who will accept them back into their homes. On the other hand, runaway youths have the opportunity to go live with parents, relatives, and friends. That opportunity has not yet been eliminated. While at the runaway stage, youths who wish to get “off the streets” can find temporary housing. In particular, they can stay temporarily

with friends. As a result, runaway youths are mostly homeless in the summer whereas chronic homeless youths can be found in all seasons, including winter. Youths are more likely to enter homelessness in the summer, but as their homelessness becomes chronic, they are likely to experience homelessness in all seasons.

In the following sections, we summarize the 2004 Homeless Youth Survey results in terms of demographics, residential history, alcohol and drug use, income, daily activities, health, legal and safety issues, and opinions regarding available services. In all sections, we discuss the differences between chronic homeless youths and runaway youths. It should not be surprising that important differences exist between these two groups, as these two groups were purposefully created to be different. Consequently, it is important to understand that we cannot prove the existence of distinct stages of homelessness. Instead, we simply describe how the needs of homeless youths vary across stages of homelessness. All results are summarized in Section J.

### B. Demographic Characteristics

This section summarizes the demographic characteristics of the 18 youths surveyed as part of the 2004 Homeless Youth Survey. Full details can be found in Appendix B. Of the 18 youths, 14 (78%) were male and 4 (22%) were female. Respondents ranged in age from 15 to 21. The average age of the respondents was 18.3 years ( $s = 1.8$ ). All but one youth (94%) classified themselves as White. One youth (6%) reported having at least one child. Most youths had little in terms of formal education. Only four youths (22%) had at least a high school degree or equivalent. Most youths (78%) had not yet finished high school, but most of these (64%) were still enrolled in school.

The demographic characteristics of the chronic homeless youths were not too different than those of the runaway youths in terms of gender or education; 77% of the runaway youths were male whereas 75% of the chronic homeless youths were male and 23% of the runaway youths were high school graduates whereas 25% of the chronic homeless youths were high school graduates. In terms of age, chronic homeless youths were on average 1.5 years older than runaway youths. As homeless youths become older, they clearly have more time to become chronic homeless youths..

### C. Residential History

Only five of the youths (27.8%) were born in Homer and only three (16.7%) spent their whole life in Homer. Five youths (27.8%) were born elsewhere in Alaska (Anchorage, Fairbanks, Palmer, and Soldotna) and eight (44.4%) were born in the lower 48 (Michigan, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, and Washington). Slightly over half of these youths (57.1%) came to Homer directly from the lower 48 while 42.9% came to Homer from other places in Alaska. However, most youths had spent quite a bit of time in Homer. Only two youths (11.8%) had spent less than one year in Homer, 15 (88.1%) had spent at least one year, 11 (64.7%) had spent at least three years, eight (47.1%) had spent at least six years, and five (29.4%) had spent at least 10 years.

In the past month, the vast majority of the youths had spent most nights in Homer. Only two (11.1%) had spent most nights elsewhere (Anchor Point). We then asked

youths why they had spent most nights in Homer or Anchor Point. Youths provided a wide variety of answers. The most common answers were that youths had family there and knew people there (e.g., friends). Of the 18 youths surveyed, 11 (61.1%) indicated that they stayed in Homer or Anchor Point because they had family there and 13 (72.2%) because they knew people there. The facts that services and work were available was important to six (33.3%) of the 18 youths. Six (33.3%) of the youths also indicated that they felt safe in Homer and Anchor Point. Other reasons mentioned for staying in Homer or Anchor Point included that youths grew up there (22.2%), youths could not afford to leave (22.2%), youths knew these areas (27.8%), youths liked the areas (27.8%), youths liked the weather (16.7%), youths had no transportation to leave (16.7%), and youths had to temporarily stay there (22.2%). Most youths stayed in Homer or Anchor Point for positive reasons (e.g., family, friends, safety, appeal). Fewer youths stayed in Homer or Anchor Point for negative reasons (e.g., lack of resources or transportation to leave). When we asked youths where they would like to be living, most (62.5%) indicated that they would prefer to stay in Homer (18.8% indicated that they would prefer to stay elsewhere and 18.8% were not sure).

Of the 18 youths we surveyed, six (33.3%) were currently homeless and 12 (66.7%) had been homeless in the past. Of the six youths who were currently homeless, three (50.0%) had been homeless for one to three months, two (33.3%) had been homeless for four to six months, and one (16.7%) had been homeless for one to two years.

We then asked youths who they currently lived with and asked them to describe their current living situation. Almost half (44.4%) of the youths were currently living with their parents. Four (22.2%) of the youths were living with friends, three (16.7%) were living alone, two (11.1%) were living with a significant other, and one (5.6%) was living with family members. When asked to describe their current living situation, nine (50.0%) of the youths responded that they were staying with friends or family, four (22.2%) were in permanent housing (e.g., apartment or house), two (11.1%) were in short term housing (e.g., hotel or shelter), two (11.1%) were staying outdoors (including automobiles, vans, tents, or boats), and one (5.6%) was in transitional housing. Only two (11.1%) of the youths had ever been placed in foster care before the age of 19.

Most youths became homeless for the first time between their fourteenth and eighteenth birthdays. On average, youths became homeless for the first time at age 15.5 ( $s = 2.2$ ). Since then, 55.6% of the youths had been homeless more than once. More precisely, six (33.3%) had been homeless two or three times, one (5.6%) had been homeless four or five times, and three (16.7%) had been homeless more than five times.

We asked youths what factors contributed to their homelessness and what was preventing them from finding permanent housing. Certain factors clearly stood out as important causes of youth homelessness. When youths were asked to indicate the single biggest factor that caused their homelessness, eight (47.1%) indicated family problems and six (35.3%) indicated it was their personal choice to become homeless (although these personal choices were often caused by family problems). In terms of family problems, over half (58.8%) of the youths indicated that they became homeless because they could not get along with their parents. Parental problems included parental divorce, parental absence, parental use of drugs and alcohol, and parental discord. Youths also became homeless because they did not follow parental rules and/or were kicked out by

parents. Six youths (35.3%) were not kicked out by parents, but simply ran away. Verbal abuse was mentioned as a contributor to the youths' homelessness by seven (41.2%) of the youths. Few youths (11.8%) mentioned physical abuse and no youths (0%) mentioned sexual abuse as causes of homelessness. Sexual abuse, however, is the least likely victimization to be reported to police and it may be unlikely that youths would report sexual victimizations to us. Six youths (35.3%) mentioned the high cost of housing and rent and five youths (29.4%) mentioned the lack of employment opportunities. Other (less common) causes identified by youths included housing eviction, mental health issues, problems with the law, and problems with siblings.

Many youths were prevented from finding permanent housing by the lack of housing availability, affordability, and accessibility. As reasons for not finding permanent housing, six youths (37.5%) identified housing affordability, four youths (25.0%) identified housing availability, two youths (12.5%) identified moving costs, three youths (18.8%) identified transportation costs, five youths (31.3%) indicated they were too young to sign a lease, and four youths (25.0%) indicated they had no rental references. But again, census results indicate that housing availability is less of an issue than income or housing affordability. As explained further in Section D, increasing income will make current housing available, affordable, and accessible to homeless youths. In fact, five youths (31.3%) indicated that they were prevented from finding permanent housing because they lacked employment. Few housing rentals are available to youths who cannot demonstrate the ability to pay for rent with a secure job. Four youths (25.0%) also indicated that they simply lacked the motivation to find permanent housing. Not surprisingly, none of these youths were chronic homeless youths.

To further understand the causes of homelessness, we asked each youth who they would like to live with if they had a choice and what was keeping them from living there. Most youths (43.8%) indicated that they would prefer to live with friends. Five youths (31.3%) would live with family, two (12.5%) would live alone, and two (12.5%) were unsure. Again, housing cost was a key reason for youths not living there. Six youths (37.5%) thought that housing costs were keeping them from living where they would like to. Only one youth (6.3%) identified housing availability as an important reason. Other reasons identified by youths included rules and laws, schooling, or a lack of interest.

Not surprisingly, the residential histories of chronic homeless youths and runaway youths are vastly different (again, these youths are at different stages of homelessness, primarily defined by residential histories). Chronic homeless youths and runaway youths were particularly different in terms of their homelessness histories, reasons for staying in Homer or Anchor Point, reasons for becoming homeless, and reasons for remaining homeless. None of the runaway youths had spent their entire lives in Homer whereas 50% of the chronic homeless youths had. More importantly, the average age at which each group first became homeless is quite different. On average, chronic homeless youths first became homeless at age 14.25 ( $s = 3.1$ ) whereas runaway youths first became homeless at age 15.9 ( $s = 1.8$ ). By becoming homeless at an earlier age (and by being older), chronic homeless youths simply had more time to transition from running away to chronic homelessness. In addition to becoming homeless at an earlier age, chronic homeless youths were homeless significantly more often than runaway youths. While only one (7.7%) of runaway youths had been homeless more than five times, 50.0% of the chronic homeless youths had been homeless more than five times.

Both chronic homeless youths and runaway youths were staying in Homer and Anchor Point. However, the two groups of homeless youths provided different reasons for staying there. The following table summarizes the number (and percentage) of youths at each stage of homelessness who identified the following reasons for spending most nights in Homer and Anchor Point.

**Table 7. Reasons for Staying in Homer and Anchor Point**

Reason	Chronic Homeless Youths (N = 4)		Runaway Youths (N = 13)	
	N	%	N	%
Services are accessible	2	50.0 %	4	30.8 %
Work is available	1	25.0	4	30.8
Grew up here	1	25.0	2	15.4
Know people here	4	100.0	8	61.5
Cannot afford to leave	0	0.0	4	30.8
Know the area	0	0.0	4	30.8
Family is here	2	50.0	8	61.5
Feel safe here	1	25.0	4	30.8
Beauty / appeal of area	1	25.0	4	30.8
Weather	0	0.0	2	15.4
Lack of transportation	0	0.0	3	23.1
Had to stay temporarily	0	0.0	4	30.8

*Source of Data: 2004 Homeless Youth Survey*

Most reasons for staying in Homer or Anchor Point were important to both chronic homeless youths and to runaway youths. However, several reasons were only important to runaway youths. No chronic homeless youth stayed in Homer or Anchor Point because they could not afford to leave, they knew the area, they liked the weather, they lacked transportation, or they had to stay there temporarily. The presence of services of people they knew were more important reasons for chronic homeless youths than for runaway youths.

**Table 8. Most important Reason for Becoming Homeless**

Reason	Chronic Homeless Youths (N = 4)		Runaway Youths (N = 13)	
	N	%	N	%
Personal choice	1	25.0 %	5	38.5 %
Family problems	1	25.0	7	53.8
Other	2	50.0	1	7.7

*Source of Data: 2004 Homeless Youth Survey*

We also asked youths about reasons for becoming homeless. Subsequently, we asked youths to identify the most important reason for becoming homeless and categorized their responses as a personal choice, a family problem, or other. Clear differences between chronic homeless youths and runaway youths were again found (see

Table 8). In particular, fewer chronic homeless youths identified that becoming homeless was a personal choice than runaway youths (25.0% versus 38.5%). Furthermore, far fewer chronic homeless youths identified family problems as the most important reason for becoming homeless than runaway youths (25.0% versus 53.8%). Generally speaking, it seems that Homer youths first became homeless because they chose to run away from family problems. However, as runaway youths become chronic homeless youths, they remain homeless for other reasons. More detailed information on reasons for becoming homeless is presented in Table 9.

**Table 9. Reasons for Becoming Homeless**

Reason	Chronic Homeless Youths (N = 4)		Runaway Youths (N = 13)	
	N	%	N	%
High cost of housing / rent	3	75.0 %	3	23.1 %
Unemployment	1	25.0	4	30.8
Disability	0	0.0	0	0.0
Runaway	0	0.0	6	46.2
Health / medical costs	0	0.0	0	0.0
Housing eviction	1	25.0	1	7.7
Mental health issues	1	25.0	0	0.0
Too old for foster care	0	0.0	0	0.0
Problems with the law	0	0.0	2	15.4
Problems with alcohol / drugs	0	0.0	4	30.8
Parents are divorced	0	0.0	3	23.1
Parents are absent	0	0.0	2	15.4
Parents use alcohol / drugs	1	25.0	2	15.4
Parents fight and argue	1	25.0	0	0.0
Cannot follow parental rules	1	25.0	4	30.8
Cannot get along with parents	1	25.0	9	69.2
Kicked out by parents	0	0.0	4	30.8
Verbal abuse	1	25.0	6	46.2
Physical abuse	0	0.0	2	15.4
Sexual abuse	0	0.0	0	0.0
Problems with siblings	1	25.0	0	0.0
Parents moved out of Homer	0	0.0	0	0.0
Death of parent / guardian	0	0.0	0	0.0

*Source of Data: 2004 Homeless Youth Survey*

The most striking results in Table 9 are based on comparisons between the most frequent answers provided by chronic homeless youths and runaway youths. Over half (75.0%) of chronic homeless youths identified high housing costs as a reason for becoming homeless (compared to 23.1% of runaway youths). Over half of the runaway youths identified they could not get along with their parents (compared to 25.0% of chronic homeless youths). Common parental problems for runaway youths included problems following parental rules, being kicked out by parents, parental verbal abuse, and physical abuse. Finally, almost half (46.2%) of runaway youths identified running away as a cause of their homelessness while none of the chronic homeless youths did so.

Instead, chronic homeless youths were currently homeless because of high housing costs (although they may have runaway in the past, since these were at some point runaways).

Finally, we can directly examine differences between chronic homeless youths and runaway youths in their reasons for remaining homeless in Table 10.

**Table 10. Reasons for Remaining Homeless**

Reason	Chronic Homeless Youths (N = 4)		Runaway Youths (N = 13)	
	N	%	N	%
No job	1	25.0	4	33.3
Housing affordability	2	50.0	4	33.3
Housing availability	2	50.0	2	16.7
Moving costs	0	0.0	2	16.7
Transportation	0	0.0	3	25.0
Bad credit	0	0.0	0	0.0
Eviction	0	0.0	0	0.0
Criminal record	0	0.0	0	0.0
Too young to sign lease	0	0.0	5	41.7
No rental reference	0	0.0	4	33.3
No interest	0	0.0	4	33.3

*Source of Data: 2004 Homeless Youth Survey*

Again, important differences emerge between chronic homeless youths and runaway youths. Only three reasons were mentioned by chronic homeless youths; not having a job, housing affordability, and housing availability. Runaway youths, on the other hand, provided a myriad of reasons for remaining homeless. The most important reason was being too young to sign a lease. Most telling, perhaps, is that 33.3% of the runaway youths simply had no interest in finding permanent housing; a feeling that was clearly not shared by the chronic homeless youths. Since many of these youths were interviewed in the summer, it is possible that their needs for permanent housing were understated. Nonetheless, as homeless youths become chronic, they do become interested in finding permanent housing.

#### D. Alcohol and Drug Use

We asked youths about alcohol use, cigarette use, marijuana use, and other drug use (including cocaine/crack, inhalants, amphetamines, Ritalin, methcathinone, tranquilizers, narcotics, heroin, LSD, MDMA, other psychedelics, Rohypnol, GHB, steroids, Oxycontin, crystal meth, and other drugs not prescribed by doctors). Overall, alcohol, cigarette, and marijuana use were relatively frequent. Although the use of other drugs was less frequent, their rates of use among the homeless youth population far exceeded rates of use in the general population. Overall, seven (38.9%) of the 18 homeless youths felt that they had used alcohol or drugs in ways that had negatively affected their functioning at home or school. Most youths expressed that alcohol and drugs had negatively impacted them psychologically (e.g., mood changes, depression). Given the prevalence of alcohol and drug use and given that youths recognized the

negative impacts that alcohol and drug use have on their lives, stronger prevention and intervention efforts are needed for homeless youths in Homer.

In terms of alcohol use, cigarette use, and marijuana use, all but two youths (88.2%) had used alcohol in the past, all but three youths (83.3%) had used cigarettes in the past, and all but two youths (88.9%) had used marijuana in the past. The majority of youths started using alcohol and marijuana before becoming homeless. More specifically, 85.7% of youths started using alcohol before becoming homeless and 86.7% started using marijuana before becoming homeless.

Frequency of use was measured by whether youths had used alcohol or drugs within the last year, whether youths had used alcohol or drugs within the last month, and how many times in the last month youths had used alcohol or drugs. Although the majority of youths reported using alcohol both within the last year and within the last month, none reported daily use. Most (33.3%) reported using alcohol less than once a week, 22% reported using alcohol once or twice a week, and only one youth (5.6%) reported using alcohol three to six times a week. Among those who had used alcohol in the past, all had used liquor and most (75%) had used beer.

Similar to alcohol use, youths reported using cigarettes and marijuana both within the last year and the last month. Contrary to alcohol use, however, most youths reported daily use of cigarettes and marijuana. Of the youths surveyed, 80% reported smoking cigarettes on a daily basis and 38.9% reported using marijuana on a daily basis.

Eleven of the 18 youths also reported using other drugs. Although other drug use was common, it was clearly more experimental than the use of alcohol, cigarettes, and marijuana. Eleven (61.1%) of the 18 youths reported using other drugs, but fewer (seven or 28.9%) reported past year drug use and even fewer (four or 22.2%) reported last month drug use. Of the four youths reporting past month drug use, three (75.0%) used other drugs less than once a week. Six youths (33.3%) reported having used cocaine or crack, narcotics, other psychedelics, Oxycontin, and prescription drugs not prescribed by a doctor. Five youths (27.8%) reported having used amphetamines. Four youths (22.2%) reported having used Ritalin, tranquilizers or sleeping pills, and LSD. Three youths (16.7%) reported having used inhalants and crystal meth, two (11.1%) reported having used MDMA, and one (5.6%) reported having used steroids. No youth reported having used methcathinone, heroin, Rohypnol, or GHB and no youth reported using a needle or syringe to inject a drug.

