COUNT US IN

2016
Report

King County's Point-In-Time Count

of Homeless & Unstably Housed Young People

March 2016

ALLHOME

United Way

United Way of King County

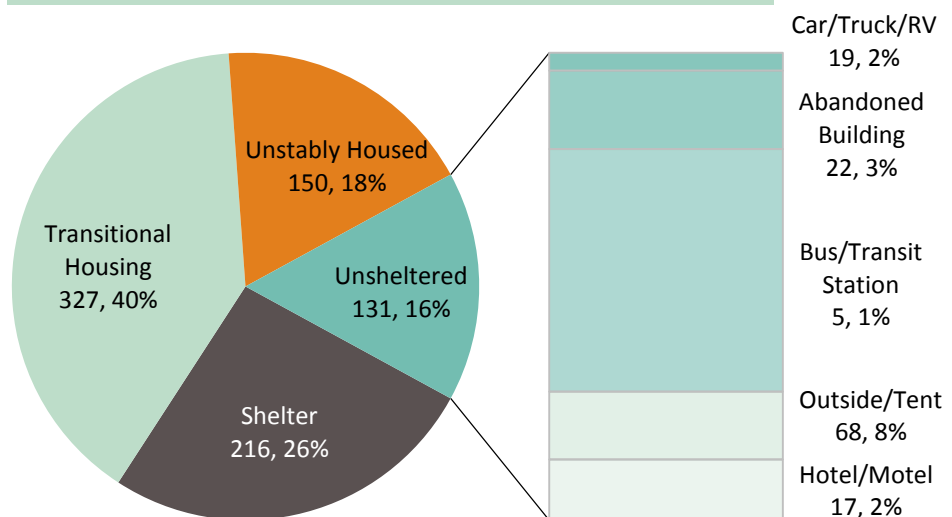This page intentionally left blank.

Executive Summary

Count Us In is King County's annual effort to count youth and young adults (YYA) ages 12-25 who are homeless or unstably housed. Count Us In documents the nature and extent of homelessness, and builds better understanding about this unique population. On January 28, 2016, King County held its sixth annual Count Us In.

824 ➡️ **The number of homeless and unstably housed youth and young adults identified through Count Us In.**

This number includes unaccompanied YYA identified through the Count Us In survey *(administered by partner locations throughout King County on January 28th, 2016)* **and unaccompanied YYA staying in shelter or transitional housing** *(identified through HMIS)*.

Housing Status of Youth and Young Adults on January 27th, 2016

Unstably Housed 150, 18%
Transitional Housing 327, 40%
Unsheltered 131, 16%
Shelter 216, 26%

Car/Truck/RV 19, 2%
Abandoned Building 22, 3%
Bus/Transit Station 5, 1%
Outside/Tent 68, 8%
Hotel/Motel 17, 2%

Count Us In: Results at a Glance

2015	2016
824 YYA on January 21, 2015	**824 YYA on January 27, 2016**
199 in shelter 170 unstably housed *322 in transitional housing 133 unsheltered*	*216 in shelter 150 unstably housed* *327 in transitional housing 131 unsheltered*
6% increase in homeless and unstably housed YYA from 2014	**No change in the number of homeless and unstably housed YYA from 2015**
71 partner locations administered the survey	72 partner locations administered the survey

Consistent Profiles of Homeless and Unstably Housed Youth Are Emerging

12% under age 18 34% African American/Black 13% Hispanic 22% LGBTQ 47% stayed with family at some point in the past 3 mos.	13% under age 18 32% African American/Black 13% Hispanic 27% LGBTQ 43% stayed with family at some point in the past 3 mos.

Homeless and unstably housed YYA come from nearly every zip code in King County

Count Us In informs our regional effort to make homelessness among youth and young adults a rare, brief, and one-time experience.

Over several years of conducting Count Us In, **a consistent profile of the young people experiencing homelessness and housing instability has emerged.** We know that homeless and unstably housed YYA come from nearly every zip code in King County, often identify as LGBTQ, are disproportionately people of color, often have experiences with the foster care and juvenile justice systems, frequently maintain connections to family, and are usually in school, employed, or looking for work.

This knowledge informed our community's Comprehensive Plan to Prevent and End Youth and Young Adult Homelessness, which was updated in 2015 and is being implemented throughout King County. Key elements of our Comprehensive Plan Refresh are summarized below. **More information on our plan and our progress are available at** *http://allhomekc.org/the-progress/*.

OUR VISION		OUR STRATEGIES
	Fewer young people will be unsheltered and literally on the streets through improved pathways out of shelter to free up existing capacity.	Connect young people with families whenever appropriate
		Create pathways out of shelter such as host homes
	Young people experiencing homelessness will be placed quickly in housing that is supportive and cost effective.	Sustain programs created to fill housing gaps
		Prevent exits to homelessness from other systems
	When homelessness does occur, it will be a one-time experience.	Support young people's independence through education, employment and stability services
		Improve skills of front line staff to meet needs of young people
	LGBTQ young people and young people of color experiencing homelessness will receive culturally competent services and achieve outcomes on par with their peers.	Develop culturally-tailored Rapid Rehousing option
		Strengthen cultural competence to serve all YYA experiencing homelessness
		Continue LGBTQ capacity building efforts
	We will have an efficient coordinated entry system. We will know what housing is needed to end youth and young adult homelessness.	Improve access to housing through Coordinated Entry
		Support housing programs in meeting the needs of young people prioritized for housing
		Increase and diversify housing options aligned to YYA needs

The number of homeless and unstably housed youth and young adults identified through Count Us In in 2016 was unchanged from 2015, even during a period of great challenges. During the past year, our community declared a State of Emergency related to homelessness, and other measures have shown large increases in the total number of individuals experiencing homelessness. While even one young person sleeping outside is unacceptable, the stability in the number of young people identified through Count Us In suggests that our regional efforts focused on preventing and ending youth and young adults are having an impact.

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Introduction

Count Us In is King County's annual effort to count youth and young adults (YYA) ages 12-25 who are homeless or unstably housed. On January 28, 2016, King County held its sixth annual Count Us In, making efforts to improve the count each year.[1] While the inaugural year had eight partner locations, now in its sixth year, the count has grown to 72 locations. In 2016, for the first time, a youth-specific Community Resource Exchange was held on the day of Count Us In to help connect young people who participated in Count Us In with resources. Our community's commitment to this issue is strong.

Count Us In takes place alongside our community's One Night Count, an annual point-in-time count of people who are experiencing homelessness that is mandated by HUD and organized locally by Seattle/ King County Coalition on Homelessness.[2] Count Us In allows for a "deeper dive" into the scope of youth and young adult homelessness by documenting the nature and extent of homelessness, which helps build a better understanding about this unique population.

