



10 Things to Know about Youth Homelessness

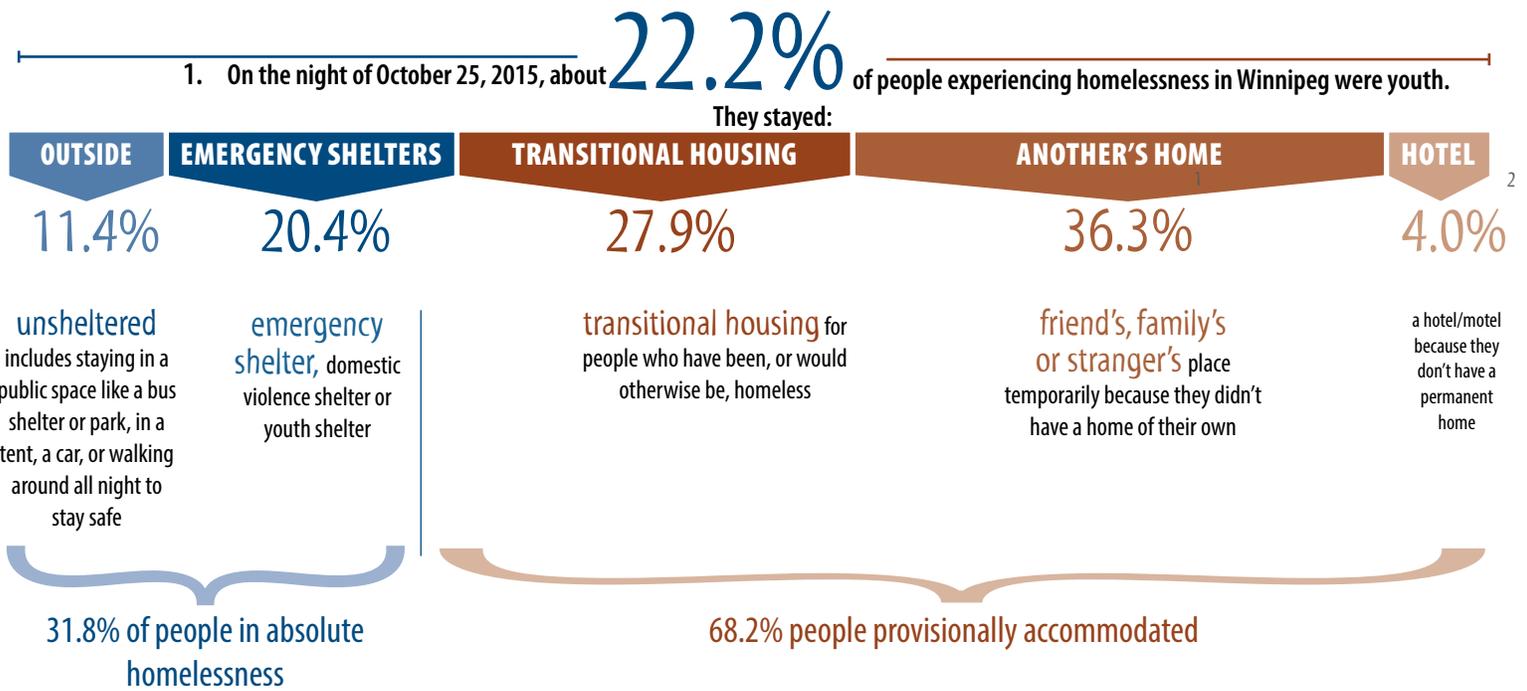
Winnipeg Street Census 2015.

The Winnipeg Street Census marks the first ever attempt at a comprehensive view of homelessness in Winnipeg. We sought to ask not only how many people are homeless, but to learn why and to hear their stories. On the night of October 25, 2015, there were at least 1,727 people experiencing homelessness in Winnipeg.

Over 24 hours from October 25-26, 300 volunteers attended, or data was gathered from: 7 emergency, domestic violence and youth shelters, 9 transitional housing sites, 10 bottle depots, and 29 community agencies or drop-in locations for Winnipeg's first ever Street Census. Surveyors also walked almost 140km of inner city streets.