**Table 11. Alcohol Use**

Alcohol Measure	Chronic Homeless Youths (N = 4)		Runaway Youths (N = 13)	
	N	%	N	%
Ever used alcohol	3	75.0 %	12	92.3 %
Last year alcohol use	1	25.0	12	92.3
Last month alcohol use	1	25.0	10	83.3

*Source of Data: 2004 Homeless Youth Survey*

Clear differences in alcohol and drug use were found between chronic homeless youths and runaway youths, as shown in Table 11. Although most youths had used alcohol in the past, last year and last month drug use were more frequent among runaway youths than among chronic homeless youths. Overall, chronic homeless youths were far less likely to use alcohol persistently than runaway youths. In fact, slightly fewer (75.0%) of the chronic homeless youths had ever used alcohol than runaway youths (92.3%). Similar results were found with respect to cigarette, marijuana, and other drug use, as shown in Table 12.

**Table 12. Drug Use**

Drug Measure	Chronic Homeless Youths (N = 4)		Runaway Youths (N = 13)	
	N	%	N	%
Cigarette lifetime use	2	50.0 %	12	92.3 %
Marijuana lifetime use	2	50.0	13	100.0
Marijuana last year use	1	25.0	13	100.0
Marijuana last month use	1	25.0	11	84.6
Other drug lifetime use	2	50.0	9	69.2
Other drug last year use	1	25.0	6	46.2
Other drug last month use	1	25.0	3	23.1

*Source of Data: 2004 Homeless Youth Survey*

Again, chronic homeless youths were far less likely to have used drugs in their lifetime, during the last year, or during the last month (except for last month use of other drugs). Some differences are striking. While all 13 runaway youths (100.0%) reported having used marijuana during their lifetime and during the past year, only two (50.0%) of the chronic homeless youths reported having used marijuana during their lifetime and only one (25.0%) reported having used marijuana during the past year. Cigarette use was also much lower among chronic homeless youths than among runaway youths. Although lifetime and last year use of other drugs were lower for chronic homeless youths than runaway youths, both used other drugs within the last month to the same extent.

Overall, however, these results show that drug and alcohol use are problematic among Homer homeless youths, particularly among those at the runaway stage. To prevent them from progressing to further stages of homelessness, it will be critical to address these drug and alcohol issues. Doing so should also prevent other youths from becoming runaways. Increased attention should be devoted to these issues. Schools are likely an appropriate place for intense prevention efforts as all runaway youths (and potential runaway youths) were at one point enrolled in school.

#### E. Income

Half of the youths were currently working when they were interviewed. Among those employed, 33.3% were employed in odd jobs, 33.3% were employed in the fast food industry, 11.1% were employed in retail, and 22.3% were employed in other jobs. Only four youths considered themselves to be employed full-time. Seven youths

provided information on their income. Among those seven, two (28.6%) reported earning less than \$100 per week before taxes, four (57.1%) reported earning between \$100 and \$499, and one (14.3%) reported earning between \$500 and \$999. Half of all youths were unemployed and were therefore not earning anything per week. Most youths (11 or 61.1%) were currently looking for work, but had a difficult time finding jobs. When asked how getting a job could be made easier in Homer, 83.3% of youths responded that job opportunities in Homer should be enhanced. The lack of jobs for which these youths were qualified was clearly a problem.

The most common sources of income were therefore not related to employment. Although 44.4% of youths reported some income from odd jobs, only 16.7% reported income from seasonal jobs, 27.8% from part-time work, and 33.3% from full-time work. Instead, 61.1% of youths reported receiving money from family and 50.0% of youths reported receiving money from friends. Four youths (22.2%) reported some income from begging, and four (22.2%) reported some income from criminal activity. The most common criminal activity was selling drugs. No youth reported income from stealing. Only three (17.6%) of the youths reported receiving government assistance such as food stamps. Only one (5.6%) of the youths reported being on welfare.

When combining all of these sources of income together, 11 youths (61.1%) thought they had enough money every month for transportation, food, clothes, and rent. However, the remaining seven youths (38.9%) did not. When asked what they lacked money for, youths indicated that they often could not afford transportation, food, clothes, and rent. More specifically, five (71.4%) of the seven youths that did not have enough money reported lacking money for food and four (57.1%) reported lacking money for transportation, for clothes, and for rent.

**Table 13. Sources of Income**

Source	Chronic Homeless Youths (N = 4)		Runaway Youths (N = 13)	
	N	%	N	%
Friends	1	25.0 %	7	53.8 %
Family	3	75.0	7	53.8
Welfare	1	25.0	0	0.0
Disability	0	0.0	0	0.0
Begging	1	25.0	3	23.1
PFD	3	75.0	5	38.5
Native Alaskan benefits	0	0.0	0	0.0
General relief	0	0.0	0	0.0
Seasonal work	1	25.0	2	15.4
Odd jobs	1	25.0	7	53.8
Part time work	1	25.0	4	30.8
Full time work	1	25.0	4	30.8
Sexual favors	0	0.0	1	7.7
Stealing	0	0.0	0	0.0
Drugs	1	25.0	2	15.4
Other criminal activity	1	25.0	0	0.0

Source of Data: 2004 Homeless Youth Survey

Chronic homeless youths were substantially less likely to be employed. Only one (25.0%) of the chronic homeless youths was employed whereas seven (53.8%) of the runaway youths were employed. Sources of income also varied across stages of homelessness. These results are shown in Table 13. The main difference between chronic homeless youths and runaway youths is again the extent to which they receive income from employment. Runaway youths were far more likely to receive income from employment (particularly from odd jobs) than chronic homeless youths. It is likely that runaway youths, being more conventional than chronic homeless youths, still have opportunities for such odd jobs. As youths progress into chronic homelessness, it is likely that their opportunities for such odd jobs become systematically eliminated. Another important difference between chronic homeless youths and runaway youths is the extent to which they receive income from friends and family. Runaway youths were more likely to receive income from friends than chronic homeless youths but runaway youths were less likely than chronic homeless youths to receive income from family members. While 50.0% of chronic homeless youths were receiving assistance such as food stamps, only one runaway youth was (7.7%).

#### F. Daily Activities

As part of their daily activities, we asked youths to focus on their activities during an average day and asked them detailed questions about their schooling experiences. When asked about their average or most typical day, we obtained three answers; work and school, hanging out, and partying. Nine youths (56.3%) indicated that school and work was part of an average day, 13 (81.3%) mentioned hanging out, and four (25.0%) mentioned partying. We then inquired further into what occupies the majority of these youths' days. Half of the youths responded that hanging out with friends occupied an important part of their days. Other important activities included work, looking for or getting money, looking for work, and schooling. Only three youths (16.7%) indicated that they spent the majority of their day looking for food. Those same three youths (16.7%) indicated that they generally did not get enough to eat each day. On an average day, they were able to eat only one meal while the remaining youths ate at least two.

Hunger was a common daily problem for some youths (22.2%). Greater problems, however, included insufficient income, boredom, and loneliness. Seven youths (38.9%) identified insufficient income as a common daily problem and boredom and loneliness were identified as common daily problems by eight (44.4%) youths. Five youths (27.8%) identified lack of work and five (27.8%) identified the lack of transportation as common daily problems. Four youths (22.2%) experienced depression and anxiousness as common daily problems. Other less common daily problems included health and dental care, problems with drugs or alcohol, problems with police, finding a way to keep in touch with others, family problems, inclement weather, finding shelter, and finding a place to bathe and wash clothes.

However, when we asked the youths about the most common daily problems of other homeless youths, we obtained substantially different answers. Of course, perceptions of others' problems are likely to be an indicator of their own problems. In particular, while only 16.7% of youths identified drugs and alcohol as one of their most common daily problems, 73.3% of youths felt that drugs and alcohol were one of the

most common daily problems of other homeless youths they knew. This likely indicates that the magnitude of the drug and alcohol problem is higher than previously indicated. Similarly, while only 27.8% of youths identified lack of work as a common daily problem, 66.7% of youths felt that lack of work was one of the most common daily problems of other youths they knew. Furthermore, while only 5.6% of youths identified finding shelter as one of their most common daily problems, 60.0% of youths felt that finding shelter was a common daily problem for other homeless youths. Differences between youths' own common daily problems and the perceived common daily problems of other homeless youths are summarized in the following table.

**Table 14. Common Daily Problems of Homeless Youths**

Source	Own Problems		Others' Problems	
	N	%	N	%
Hunger	4	22.2 %	6	40.0 %
Insufficient income	7	38.9	6	40.0
Lack of work	5	27.8	10	66.7
Finding shelter	1	5.6	9	60.0
Washing self / clothes	1	5.6	6	40.0
Boredom / loneliness	8	44.4	5	33.3
Depression / anxiety	4	22.2	6	40.0
Threat of crime / violence	0	0.0	4	26.7
Health / dental care	3	16.7	3	20.0
Drugs / alcohol	3	16.7	11	73.3
Problems with police	2	11.1	7	46.7
Keeping in touch	2	11.1	3	20.0
Transportation	5	27.8	6	40.0
Family problems	3	16.7	9	60.0
Weather	1	5.6	3	20.0
Other	0	0.0	2	13.3

*Source of Data: 2004 Homeless Youth Survey*

Homeless youths identified some common daily problems to be far more problematic for other youths than for themselves. These included hunger, lack of work, finding shelter, washing self and clothes, depression and anxiety, threat of crime and violence, drugs and alcohol, problems with police, transportation, family problems, and weather. Again, although some of these perceptions may be factual, it is likely that others' problems are a reflection of the youths' own problems. Homeless youths identified other common daily problems to be as problematic for themselves as for others. These included insufficient income, boredom and loneliness, health and dental care, and keeping in touch with others. None of the youths estimated the common daily problems to be worse for themselves than for others. When these common daily problems become severe, youths were most likely to talk with friends. Fifteen (83.3%) of the youths indicated that they would talk with friends when they had a problem. Seven (38.9%) would talk with family and three (16.7%) would talk to a counselor.

Although some youths (11.1%) mentioned problems with police as a common daily problem, it is important to note that most youths had favorable opinions of the

Homer Police Department; 70.6% of homeless youths did not feel harassed by local police.

After talking with youths about the most common daily problems that they encountered, we asked them to tell us the worst part about being homeless. Seven youths (53.8%) mentioned the lack of housing, two (15.4%) mentioned the lack of activities and plans, two (15.4%) mentioned the negative stigma that is associated with homelessness, one (7.7%) mentioned the lack of family contact, and one (7.7%) mentioned the lack of food.

Finally, as part of their daily activities, we asked youths a series of questions about their schooling experiences. Only half of the youths that we talked to were currently enrolled in school (but half of them were interviewed during the summer). Of the youths in school, 62.5% were attending a conventional school and the remaining 37.5% were attending an alternative school. Most of these youths were attending school every day. Only two youths that were still in school were attending less than five times a week. One was not always attending school because of work and the other because of a lack of motivation. For those not enrolled in school, we asked them why they were not enrolled and what would make it possible for them to go to school. Among these seven youths, three (42.9%) were not enrolled because they disliked school, two (28.6%) lacked interest, one (14.3%) had to earn money, and one (14.3%) had poor grades. In order to go back to school, three (42.9%) thought they would need more money, three (42.9%) thought they would need to go to a different school with different classes, and one (14.3%) thought better study skills were needed.

**Table 15. Employment and Income Differences Between Chronic Homeless Youths and Runaway Youths**

Source	Chronic Homeless Youths (N = 4)		Runaway Youths (N = 13)	
	N	%	N	%
<i>Average day includes:</i>				
Work	0	0.0 %	8	61.5 %
<i>Day occupied by:</i>				
Work	0	0.0	7	53.8
Looking for work	0	0.0	4	30.8
Looking for money	1	25.0	4	30.8
<i>Most common problems:</i>				
Insufficient income	3	75.0	4	30.8
Lack of work	1	25.0	4	30.8

*Source of Data: 2004 Homeless Youth Survey*

The daily activities of chronic homeless youths were not substantially different than those of runaway youths. This indicates that many of the basic needs of chronic homeless youths are currently being met. One reasonable conclusion from this finding is that chronic homeless youths are able to satisfy most of their basic needs given available

services in Homer. Perhaps these youths learn how to receive such services by the time they become chronic homeless youths. The one clear exception was about work and income. Table 15 describes all differences in employment and income as they relate to daily activities.

None of the chronic homeless youths' days were occupied by work. In contrast, 61.5% of runaway youths indicated that work was part of their average day and 53.8% indicated that work was a significant part of each day. As a result, insufficient income was a more common problem for chronic homeless youths than for runaway youths. While 75.0% of chronic homeless youths identified insufficient income as a most common daily problem, only 30.8% of runaway youths did so.

However, looking for work and looking for money did not occupy the days of chronic homeless youths, but did occupy the days of runaway youths. Although proportionately fewer chronic homeless youths were working and although proportionately more chronic homeless youths identified insufficient income as a common daily problem, proportionately fewer chronic homeless youths were actively looking for work or for ways to get money. Although survey results cannot explain this result, it is possible that chronic homeless youths have given up on securing employment. They are perhaps engulfed in situations that render seeking and securing employment difficult or impossible. As a result, they may become demoralized and lose interest in finding a job. Indeed, results do show that chronic homeless youths are far more likely to experience depression and anxiousness as a common daily problem than runaway youths (75.0% versus 7.7%).

Based on other survey responses, we do not believe that chronic homeless youths are not interested in finding employment. Instead, we believe that chronic homeless youths either do not know how to find employment or that employment is simply not available for chronic homeless youths. We are certain, however, that the fact they are not looking for work should not be construed to indicate that they are not interested in work. Other survey responses clearly indicate that they are (see Section E). The daily activities of chronic homeless youths are indeed constrained by a lack of income.

## G. Health

We asked the youths to describe their medical histories to us. Most youths were healthy in the sense that few severe illnesses or conditions were reported. Nonetheless, common problems reported included asthma and depression. Of the 18 youths surveyed, 22.2% reported having asthma and 27.8% reported being depressed. One youth (5.6%) reported high blood pressure and another youth (5.6%) reported pneumonia and influenza. Two youths (11.1%) reported a learning disability and one youth (5.6%) reported a mental illness other than depression. Half of these youths were currently receiving treatment and / or medications for these conditions. The youths who were not receiving treatment believed that treatment was not needed.

Seven of the youths (38.9%) had received health or dental care while they were homeless or in transition in Homer. Most health or dental care was provided by emergency rooms, hospitals, private clinics, or public clinics. Youths showed mixed feelings about the care that they had received from these agencies. Some youths had favorable opinions because they had received good care from friendly and efficient staff.

Other youths, however, had unfavorable opinions because of the cost of such care, the lack of confidentiality, delays in processing, and inaccessibility to care. Nonetheless, 66.7% of youths who received care while homeless felt that they had been provided with good care. Four youths reported currently being on medication. All four were able to receive their prescribed medication.

Six (33.3%) of the youths did not receive care when they needed health care, dental care, or medications. For those six youths, lack of money and lack of medical insurance were important reasons for not receiving care. Four (66.7%) of those six youths did not have medical insurance and three (50.0%) did not have enough money. Lack of transportation was a problem for two (33.3%) of those youths. At the time of the survey, however, most youths (82.4%) did have health insurance, dental insurance, Medicaid, or Denali kid care.

Many of the youths (47.1%) also received mental health services while they were homeless. Services were received from community mental health centers and school counselors. The majority of youths (83.3%) felt that good services had been provided although a few youths (33.3%) felt that services were limited. Two (11.8%) of the youths reported not being able to receive mental health services when they needed them. Again, the youths who did not seek services had no medical insurance.

**Table 16. Health Problems**

Ever diagnosed with:	Chronic Homeless Youths (N = 4)		Runaway Youths (N = 13)	
	N	%	N	%
Tuberculosis	0	0.0 %	0	0.0 %
HIV / AIDS	0	0.0	0	0.0
Hepatitis (any type)	0	0.0	0	0.0
Sexually transmitted disease	0	0.0	0	0.0
Diabetes	0	0.0	0	0.0
Heart problems	0	0.0	0	0.0
Cancer (any type)	0	0.0	0	0.0
Alcoholism	0	0.0	0	0.0
High blood pressure	0	0.0	1	7.7
Pneumonia / Influenza	0	0.0	1	7.7
Learning disability	0	0.0	2	15.4
Asthma	1	25.0	3	23.1
Depression	2	50.0	3	23.1
Other mental illness	0	0.0	1	7.7
Other	0	0.0	3	23.1

*Source of Data: 2004 Homeless Youth Survey*

As shown in Table 16, chronic homeless youths were far more likely to experience depression than runaway youths. Half of the chronic homeless youths reported having been diagnosed with depression whereas 23.1% of the runaway youths had. As with their daily needs, chronic homeless youths were able to receive medical attention for their problems. Only one (25.0%) of the chronic homeless youths was not able to receive needed health care, dental care, or medications compared to 38.5% of the

runaway youths. None of the chronic homeless youths were unable to receive needed mental health services compared to 15.4% of the runaway youths. Again, it seems that chronic homeless youths are aware of available services, know how to use these services, and actively seek these services. Again, it is perhaps because youths learn about available services as they progress through the stages of homelessness. Proportionately more chronic homeless youths received health or dental care while homeless than runaway youths (50.0% versus 38.5%) and proportionately more chronic homeless youths received mental health services while homeless than runaway youths (50.0% versus 46.2%). Access to medical care, therefore, does not seem to vary across the two groups of homeless youths (although chronic homeless youths were more likely than runaway youths to receive care from public clinics; 50.0% versus 15.4%).