> Count Us In is an important advocacy tool, not just for service providers, but for youth themselves. After learning that there were no shelters in her community, a teen volunteer declared that she would go to the local City Council to tell them how much one is needed.
>
> -Count Us In survey partner

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[1] Count Us In surveys were administered on January 28, 2016 and refer to the night of January 27, 2016. HMIS data used in Count Us In results is based on the night of January 27, 2016.
[2] Results from the 2016 One Night Count are available at
http://www.homelessinfo.org/what_we_do/one_night_count/2016_results.php

Methodology
of Count Us In

The methodology for Count Us In continues to improve each year. While the inaugural year had eight partner locations, now in its sixth year, the count has grown to 72 locations. Not only is Count Us In a means to document the unique needs and experiences of homeless and unstably housed YYA, it is also an opportunity to spread awareness about this important issue.

Count Us In Survey Data	**+**	HMIS Data for January 27, 2016	**=**	Count Us In Results
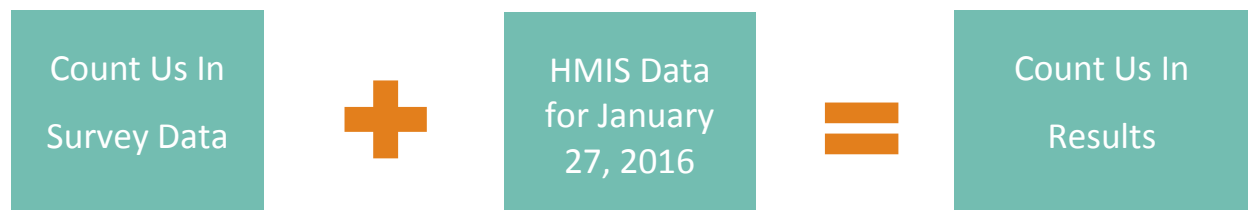
Count Us In uses a survey of YYA *and* HMIS data to create an overall profile of youth homelessness on a single day.

Count Us In Surveys

King County homeless youth and young adult providers and community partners surveyed young people as part of Count Us In during the day and evening of January 28, 2016.[3] Surveys were conducted at a total of 72 agencies and partner locations.[4] For the first time, the Count Us In survey was made available in Spanish this year.

Surveys were administered by agency staff and volunteers. Training sessions were provided prior to the event, inviting staff and volunteers to learn about Count Us In and the survey tool, and receive survey and publicity materials (t-shirts, posters, and handbills). The United Way of King County provided a small stipend to each participating provider agency to help support activities for Count Us In and provide incentives to encourage YYA participation.

Count Us In took place on the day prior to King County's One Night Count; these complementary events use a different methodology and result in different data pertaining to their purposes. As the day of January 28th drew to an end and the overnight One Night Count began, four agencies serving homeless youth and young adults hosted "sleepover sites" from January 28-29. Young people who would otherwise be sleeping on the streets were encouraged to gather at these locations at night in order to complete a Count Us In survey and to be counted as part of the One Night Count between 2am and 5am.

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[3] The Count Us In survey and training tool are provided in Appendix A and Appendix B.
[4] Count Us In partners are listed in Appendix C.

A new addition to Count Us In this year was a Community Resource Exchange held at New Horizons Ministries on the day of Count Us In. The Community Resources Exchange was coordinated and supported by the United Way of King County, and created an opportunity for young people to complete Count Us In surveys while also accessing a variety of services and resources for young people. Resources included a dental van, eye care, animal services, haircuts, a resume writing workshop, and connections to a range of services.

1405 surveys were completed for Count Us In. Surveys not eligible to be included in the analysis included YYA who had already completed a survey, YYA who had stayed in a shelter or transitional housing program, YYA whose survey responses indicated that they were stably housed, or respondents who were not within the valid age range of 12-25. 281 surveys indicated that a YYA was homeless or unstably housed; these YYA are included in the analysis in this report.[5] An additional 188 YYA who were not homeless or unstably housed on January 27, 2016 reported having been unstably housed at some point in the past.

A unique element of Count Us In is the partnership between agencies in the homeless YYA continuum of care, agencies serving youth and families without an explicit focus on homelessness, and community partners such as libraries and community centers. Participation in Count Us In brings together agencies and community organizations who might not otherwise be considered as working with homeless young people. Efforts are ongoing to ensure count methodology is appropriate and inclusive for all YYA, regardless of housing status or self-identification as homeless. Toward that end, the Mockingbird Society hosted an Americorps VISTA from February 2015 through January 2016 to make recommendations regarding improvements to Count Us In. The Americorps VISTA researched literature about survey methodology, interviewed service providers and other partners who had participated in Count Us In 2015, and interviewed homeless youth, including members of Youth Advocates Ending Homelessness.[6] Many of these recommendations resulted in changes to the survey tool and administration of the survey in 2016.

Consistent with previous years, a debriefing session was held during the week following the count. This gathering was a celebration of the diversity of provider agencies and organizations who had contributed to Count Us In, and invited individuals to share stories, feedback, and comments about their experiences during the coordination and implementation of the count. This information will be used to improve subsequent years of Count Us In.

HMIS Data

In addition to the survey process described above, data from the Safe Harbors HMIS were also pulled for the night prior to the count to correspond with the "where you stayed last night" question on the survey. HMIS data show that 543 YYA (ages 12-25) unaccompanied by parents or guardians were in shelters and transitional living programs on the night of January 27, 2016. This is an increase from 2015, reflecting the expanded capacity of resources in our community through the increase of young adult shelter beds during the past year.

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[5] Details regarding how survey data were used to determine which youth were unsheltered or unstably housed are included as Appendix C.

[6] A summary of the work of the Mockingbird Society's Americorps VISTA is provided as Appendix E.

Data Quality

Count Us In is the most comprehensive count of YYA in King County. The dataset includes a large sample of homeless and unstably housed youth and young adults in King County and therefore the demographic profile is meaningful. These demographic data represent the best available point-in-time profile of our homeless/unstably housed YYA population. However, some limitations to the data are described below.

The data reflect, in part, the profiles of youth who use participating programs. This might result in omitting youth who do not access services, are outside of the target demographic or geographic reach of these programs, and those who did not respond to outreach methods. The inclusion of providers not focused exclusively on serving homeless youth and young adults, such libraries and community centers, is an effort to address some of these limitations.

Data regarding YYA sexual orientation is not consistently entered in HMIS. HMIS is missing sexual orientation for 50% of YYA who stayed in a shelter or transitional housing program on January 27, 2016. Due to low data quality, these data are not included in this report, though there may be opportunity to analyze these data in future years.