For this large-scale survey, everyone encountered was asked about their housing situation to evaluate the magnitude of homelessness in the city. Everyone whose circumstances fit the definition of homelessness was asked to complete a 19 question interview about them and their experiences.

Youth Homelessness = the experience of a person under the age of 30 without stable, permanent, appropriate housing, or the immediate prospect, means and ability of acquiring it.



2. Youth homelessness leads to adult homelessness.

The median age at which all survey respondents **first became homeless** was **24** years, and the most **frequent** age was **18** years.

3. Of those experiencing homelessness for 10+ years, the majority (70%) **first became homeless** when they were **18** years or younger.

4. The most common reason youth experienced homelessness for the first time was **family conflict or breakdown**. **38.0%** became homeless for this reason, 2/3 of those involved either entering or leaving foster care or group homes.

5. Over half, **68.2%** of youth spent time in **foster care or group homes**.

6. **23.1%** of youth are part of **LGBTQ** community. This is about double the proportion in the overall homeless population.

7. **44.1%** of youth were homeless for **6 months or longer**. **45.6%** experienced **3 or more episodes** of homelessness in the past three years.



StreetCensusWpg.ca

The Winnipeg Street Census is a survey conducted over a 24 hour period to gather information about the extent and nature of homelessness in Winnipeg.

Income

8. Income sources (respondents could choose more than one)

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE 33.5%

SELF / INFORMAL 20.3%

self or informal employment: busking, panhandling, squeegeeing, selling art, etc.

EMPLOYMENT 15.1%

formal, including temporary and part-time

DISABILITY ASSISTANCE 13.2%

FAMILY 12.1%

money from family or friends

OTHER 5.0%

EI, CFS, CCTB

36.7% said that **low income** is a barrier to finding housing.

Those with no income spoke about being cut-off, waiting for, or unable to receive income assistance. Some lacked the necessary identification. Others said they were eligible but felt too proud to ask for assistance.

9. **84.6%** of youth identify as **Indigenous**. Almost half of First Nations youth grew up in a First Nations community, and half of them moved to Winnipeg in the last year.

10. Overall, **30.3%** of youth **moved to Winnipeg** in the past year

Methods, Data & Limitations

The Winnipeg Street Census utilized the Canadian Observatory on Homelessness definition and typology of homelessness and housing exclusion. In addition to survey data, administrative data about bed use on the night of October 25th has been gathered from emergency shelters, youth shelters, shelters for individuals and families impacted by domestic violence, and interim housing for people who are homeless (transitional housing). Some data has been provided by institutional, residential treatment, and community mental health residential programs for individuals who were homeless upon entering the residential setting, lost housing while in the setting, or will exit the program to homelessness. More data from these residential settings is still being gathered and analyzed.

Though the methods used in this project were comprehensive, it is virtually impossible to get an exact count of the homeless

population. Invisibility is a survival strategy for people experiencing homelessness. This was a voluntary survey and data is self-reported. The locations and routes where surveys took place were concentrated in the inner city and decided based on feedback from outreach teams, community agency staff and people who have experienced homelessness, however people experience homelessness and spend their time in other neighbourhoods too. The method vastly undercounts those who are staying temporarily with family, friends, or strangers and efforts were not made to identify overall numbers of those staying in hotels who do not have a permanent home. **Results should not be seen as an estimate of the hidden homeless population.**

More details about methodology, limitations and definitions will be available in a comprehensive report December 15, 2015.

Notes

¹This is the number of survey respondents staying temporarily at someone else's place with no guarantee of returning each night. Because people stay in these circumstances throughout Winnipeg and often do not utilize any services, this SHOULD NOT be seen as an estimate of the population in this circumstance.

²This is the number of survey respondents staying in a hotel or motel without a permanent home to return to. People staying monthly in hotels do not have tenancy agreements or legal protection. We did not include surveys from respondents staying at the Bell Hotel because it is considered to be permanent housing.

³Data from all healthcare and addictions treatment programs has not yet been received. Requests have also been made for data on people experiencing homelessness in the Corrections system, youth and children in emergency placements through Child and Family Services, and people receiving hotel vouchers due to flooding or fires. Therefore, this number will likely grow.

⁴Canadian Observatory on Homelessness (2012) Canadian Definition of Homelessness. Homeless Hub: www.homelesshub.ca/homelessdefinition/