#### H. Legal and Safety Issues

Three (16.7%) of the 18 youths surveyed were victims of a crime within the last year. While 16.7% is low, the rate of victimization among the homeless youth population is far greater than it is in the general population. For comparison purposes, 2.0% of Homer's general population reported violent victimizations to police in 2003 (violent victimizations include criminal homicide, forcible rape, robbery, and assault) and 5.6% reported property victimizations (property victimizations include burglary, larceny-theft, and motor vehicle theft; Source: Alaska Department of Public Safety, Crime Reported in Alaska 2003). Together, these three youths experienced one physical assault and three robberies. No incidents of domestic violence or sexual assault were reported, but again these incidents are rarely reported. Two (66.7%) of the youths had reported their victimization to police. Five of the 18 youths needed legal help or advice in the last year, and most (80%) of them were able to receive adequate legal assistance.

Legal and safety issues were somewhat different between chronic homeless youths and runaway youths. Chronic homeless youths were more likely to be victimized than runaway youths (25.0% versus 15.4%). When victimized, chronic homeless youths were more likely to report their victimization to police than runaway youths (25.0% versus 7.7%). Chronic homeless youths held more favorable opinions of local police. None of the chronic homeless youths felt harassed by police whereas 38.5% of runaway youths felt so.

#### I. Opinions Regarding Available Services

Youths clearly underestimated the number of agencies in Homer that provide services to youths. As such, there is a need to publicize the services that are currently available in Homer, particularly to the runaway youths who do not yet know about these services. While we identified between 20 and 29 agencies that could provide services to homeless youths, only two (15.4%) youths estimated that more than 10 agencies provided services to youths. Nine youths (69.2%) estimated that fewer than six agencies provide services to youths in Homer. Only two (11.1%) of the youths had sought services from faith-based programs while homeless in Homer. Both youths were able to find faith-based programs and both were satisfied with their experiences.

We then presented each youth with a list containing 42 agencies in Homer. We asked each youth whether they knew about each agency, whether they had used their services, and what they thought about the services that they had received. Youths had generally heard about the agencies on our list. More specifically, five youths (27.8%) knew 1 to 24% of the agencies, six youths (33.3%) knew 25 to 49% of the agencies, four youths (22.2%) knew 50 to 74% of the agencies, and three youths (16.7%) knew of 75 to 99% of the agencies. This suggests that although youths know about agencies in Homer, they are relatively unaware of what services these agencies provide and are relatively unaware that many of these agencies do provide services to youths. We did ask youths to report which agencies they had received services from, but these data are invalid. The validity of the youths' answer to this question is too low to discuss their answers.

Youths generally had positive opinions about the agencies from which they had received services. The following table summarizes the percentage of youths that had negative, neutral, and positive opinions about the agencies that they had received services from.

**Table 17. Opinions of Agencies Providing Youth Services**

% of Agencies	Negative		Neutral		Positive	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
0%	7	46.7 %	5	33.3 %	2	13.3 %
1 to 24%	5	33.3	3	20.0	0	0.0
25 to 49%	1	6.7	5	33.3	2	13.3
50 to 74%	2	13.3	1	6.7	6	40.0
75 to 99%	0	0.0	0	0.0	3	20.0
100%	0	0.0	1	6.7	2	13.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>		<b>15</b>		<b>15</b>	

*Source of Data: 2004 Homeless Youth Survey*

Of the 15 youths who answered this question, most did not have negative opinions about the agencies that provided them with services. In fact, 46.7% had negative opinions about none of the agencies they had received services from and 80.0% had negative opinions about less than 25% of the agencies they had received services from. In contrast, two youths (13.3%) had positive opinions about all agencies they had received services from, 33.3% had positive opinions about at least 75% of the agencies, and 73.3% had positive opinions about at least 50% of the agencies. Though some youths were clearly disappointed with the services they had received, on average, youths had favorable opinions of agencies in Homer.

We also asked youths about why they had negative, neutral, or positive opinions about these agencies. Overall, youths indicated that they had negative opinions about the agencies whose staff were unfriendly, agencies who failed to provide adequate services, and agencies whose services were too costly. Youths had positive opinions about agencies that provided good services, with friendly staff.

Our survey included a variety of questions about specific services that were needed in Homer. We assessed needed services by asking youths what types of services were most needed in Homer and to then identify the most important of these services.

The following table summarizes these results. It shows how many youths expressed a need for each service and how many youths believed each was the most important needed service. The list is sorted by the most important service.

**Table 18. List of Needed Services and Their Importance**

Service	Need this Service		Most Important Service	
	N	%	N	%
Places where youth are welcome	14	77.8 %	8	50.0 %
Homeless service centers	7	43.8	1	6.3
Emergency shelter	5	31.3	1	6.3
Transitional housing	5	31.3	1	6.3
Affordable housing	5	31.3	1	6.3
Job training and placement	4	25.0	1	6.3
Health and dental clinics	4	25.0	1	6.3
Drug and alcohol programs	2	12.5	1	6.3
Reliable transportation	2	12.5	1	6.3
Jobs	5	31.3	0	0.0
Food and clothing banks	1	6.3	0	0.0
Mental health services	1	6.3	0	0.0
School health clinic	0	0.0	0	0.0
Family counseling	0	0.0	0	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>--</b>		<b>16</b>	

*Source of Data: 2004 Homeless Youth Survey*

We also asked youths to directly identify the one service that would be most needed for them to transition back home or into permanent housing. The vast majority of youths (77.8%) expressed a need for places or outdoor locations where youths were welcome. In fact, 50.0% of youths identified this as the most important needed service. Seven (43.8%) of the youths expressed a need for homeless service centers, but only one (6.3%) identified this as the most important needed service. Five (31.3%) of the youths expressed needs for emergency shelters, transitional housing, affordable housing, and jobs. Four (25.0%) of the youths expressed needs for job training and job placement and health and dental clinics. Two (12.5%) of the youths expressed needs for drug and alcohol rehabilitation programs and reliable transportation. One (6.3%) of the youths expressed needs for food and clothing banks and mental health services. However, none of these services were identified as the most important. Clearly, the most important service was related to recreation. Interestingly, none of the youths identified family counseling as a needed service (and therefore none identified it as the most important needed service). This is doubtful given that most runaway youths became homeless because of family problems. Obviously, family counseling is therefore an important need (albeit not one directly identified by youths).

Finally, youths were asked specifically about which services were needed to make it easier for homeless youths to transition back home or into permanent housing. Answers to this question varied greatly. Five youths (31.3%) identified increasing housing availability and assistance, four youths (25.0%) identified providing temporary housing and enhancing youth services, and two youths (12.5%) identified improving

recreation and providing job training and employment. Three youths (18.8%) did not believe that the community of Homer could do anything to make it easier for youths to transition back home or into permanent housing (either because nothing truly prevented them from doing so or because they were not interested in transitioning back home or into permanent housing at the time of the survey). It is possible that the timing of the survey (and the over-sampling of runaway youths) affected these results. Runaway youths would be less likely to identify permanent housing as an important need than chronic homeless youths, particularly during the summer when most interviews occurred. By over-sampling runaway youths (particularly youths who had been runaway youths in the past), we over-sampled youths who had transitioned back into permanent housing. It is doubtful that these youths would identify permanent housing as an important need.

Important differences existed between chronic homeless youths and runaway youths. Chronic homeless youths knew more agencies in Homer, had used more agencies in Homer, and tended to have more positive opinions about these agencies than runaway youths. Again, it seems that the basic needs of chronic homeless youths are already being met in Homer. For example, none of the chronic homeless youths expressed a need for food and clothing banks, none expressed a need for drug and alcohol rehabilitation programming, and none expressed a need for reliable transportation. Runaway youths, on the other hand, were generally not aware of which services were currently available and had not used these services. As a result, many believed it would be important for Homer to have a homeless service center (50.0% versus 25.0%). Available services need to be publicized to the youths in the runaway stage.

Although recreational opportunities were estimated to be an important part of needed services in Homer, few chronic homeless youths agreed. Instead, chronic homeless youths tended to focus on housing availability and housing assistance. For chronic homeless youths, recreation was not as important a concern or needed service and it was rarely the most important. Table 19 disaggregates the youths' answers to what one thing the community of Homer could do to make it easier for homeless youths to transition back home or into permanent housing by each group of youth.

Runaway youths believed that enhancing youth services and increasing recreational opportunities would make it easier for them to transition back home or into permanent housing. On the other hand, none of the chronic homeless youths believed that these services would help. Chronic homeless youths were more interested in temporary housing, housing availability, and housing assistance. None of the chronic homeless youths identified job training and employment as a needed service to transition back home or into permanent housing. Again, this does not imply that chronic homeless youths are not interested in securing employment. Rather, it implies that chronic homeless youths do not foresee the possibility of obtaining a job that will provide enough financial security to obtain housing. As before, this may occur for two reasons. First, there may be little to no jobs available for chronic homeless youths. Second, the types of jobs that are available to chronic homeless youths may not provide enough income for these youths to afford housing.

Similarly, although drug and alcohol programs were rarely mentioned as needed services and were never mentioned as a service needed to transition back home or into permanent housing, youths' answers to the drug and alcohol questions clearly show that this service is needed. Although youths may not see the connection between their

homelessness and their use of alcohol and drugs, the prevalence of alcohol and drug use and the perceptions that alcohol and drug use negatively affected their lives support this conclusion. The same argument can be made with family counseling. Although none of the youths identified family counseling as a needed service and none identified family counseling as a service needed for them to transition back home or into permanent housing, family problems was a key reason for runaways to become homeless. This supports the argument that family counseling services should be expanded.

**Table 19. Services Needed to Transition back Home or into Permanent Housing**

Service:	Chronic Homeless Youths (N = 4)		Runaway Youths (N = 13)	
	N	%	N	%
Temporary housing	1	25.0 %	2	18.2 %
Housing availability / assistance	2	50.0	3	27.3
Recreation	0	0.0	2	18.2
Job training and employment	0	0.0	1	9.1
Enhancing youth services	0	0.0	4	36.4
Nothing	1	25.0	2	18.2

*Source of Data: 2004 Homeless Youth Survey*

## J. Summary

The youths that we surveyed were clearly at different stages of homelessness. Although some had little experience being homeless or had just begun their homeless experience, others had long, extensive, and intensive histories of homelessness. We developed the distinction between chronic homeless youths and runaway youths in great detail because differences between these groups will dramatically affect our recommendations. Based on survey responses, it is obvious that the services needed for runaway youths to transition into permanent housing are different than the services needed for chronic homeless youths to transition into permanent housing. Providing services to runaway youths should eventually lower the number of chronic homeless youths, but it would not be wise to focus exclusively on runaway youths as those with the most severe needs are those at the chronic homelessness stage or beyond.

Throughout this section, we emphasized that the demographics, residential history, alcohol and drug use, income, daily activities, health, legal and safety issues, and opinions regarding available services varied greatly between chronic homeless youths and runaway youths. At the same time, however, there were many similarities. These are summarized in Table 20.

**Table 20. Key Similarities Between Chronic Homeless Youths and Runaway Youths**

<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>Similarities</b>
Demographics	Both coed; similar educational attainments
Residential History	Staying in Homer and Anchor Point; Causes of homeless do not include disability, medical costs, sexual abuse, parents moving away, or death of a parent; Causes for remaining homeless do not include bad credit, eviction, or criminal record
Alcohol and Drug Use	Lifetime alcohol use; Last month other drug use
Income	No income from disability, general relief, or stealing Income from begging
Daily Activities	Similar daily activities, except for work and income
Health	Relatively few severe health problems Equal access to medical care Generally positive opinions about care
Legal and Safety Issues	At risk for similar types of victimizations
Opinions of Services	Little need for homeless shelter, food, or clothing

*Source of Data:* 2004 Homeless Youth Survey

The important differences between chronic homeless youths and runaway youths are summarized in Table 21.

**Table 21. Key Differences Between Chronic Homeless Youths and Runaway Youths**

Characteristics	Chronic Homeless Youths (N = 4)	Runaway Youths (N = 13)
Demographics	Average age = 19	Average age = 17
Residential History	First homeless at age 14 Homeless more frequently Because of housing costs 0% runaway	First homeless at age 16 Homeless less frequently Because of problems w/ parents 46% runaway
Alcohol and Drug Use	Less use of alcohol, cigarette, marijuana, and other drugs	More use of alcohol, cigarette, marijuana, and other drugs
Income	Less likely to be employed Rely on family for income	More likely to be employed Rely on friends & jobs for income
Daily Activities	Less likely to be working Less likely to look for work	More likely to be working More likely to look for work
Health	More depressed	Less depressed
Legal and Safety Issues	More likely to be victims More likely to call police	Less likely to be victims Less likely to call police
Opinions of Services	Know and use services Have favorable opinions Need job & housing assistance	Unaware of available services Unfavorable opinions of services Need recreational opportunities

*Source of Data: 2004 Homeless Youth Survey*

In terms of demographic characteristics, chronic homeless youths and runaway youths were similar in that both groups included boys and girls. Youths also had similar educational attainments. However, the chronic homeless youths should have had higher educational attainments given that they were on average 2 years older. Consequently, chronic homeless youths were not as educationally advanced as runaway youths.

Not surprisingly, chronic homeless youths and runaway youths were perhaps most different in terms of their residential histories. Although all youths were staying in Homer or Anchor Point, although none of the youths reported becoming homeless because of disabilities, medical costs, sexual abuse, parents moving away, or the death of a parent, and although none of the youths remained homeless because of bad credit, being evicted, or having a criminal record, key differences existed between chronic homeless youths and runaway youths. Chronic homeless youths became homeless at a much earlier age (14 versus 16) and were homeless much more frequently than runaway youths. Chronic homeless youths were more likely to have become homeless as a result of housing costs whereas runaway youths were more likely to have become homeless as a result of problems with parents. Consequently, runaway youths were much more likely to have runaway from home than chronic homeless youths (46% versus 0%). Again, the causes of homelessness are likely to change over time and likely to change as some

runaway youths become chronic homeless youths. It is likely that chronic homeless youths began their homeless career by running away from problems with parents. Now that they are chronic homeless youths, however, they are homeless because of high housing costs. But as explained in Section II, housing costs are likely to be less of an issue than housing affordability.

Key differences also existed in alcohol and drug use. Although most youths had used alcohol during their lifetime and although the use of other drugs in the past month was similar, chronic homeless youths were less likely to use alcohol, cigarettes, and marijuana than runaway youths. Only 50.0% of chronic homeless youths had used cigarettes versus 92.3% of runaway youths. Only 50.5% of chronic homeless youths had used marijuana versus 100.0% of runaway youths. During a past month, a runaway youth was 1,000 times more likely than a chronic homeless youth to have used marijuana. Clearly, alcohol and drug use pose significant problems for homeless youths in Homer, particularly for runaway youths. This undoubtedly supports the creation and maintenance of prevention and intervention programs to lower the prevalence of substance use.

In terms of income, neither chronic homeless youths nor runaway youths obtained income from disability, general relief, or stealing. Both groups of youths did rely on begging to obtain income. There was a difference between chronic homeless youths and runaway youths in the extent to which each relied on employment as an important source of income. Runaway youths were far more likely to rely on employment as an important source of income than chronic homeless youths, simply because they were more likely to be employed. Furthermore, runaway youths also relied on friends for income whereas chronic homeless youths relied more on family. Overall, chronic homeless youths were less likely to have extensive networks of friends. As a result, they were less likely to rely on friends for income, advice, and general help. In addition, this may be a reason why chronic homeless youths were less involved in alcohol and drug use than runaway youths (as alcohol and drug use in adolescence are often social activities).

The daily activities of chronic homeless youths and runaway youths were very similar except for work and income. The daily activities of chronic homeless youths were less likely to involve work. At the same time, however, the daily activities of chronic homeless youths were less likely to involve looking for work. Again we emphasize that chronic homeless youths were interested in securing employment, even though they were not actively searching for employment. Chronic homeless youths therefore did not know how to search for employment or lacked the necessary skills to obtain employment. Alternatively, there may be few jobs available for chronic homeless youths.

Both chronic homeless youths and runaway youths showed few signs of severe health problems. Furthermore, both described having adequate access to health care and generally had positive opinion about the health care that they had received. However, chronic homeless youths were substantially more likely to feel depressed than runaway youths. At the stage of chronic homelessness, youths experience greater problems and have fewer resources available to address these problems. As a result, it is not surprising that chronic homeless youths experience greater levels of depression and anxiety.

Although both youths were at-risk for similar types of victimizations (i.e., physical assaults and robberies), chronic homeless youths were more likely to be victimized than runaway youths. Both were more likely to be victimized than the general

population; 25.0% of chronic homeless youths were victimized in the past year, 15.4% of runaway youths were victimized in the past year, and 2.0% of the general population had been victimized in the past year. Chronic homeless youths were more likely to call police when they had been victimized. All youths generally had positive opinions of law enforcement. Although some felt harassed by law enforcement, all understood law enforcement's duties and none questioned the legitimacy of their duties.

Finally, important differences existed in the opinions of available youth services. Chronic homeless youths were more likely to know about services available to youths in Homer and were more likely to have used these services. Furthermore, they were more likely to have favorable opinions about these services. Chronic homeless youths, however, did experience strong needs for additional job and housing assistance. On the other hand, runaway youths were relatively unaware of services available to them, had not used these services, and generally had negative opinions about these services. Contrary to chronic homeless youths, runaway youths did not express needs for additional job and housing assistance, but instead expressed needs for additional recreational opportunities. Runaway youths were particularly interested in places or outdoor locations where youth were welcome. Again, although they did not express a need for drug and alcohol programs, that need is clearly substantiated given their answers to other questions. It is important to note that the basic daily needs of both chronic homeless youths and of runaway youths appeared to be satisfied. Although many youths did not have adequate housing, although many youths were hungry, and although many youths expressed not having enough money for clothing, few directly expressed needs for a homeless shelter, additional food pantries, or clothing assistance.