YYA surveyed at King County Juvenile Detention are not unsheltered or unstably housed, but may have a history of housing instability. One of our partner locations for Count Us In is King County Juvenile Detention, as housing instability is often experienced by young people who are incarcerated. Due to being in detention at the time of Count Us In, these youth were not classified as unstably housed on the night of Count Us In and therefore are not included in most data throughout the report. While these surveys were analyzed separately, they may be included in the count of YYA who have a history of housing instability.

Results:

Survey + HMIS Data

On the night of January 27, 2016, YYA ages 12-25 were homeless or unstably housed, based on data from HMIS and Count Us In surveys.

An additional 188 who were not homeless or unstably housed on the night of the count reported having a history of housing instability. These YYA are not included in the demographic profiles throughout this report because they did not report being homeless or unstably housed for Count Us In; however, the large number of these youth highlights that many youth experience periods of both stable and unstable housing over time.

The following section will provide data for the 824 YYA identified as homeless or unstably housed through HMIS and Count Us In surveys.

Overview of Findings

Of 824 homeless and unstably housed youth and young adults identified through Count Us In 2016	
26% (216) stayed in shelter 40% (327) stayed in transitional housing	16% (131) were unsheltered 18% (150) were unstably housed
13% (111) under age 18	
53% (436) youth of color	
13% (107) Hispanic, 67% (548) non-Hispanic	
47% (384) female 48% (392) male 3% (26) transgender/gender-queer	
Homeless and unstably housed YYA come from nearly every zip code in King County. Of those who provided zip code information: • 81% (560) YYA were last housed in King County • 13% (89) YYA were last housed in WA, outside of King County • 6% (40) YYA were last housed outside of Washington State	

	Shelter	Transitional Housing	Unsheltered	Unstably Housed
2014	159	303	124	193
2015	199	322	133	170
2016	216	327	131	150
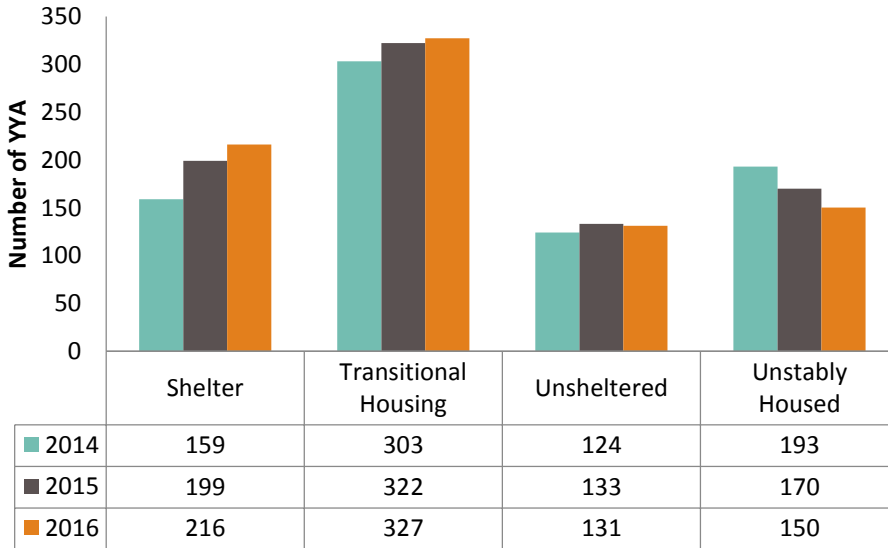
Where Unsheltered Youth and Young Adults Slept on January 27, 2016
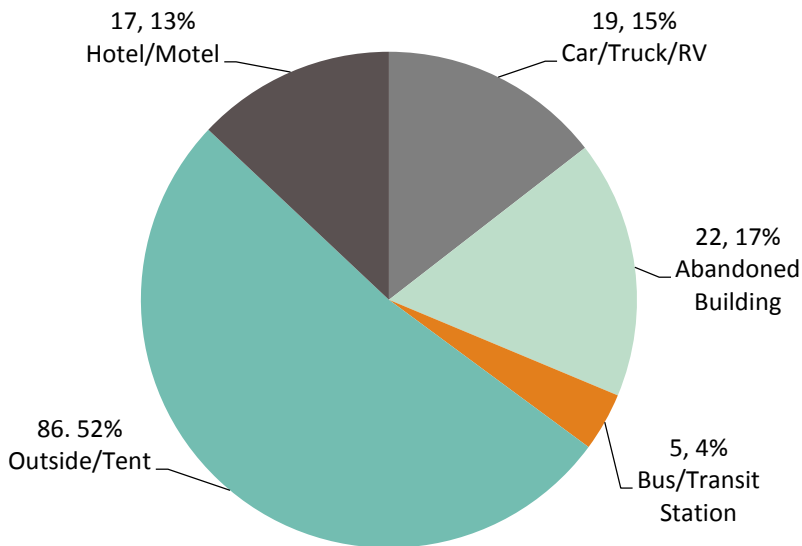
Count Us In found that on January 27, 2016:

- 26% (216) YYA stayed in shelter

- 40% (327) YYA stayed in transitional housing

- 16% (131) YYA were unsheltered

- 18% (150) YYA were unstably housed

17, 13% Hotel/Motel

19, 15% Car/Truck/RV

22, 17% Abandoned Building

86. 52% Outside/Tent

5, 4% Bus/Transit Station

Ages of Homeless and Unstably Housed Youth and Young Adults

Bar chart showing ages from 12 to 25:

Age	Count
12	10
13	6
14	10
15	11
16	29
17	45
18	50
19	72
20	99
21	100
22	92
23	97
24	95
25	103
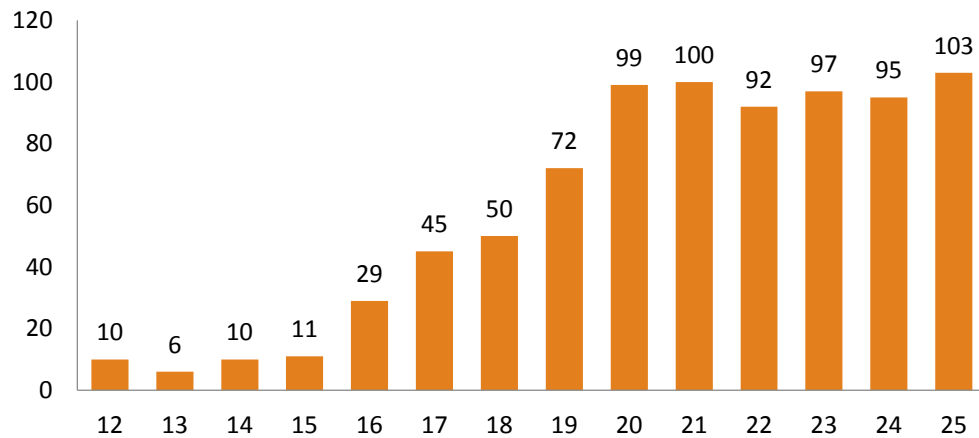
Most homeless and unstably housed young people are between the ages of 21-25

