

Survey shows

2012 MINNESOTA
HOMELESS STUDY

Seven key facts about homeless Minnesotans with a history of incarceration

Almost half (47%) of the homeless adults, 2,931 people, interviewed for Wilder's 2012 homeless study reported that they had served time in one or more correctional facilities at some point in their lives. While the total number is larger than previous studies, the proportion is consistent with Wilder's three most recent surveys: Specifically, in 2009 and 2006 (47%), and 2003 (42%), and follows a steady rise since 1994. Any strategies devised to reduce this problem must take into account these seven key facts:

- 1. Of those with a history of incarceration, about one out of five homeless adults (21%) had been released from a correctional facility within the previous 12 months.**

The vast majority had been released from a county jail (69%) and about one-quarter (26%) were released from a state prison. Those released from federal prisons accounted for only 2 percent of those who were homeless on the night of the survey and those released from juvenile detention centers accounted for 4 percent.

- 2. On average, formerly incarcerated homeless adults spent twice as much time sleeping in outdoor locations compared to other homeless adults.**

While it was typical for those who had never been incarcerated to have spent three nights out-of-doors during the preceding 30 days, it was typical for those who had been previously incarcerated to spend six nights out-of-doors.

- 3. Homeless adults with a record of incarceration reported more episodes of homelessness throughout their life and longer times spent without permanent housing than other homeless adults who had not been incarcerated.**

Over half (54%) of ex-offenders reported four or more episodes of homelessness in their life, compared to just one-third (33%) of non-offenders.

- 4. Homeless ex-offenders – especially females – were much more likely than other homeless persons to report experiencing serious difficulties early in life.**

These difficulties included physical or sexual abuse in childhood, out-of-home placement in childhood, and becoming a parent before the age of 18. In all, 92 percent of all female ex-offenders reported one or more of these elements in their background, as did 85 percent of all previously incarcerated men.

5. Homeless adult ex-offenders were twice as likely as other homeless adults to have spent time in a facility for persons with emotional, behavioral or mental health issues.

Homeless ex-offenders were also more than three times as likely as other homeless adults to have spent time in a drug or alcohol treatment facility during adulthood.

6. Homeless adult ex-offenders are nearly twice as likely as other homeless adults to have symptoms of traumatic brain injury.

Of those ever incarcerated, 41 percent screened positively for evidence of TBI compared to only 24 percent of those in the general homeless population.

7. Not surprisingly homeless adult ex-offenders were more likely to cite their criminal background as a barrier to housing than any other category of barrier.

Specifically, 48 percent of adult homeless ex-offenders reported that their criminal background made it difficult to find or keep housing. In addition, 26 percent reported that their criminal background made it difficult to find employment. Other significant barriers to employment for this group include physical health problems, transportation problems, the absence of stable housing, and a lack of work history.

Learn more about homelessness in Minnesota: The information presented here is based on an analysis of the statewide survey of homeless people conducted by Wilder Research on October 25, 2012. Face-to-face interviews were conducted with more than 4,500 people experiencing homelessness throughout the state and weighted to represent the 10,214 homeless adults, youth, and children who were counted on that date.

Quick look at key findings links to all homeless information on our website www.wilder.org/Wilder-Research/Research-Areas/Homelessness/Pages/Statewide-Homeless-Study-Most-Recent-Results.aspx

Detailed data tables from the 2012 and 2009 studies at www.wilder.org/Wilder-Research/Research-Areas/Homelessness/Pages/Statewide-Homeless-Study-Detailed-Data.aspx

All homeless publications from Wilder Research at www.wilder.org/Wilder-Research/Publications/Pages/results-Homelessness-Housing.aspx

Study findings about homeless youth at www.wilder.org/Wilder-Research/Research-Areas/Homelessness/Pages/Homeless-Youth-In-Minnesota.aspx

Homeless service use (HMIS reports) at www.wilder.org/redirects/HomelessServiceUseinMinnesota.html

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