Again, we remind the reader of the limitations of this survey. This survey is entirely based on youths' thoughts, beliefs, and perceptions. These thoughts, beliefs, and perceptions come from a very limited segment of the homeless youth population. These thoughts, beliefs, and perceptions do not reflect the homeless population at later stages of homelessness. Finally, the thoughts, beliefs, and perceptions described herein may not accurately depict the needs of homeless youths. For example, although little need was expressed for drug and alcohol programs, they are undoubtedly important, particularly for runaway youths.

With this extensive description of homeless youths in Homer, we now turn to a description of available services. After describing these available services, we compare the needs of homeless youths to available services to identify gaps in service delivery.

#### **IV. SERVICES SURVEY RESULTS**

In this section, we catalog the services used by homeless youths in Homer. As explained in Section I, this is not a complete inventory of all services available to homeless youths in Homer. Our sample of agencies included 44 agencies in Homer that provide services to youths. However, 15 agencies (34.1%) never responded to our survey. Of the 29 agencies that responded, nine (31.0%) indicated that they had not provided services to homeless youths (though they could if needed). In this section, we describe not the services that are available to homeless youths, but the services that have been used by homeless youths. This allows us in the next section to identify gaps in service delivery. Gaps in service delivery are then caused by non-existent services or services that do not reach the homeless population.

##### **A. Services Provided**

Overall, a wide array of services is currently available to Homer youths. However, many of these services do not reach all youths, particularly chronic homeless youths. Before describing these limitations or gaps in services, we now fully summarize the results from the 2004 Services Survey.

Of the 20 agencies that responded to the survey and who had provided services to homeless youths, nine (45%) classified themselves as a non-profit organization, two (10%) classified themselves as a Borough department, eight (40%) classified themselves as other agencies (many of these were schools), and one (5%) did not classify itself. Together, these 20 agencies provide over 23 unduplicated services, for a grand total of over 78 services (i.e., 55 services were duplicated, or provided by multiple agencies). These services are summarized in Table 22 on the next page. Overall, 12 agencies (60.0%) provided basic physical needs such as soup kitchens, food, medical assistance, transportation, emergency shelters, transitional housing, and permanent or supportive housing. Eleven agencies (55.0%) provided counseling and treatment such as case management, substance abuse treatment, crisis counseling, domestic violence counseling, mental health treatment, mentoring, and family planning. Many of these services were informal. Seven agencies (35.0%) provided job or educational training such as job training, educational training, life skills training, mentoring, job placement, financial assistance, and legal or court services. Four agencies (20.0%) provided youth recreation activities such as after-school activities, weekend activities, sports, and clubs. Finally, 13 agencies (65.0%) provided other services. Again, many of these other services were informal.

##### **B. Summary**

Based on the numbers reported in Table 22, it is clear that many services are already available to homeless youths in Homer. However, few agencies provided job training or job placement assistance; few agencies provided recreational opportunities for youth; and few agencies provided drug and alcohol counseling or family counseling. These were all identified as important services needed by homeless youths, either directly from the youths' comments about needed services or indirectly from the youths' answers

to other questions (e.g., What is preventing you from finding permanent housing?). Furthermore, many of the agencies that do provide these services are schools. This is problematic because (1) these services are available during the school year only and (2) these services are not available for youths not in school. This is particularly problematic since runaway youths are more likely to experience problems during the summer (when they are typically not in school) and chronic homeless youths are less likely to be in school. Although schools should continue their efforts to provide youth services, other agencies must step in when schools are closed and must provide services to youths that are not in school.

**Table 22. Services Provided by Homer Agencies**

Categories are not mutually exclusive.

Services:	Yes		No		Total
	N	%	N	%	
<b><i>Basic Physical Needs:</i></b>	<b>12</b>	<b>60.0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>40.0</b>	<b>20</b>
Soup kitchen / food	6	30.0	14	70.0	20
Clothing	0	0.0	20	100.0	20
Medical assistance	8	40.0	12	60.0	20
Transportation	6	30.0	14	70.0	20
Emergency shelter	1	5.0	19	95.0	20
Transitional housing	1	5.0	19	95.0	20
Permanent/supportive housing	1	5.0	19	95.0	20
<b><i>Counseling and Treatment:</i></b>	<b>11</b>	<b>55.0</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>45.0</b>	<b>20</b>
Case management	4	20.0	16	80.0	20
Substance abuse treatment	2	10.0	18	90.0	20
Crisis counseling	2	10.0	18	90.0	20
Domestic violence counseling	2	10.0	18	90.0	20
Mental health treatment	3	15.0	17	85.0	20
Mentoring	2	10.0	18	90.0	20
Family planning	4	20.0	16	80.0	20
<b><i>Job and Educational Training:</i></b>	<b>7</b>	<b>35.0</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>65.0</b>	<b>20</b>
job/school/life skills training	6	30.0	14	70.0	20
Mentoring	3	15.0	17	85.0	20
Job placement	2	10.0	18	90.0	20
Financial assistance	1	5.0	19	95.0	20
Legal / court services	1	5.0	19	95.0	20
<b><i>Youth Recreation:</i></b>	<b>4</b>	<b>20.0</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>80.0</b>	<b>20</b>
After-school activities	4	20.0	16	80.0	20
Weekend activities	2	10.0	18	90.0	20
Sports	3	15.0	17	85.0	20
Clubs	1	5.0	19	95.0	20
<b><i>Other Services:</i></b>	<b>13</b>	<b>65.0</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>35.0</b>	<b>20</b>

Source of Data: 2004 Services Survey

## V. CONCLUSION

### A. Summary of Youth Survey Results

We surveyed 18 youths who were currently homeless or had been homeless in the Homer area. These 18 youths were clearly at different stages of homelessness. We called youths in the first stage “runaway youths” and youths in the second stage “chronic homeless youths.” On average, runaway youths first became homeless at a later age and were not homeless as frequently as chronic homeless youths. Most had become homeless after running away from parental problems. These youths were more involved in alcohol and drug use but were more likely to be employed. They were generally unaware of available services.

On average, chronic homeless youths had been homeless more frequently, had been homeless for longer periods of time, or had more intensive homeless experiences. Their current homelessness was generally due to high housing costs that they could not afford. These youths were currently less heavily involved in drug and alcohol use. Few of these youths were employed and few sought employment opportunities. Given the totality of their answers, however, we believe that they are genuinely interested in securing employment but lack either the opportunities for meaningful employment or the skills to secure such employment.

Many similarities existed between chronic homeless youths and runaway youths. In particular, it seemed like most of their basic physical needs were being adequately met. The key concern for chronic homeless youths was related to employment (although it often revealed itself in the inability to afford housing). The key concern for runaway youths was related to recreation. However, youths at both stages of homelessness showed signs of additional needs, even if those needs were not directly expressed by the youths themselves. This was particularly true for runaway youths. Runaway youths could use additional drug and alcohol programs, could use additional family counseling opportunities, and could use a better understanding of what services are already available in Homer.

### B. Summary of Services Survey Results

Results from the 2004 Services Survey showed that many services are already available to homeless youths, particularly in the area of basic physical needs. In fact, few of the youths that were surveyed expressed strong needs in this area. However, few agencies provided youths with job training and job placement, with recreational activities, with family counseling, or with drug and alcohol programming. The few agencies that did provide these services were generally not available to homeless youths. The runaway youths could not access these services during the summer, when they were most needed. The chronic homeless youths could not access these services because they were not in school. As a result, when youths needed employment assistance, recreational services, family counseling, or drug and alcohol programming, little was available.

C. Identifying Gaps in Services

The gaps analysis is therefore straightforward. Chronic homeless youths are in need of additional assistance with job training and job placement. Runaway youths directly identified a need for additional recreational opportunities, but also indirectly identified needs for drug and alcohol programming, for family counseling, and for an awareness of available services. A careful analysis of all survey results will identify other unmet needs and other services that could be enhanced. A thorough discussion of these needs is beyond the scope of this report. However, we strongly believe that addressing just these factors (employment, recreation, drug and alcohol programming, family counseling, and making available services known) will have a sufficient effect on youth homelessness to significantly improve the lives of these young people. These are their key concerns. These needs were the most important given the results of both the homeless youth survey and the services survey. At the same time, it is important to continue the current efforts to address basic physical needs.

D. Recommendations

Our recommendations are as straightforward as the gaps analysis. First, all available services should remain available. Any cut in service will negatively impact homeless youths in Homer. If an agency must close its doors, efforts should be made to replace that agency and its services. Many good services are already being offered in Homer, as homeless youths reported few basic physical needs. Efforts to provide these services must be continued. At the same time, however, additional efforts should be made to publicize all of these good services, particularly to runaway youths. Runaway youths were generally unaware of these services being available in Homer.

Second, job training, job placement, and general employment assistance must be enhanced. In addition, this will likely require the creation of good jobs. Many youths complained about the unavailability of jobs in Homer. It is important, however, to distinguish between part-time or temporary low paying jobs and stable full-time employment. While part-time low paying jobs are easy to find, it is substantially more difficult to find full-time work with decent pay and benefits. Youths in the homeless survey were unable to find or secure full-time work with decent pay and benefits. Those jobs either did not exist or were unavailable to homeless youths. Assistance should be provided to these youths so that they may become more qualified to secure these jobs. While the creation of new jobs is a desirable goal for elected officials, the City of Homer ought to think carefully about the lifestyle that these new jobs will create, as these affect not just the homeless population but the general well-being of Homer. Although low paying temporary or part time jobs may be of great value to conventional youths, they are of no value whatsoever to homeless youths. These jobs will not prevent runaway youths from progressing into chronic homelessness. Furthermore, chronic homeless youths (like most of us) simply cannot survive with a temporary or part time low paying job.

Increasing quality jobs will substantially enhance the youths' ability to afford housing in Homer. As stated in Section II, the key problem is not housing costs, but housing affordability. Housing costs in Homer are relatively low, but youths cannot afford housing with their limited income. Incomes must be raised so that youths can

afford the low-cost housing options that are already available in Homer. This necessitates the creation of meaningful good paying jobs, rather than the creation of temporary low paying jobs. We should encourage these youths not to just seek employment, but to seek long-term fulfilling careers.

Several agencies in Homer already provide an integral role on employment assistance. Their efforts should be continued. However, it is unclear that their services reach the homeless population. In some cases, youths were unaware of these available services. In other cases, youths were ineligible for these services. Job training must be combined with financial assistance, as these youths have immediate needs that must be addressed. We should not expect youths without adequate housing to enter into long-term job training programs if they cannot satisfy their immediate housing needs. Apprenticeship programs are likely to succeed in Homer, but stronger efforts should be made to reach out to the homeless population.

In terms of recreation, the Boys and Girls Club of Homer is well positioned to lead and coordinate these efforts. Unfortunately, we were never able to contact the Boys and Girls Club to have them complete a services survey. The Boys and Girls Clubs of America already has standard programming for adolescents. Unfortunately, these were not available in Homer at the time of the survey. Although some clubs have expressed concerns about serving multiple and diverse populations, clubs throughout the country and throughout Alaska have been able to resolve these issues. There is simply no reason that the Boys and Girls Club of Homer cannot develop adolescent programs and we would strongly recommend this initiative.

This is particularly important given that many of the Boys and Girls Clubs programs would be valuable to both runaway youths and chronic homeless youths. Although the Boys and Girls Clubs are traditionally believed to focus on recreation, they offer many excellent programs to facilitate the transition from adolescence to adulthood, particularly in terms of employment (<http://www.bgca.org/programs/education.asp>). Programs likely to be of high value include “Money Matters: Make it Count,” “CareerLaunch,” and “Job Ready.” “Money Matters: Make it Count” is a program that teaches 13 to 18 year olds how to manage money to become financially independent. “CareerLaunch” allows youths to explore potential careers of interest and “Job Ready” provides youths the necessary skills to seek and obtain employment in those careers. All youths could benefit from such programs.

Regardless of who enhances recreational opportunities for youths in Homer, three guidelines should be followed. Recreational opportunities should be available to all youths, at all times. Recreational opportunities should not exclude youths who are not in school and should not be closed during the summer. Lastly, all recreational opportunities must be supervised by responsible adults.

Finally, although not directly identified by the youths themselves, counseling should be enhanced, particularly in two areas – family counseling and drug and alcohol counseling. Given that many runaway youths became homeless in the first place because of family problems, family counseling should obviously be enhanced to lower the onset of homelessness. Once homeless, these youths are likely to accumulate other needs and could become chronic homeless youths. To prevent homelessness generally, and to increase the likelihood of runaway youths transitioning back into permanent housing, more efforts should be made to offer family counseling to those in need. Runaway

youths could also benefit from additional programming on drug and alcohol use. Many of these youths were using drugs and alcohol, and the use of “hard” drugs was not infrequent. Alcohol and drug use were also rated as an important problem for other homeless youths. This is likely an indication of their own problems with alcohol and drug use. Interestingly, many youths recognized that the use of drugs and alcohol negatively affected their lives. This suggests that they may be highly receptive to counseling efforts. Unfortunately, these youths did not know where to receive such counseling, were unable to afford such counseling, or such counseling was simply unavailable to them. As suggested by the youths, counseling in Homer should be offered at a relatively low cost. The cost of counseling can prohibit some youths from receiving these services, particularly when the youths (and their families) have little money to begin with.

**Appendix A**  
**Homeless Youth Survey**

**YOUTH SURVEY**

**FOR THE 2004 CENSUS AND SURVEY OF  
HOMELESS YOUTHS IN HOMER ALASKA**

Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_, and I'm from the University of Alaska in Anchorage. We would like to learn more about youths in Homer who are homeless or in transition. We would also like to know about the problems they face and whether their needs are met.

As explained to you in the consent form, your responses will be kept anonymous. We will not tell anyone your name.

Your participation is completely voluntary. You may stop the interview entirely at any time. You can also refuse to answer any question that makes you uncomfortable. Your honest information is appreciated and will only be used to benefit the youths in Homer. If there's a question that you don't want to answer, let me know and we'll skip that question.

Interviewer Name(s):            SHANA            ROSE            TONI            JEROD

Date of Interview: \_\_\_\_\_      Time at beginning of interview: \_\_\_\_\_

Has the interviewee signed a consent form?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No (Do not begin interview)

If the interviewee is less than 18 and living with parents, have parents signed a parental consent form?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No (Do not begin interview)

Does the interviewee appear to understand the consent form?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No (Do not begin interview)

Does the interviewee have any questions about the consent form?

- 1. Yes (Answer)
- 2. No (Begin interview)

**A. DEMOGRAPHICS**

- 1. What is your gender?
  - 1. Male
  - 2. Female
  
- 2. In what year were you born? \_\_\_\_\_
  
- 3. Which racial/ethnic group do you identify with the most? (Check all that apply)
  - 1. White / Caucasian
  - 2. Black / African American
  - 3. Hispanic / Latino
  - 4. Alaska Native / Native American
  - 5. Asian / Pacific Islander
  - 6. Russian Orthodox (Old-Believers and non)
  - 7. Other: \_\_\_\_\_
  
- 4. What is the highest level of education that you have completed?  
(Check only one box)
  - 01. No formal education
  - 02. 3<sup>rd</sup> grade or less
  - 03. 6<sup>th</sup> grade or less
  - 04. 9<sup>th</sup> grade or less
  - 05. High school (no diploma)
  - 06. High school diploma or GED
  - 07. Tech / vocational degree
  - 08. One year college
  - 09. Two years of college (AA / AS degree)
  - 10. BA / BS degree
  - 11. Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_
  
- 5. Do you have any children?
  - 1. No (Skip to question 6)
  - 2. Yes  
  - 5a. Are any of these children currently living with you?
    - 1. No
    - 2. Yes

**B. RESIDENTIAL HISTORY**

- 6. Were you born in Homer?
  - 1. Yes (Skip to question 7)
  - 2. No  
  - 6a. Where were you born? \_\_\_\_\_

7. Have you lived in Homer your whole life?
- 1. Yes (Skip to question 8)
  - 2. No
- 7a. How long have you lived in Homer?
- 1. Less than 6 months
  - 2. 6 – 11 months
  - 3. 1 – 2 years
  - 4. 3 – 5 years
  - 5. 6 – 10 years
  - 6. More than 10 years
- 7b. Where did you live before coming to Homer?
- 1. Lower 48
  - 2. Anchor Point
  - 3. Clam Gulch
  - 4. Happy Valley
  - 5. Ninilchik
  - 6. Seldovia
  - 7. Kenai
  - 8. Soldotna
  - 9. Other: \_\_\_\_\_
8. Where have you spent the most nights in the last month?
- 01. Homer
  - 02. Lower 48
  - 03. Anchor Point
  - 04. Clam Gulch
  - 05. Happy Valley
  - 06. Ninilchik
  - 07. Seldovia
  - 08. Kenai
  - 09. Soldotna
  - 10. Other: \_\_\_\_\_

9. Why did you spend most of the nights in the last month there?  
(Check all that apply)
- 01. Services are accessible
  - 02. Work is available
  - 03. Grew up here
  - 04. Know people here
  - 05. Cannot afford to leave
  - 06. Know the area
  - 07. Family is here
  - 08. Feel safe here
  - 09. Beauty / appeal of area
  - 10. Weather
  - 11. Lack of transportation
  - 12. Had to stay temporarily
  - 13. Other: \_\_\_\_\_
10. Who do you currently live with? (Check all that apply)
- 1. Alone
  - 2. Significant Other
  - 3. Parents
  - 4. Other family
  - 5. Friend
  - 6. Family friend
  - 7. Strangers
  - 8. Siblings
  - 9. Other: \_\_\_\_\_
11. Are you currently homeless or in transition?
- 1. Yes
  - 2. No (Skip to question 12)
- 11a. How long has it been since your last permanent housing?
- 1. Less than 1 month
  - 2. 1 – 3 months
  - 3. 4 – 6 months
  - 4. 7 – 11 months
  - 5. 1 – 2 years
  - 6. 3 – 5 years
  - 7. 6 – 10 years
  - 8. More than 10 years

12. Which of the following best describes your current living situation?
- 1. Short term housing (hotel, shelter)
  - 2. Transitional housing (longer term program)
  - 3. Permanent housing (apartment, house)
  - 4. Staying with friends / family
  - 5. Converted garage or other structure
  - 6. Automobile, van, or boat
  - 7. Outdoors
  - 8. Other: \_\_\_\_\_
13. How old were you when you first became homeless or transient?
- \_\_\_\_\_
14. Since then, how many times have you been homeless or in transition?  
(Include current situation)
- 1. 1 time
  - 2. 2 – 3 times
  - 3. 4 – 5 times
  - 4. More than 5 times
15. Before the age of 19, were you ever placed in foster care?
- 1. Yes
  - 2. No

16. Have any of the following contributed to your homelessness?

(Check all that apply)

(Remind interviewee that all answers will remain anonymous)

- 01. High cost of housing / rent
- 02. Unemployment / seasonal employment
- 03. Disability
- 04. Runaway
- 05. Health / medical costs
- 06. Housing eviction
- 07. Mental health issues
- 08. Too old for foster care
- 09. Problems with the law
- 10. Problems with drug / alcohol use
- 11. Problems with parents (specify:)
  - 11a. Parents are divorced
  - 11b. Parents are absent
  - 11c. Parents use drugs and alcohol
  - 11d. Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- 12. Problems at home (specify:)
  - 12a. Cannot follow parental rules
  - 12b. Cannot get along with parents
  - 12c. Kicked out by parents
  - 12d. Verbal abuse
  - 12e. Physical abuse
  - 12f. Sexual abuse
  - 12g. Problems with siblings
  - 12h. Parents moved away from Homer
  - 12i. Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- 13. Death of parent/guardian
- 14. Others: (Be specific)

\_\_\_\_\_

**If interviewee reported physical and/or sexual abuse:**

(Remind interviewee that all answers will remain anonymous)

- 16a. Was this reported to police?
  - 1. Yes (skip to question 17)
  - 2. No

16b. Why not? \_\_\_\_\_

If you would like to, a counselor can help you report to police.  
We'll talk more about this at the end of the interview.