Donut chart:
- 13% Age 12 to 17
- 27% Age 18 to 20
- 59% Age 21 to 25
- 1% Missing
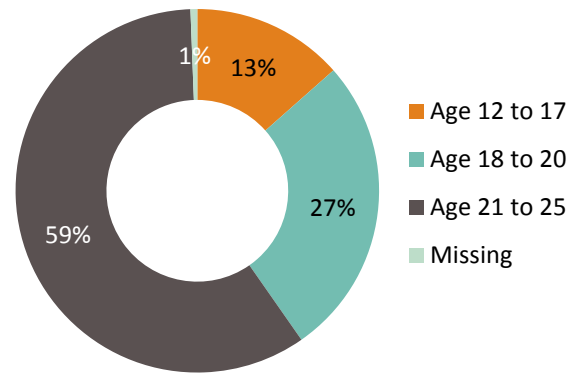
Young people who identified as male or female were evenly represented among those who experienced homelessness and housing. 47% (384) of homeless and unstably housed YYA identified as female, 48% (392) identified as male, and 3% (26) identified as transgender or gender-queer.

Gender Identity of Homeless and Unstably Housed Youth and Young Adults

Gender	Count
Female	384
Male	392
Transgender/Gender non-conforming	26
Other/Unknown	22

Race of Homeless and Unstably Housed Youth and Young Adults

American Indian/Alaskan Native	23, 3%
Asian	23, 3%
African American/Black	260, 32%
Caucasian/White	281, 34%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	13, 2%
Multi-racial	117, 14%
Other/Missing	107, 13%
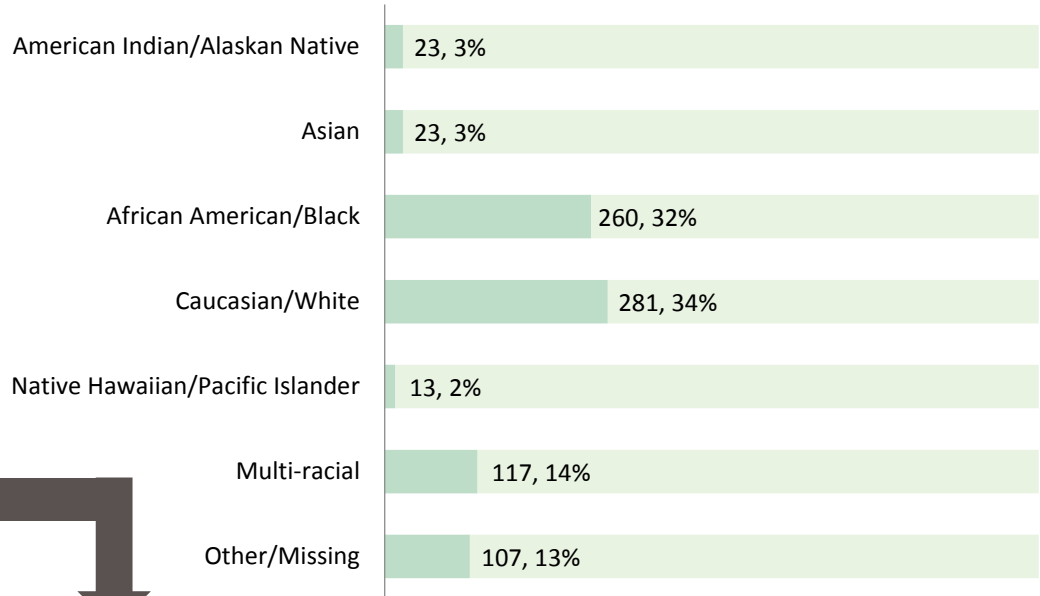
53% (436) of homeless and unstably housed YYA were youth of color. This compares to 29% of all King County residents.

In addition, 13% of homeless and unstably housed YYA identified as Hispanic.

This is consistent with research showing that youth of color are disproportionately represented among homeless YYA. Data for all benchmarks of the Comprehensive Plan to Prevent and End Youth and Young Adult Homelessness are disaggregated by race and ethnicity. As King County continues to work toward making homelessness rare, brief, and one-time, **the goal is parity in outcomes.**