17. What is (or was) the single biggest factor that caused your homelessness?

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18. What is (or was) preventing you from finding permanent housing?  
(Check all that apply)

- 01. No job
- 02. Housing affordability
- 03. Housing availability
- 04. Moving costs (security deposit)
- 05. Transportation
- 06. Bad credit
- 07. Eviction
- 08. Criminal record
- 09. Too young to sign the lease
- 10. No rental reference
- 11. Other: \_\_\_\_\_

19. If you had a choice, where would you like to be living and with whom?

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20. What is keeping you from living there?

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21. In your opinion, what types of services does Homer need the most?  
 (Check all that apply and rank order [1 = most important])
- |   | RANK  |
|---|-------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 01. Emergency shelter                                | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 02. Transitional housing                             | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 03. Homeless service centers                         | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 04. Job training and job placement programs          | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 05. Food and clothing banks                          | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 06. Affordable housing                               | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 07. Drug and alcohol rehabilitation programs         | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 08. Mental health services                           | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 09. Health and dental clinics                        | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 10. Family counseling                                | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 11. Reliable transportation                          | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 12. Places or outdoor areas where youths are welcome | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 13. Jobs   | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 14. School health clinic                             | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15. Other: _____                                     | _____ |

**C. ALCOHOL AND DRUG USE**

(Remind interviewee that all answers will remain anonymous)

22. Do you feel that you have used alcohol or drugs in ways that have negatively affected your functioning at home or school?
1. Yes
2. No (Skip to question 23)

22a. How have drugs and alcohol negatively affected your functioning?

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23. If you or someone you know did have a problem, who or where would you start for getting help?

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24. Have you ever used alcohol?

1. Yes
2. No (Skip to question 25)

- 24a. What type of alcohol have you used?  
O 1. Liquor  
O 2. Beer  
O 3. Other (Mouthwash)
- 24b. Did you start using alcohol before or after becoming homeless?  
O 1. Before  
O 2. After  
O 3. At the same time
- 24c. Have you used alcohol within the last year?  
O 1. Yes  
O 2. No (Skip to question 25)
- 24d. Have you used alcohol within the last month?  
O 1. Yes  
O 2. No (Skip to question 25)
- 24e. How many times in the last month have you used alcohol?  
O 1. Daily  
O 2. Three to six times a week  
O 3. Once or twice a week  
O 4. Less than once a week
25. Have you ever smoked cigarettes?  
O 1. Yes  
O 2. No (Skip to question 26)
- 25a. Do you currently smoke?  
O 1. Yes  
O 2. No
- 25b. How many cigarettes do you usually smoke in one day?  
O 1. Two packs or more (more than 40)  
O 2. One to two packs (20 to 40)  
O 3. About half a pack (10)  
O 4. Less than half a pack (1 to 9)  
O 5. Don't smoke daily
26. Have you ever used marijuana?  
O 1. Yes  
O 2. No (Skip to question 27)

- 26a. Did you start using marijuana before or after becoming homeless?
  - 1. Before
  - 2. After
  - 3. At the same time
  
- 26b. Have you used marijuana within the last year?
  - 1. Yes
  - 2. No (Skip to question 27)
  
- 26c. Have you used marijuana within the last month?
  - 1. Yes
  - 2. No (Skip to question 27)
  
- 26d. How many times in the last month have you used marijuana?
  - 1. Daily
  - 2. Three to six times a week
  - 3. Once or twice a week
  - 4. Less than once a week
  
- 27. Have you ever used drugs that were not prescribed by a doctor?
  - 1. Yes
  - 2. No (Skip to question 28)
  
- 27a. If so, which other drugs have you used?
  - 01. Cocaine / Crack (ice cube, paste, rox)
  - 02. Inhalants (glue, fumes, amyls)
  - 03. Amphetamines (uppers, aimies, lid poppers)
  - 04. Ritalin (non-prescribed use)
  - 05. Methcathinone (cat, tweaker, Cadillac express)
  - 06. Tranquilizers or sleeping pills (downers, little bomb, sleeper)
  - 07. Narcotics (opium, morphine, codeine)
  - 08. Heroin (smoke, smack, dope, dirt)
  - 09. LSD (acid, Angles in a sky, L)
  - 10. MDMA (ecstasy, XTC, X)
  - 11. Other psychedelics (psilocybin, mescaline)
  - 12. Rohypnol (roofies, date rape drug)
  - 13. GHB (Cherry meth, G, Liquid E)
  - 14. Steroids (gym candy, stackers, weight trainers)
  - 15. Oxycontin (Pills, oxycotton, O's)
  - 16. Crystal Meth (Blade, crystal glass, stove top)
  - 17. Rx drugs not currently prescribed to you (Codeine, morphine)
  - 18. Other: \_\_\_\_\_
  
- 27b. Have you used a needle or syringe to inject a drug?
  - 1. Yes
  - 2. No

- 27c. Did you start using other drugs before or after becoming homeless?
  - 1. Before
  - 2. After
  - 3. At the same time
  
- 27d. Have you used other drugs within the last year?
  - 1. Yes
  - 2. No (Skip to question 28)
  
- 27e. Have you used this drugs within the last month?
  - 1. Yes
  - 2. No (Skip to question 28)
  
- 27f. How many times in the last month have you used other drugs?
  - 1. Daily
  - 2. Three to six times a week
  - 3. Once or twice a week
  - 4. Less than once a week

**D. INCOME**

- 28. Are you currently working?
  - 1. Yes
  - 2. No (Skip to question 29)
  
- 28a. What type of job do you have?  

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- 28b. What is your employment status? (Check all that apply)
  - 1. Self-employed full-time (more than 30 hours per week)
  - 2. Self-employed part-time (30 hours per week or less)
  - 3. Occasionally self-employed (not employed every week)
  - 4. Employed full-time (more than 30 hours per week)
  - 5. Employed part-time (30 hours per week or less)
  - 6. Occasionally employed (not employed every week)
  
- 29. What is your total weekly income before taxes? \_\_\_\_\_

30. What are your primary sources of income? (Check all that apply)
- 01. Friends
  - 02. Family
  - 03. Welfare
  - 04. Disability
  - 05. Begging
  - 06. PFD
  - 07. Native Alaskan benefits
  - 08. General relief
  - 09. Seasonal work
  - 10. Odd jobs
  - 11. Part-time work
  - 12. Full-time work
  - 13. Sexual favors
  - 14. Stealing
  - 15. Drugs
  - 16. Other criminal activity
  - 17. Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_
31. Do you get enough money every month for transportation, food, clothes, and rent?
- 1. Yes (Skip to question 32)
  - 2. No
- 31a. What do you lack money for? \_\_\_\_\_
32. Do you have a checking or savings account?
- 1. Yes
  - 2. No
33. Are you currently receiving government assistance such as food stamps?
- 1. Yes (Skip to question 34)
  - 2. No
- 33a. If not, why are you not receiving assistance? (Check all that apply)
- 01. Don't need it (Skip to question 34)
  - 02. Never applied
  - 03. No identification
  - 04. No permanent address
  - 05. Waiting for approval
  - 06. Turned down
  - 07. No transportation
  - 08. Too much hassle
  - 09. Don't know what's available
  - 10. Don't think I'm eligible
  - 11. Other: \_\_\_\_\_

33b. How could receiving government assistance be made easier for you?

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34. Are you currently looking for work?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No (Skip to question 35)

34a. How could getting a job be made easier for you?

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**E. DAILY ACTIVITIES**

(Remind interviewee that all answers will remain anonymous)

35. What occupies the majority of your day? (Check all that apply)

- 1. Looking for food
- 2. Looking for work
- 3. Looking for or getting money
- 4. Using or acquiring drugs or alcohol
- 5. Hanging out with friends
- 6. School
- 7. Work
- 8. Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_

36. What are your most common daily problems? (Check all that apply)
- 01. Hunger
  - 02. Insufficient income
  - 03. Lack of work
  - 04. Finding shelter
  - 05. Finding a place to wash self / clothes
  - 06. Boredom / loneliness
  - 07. Depression / anxiousness
  - 08. Threat of crime / violence
  - 09. Health / dental care
  - 10. Drugs / alcohol
  - 11. Problems with police
  - 12. Finding a way to keep in touch with others (telephone, mail)
  - 13. Transportation
  - 14. Child care
  - 15. Family problems
  - 16. Weather
  - 17. Other: \_\_\_\_\_

37. Who do you talk to when you have a problem? (Name as many people as you like by role [i.e., friend, school counselor])

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38. What is the worst part about being homeless?

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39. Are you currently enrolled in school?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No (Skip to question 40)

- 39a. Are you currently attending school?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No (Skip to question 42)

- 39b. What school do you attend?
- 1. Smokey Bay
  - 2. Homer High School
  - 3. Community Christian School
  - 4. Alternative High School
  - 5. Middle School
  - 6. Jr. High School
  - 7. KPC branch of UA
  - 8. Other: \_\_\_\_\_

- 39c. How often do you go to school?
- 1. Every day (Skip to question 43)
  - 2. Two to four times a week (Skip to question 42)
  - 3. Once a week (Skip to question 42)
  - 4. Less than once a week (Skip to question 42)

40. Why are you not enrolled in school?

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41. What would make it possible for you to go to school?  
(Skip to question 43)

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42. Why are you not always attending school?

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43. How many meals do you eat on an average day?

- 1. None
- 2. One
- 3. Two
- 4. Three
- 5. More than three

- 44. Do you usually get enough to eat?
  - 1. Yes
  - 2. No
  
- 45. If you have children, do they usually get enough to eat?
  - 1. Yes
  - 2. No
  - 3. Not applicable

46. Can you describe an average day for you?

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**F. HEALTH**

- 47. Have you received health or dental care while homeless or in transition in Homer?
  - 1. Yes
  - 2. No (Skip to question 48)

47a. Where did you get medical attention? (Check all that apply)

- 1. Emergency room/Hospital
- 2. Seldovia Village Clinic
- 3. Kachemak Bay Family Planning
- 4. Public Health
- 5. Out of town clinic
- 6. Private doctor
- 7. Friends / family
- 8. Don't know
- 9. Other: \_\_\_\_\_

47b. What did you like about the care that you received?

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47c. What did you not like about the care that you received?

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48. Has there been a time in the last 12 months that you needed health care, dental care, or medications and did not receive it?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No (Skip to question 49)

48a. Why didn't you receive care? (Check all that apply)

- 1. No money
- 2. No medical insurance
- 3. No transportation
- 4. Never tried
- 5. Don't know where to go
- 6. Other: \_\_\_\_\_

49. Do you have health insurance, dental insurance, Medicaid, or Denali kid care?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

50. If **female**, are you pregnant? If **male**, is your partner pregnant?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No (Skip to question 51)
- 3. Don't know (Skip to question 51)
- 4. Not applicable (Skip to question 51)

50a. Have you (Has your partner) seen a doctor during this pregnancy?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

51. If you have children, have they received all their childhood vaccines?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. Don't know
- 4. Not applicable

52. Have you received mental health services while homeless or in transition in Homer?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No (Skip to question 53)

52a. Where did you receive mental health services? (Check all that apply)

- 1. Community mental health
- 2. South Peninsula Women’s Services
- 3. Private counselor
- 4. Seldovia Village Clinic
- 5. Chugach mental clinic
- 6. School Counselor
- 7. Don’t ever go
- 8. Don’t know
- 9. Other: \_\_\_\_\_

52b. What did you like about the services that you received?

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52c. What did you not like about the services that you received?

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53. Has there been a time in the last 12 months that you needed mental health services and did not receive them?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No (Skip to question 54)

53a. Why didn’t you receive services? (Check all that apply)

- 1. No money
- 2. No medical insurance
- 3. No transportation
- 4. Never tried
- 5. Don’t know where to go
- 6. Other: \_\_\_\_\_

54. Are currently on a prescribed medication?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No (Skip to question 55)

54a. What medications are you taking?

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54b. What is the medication for?

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54c. Is there anything keeping you from taking your medication regularly?

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55. Have you ever been diagnosed with any of the following conditions?

(Check all that apply)

- 01. Tuberculosis
- 02. HIV / AIDS
- 03. Hepatitis (any type)
- 04. Sexually transmitted diseases
- 05. Diabetes
- 06. Asthma
- 07. Heart problems
- 08. High blood pressure
- 09. Cancer (any type)
- 10. Pneumonia and influenza
- 11. Alcoholism
- 12. Learning Disability
- 13. Depression
- 14. Other mental illness
- 15. Decline to state
- 16. Not applicable
- 17. Other: \_\_\_\_\_

55a. If yes to any of the above, are you currently receiving treatment and / or medications?

- 1. Yes (Skip to question 56)
- 2. No

55b. Why not?

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**G. LEGAL AND SAFETY ISSUES**

(Remind interviewee that all answers will remain anonymous)

- 56. Have you been a crime victim in the last 12 months?
  - 1. Yes
  - 2. No (Skip to question 57)
  - 3. Decline to state (Skip to question 57)

- 56a. If yes, what type of crime was it?
  - 1. Physical assault
  - 2. Robbery
  - 3. Domestic violence
  - 4. Sexual assault
  - 5. Other: \_\_\_\_\_

- 56b. Did you contact the police about this crime?
  - 1. Yes (Skip to question 57)
  - 2. No

56c. Why not?

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- 57. Do you feel harassed by police?
  - 1. Yes
  - 2. No

- 58. Have you needed legal help or advice in the last 12 months?
  - 1. Yes
  - 2. No (Skip to question 59)
  - 3. Decline to state (Skip to question 59)

- 58a. Were you able to receive adequate legal help or advice?
  - 1. Yes (Skip to question 59)
  - 2. No

58b. Why not?

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**H. INFORMATION ABOUT OTHER YOUTHS IN HOMER**

59. In your opinion, how many youths (21 years old or younger) live in Homer?

\_\_\_\_\_

59a. Of these, how many are transient or homeless? \_\_\_\_\_

59b. How many youths (21 years old or younger) are transient or homeless in Homer during the:

Spring: \_\_\_\_\_ Summer: \_\_\_\_\_

Fall: \_\_\_\_\_ Winter: \_\_\_\_\_

60. Do you personally know other youths who are or were homeless or in transition in Homer?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No (Skip to question 63)

60a. How many? \_\_\_\_\_

61. What are their most common daily problems? (Check all that apply)

- 01. Hunger
- 02. Insufficient income
- 03. Lack of work
- 04. Finding shelter
- 05. Finding a place to wash self / clothes
- 06. Boredom / loneliness
- 07. Depression / anxiousness
- 08. Threat of crime / violence
- 09. Health / dental care
- 10. Drugs / alcohol
- 11. Problems with police
- 12. Finding a way to keep in touch with others (telephone, mail)
- 13. Transportation
- 14. Child care
- 15. Family problems
- 16. Weather
- 17. Other: \_\_\_\_\_

62. If we wanted to interview other homeless or transient youths in Homer, how could we find them?

\_\_\_\_\_

**I. OPINIONS REGARDING AVAILABLE SERVICES**

63. How many agencies in Homer provide services to youths? \_\_\_\_\_

64. Which agencies have you received services from in Homer?

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64a. What did you like about these agencies?

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65. Which agencies have you not received services from in Homer?

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65a. Why have you not received services from these agencies?

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66. What one thing could the community of Homer do to make it easier for you to transition back home or into permanent housing?

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67. Have you sought any faith-based programs while homeless in Homer?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No (Skip to question 68)

67a. Were you able to find faith-based programs?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No (Skip to question 68)

67b. Were you satisfied with your experience?