Ethnicity of Homeless and Unstably Housed Youth and Young Adults

Hispanic	107, 13%
Non-Hispanic	548, 67%
Unknown/Missing	169, 20%
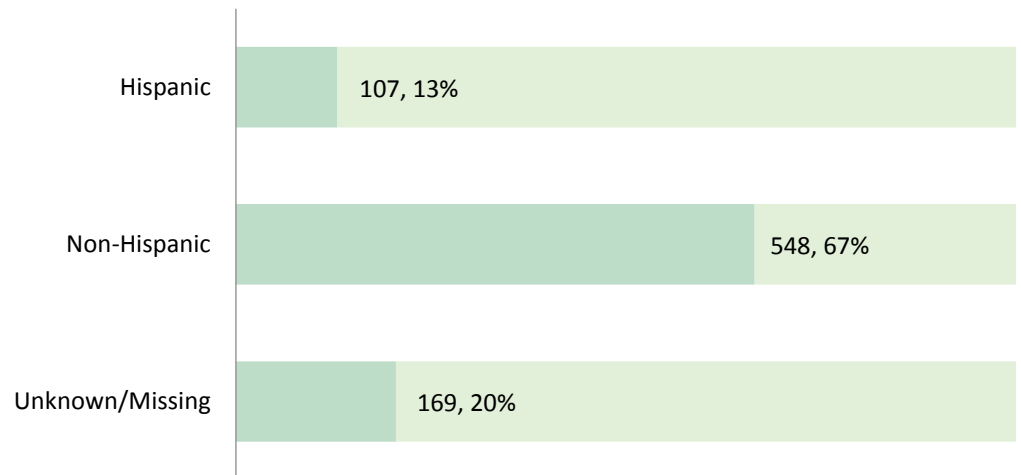
Geographic Distribution of Homeless and Unstably Housed Youth and Young Adults
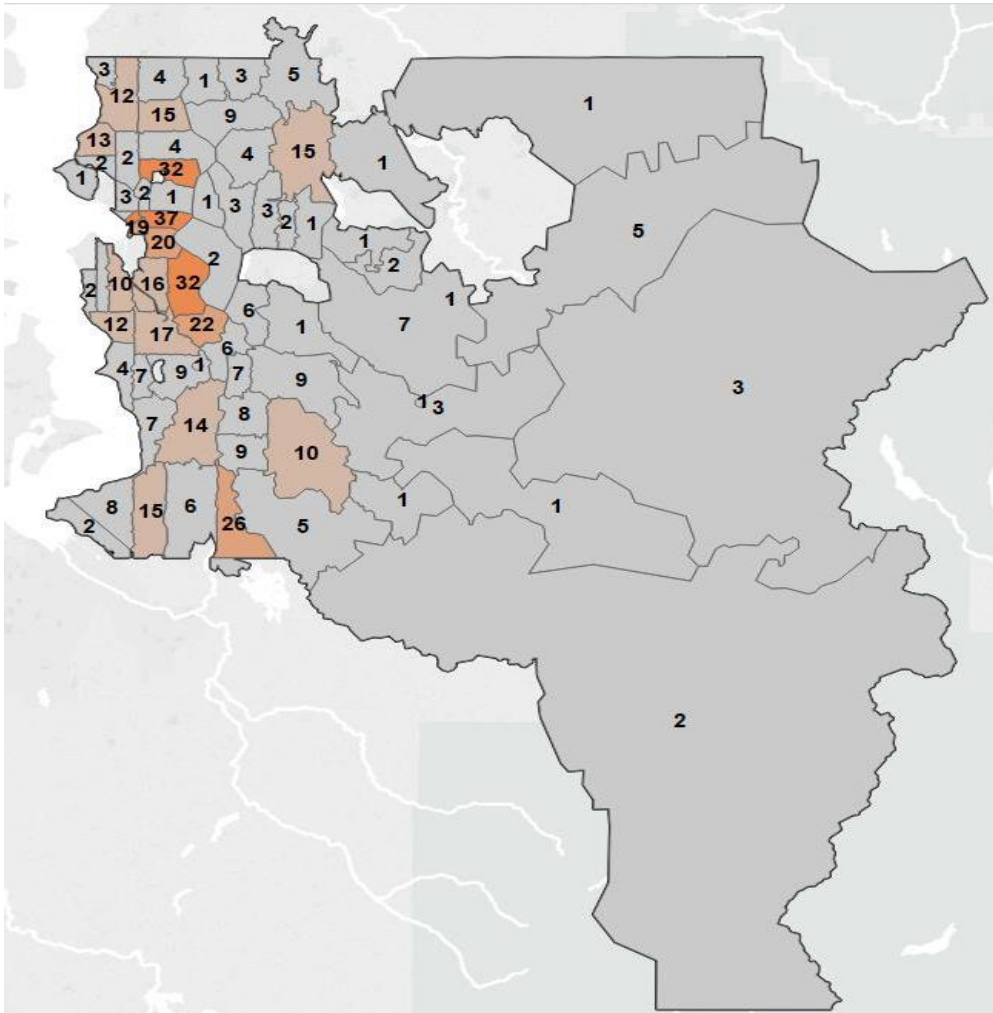
Of the YYAs for whom zip code data were available:

- The last zip code for 560 YYAs (81%) was in King County *(see details in table and map provided)*

- The last zip code for 89 YYAs (13%) was a county in Washington outside of King County. The last zip code for 40 YYAs (6%) was from outside of Washington State.

Zip code data were unavailable for 135 YYAs.

The top ten reported zip codes were:

Zip code	# of YYA	Zip Code	# of YYA
98122 (Central District/ Capitol Hill)	37	98178 (Tukwila)	22
98105 (University District)	32	98144 (Mount Baker/ Beacon Hill)	20
98118 (Rainier Valley)	32	98104 (Downtown)	19
98101 (Downtown)	29	98168 (Tukwila)	17
98002 (Auburn)	26	98108 (Georgetown)	16

Results:

survey data only

The following section will provide data for 281 YYA identified through the Count Us In surveys. This data is not available in HMIS, but was collected from YYA who completed a Count Us In survey at one of the partner locations on January 28, 2016.

Overview of Findings

Of 281 homeless and unstably housed youth and young adults identified through Count Us In surveys
38% (108) are enrolled in school
37% (57) who are not enrolled in school have graduated from high school or received a GED
27% (75) identify as LGBTQ
27% (77) are currently employed
59% (165) are looking for a job
49% (139) have been to detention/jail
22% (62) have been in foster care
16% (46) are pregnant or parenting
43% (121) report having stayed with family during the past three months

Legend:
- Not Enrolled in School
- Enrolled in School
- Not Answered

Donut chart:
- 154, 55%
- 108, 38%
- 19, 7%
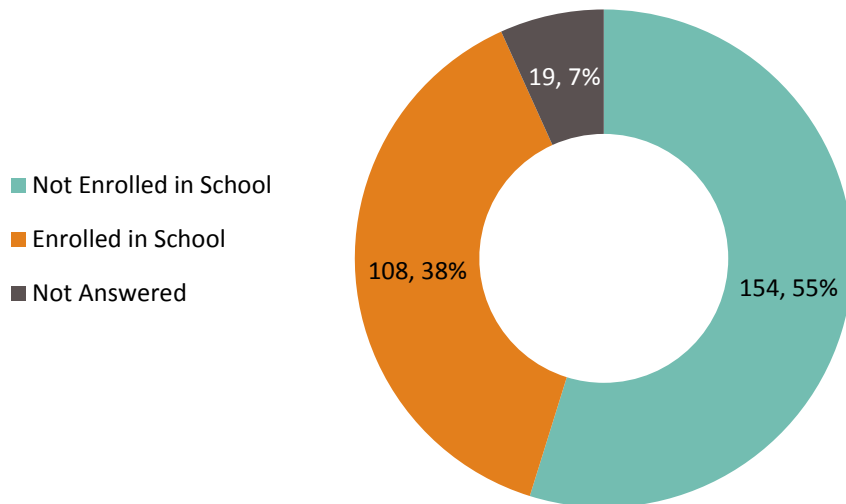
Highest Level of Education for Homeless and Unstably Housed Youth and Young Adults Not Currently Enrolled in School (n=154)

38% (108) of homeless and unstably housed youth and young adults who completed the survey are enrolled in school.

37% (57) of homeless and unstably housed youth not currently enrolled in school have graduated from high school or received a GED.

Bar chart (axis: 0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80):
- 8th Grade or Less: 14, 9%
- Some High School: 67, 44%
- Graduated High School/GED: 57, 37%
- Some College/College Degree: 11, 7%
- Other/Unknown: 5, 3%
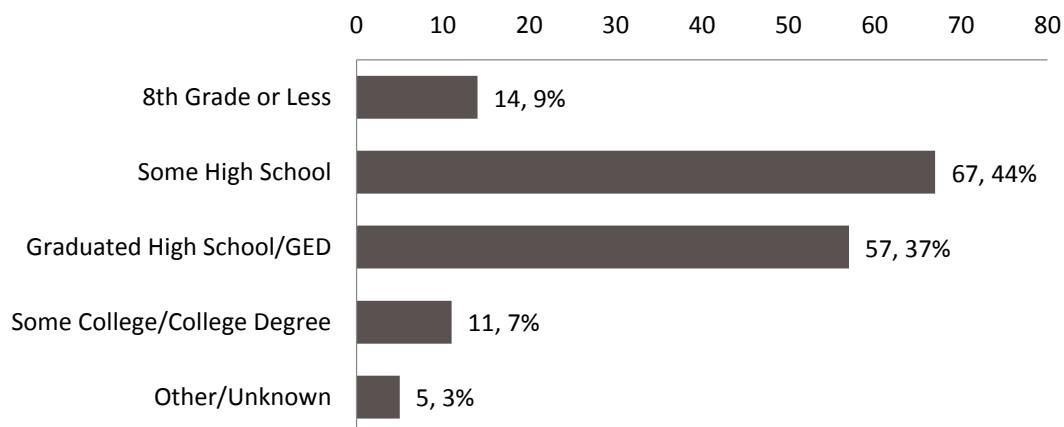
27% of homeless and unstably housed YYA identify as LGBTQ. This includes a cross-tabulation of sexual orientation and gender identity.

Consistent with other national and local research related to homeless young people, Count Us In surveys indicate that a disproportionate number of homeless and unstably housed youth and young adults identify as LGBTQ.

Based on the priorities of the Comprehensive Plan to Prevent and End Youth and Young Adult Homelessness by 2020, partners in our community are working together to the ability of homeless YYA providers to effectively support LGBTQ young people.

Sexual Orientation of Homeless and Unstably Housed Youth and Young Adults

Questioning 10, 4%

Refused 10, 4%

Queer 13, 5%

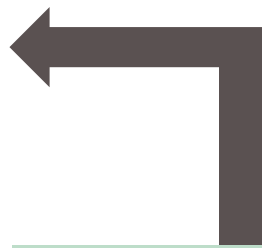Bisexual or Pansexual 36, 13%

Lesbian or Gay 12, 4%

Straight 220, 71%
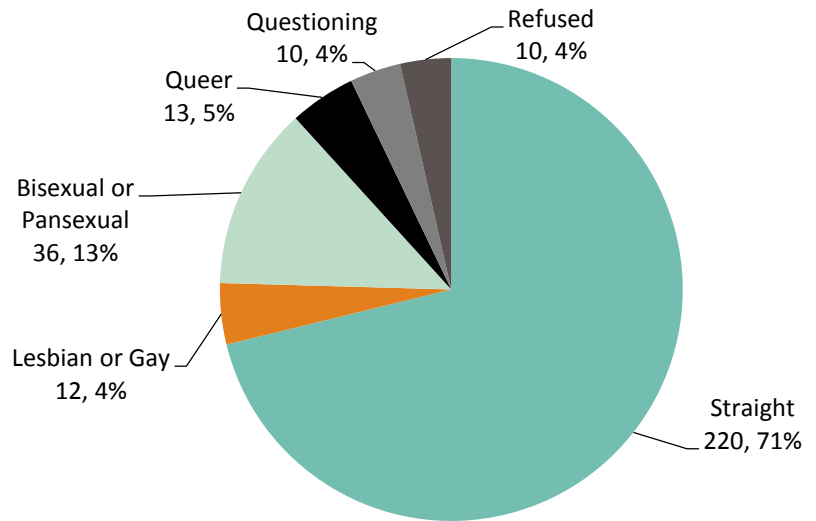
Additional Characteristics of Homeless and Unstably Housed Youth and Young Adults