- 1. Yes (Skip to question 68)
- 2. No

67c. Why not?

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68. The following list contains agencies and organizations in Homer that provide services to youths. Do you know each agency? If known, have you used each agency? If used, do you have a positive, neutral, or negative opinion about each agency?

AGENCY	KNOWN?	USED?	OPINION
Alcoholics Anonymous	YES NO	YES NO	- NEUTRAL +
AV Tech	YES NO	YES NO	- NEUTRAL +
Benefits and Food Stamps	YES NO	YES NO	- NEUTRAL +
Big Brothers Big Sisters of Homer	YES NO	YES NO	- NEUTRAL +
Birth 2 Three	YES NO	YES NO	- NEUTRAL +
Boys and Girls Club	YES NO	YES NO	- NEUTRAL +
Center for Employment and Training	YES NO	YES NO	- NEUTRAL +

AGENCY	KNOWN?		USED?		OPINION		
Choices for Teens	YES	NO	YES	NO	-	NEUTRAL	+
Community Mental Health Center	YES	NO	YES	NO	-	NEUTRAL	+
Cook Inlet Counsel	YES	NO	YES	NO	-	NEUTRAL	+
Day Care Assistance	YES	NO	YES	NO	-	NEUTRAL	+
Division of Family and Youth Services	YES	NO	YES	NO	-	NEUTRAL	+
Division of Public Assistance	YES	NO	YES	NO	-	NEUTRAL	+
Division of Vocational Rehabilitation	YES	NO	YES	NO	-	NEUTRAL	+
Family Learning Center	YES	NO	YES	NO	-	NEUTRAL	+
Family Solutions	YES	NO	YES	NO	-	NEUTRAL	+
Kachemak Bay Family Planning Clinic	YES	NO	YES	NO	-	NEUTRAL	+
School District (Kenai Peninsula Boroug	YES	NO	YES	NO	-	NEUTRAL	+
GED Adult Basic Education	YES	NO	YES	NO	-	NEUTRAL	+
Helping Hand Food Pantry	YES	NO	YES	NO	-	NEUTRAL	+
Homer Children's Services	YES	NO	YES	NO	-	NEUTRAL	+
Homer Crisis Pregnancy Center	YES	NO	YES	NO	-	NEUTRAL	+
Homer Community Food Pantry	YES	NO	YES	NO	-	NEUTRAL	+
Homer Head Start	YES	NO	YES	NO	-	NEUTRAL	+
Homer Health Care	YES	NO	YES	NO	-	NEUTRAL	+
Homer Hostel	YES	NO	YES	NO	-	NEUTRAL	+
Homer Job Center	YES	NO	YES	NO	-	NEUTRAL	+
Homer Public Library	YES	NO	YES	NO	-	NEUTRAL	+
Independent Living Center	YES	NO	YES	NO	-	NEUTRAL	+
Job Ready	YES	NO	YES	NO	-	NEUTRAL	+
Kenai Peninsula Borough School District	YES	NO	YES	NO	-	NEUTRAL	+
NAMI Homer	YES	NO	YES	NO	-	NEUTRAL	+
Pick and Pay	YES	NO	YES	NO	-	NEUTRAL	+
Pregnancy Care Center of Homer	YES	NO	YES	NO	-	NEUTRAL	+
Public Health Center	YES	NO	YES	NO	-	NEUTRAL	+
Rental Assistance Program	YES	NO	YES	NO	-	NEUTRAL	+
Salvation Army	YES	NO	YES	NO	-	NEUTRAL	+
Seldovia Village Tribe Health Clinic	YES	NO	YES	NO	-	NEUTRAL	+
Share the Spirit	YES	NO	YES	NO	-	NEUTRAL	+
South Peninsula Hospital	YES	NO	YES	NO	-	NEUTRAL	+
Work Services	YES	NO	YES	NO	-	NEUTRAL	+
Women, Infants, & Children (W.I.C.)	YES	NO	YES	NO	-	NEUTRAL	+

68a. Overall, what causes you to have a negative or neutral opinion about these agencies?

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68b. Overall, what causes you to have a positive opinion about these agencies?

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69. Is there anything else you would like to tell us?

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Time at end of interview: \_\_\_\_\_

**If interviewee reported physical and/or sexual abuse:**

Did you want to report your abuse to the police?

- 1. Yes (Ask counselor to join you)
- 2. No (End interview)

**Appendix B**  
**Homeless Youth Survey Results**

## TABLE INDEX

TABLE	PAGE #
1. What is your gender?	82
2. What is your age?	82
3. Which racial/ethnic group do you identify with the most?	82
4. What is the highest level of education that you have completed?	83
5. Do you have any children?	83
6. Where were you born?	84
7. Have you lived in Homer your whole life?	84
8. How long have you lived in Homer?	84
9. Where did you live before coming to Homer?	85
10. Where have you spent the most nights in the last month?	85
11. Why did you spend most of the nights in the last month there?	86
12. Who do you currently live with?	86
13. Are you currently homeless or in transition?	87
14. How long has it been since your last permanent housing?	87
15. Which of the following best describes your current living situation?	87
16. How old were you when you first became homeless or transient?	88
17. Since then, how many times have you been homeless or in transition (including current situation)?	88
18. Before the age of 19, were you ever placed in foster care?	88
19. Have any of the following contributed to your homelessness?	89
20. What is (or was) the single biggest factor that caused your homelessness?	89
21. What is (or was) preventing you from finding permanent housing?	90
22. If you had a choice, where would you be living?	90
23. If you had a choice, who would you live with?	90

<b>TABLE</b>	<b>PAGE #</b>
24. What is keeping you from living there?	91
25. In your opinion, what types of services does Homer need the most?	91
26. What is the most important service needed?	92
27. Do you feel that you have used alcohol or drugs in ways that have negatively affected your functioning at home or school?	92
28. How have drugs and alcohol negatively affected your functioning?	92
29. If you or someone you know did have a problem with drugs or alcohol, who or where would you start for getting help?	93
30. Have you ever used alcohol?	93
31. What type of alcohol have you used?	93
32. Did you start using alcohol before or after becoming homeless?	93
33. Have you used alcohol within the last year?	94
34. Have you used alcohol within the last month?	94
35. How many times in the last month have you used alcohol?	94
36. Have you ever smoked cigarettes?	94
37. Do you currently smoke?	95
38. How many cigarettes do you usually smoke in one day?	95
39. Have you ever used marijuana?	95
40. Did you start using marijuana before or after becoming homeless?	95
41. Have you used marijuana within the last year?	96
42. Have you used marijuana within the last month?	96
43. How many times in the last month have you used marijuana	96
44. Have you ever used other drugs that were not prescribed by a doctor?	96
45. Which other drugs have you used?	97
46. Have you used a needle or syringe to inject a drug?	97
47. Did you start using other drugs before or after becoming homeless?	97
48. Have you used other drugs within the last year?	98

<b>TABLE</b>	<b>PAGE #</b>
49. Have you used other drugs within the last month?	98
50. How many times in the last month have you used other drugs?	98
51. Are you currently working?	98
52. What type of job do you have?	99
53. What is your employment status?	99
54. What is your total weekly income before taxes?	99
55. What are your primary sources of income?	100
56. Do you get enough money every month for transportation, food, clothes, and rent?	100
57. What do you lack money for?	101
58. Do you have a checking or savings account?	101
59. Are you currently receiving government assistance such as food stamps?	101
60. Why are you not receiving government assistance?	102
61. How could receiving government assistance be made easier for you?	102
62. Are you currently looking for work?	102
63. How could getting a job be made easier for you?	103
64. What occupies the majority of your day?	103
65. What are your most common daily problems?	104
66. Who do you talk to when you have a problem?	104
67. What is the worst part about being homeless?	105
68. Are you currently enrolled in school?	105
69. Are you currently attending school?	105
70. What type of school do you attend?	105
71. How often do you go to school?	106
72. Why are you not enrolled in school?	106
73. What would make it possible for you to go to school?	106

<b>TABLE</b>	<b>PAGE #</b>
74. Why are you not always attending school?	106
75. How many meals do you eat on an average day?	107
76. Do you usually get enough to eat?	107
77. Can you describe an average day for you?	107
78. Have you received health or dental care while homeless or in transition in Homer?	107
79. Where did you get medical attention?	108
80. What did you like about the care that you received?	108
81. What did you not like about the care that you received?	108
82. Has there been a time in the last 12 months that you needed health care, dental care, or medications and did not receive it?	108
83. Why didn't you receive care?	109
84. Do you have health insurance, dental insurance, Medicaid, or Denali kid care?	109
85. Have you received mental health services while homeless or in transition in Homer?	109
86. Where did you receive mental health services?	109
87. What did you like about the services that you received?	110
88. What did you not like about the services that you received?	110
89. Has there been a time in the last 12 months that you needed mental health services and did not receive them?	110
90. Why didn't you receive services?	110
91. Are you currently on a prescribed medication?	111
92. Are you able to receive your prescribed medication?	111
93. Have you ever been diagnosed with any of the following conditions?	111
94. Are you receiving treatment and / or medications for those conditions?	112
95. Why are you not currently receiving treatment and / or medications for those conditions?	112
96. Have you been a crime victim in the last 12 months?	112

<b>TABLE</b>	<b>PAGE #</b>
97. What type of crime were you a victim of in the last 12 months?	112
98. Did you contact the police about these crimes?	113
99. Do you feel harassed by police?	113
100. Have you needed legal help or advice in the last 12 months?	113
101. Were you able to receive legal help or advice?	113
102. In your opinion, how many youths (21 years old or younger) live in Homer?	114
103. In your opinion, what percentage of the youth population in Homer is transient or homeless?	114
104. In your opinion, how many transient or homeless youths are there in Homer?	115
105. Are there more homeless or transient youths in the summer?	115
106. Do you personally know other youths who are or were homeless or in transition in Homer?	115
107. How many other homeless youths in Homer do you know?	116
108. What are other homeless / transient youths' most common daily problems?	116
109. If we wanted to interview other homeless or transient youths in Homer, what would be the first place to find them?	117
110. How many agencies provide services to youths?	117
111. What one thing could the community of Homer do to make it easier for you to transition back home or into permanent housing?	117
112. Have you sought any faith-based programs while homeless in Homer?	117
113. Were you able to find faith-based programs?	118
114. Were you satisfied with your experience?	118
115. Of the following 42 agencies in Homer, what percentage do you know about?	118
116. What percentage of the agencies that you know about have you used?	119
117. What percentage of the agencies that you have used do you have negative opinions about?	119
118. What percentage of the agencies that you have used do you have neutral opinions about?	119

<b>TABLE</b>	<b>PAGE #</b>
119. What percentage of the agencies that you have used to you have positive opinions about?	120
120. Overall, what causes you to have a negative or neutral opinion about these agencies?	120
121. Overall, what causes you to have a positive opinion about these agencies?	120

Table 1. What is your gender?

RESPONSE	N	%
Male	14	77.8
Female	4	22.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 2. What is your age?

RESPONSE	N	%
Fifteen	2	11.1
Sixteen	1	5.6
Seventeen	2	11.1
Eighteen	4	22.2
Nineteen	5	27.8
Twenty	2	11.1
Twenty-One	2	11.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 3. Which racial/ethnic group do you identify with the most?

RESPONSE	N	%
White / Caucasian	17	94.4
Black / African-American	0	0.0
Hispanic / Latino	0	0.0
Alaska Native / Native American	0	0.0
Asian / Pacific-Islander	1	5.6
Russian Orthodox	0	0.0
Other	0	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 4. What is the highest level of education that you have completed?

<b>RESPONSE</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
No formal education	0	0.0
3 <sup>rd</sup> grade or less	0	0.0
6 <sup>th</sup> grade or less	0	0.0
9 <sup>th</sup> grade or less	4	22.2
High school (without diploma)	10	55.6
High school (with diploma)	3	16.7
Tech / vocational degree	0	0.0
One year of college	0	0.0
Two years of college (AA/AS)	1	5.6
Four years of college (BA/BS)	0	0.0
Other	0	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 5. Do you have any children?

<b>RESPONSE</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	1	5.6
No	17	94.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Note: To protect the confidentiality of the single respondent who was a parent, no information about parenting and/or children is provided hereafter.

Table 6. Where were you born?

RESPONSE	N	%
<b>Alaska</b>		
Homer	5	27.8
Anchorage	2	11.1
Fairbanks	1	5.6
Palmer	1	5.6
Soldotna	1	5.6
<b>Lower 48</b>		
Michigan	1	5.6
Montana	1	5.6
Nevada	1	5.6
Oregon	3	16.7
Utah	1	5.6
Washington	1	5.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 7. Have you lived in Homer your whole life?

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes	3	16.7
No	15	83.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 8. How long have you lived in Homer?

RESPONSE	N	%
Less than six months	1	5.9
Six to eleven months	1	5.9
One to two years	4	23.5
Three to five years	3	17.6
Six to ten years	3	17.6
More than 10 years	5	29.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 9. Where did you live before coming to Homer?

<b>RESPONSE</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Alaska	6	42.9
Lower 48	8	57.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 10. Where have you spent the most nights in the last month?

<b>RESPONSE</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Anchor Point	2	11.1
Clam Gulch	0	0.0
Happy Valley	0	0.0
Homer	16	88.9
Kenai	0	0.0
Ninilchik	0	0.0
Seldovia	0	0.0
Soldotna	0	0.0
Other place in Alaska	0	0.0
Lower 48	0	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 11. Why did you spend most of the nights in the last month there?

<b>RESPONSE</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>%</b>
Services are accessible	6	18	33.3
Work is available	6	18	33.3
Grew up here	4	18	22.2
Know people here	13	18	72.2
Cannot afford to leave	4	18	22.2
Know the area	5	18	27.8
Family is here	11	18	61.1
Feel safe here	6	18	33.3
Beauty / appeal of area	5	18	27.8
Weather	2	18	11.1
Lack of transportation	3	18	16.7
Had to stay temporarily	4	18	22.2

Table 12. Who do you currently live with?

<b>RESPONSE</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Alone	3	16.7
With significant other	2	11.1
With parents	8	44.4
With other family	1	5.6
With friend	4	22.2
With family friend	0	0.0
With strangers	0	0.0
With siblings	0	0.0
Other	0	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 13. Are you currently homeless or in transition?

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes	6	33.3
No	12	66.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 14. How long has it been since your last permanent housing?

RESPONSE	N	%
Less than one month	0	0.0
One to three months	3	50.0
Four to six months	2	33.3
Seven to eleven months	0	0.0
One to two years	1	16.7
Three to five years	0	0.0
Six to ten years	0	0.0
More than ten years	0	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 15. Which of the following best describes your current living situation?

RESPONSE	N	%
Short term housing (hotel, shelter)	2	11.1
Transitional housing (longer term program)	1	5.6
Permanent housing (apartment, house)	4	22.2
Staying with friends or family	9	50.0
Converted garage or other structure	0	0.0
Automobile, van, tent, or boat	1	5.6
Outdoors	1	5.6
Other	0	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 16. How old were you when you first became homeless or transient?

RESPONSE	N	%
Ten	1	6.3
Eleven	0	0.0
Twelve	0	0.0
Thirteen	0	0.0
Fourteen	4	25.0
Fifteen	2	12.5
Sixteen	5	31.3
Seventeen	2	12.5
Eighteen	1	6.3
Nineteen	0	0.0
Twenty	1	6.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 17. Since then, how many times have you been homeless or in transition (including current situation)?

RESPONSE	N	%
One time	8	44.4
Two to three times	6	33.3
Four to five times	1	5.6
More than five times	3	16.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 18. Before the age of 19, were you ever placed in foster care?

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes	2	11.1
No	16	88.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 19. Have any of the following contributed to your homelessness?

RESPONSE	N	TOTAL	%
High cost of housing / rent	6	17	35.3
Unemployment / seasonal employment	5	17	29.4
Disability	0	17	0.0
Runaway	6	17	35.3
Health / medical costs	0	17	0.0
Housing eviction	2	17	11.8
Mental health issues	1	17	5.9
Too old for foster care	0	17	0.0
Problems with the law	2	17	11.8
Problems with drug / alcohol use	4	17	23.5
Parents are divorced	3	17	17.6
Parents are absent	2	17	11.8
Parents use drugs and alcohol	3	17	17.6
Parents fight and argue with each other	1	17	5.9
Cannot follow parental rules	5	17	29.4
Cannot get along with parents	10	17	58.8
Kicked out by parents	4	17	23.5
Verbal abuse	7	17	41.2
Physical abuse	2	17	11.8
Sexual abuse	0	17	0.0
Problems with siblings	1	17	5.9
Parents moved away from Homer	0	17	0.0
Death of parent / guardian	0	17	0.0

Table 20. What is (or was) the single biggest factor that caused your homelessness?

RESPONSE	N	%
Personal choice	6	35.3
Family problems	8	47.1
Other	3	17.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 21. What is (or was) preventing you from finding permanent housing?

RESPONSE	N	TOTAL	%
No job	5	16	31.3
Housing affordability	6	16	37.5
Housing availability	4	16	25.0
Moving costs	2	16	12.5
Transportation	3	16	18.8
Bad credit	0	16	0.0
Eviction	0	16	0.0
Criminal record	0	16	0.0
Too young to sign the lease	5	16	31.3
No rental reference	4	16	25.0
Lack of interest or motivation	4	16	25.0

Table 22. If you had a choice, where would you be living?

RESPONSE	N	%
Homer	10	62.5
Elsewhere	3	18.8
Don't know	3	18.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 23. If you had a choice, who would you live with?

RESPONSE	N	%
Alone	2	12.5
With friends	7	43.8
With family	5	31.3
Don't know	2	12.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 24. What is keeping you from living there?