Are you currently employed? — Yes, 27%
Are you currently looking for a job? — Yes, 59%
Have you ever served in the U.S. Armed Forces? — Yes, 1%
Are you an actived National Guard or Reservist? — Yes, 0%
Are you pregnant or parenting? — Yes, 16%
Have you ever been to detention or jail? — Yes, 49%
Have you ever been in foster care? — Yes, 22%
Have you ever been evicted from a rental where your... — Yes, 11%
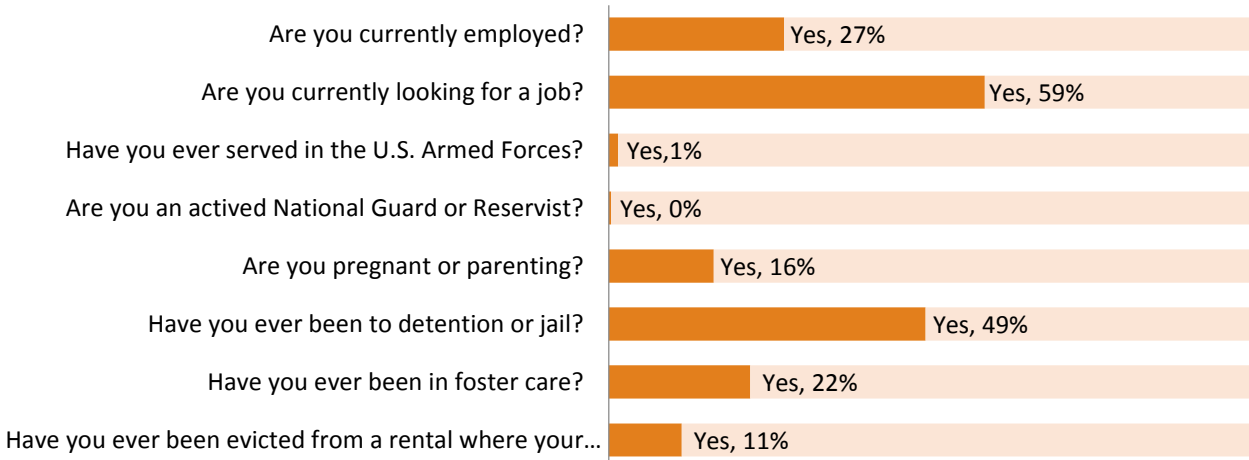
Where Homeless Youth and Young Adults Have Stayed During the Three Months Prior to Count Us In
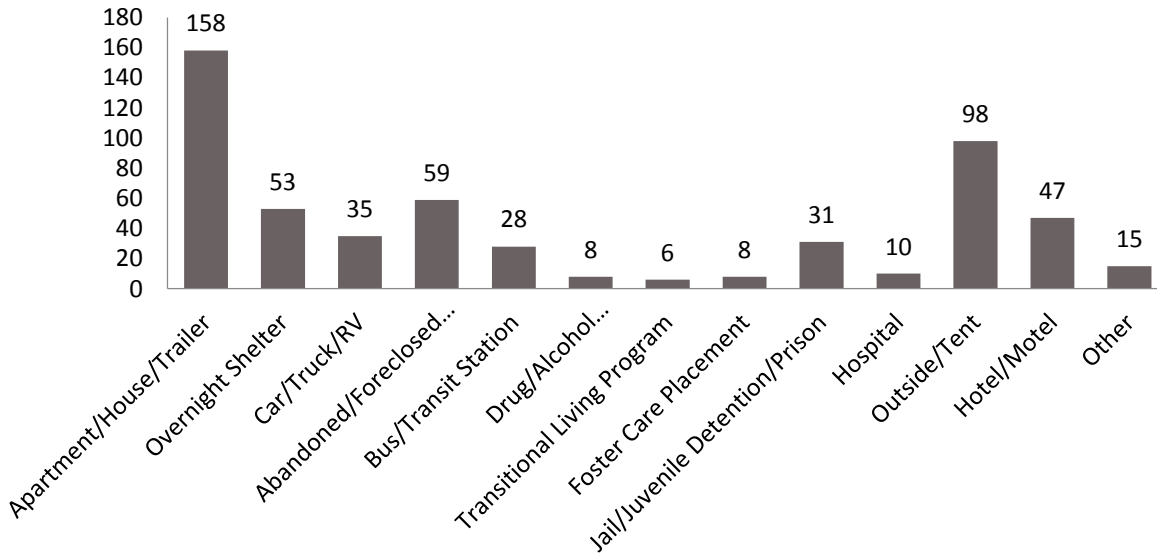
With Whom Homeless Youth and Young Adults Have Stayed During the Three Months Prior to Count Us In
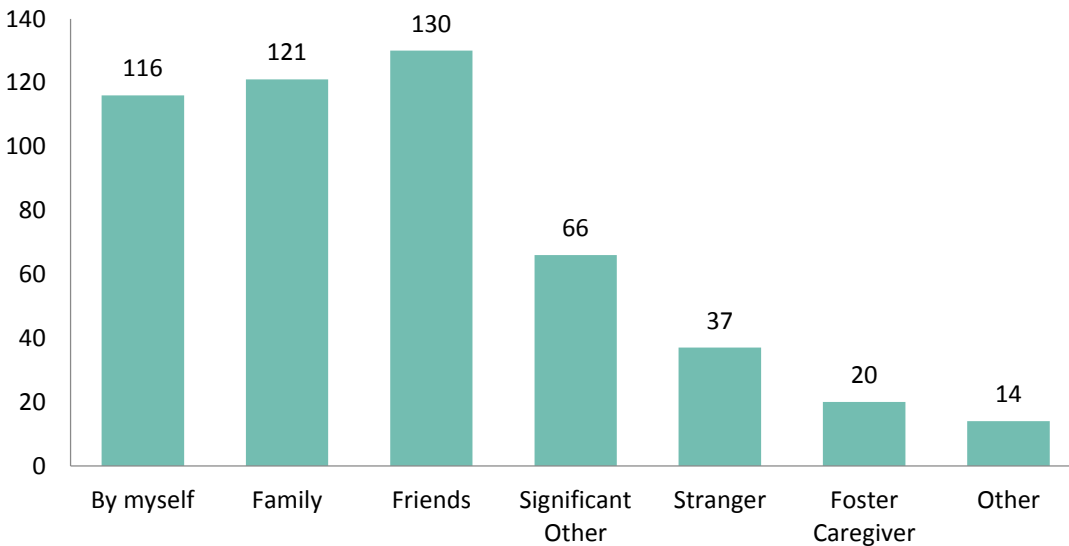
43% of YYAs report having stayed with their parents or other relatives at some point during the 3 months prior to Count Us In.

Results:

King County Juvenile Detention surveys

For the second year, Count Us In surveys were administered at King County Juvenile Detention in 2016, as housing instability is often experienced by young people who are incarcerated. The following section provides data for 43 YYA who completed the Count Us In survey at King County Juvenile Detention. They are not included in the above demographic profiles due to being housed in detention on January 27, 2016.

Missing
5%

18, 42%
History of
instability/
homelessness

23, 53%
No history of
instability/
homelessness
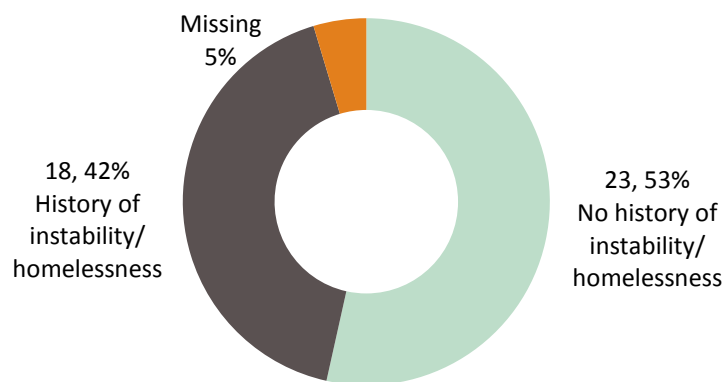
42% (18) of YYA in detention report that they have a history of homelessness and/or housing instability.

Of the 43 young people surveyed, **5 indicated that they would be unsheltered or didn't know where they would stay when released.**

Housing Plans after Release of Youth and Young Adults with a History of Not Knowing Where They Would Sleep At Night (n=43)

Outside
1, 2%

Missing
13, 30%

Don't Know
3, 7%

Bus/Transit
1, 2%

Family
1, 2%

Foster Care
1, 3%

Drug/Alcohol
Treatment/Detox
Center
1, 3%

Apartment
22, 51%
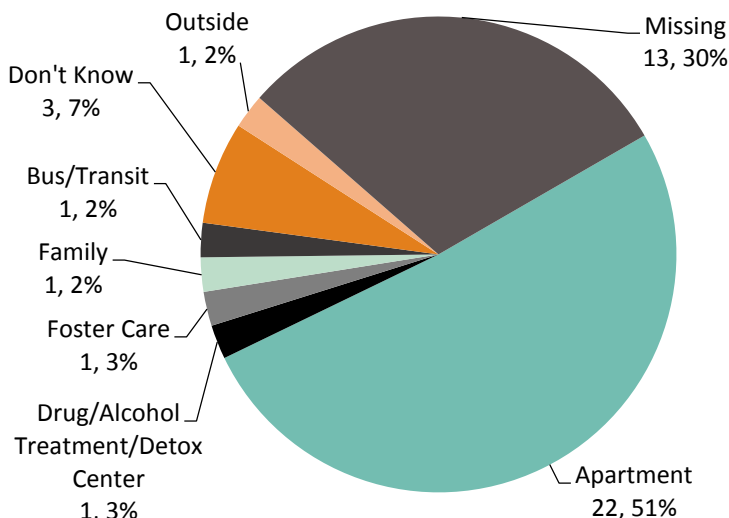
Conclusion

These are our young people. Homeless and unstably housed YYA in King County come from nearly every zip code. Count Us In is one of the critical annual benchmarks that tells us about the potential needs and resources of YYA, and if progress is being made.