<b>RESPONSE</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Housing costs	6	37.5
Housing availability	1	6.3
Rules and laws	2	12.5
Lack of interest	1	6.3
School	1	6.3
Not applicable	5	31.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 25. In your opinion, what types of services does Homer need the most?

<b>RESPONSE</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>%</b>
Emergency shelter	5	16	31.3
Transitional housing	5	16	31.3
Homeless service centers	7	16	43.8
Job training and job placement programs	4	16	25.0
Food and clothing banks	1	16	6.3
Affordable housing	5	16	31.3
Drug and alcohol rehabilitation programs	2	16	12.5
Mental health services	1	16	6.3
Health and dental clinics	4	16	25.0
Family counseling	0	16	0.0
Reliable transportation	2	16	12.5
Places or outdoor locations where youths are welcome	14	18	77.8
Jobs	5	16	31.3
School health clinic	0	16	0.0

Table 26. What is the most important service needed?

RESPONSE	N	%
Emergency shelter	1	6.3
Transitional housing	1	6.3
Homeless service centers	1	6.3
Job training and job placement programs	1	6.3
Food and clothing banks	0	0.0
Affordable housing	1	6.3
Drug and alcohol rehabilitation programs	1	6.3
Mental health services	0	0.0
Health and dental clinics	1	6.3
Family counseling	0	0.0
Reliable transportation	1	6.3
Places or outdoor locations where youths are welcome	8	50.0
Jobs	0	0.0
School health clinic	0	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 27. Do you feel that you have used alcohol or drugs in ways that have negatively affected your functioning at home or school?

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes	7	38.9
No	11	61.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 28. How have drugs and alcohol negatively affected your functioning?

RESPONSE	N	%
Psychologically	4	66.7
Behaviorally	2	33.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 29. If you or someone you know did have a problem with drugs or alcohol, who or where would you start for getting help?

RESPONSE	N	%
Peers	9	69.2
Parents	1	7.7
Counselors	3	23.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 30. Have you ever used alcohol?

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes	15	88.2
No	2	11.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 31. What type of alcohol have you used?

RESPONSE	N	TOTAL	%
Liquor	16	16	100.0
Beer	12	16	75.0
Other	7	16	43.8

Table 32. Did you start using alcohol before or after becoming homeless?

RESPONSE	N	%
Before	12	85.7
At the same time	1	7.1
After	1	7.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 33. Have you used alcohol within the last year?

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes	14	82.3
No	3	17.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 34. Have you used alcohol within the last month?

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes	11	61.1
No	7	38.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 35. How many times in the last month have you used alcohol?

RESPONSE	N	%
Daily	0	0.0
Three to six times a week	1	5.6
Once or twice a week	4	22.2
Less than once a week	6	33.3
Never	7	38.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 36. Have you ever smoked cigarettes?

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes	15	83.3
No	3	16.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 37. Do you currently smoke?

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes	13	72.2
No	5	27.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 38. How many cigarettes do you usually smoke in one day?

RESPONSE	N	%
Two packs or more	0	0.0
One to two packs	2	13.3
About half a pack	5	33.3
Less than half a pack	5	33.3
Don't smoke daily	3	20.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 39. Have you ever used marijuana?

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes	16	88.9
No	2	11.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 40. Did you start using marijuana before or after becoming homeless?

RESPONSE	N	%
Before	13	86.7
At the same time	0	0.0
After	2	13.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 41. Have you used marijuana within the last year?

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes	15	83.3
No	3	16.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 42. Have you used marijuana within the last month?

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes	12	66.7
No	6	33.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 43. How many times in the last month have you used marijuana?

RESPONSE	N	%
Daily	7	38.9
Three to six times a week	1	5.6
Once or twice a week	0	0.0
Less than once a week	4	22.2
Never	6	33.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 44. Have you ever used drugs that were not prescribed to you by a doctor?

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes	11	61.1
No	7	38.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 45. Which other drugs have you used?

RESPONSE	N	TOTAL	%
Cocaine / Crack	6	18	33.3
Inhalants	3	18	16.7
Amphetamines	5	18	27.8
Ritalin	4	18	22.2
Methcathinone	0	18	0.0
Tranquilizers or sleeping pills	4	18	22.2
Narcotics	6	18	33.3
Heroin	0	18	0.0
LSD	4	18	22.2
MDMA	2	18	11.1
Other psychedelics	6	18	33.3
Rohypnol	0	18	0.0
GHB	0	18	0.0
Steroids	1	18	5.6
Oxycontin	6	18	33.3
Crystal meth	3	18	16.7
Rx drugs not prescribed	6	18	33.3

Table 46. Have you used a needle or syringe to inject a drug?

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes	0	0.0
No	17	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 47. Did you start using other drugs before or after becoming homeless?

RESPONSE	N	%
Before	7	63.6
At the same time	3	27.3
After	1	9.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 48. Have you used other drugs within the last year?

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes	7	38.9
No	11	61.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 49. Have you used other drugs within the last month?

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes	4	22.2
No	14	77.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 50. How many times in the last month have you used other drugs?

RESPONSE	N	%
Daily	0	0.0
Three to six times a week	0	0.0
Once or twice a week	1	5.6
Less than once a week	3	16.7
Never	14	77.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 51. Are you currently working?

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes	9	50.0
No	9	50.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 52. What type of job do you have?

<b>RESPONSE</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Odd jobs	3	18.8
Fast food	3	18.8
Retail	1	6.3
Not employed	9	56.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 53. What is your employment status?

<b>RESPONSE</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Self-employed full-time	1	5.9
Self-employed part-time	0	0.0
Occasionally self-employed	0	0.0
Employed full-time	4	23.5
Employed part-time	2	11.8
Occasionally employed	1	5.9
Unemployed	9	52.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 54. What is your total weekly income before taxes?

<b>RESPONSE</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Less than \$100	2	12.5
\$100 to \$499	4	25.0
\$500 to \$999	1	6.3
Not employed	9	56.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 55. What are your primary sources of income?

RESPONSE	N	TOTAL	%
Friends	9	18	50.0
Family	11	18	61.1
Welfare	1	18	5.6
Disability	0	18	0.0
Begging	4	18	22.2
PFD	8	18	44.4
Native Alaskan benefits	0	18	0.0
General relief	0	18	0.0
Seasonal work	3	18	16.7
Odd jobs	8	18	44.4
Part-time work	5	18	27.8
Full-time work	6	18	33.3
Sexual favors	1	18	5.6
Stealing	0	18	0.0
Drugs	3	18	16.7
Other criminal activity	1	18	5.6
Other	0	18	0.0

Table 56. Do you get enough money every month for transportation, food, clothes, and rent?

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes	11	61.1
No	7	38.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 57. What do you lack money for?

<b>RESPONSE</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>%</b>
Transportation	4	7	57.1
Food	5	7	71.4
Clothes	4	7	57.1
Rent	4	7	57.1

Table 58. Do you have a checking or savings account?

<b>RESPONSE</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	7	38.9
No	11	61.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 59. Are you currently receiving government assistance such as food stamps?

<b>RESPONSE</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	3	17.6
No	14	82.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 60. Why are you not receiving government assistance?

RESPONSE	N	TOTAL	%
Don't need it	3	14	17.6
Never applied	8	14	57.1
No identification	0	14	0.0
No permanent address	0	14	0.0
Waiting for approval	1	14	7.1
Turned down	2	14	14.3
No transportation	2	14	14.3
Too much hassle	1	14	7.1
Don't know what's available	1	14	7.1
Don't think I'm eligible	2	14	14.3
Other	0	14	0.0

Table 61. How could receiving government assistance be made easier for you?

RESPONSE	N	%
Change eligibility	2	50.0
Better location	1	25.0
Increase publicity	1	25.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 62. Are you currently looking for work?

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes	11	61.1
No	7	38.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 63. How could getting a job be made easier for you?

<b>RESPONSE</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
More jobs	5	83.3
Job bulletins	1	16.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 64. What occupies the majority of your day?

<b>RESPONSE</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>%</b>
Looking for food	3	18	16.7
Looking for work	4	18	22.2
Looking for or getting money	5	18	27.8
Using or acquiring drugs / alcohol	4	18	22.2
Hanging out with friends	9	18	50.0
School	4	18	22.2
Work	8	18	44.4
Other	3	18	16.7

Table 65. What are your most common daily problems?

RESPONSE	N	TOTAL	%
Hunger	4	18	22.2
Insufficient income	7	18	38.9
Lack of work	5	18	27.8
Finding shelter	1	18	5.6
Finding a place to wash self / clothes	1	18	5.6
Boredom / loneliness	8	18	44.4
Depression / anxiousness	4	18	22.2
Threat of crime / violence	0	18	0.0
Health / dental care	3	18	16.7
Drugs / alcohol	3	18	16.7
Problems with police	2	18	11.1
Finding a way to keep in touch with others	2	18	11.1
Transportation	5	18	27.8
Family problems	3	18	16.7
Weather	1	18	5.6
Other	0	18	0.0

Table 66. Who do you talk to when you have a problem?

RESPONSE	N	TOTAL	%
Friends	15	18	83.3
Family	7	18	38.9
Counselor	3	18	16.7

Table 67. What is the worst part about being homeless?

RESPONSE	N	%
Lack of housing	7	53.8
Lack of activities/plans	2	15.4
Lack of family contact	1	7.7
Negative Stigma	2	15.4
Lack of food	1	7.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 68. Are you currently enrolled in school?

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes	9	50.0
No	9	50.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 69. Are you currently attending school?

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes (spring)	5	27.8
No (spring)	4	22.2
No (summer)	9	50.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 70. What type of school to you attend?

RESPONSE	N	%
Conventional	5	29.4
Alternative	3	17.6
Not in School	9	52.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 71. How often do you go to school?

RESPONSE	N	%
Never	9	52.9
Less than once a week	0	0.0
Once a week	0	0.0
Two to four times a week	2	11.8
Every day	6	35.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 72. Why are you not enrolled in school?

RESPONSE	N	%
Lack of interest	2	28.6
Disliked school	3	42.9
Had to earn money	1	14.3
Poor grades	1	14.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 73. What would make it possible for you to go to school?

RESPONSE	N	%
Money	3	42.9
New school / classes	3	42.9
Study skills	1	14.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 74. Why are you not always attending school?

RESPONSE	N	%
Not enrolled	8	80.0
Work	1	10.0
Lack of motivation	1	10.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 75. How many meals do you eat on an average day?

RESPONSE	N	%
One	3	17.6
Two	9	52.9
Three	4	23.5
More than three	1	5.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 76. Do you usually get enough to eat?

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes	15	83.3
No	3	16.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 77. Can you describe an average day for you?

RESPONSE	N	TOTAL	%
Work / school	9	16	56.3
Hang out	13	16	81.3
Party	4	16	25.0

Table 78. Have you received health or dental care while homeless or in transition in Homer?

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes	7	38.9
No	11	61.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 79. Where did you get medical attention?

RESPONSE	N	TOTAL	%
Emergency room / hospital	3	7	42.9
Private clinic	4	7	57.1
Public clinic	4	7	57.1
Friends / family	1	7	14.3
Other	1	7	14.3

Table 80. What did you like about the care that you received?

RESPONSE	N	TOTAL	%
Efficient	2	6	33.3
Friendly	1	6	16.7
Provided good care	4	6	66.7

Table 81. What did you not like about the care that you received?

RESPONSE	N	TOTAL	%
Cost	2	6	33.3
Lack of confidentiality	1	6	16.7
Delays	1	6	16.7
Accessibility	1	6	16.7
Nothing	2	6	33.3

Table 82. Has there been a time in the last 12 months that you needed health care, dental care, or medications and did not receive it?

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes	6	33.3
No	12	66.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 83. Why didn't you receive care?

RESPONSE	N	TOTAL	%
No money	3	6	50.0
No medical insurance	4	6	66.7
No transportation	2	6	33.3
Never tried	1	6	16.7
Don't know where to go	1	6	16.7

Table 84. Do you have health insurance, dental insurance, Medicaid, or Denali kid care?

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes	14	82.4
No	3	17.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 85. Have you received mental health services while homeless or in transition in Homer?

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes	8	47.1
No	9	52.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 86. Where did you receive mental health services?

RESPONSE	N	TOTAL	%
Community mental health	8	8	100.0
School counselor	1	8	12.5
Other	0	8	0.0

Table 87. What did you like about the services that you received?

<b>RESPONSE</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Provided good services	5	83.3
Nothing	1	16.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 88. What did you not like about the services that you received?

<b>RESPONSE</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Nothing	3	50.0
Limited services	2	33.3
Impersonal services	1	16.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 89. Has there been a time in the last 12 months that you needed mental health services and did not receive them?

<b>RESPONSE</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	2	11.8
No	15	88.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 90. Why didn't you receive services?

<b>RESPONSE</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>%</b>
No money	1	2	50.0
No medical insurance	2	2	100.0
No transportation	1	2	50.0
Never tried	1	2	50.0
Don't know where to go	0	2	0.0

Table 91. Are you currently on a prescribed medication?

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes	4	22.2
No	14	77.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 92. Are you able to receive your prescribed medication?

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes	4	100.0
No	0	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 93. Have you ever been diagnosed with any of the following conditions?

RESPONSE	N	TOTAL	%
Tuberculosis	0	18	0.0
HIV / AIDS	0	18	0.0
Hepatitis (any type)	0	18	0.0
Sexually transmitted diseases	0	18	0.0
Diabetes	0	18	0.0
Asthma	4	18	22.2
Heart problems	0	18	0.0
High blood pressure	1	18	5.6
Cancer (any type)	0	18	0.0
Pneumonia and influenza	1	18	5.6
Alcoholism	0	18	0.0
Learning disability	2	18	11.1
Depression	5	18	27.8
Other mental illness	1	18	5.6
Other	3	18	16.7

Table 94. Are you receiving treatment and / or medications for those conditions?

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes	5	50.0
No	5	50.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 95. Why are you not currently receiving treatment and / or medications for those conditions?

RESPONSE	N	%
Not needed	4	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 96. Have you been a crime victim in the last 12 months?

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes	3	16.7
No	15	83.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 97. What type of crime were you a victim of in the last 12 months?

RESPONSE	N	TOTAL	%
Physical assault	1	18	5.6
Robbery	3	18	16.7
Domestic violence	0	18	0.0
Sexual assault	0	18	0.0
Other	0	18	0.0

Table 98. Did you contact the police about these crimes?

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes	2	66.7
No	1	33.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 99. Do you feel harassed by police?

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes	5	29.4
No	12	70.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 100. Have you needed legal help or advice in the last 12 months?

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes	5	27.8
No	13	72.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 101. Were you able to receive adequate legal help or advice?

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes	4	80.0
No	1	20.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 102. In your opinion, how many youths (21 years old or younger) live in Homer?

<b>RESPONSE</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
1 to 500	1	9.1
501 to 1,000	4	36.4
1,001 to 2,000	2	18.2
2,001 to 3,000	3	27.3
3,001 to 4,000	0	0.0
4,001 to 5,000	1	9.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Note: Correct answer is 1,001 to 2,000.

Table 103. In your opinion, what percentage of the youth population in Homer is transient or homeless?

<b>RESPONSE</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
1% to 5%	5	45.5
6% to 10%	1	9.1
11% to 20%	2	18.2
21% to 30%	1	9.1
31% to 40%	2	18.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 104. In your opinion, how many transient or homeless youths are there in Homer?

RESPONSE	N	%
1 to 10	2	14.3
11 to 20	2	14.3
21 to 30	2	14.3
31 to 40	0	0.0
41 to 50	1	7.1
51 to 100	2	14.3
101 to 200	3	21.4
Over 200	2	14.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 105. Are there more homeless or transient youths in the summer?

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes	5	62.5
No	3	37.5
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 106. Do you personally know other youths who are or were homeless or in transition in Homer?

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes	14	82.4
No	3	17.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 107. How many other homeless youths in Homer do you know?

RESPONSE	N	%
Zero	3	21.4
1 to 10	5	35.7
11 to 20	3	21.4
21 to 30	0	0.0
31 to 40	0	0.0
41 to 50	1	7.1
51 to 100	1	7.1
101 to 200	1	7.1
Over 200	0	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 108. What are other homeless / transient youths' most common daily problems?

RESPONSE	N	TOTAL	%
Hunger	6	15	40.0
Insufficient income	6	15	40.0
Lack of work	10	15	66.7
Finding shelter	9	15	60.0
Finding a place to wash self / clothes	6	15	40.0
Boredom / loneliness	5	15	33.3
Depression / anxiousness	6	15	40.0
Threat of crime / violence	4	15	26.7
Health / dental care	3	15	20.0
Drugs / alcohol	11	15	73.3
Problems with police	7	15	46.7
Finding a way to keep in touch with others	3	15	20.0
Transportation	6	15	40.0
Family problems	9	15	60.0
Weather	3	15	20.0
Other	2	15	13.3

Table 109. If we wanted to interview other homeless or transient youths in Homer, what would be the first place to find them?

RESPONSE	N	%
Beach	1	7.1
McDonald's	11	78.6
Elsewhere	2	14.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 110. How many agencies provide services to youths?

RESPONSE	N	%
Zero	1	7.7
One to five	8	61.5
Six to ten	2	15.4
More than 10	2	15.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 111. What one thing could the community of Homer do to make it easier for you to transition back home or into permanent housing?

RESPONSE	N	TOTAL	%
Provide temporary housing	4	16	25.0
Increase housing availability / assistance	5	16	31.3
Improve recreation	2	16	12.5
Provide job training / employment	2	16	12.5
Enhance youth services	4	16	25.0
Nothing	3	16	18.8

Table 112. Have you sought any faith-based programs while homeless in Homer?

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes	2	11.1
No	16	88.9
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 113. Were you able to find faith-based programs?

<b>RESPONSE</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	2	100.0
No	0	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 114. Were you satisfied with your experience?

<b>RESPONSE</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
Yes	2	100.0
No	0	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 115. Of the following 42 agencies in Homer, what percentage do you know about?

<b>RESPONSE</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
0 %	0	0.0
1 to 24 %	5	27.8
25 to 49 %	6	33.3
50 to 74 %	4	22.2
75 to 99 %	3	16.7
100 %	0	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 116. What percentage of the agencies that you know about have you used?

<b>RESPONSE</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
0 %	2	11.1
1 to 24 %	3	16.7
25 to 49 %	2	11.1
50 to 74 %	7	38.9
75 to 99 %	2	11.1
100 %	2	11.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 117. What percentage of the agencies that you have used do you have negative opinions about?

<b>RESPONSE</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
0 %	7	46.7
1 to 24 %	5	33.3
25 to 49 %	1	6.7
50 to 74 %	2	13.3
75 to 99 %	0	0.0
100 %	0	0.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 118. What percentage of the agencies that you have used do you have neutral opinions about?

<b>RESPONSE</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>%</b>
0 %	5	33.3
1 to 24 %	3	20.0
25 to 49 %	5	33.3
50 to 74 %	1	6.7
75 to 99 %	0	0.0
100 %	1	6.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 119. What percentage of the agencies that you have used do you have positive opinions about?

RESPONSE	N	%
0 %	2	13.3
1 to 24 %	0	0.0
25 to 49 %	2	13.3
50 to 74 %	6	40.0
75 to 99 %	3	20.0
100 %	2	13.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 120. Overall, what causes you to have a negative or neutral opinion about these agencies?

RESPONSE	N	TOTAL	%
Unfriendly staff	3	8	37.5
Provided inadequate services	3	8	37.5
Cost too high	2	8	25.0

Table 121. Overall, what causes you to have a positive opinion about these agencies?

RESPONSE	N	TOTAL	%
Provided good services	10	13	76.9
Friendly staff	5	13	38.5

**Appendix C**  
**Services Survey**

# SERVICES SURVEY

## FOR THE 2004 CENSUS AND SURVEY OF HOMELESS YOUTHS IN HOMER ALASKA

You have been identified as an agency or organization that provides services to youths in Homer Alaska. In collaboration with the Child Advocacy Coalition of Homer, we are performing a survey to gather some basic information regarding your agency and the specific services that it provides. In the end, we will create an inventory of all agencies in Homer that provide services to youth. Each agency will also be briefly described. Once the survey is completed, we will send you a copy of this inventory.

Your participation in this survey is completely voluntary. Your answers to this survey will not remain confidential and your agency will not remain anonymous. In other words, all of your answers to this survey will be publicly disseminated.

If you have any questions about this survey, please feel free to contact André Rosay with the Justice Center at the University of Alaska Anchorage (907-786-1821) or Sharon Whytal with the Child Advocacy Coalition of Homer (907-235-8857).

**When you have completed this survey, please return it to us either  
by FAX at: 907-786-7777 (to the attention of André Rosay)  
or by mail to: André B. Rosay  
UAA Justice Center  
3211 Providence Drive  
Anchorage, AK 99508**

Please return this survey to us as soon as possible. We thank you for your participation!

Sincerely,

André B. Rosay, Ph.D.  
Justice Center  
University of Alaska Anchorage  
3211 Providence Drive  
Anchorage, AK 99508  
(907) 786-1821  
[afabr@uaa.alaska.edu](mailto:afabr@uaa.alaska.edu)

**A. AGENCY INFORMATION**

Name of Agency:  
Address:

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax number: \_\_\_\_\_

Web site: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of respondent: \_\_\_\_\_

Title of respondent: \_\_\_\_\_

What type of organization does your agency represent?

- Non-profit organization
- City department
- Emergency shelter
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_
- Borough department
- Church/faith based organization

**This survey focuses on services provided to homeless youths.**

**Homeless youths are defined as youths (21 years of age or younger) who:**

- (1) lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence, AND**
- (2) have a primary nighttime residence that is:**
  - a. a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designed to provide temporary living accommodations,**
  - 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.**

Does your agency or organization provide services to **homeless youths** in Homer?

YES                      NO

**If your agency provides services to homeless youths, please continue to the next page.**

**If your agency does not provide services to homeless youths in Homer, please skip to page 4.**

## B. SERVICES PROVIDED

Please check all of the supportive services that your agency provides to **homeless youths**.

- **Basic Physical Needs**
  - Soup kitchen/food
  - Clothing
  - Medical assistance
  - Transportation
  - Emergency shelter
  - Transitional housing
  - Permanent supportive housing
  
- **Counseling and Treatment**
  - Case management
  - Substance abuse treatment
  - Crisis counseling
  - Domestic violence counseling
  - Mental health treatment
  - Mentoring
  - Family planning
  
- **Jobs and Education Training**
  - Employment/educational/life skills training
  - Mentoring
  - Job placement
  - Financial assistance
  - Legal/court services
  
- **Youth Recreation**
  - After-school activities
  - Weekend activities
  - Sports
  - Clubs
  
- **Others (Please list):**

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**C. CLIENTS SERVED**

For the following questions, please provide your best estimates. **During the past year,**

- How many youths (21 years old or younger) did your agency provide services to?  
\_\_\_\_\_ Of these, how many were homeless? \_\_\_\_\_
- How many youths (21 years old or younger) used your services more than once?  
\_\_\_\_\_ Of these, how many were homeless? \_\_\_\_\_
- How many youths (21 years old or younger) were placed on a waiting list?  
\_\_\_\_\_ Of these, how many were homeless? \_\_\_\_\_
- How many youths (21 years old or younger) were turned away?  
\_\_\_\_\_ Of these, how many were homeless? \_\_\_\_\_

Please estimate the total number of youths (21 years old or younger) in Homer:  
\_\_\_\_\_ Of these, how many are homeless? \_\_\_\_\_

Please estimate the total number of homeless youths (21 years old or younger) in Homer during the:

Spring	_____	Summer	_____
Fall	_____	Winter	_____

**D. OTHER AGENCIES**

The following organizations/agencies have received this survey:

- |                                       |                                     |                                       |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Alaska Bible Institute                | Alaska Housing Finance              | Alaska State Troopers                 |
| Alcoholics Anonymous                  | Assembly of God                     | AV Tech                               |
| Bay View Baptist                      | Benefits and Food Stamps            | Big Brothers Big Sisters of Homer     |
| Birth 2 Three                         | Boys and Girls Club                 | Catholic Church                       |
| Center for Employment and Training    | Choices for Teens                   | Church of the Nazarene                |
| Community Christian Church            | Community Mental Health Center      | Conifer Woods Apartments              |
| Consumer Credit Counseling            | Cook Inlet Counsel                  | Day Care Assistance                   |
| Division of Family and Youth Services | Division of Public Assistance       | Division of Vocational Rehabilitation |
| East Gate Fellowship                  | East Homer Church of Christ         | Family Learning Center                |
| Family Solutions                      | Kachemak Bay Family Planning Clinic | Fireweed Academy                      |
| GED Adult Basic Education             | Glacier View Baptist Church         | Harbor Ridge Apartments               |
| Helping Hand Food Pantry              | Homer Children's Services           | Homer Crisis Pregnancy Center         |
| Homer Christian Church                | Homer City Hall                     | Homer Community Food Pantry           |
| Homer Community Schools               | Homer Flex High School              | Homer Head Start                      |
| Homer Health Care                     | Homer High School                   | Homer Hostel                          |
| Homer Job Center                      | Homer Middle School                 | Homer Police Department               |
| Homer Public Library                  | Homer United Methodist Church       | IDEA Attn: Steve Musser               |
| Independent Living Center             | Job Ready                           | Kachemak Bay Christian Center         |
| Karen Ruebsamen                       | McNeil Canyon Elementary School     | NAMI Homer                            |
| New Life Tabernacle Church            | Paul Banks Elementary               | Pick and Pay                          |
| Pregnancy Care Center of Homer        | Public Health Center                | Refuge Chapel                         |
| Rental Assistance Program             | Salvation Army                      | Seldovia Village Tribe Health Clinic  |
| Seventh Day Adventist Church          | Share the Spirit                    | South Peninsula Hospital              |
| South Peninsula Women's Services      | W.I.C.                              | West Homer Elementary                 |
| Work Services                         | Youth Court                         |                                       |

Are there other organizations/agencies that provide services to homeless youths in Homer?

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Again, we sincerely thank you for your participation. Please return this survey by FAX at 907-786-7777 (to the attention of André Rosay) or by mail to:

André B. Rosay  
 UAA Justice Center  
 3211 Providence Drive  
 Anchorage, AK 99508

**Appendix D**  
**Services Survey Results**

## TABLE INDEX

TABLE	PAGE #
1. What type of organization does your agency represent?	130
2. Basic physical needs: Soup kitchen / food	130
3. Basic physical needs: Clothing	130
4. Basic physical needs: Medical assistance	130
5. Basic physical needs: Transportation	131
6. Basic physical needs: Emergency shelter	131
7. Basic physical needs: Transitional housing	131
8. Basic physical needs: Permanent supportive housing	131
9. Counseling and treatment: Case management	131
10. Counseling and treatment: Substance abuse treatment	132
11. Counseling and treatment: Crisis counseling	132
12. Counseling and treatment: Domestic violence counseling	132
13. Counseling and treatment: Mental health treatment	132
14. Counseling and treatment: Mentoring	132
15. Counseling and treatment: Family planning	133
16. Jobs and education training: Employment / educational / life skills training	133
17. Jobs and education training: Mentoring	133
18. Jobs and education training: Job placement	133
19. Jobs and education training: Financial assistance	133
20. Jobs and education training: Legal / court services	134
21. Youth recreation: After-school activities	134
22. Youth recreation: Weekend activities	134
23. Youth recreation: Sports	134

<b>TABLE</b>		<b>PAGE #</b>
24.	Youth recreation: Clubs	134
25.	Other services	135
26.	Type of services by agency	135
27.	Agencies by services	139

Table 1. What type of organization does your agency represent?

RESPONSE	N	%
Non-profit organization	9	47.4
City department	0	0.0
Emergency shelter	0	0.0
Borough department	2	10.5
Other	8	42.1
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 2. Basic physical needs: Soup kitchen / food

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes	6	30.0
No	14	70.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 3. Basic physical needs: Clothing

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes	0	0.0
No	20	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 4. Basic physical needs: Medical assistance

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes	8	40.0
No	12	60.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 5. Basic physical needs: Transportation

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes	6	30.0
No	14	70.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 6. Basic physical needs: Emergency shelter

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes	1	5.0
No	19	95.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 7. Basic physical needs: Transitional housing

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes	1	5.0
No	19	95.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 8. Basic physical needs: Permanent or supportive housing

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes	1	5.0
No	19	95.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 9. Counseling and treatment: Case management

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes	4	20.0
No	16	80.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 10. Counseling and treatment: Substance abuse treatment

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes	2	10.0
No	18	90.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 11. Counseling and treatment: Crisis counseling

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes	2	10.0
No	18	90.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 12. Counseling and treatment: Domestic violence counseling

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes	2	10.0
No	18	90.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 13. Counseling and treatment: Mental health treatment

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes	3	15.0
No	17	85.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 14. Counseling and treatment: Mentoring

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes	2	10.0
No	18	90.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 15. Counseling and treatment: Family planning

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes	4	20.0
No	16	80.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 16. Jobs and educational training: Employment/educational/life skills training

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes	6	30.0
No	14	70.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 17. Jobs and educational training: Mentoring

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes	3	15.0
No	17	85.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 18. Jobs and educational training: Job placement

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes	2	10.0
No	18	90.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 19. Jobs and educational training: Financial assistance

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes	1	5.0
No	19	95.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 20. Jobs and educational training: Legal / court services

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes	1	5.0
No	19	95.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 21. Youth recreation: After-school activities

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes	4	20.0
No	16	80.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 22. Youth recreation: Weekend activities

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes	2	10.0
No	18	90.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 23. Youth recreation: Sports

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes	3	15.0
No	17	85.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 24. Youth recreation: Clubs

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes	1	5.0
No	19	95.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 25. Other services

RESPONSE	N	%
Yes	13	65.0
No	7	35.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 26. Type of Services by agency

AGENCY	SERVICES
<b>Adult Basic Education</b> 235-7743	Employment / educational / life skills training
<b>Alaska State Troopers</b> 235-8239	Medical assistance Transportation  Other: Conflict resolution and crisis intervention
<b>Choices for Teens</b> (closed for restructuring) 235-4991	Mentoring (informal) Employment / educational / life skills training Job placement After-school activities Weekend activities  Other: Some case management and wrap around service coordination for youth in the job training program
<b>Community Mental Health Center</b> 235-7701	Case management Mental health treatment  Other: Case management is provided to assist youths in accessing needed services from other agencies in the community.
<b>Division of Juvenile Justice</b> 235-7114	Legal / court services (for HPD/AST referrals)

AGENCY	SERVICES
<p><b>Division of Vocational Rehabilitation</b> 283-3133</p>	<p>Transportation Mentoring Employment / educational / life skills training Job placement Financial assistance</p> <p>Other: Services related to obtaining employment</p>
<p><b>Family Solutions</b> 235-4010</p>	<p>Crisis counseling Mental health treatment</p>
<p><b>Homer Community Food Pantry</b> 235-1968</p>	<p>Food Emergency shelter Transitional housing Permanent supportive housing</p>
<p><b>Homer Head Start</b> 235-7087</p>	<p>Other: Preschool (4 days per week, 9AM – 1PM, September through May), serves 3-5 year olds. Other: Family advocate who assists families as they interface with service systems</p>
<p><b>Homer High School</b> 235-8186</p>	<p>Soup kitchen / food Medical assistance Transportation Crisis counseling Employment / educational / life skills training After-school activities Sports</p>
<p><b>Homer Middle School</b> 235-5291</p>	<p>Soup kitchen / food Transportation Employment / educational / life skills training Mentoring After-school activities Weekend activities Sports Clubs</p>
<p><b>Kachemak Bay Family Planning</b> 235-3436</p>	<p>Medical assistance Family planning</p>

AGENCY	SERVICES
<p><b>Kenai Peninsula Borough School District</b> 262-9805 (x257)</p>	<p>Soup kitchen / food Medical assistance Transportation Case management Family planning</p> <p>Other: Academic assistance, free meal benefits program, referral services</p>
<p><b>Paul Banks Elementary School</b> 235-8161</p>	<p>Case management</p> <p>Other: Referral for basic physical needs, transport to/from school, free school lunch benefits, school enrollment assistance, Title One program educational assistance</p>
<p><b>Public Health Center</b> 235-8857</p>	<p>Medical assistance Case management (very limited basis) Domestic violence counseling / referral Family planning (limited basis)</p> <p>Other: Emergency food via connection to Food Pantry, advocacy for basic needs (shelter, public assistance, some assistance with referrals and transportation, assistance for medical / dental care for those unable to pay, immunizations</p>
<p><b>Seldovia Village Tribe Health Center</b> 226-2228</p>	<p>Medical assistance Substance abuse treatment Domestic violence counseling Mental health treatment Family planning</p>
<p><b>South Peninsula Hospital</b> 235-8101</p>	<p>Medical assistance</p> <p>Other: Assessments and treatments. Agency will help supply placement for homeless youths</p>
<p><b>TEENs Up Front</b> 235-7209</p>	<p>Substance abuse treatment</p> <p>Other: Alcohol / Drug Information School</p>

AGENCY	SERVICES
<p><b>West Homer Elementary</b> 235-5660</p>	<p>Soup kitchen / food                      Medical assistance                      Transportation                      Employment / educational / life skills training                      Mentoring                      After-school activities                      Sports</p> <p>Other: Provides links to Homer Community Mental Health Center, Big Brothers / Big Sisters, OCS, and others</p>
<p><b>Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)</b> 235-5495</p>	<p>Food</p> <p>Other: Nutrition counseling, referrals</p>

Table 27. Agencies by Services

SERVICES	AGENCIES
<b>Basic physical needs</b>	Alaska State Troopers (235-8239) Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (283-3133) Homer Community Food Pantry (235-1968) Homer High School (235-8186) Homer Middle School (235-5291) Kachemak Bay Family Planning (235-3436) Kenai Peninsula Borough School District (262-9808, x257) Public Health Center (235-8857) Seldovia Village Tribe Health Center (226-2228) South Peninsula Hospital (235-8101) West Homer Elementary (235-5660) Women, Infants, and Children (WIC; 235-5495)
<b>Counseling and treatment</b>	Choices for Teens (Closed, 235-4991) Community Mental Health Center (235-7701) Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (283-3133) Family Solutions (235-4010) Homer High School (235-8186) Homer Middle School (235-5291) Kachemak Bay Family Planning (235-3436) Kenai Peninsula Borough School District (262-9808, x257) Paul Banks Elementary School (235-8161) Public Health Center (235-8857) Seldovia Village Tribe Health Center (226-2228) TEENs Up Front (235-7209)
<b>Jobs and education training</b>	Adult Basic Education (235-7743) Choices for Teens (Closed, 235-4991) Division of Juvenile Justice (235-7114) Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (283-3133) Homer High School (235-8186) Homer Middle School (235-5291) West Homer Elementary (235-5660)
<b>Youth recreation</b>	Choices for Teens (Closed, 235-4991) Homer High School (235-8186) Homer Middle School (235-5291) West Homer Elementary (235-5660)
<b>Other services</b>	Alaska State Troopers (235-8239) Choices for Teens (Closed, 235-4991) Community Mental Health Center (235-7701) Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (283-3133) Homer Head Start (235-7087) Kenai Peninsula Borough School District (262-9808, x257) Paul Banks Elementary School (235-8161) Public Health Center (235-8857) South Peninsula Hospital (235-8101) TEENs Up Front (235-7209) West Homer Elementary (235-5660) Women, Infants, and Children (WIC; 235-5495)