Through several years of Count Us In, clear and consistent profile of young people experiencing homelessness has emerged. We know that homeless and unstably housed YYA often identify as LGBTQ, are predominantly people of color, often have experiences with the foster care and juvenile justice systems, frequently maintain connections to family, and are usually in school, employed, or looking for work.

Count Us In informs our regional effort to make homelessness among youth and young adults a rare, brief, and one-time experience. Information from Count Us In informs our Comprehensive Plan Refresh, leading to strategies such as family reunification, a clear focus on disproportionality for LGBTQ young people and young people of color, a priority on preventing homelessness among young people with foster care and juvenile justice experiences, expansion of education and employment programming, and new housing options designed to help young people move out of shelter more quickly. **More information on our plan and our progress are available at** *http://allhomekc.org/the-progress/*.

The number of young people identified as homeless or unstably housed through Count Us In did not change over the past year. This stability is remarkable during a period of great challenges related to homelessness in our community. There are many reasons to hope that we can impact this issue—we have made great strides by coming together as a community with a focus on youth homelessness, and there is much work left to be done.

Appendices

A. Count Us In 2016 Survey

   On the day of Count Us In, survey was provided on a legal-sized sheet of paper to maintain one page format, and Spanish language version of survey was also available. For the purposes of this report, the English language version is provided and is formatted on standard size paper.
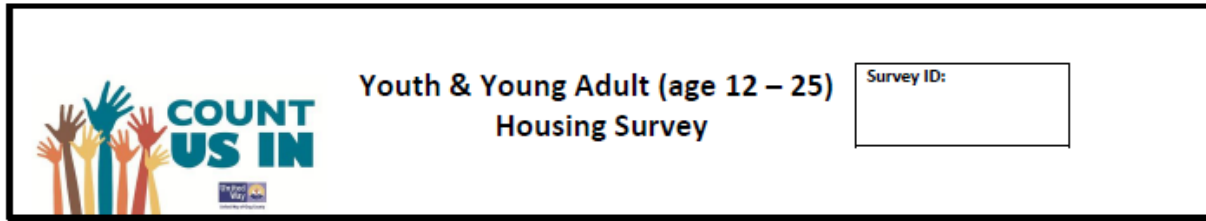
B. Count Us In 2016 Training Tool

C. Definitions and Terminology

D. Count Us In Partner Locations

E. Recommendations to Improve Count Us In

F. Comparability: 2015 to 2016

APPENDIX A

Youth & Young Adult (age 12 – 25) Housing Survey

Survey ID:

Have you already taken this survey today? ☐ Yes   ☐ No

Age:_____   Zip code of last permanent address:_____

Race (check all that apply):
☐ American Indian/Alaska Native   ☐ Asian   ☐ African American/Black
☐ Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander   ☐ Caucasian/White ☐ Refused ☐ Write-In: _____

Ethnicity (check all that apply): ☐ Hispanic/Latino/Spanish   ☐ Non-Hispanic/Latino/Spanish   ☐ Refused

Which of the following best represents how you think of your gender? (check all that apply):
☐ Male   ☐ Female   ☐ Transgender   ☐ Gender-queer   ☐ Gender non-conforming
☐ Non-binary   ☐ Refused   ☐ Write-In: _____

Which of the following best represents how you think of your sexual orientation? (check all that apply):
☐ Straight   ☐ Lesbian or Gay   ☐ Bisexual   ☐ Pansexual   ☐ Queer
☐ I don't know/questioning   ☐ Refused   ☐ Write-In: _____

Where did you stay last night? (Check ONE)
☐ Apartment/House/Trailer   ☐ Drug/alcohol treatment/detox center   ☐ Hospital
☐ Overnight/ Emergency Shelter   ☐ Transitional Living Program   ☐ Outside/Tent
☐ Car/Truck/RV   ☐ Foster care placement   ☐ Hotel/ Motel
☐ Abandoned/foreclosed building/ squat ☐ Jail/Juvenile Detention/Prison   **Paid by:** ☐ DSHS / Foster Care
                                                                                  ☐ Self   ☐ Other
☐ Bus/ Transit Station   ☐ Other/ Write-In: _____

Whom did you stay with last night? (Check all that apply)
☐ By myself   ☐ Friends (not related)   ☐ Stranger
☐ Family (parents, siblings, other relatives) ☐ Significant Other   ☐ Foster Caregiver
☐ Other/ Write-In: _____

Can you live where you stayed last night for the next month? ☐ Yes   ☐ No   ☐ I Don't Know

Do you feel safe where you stayed last night? ☐ Yes   ☐ No   ☐ I Don't Know

Where have you stayed in the last 3 months? (Check all that apply)
☐ Apartment/House/Trailer   ☐ Drug/alcohol treatment/detox center   ☐ Hospital
☐ Overnight Shelter   ☐ Transitional Living Program   ☐ Outside/Tent
☐ Car/Truck/RV   ☐ Foster care placement   ☐ Hotel/ Motel
☐ Abandoned/foreclosed building/ squat ☐ Jail/juvenile detention/prison   **Paid by:** ☐ DSHS / Foster Care
                                                                                  ☐ Self   ☐ Other
☐ Bus/ Transit Station   ☐ Other/ Write-In: _____

Whom have you stayed with during the last 3 months? (Check all that apply)
☐ By myself   ☐ Friends (not related)   ☐ Stranger

APPENDIX A

☐ Family (parents, siblings, other relatives)   ☐ Significant Other   ☐ Foster Caregiver
☐ Other/ Write-In: _____

Has there been a time in the past when you didn't know where you would be sleeping at night? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Have you ever been evicted from an apartment where your name was on the lease? ☐ Yes ☐ No

What is the last grade you <u>completed</u>? (Check ONE) ☐ Elementary School   ☐ 6th ☐ 7th ☐ 8th ☐ 9th

☐ 10th ☐ 11th ☐ 12th ☐ HS Diploma   ☐ GED   ☐ Some College   ☐ Other: _____

Are you currently enrolled in school?   ☐ Yes ☐ No

Do you have a job?   Are you currently looking for a job?
☐ Yes   ☐ No   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

Have you ever been in foster care?   Have you ever been to detention or jail?
☐ Yes   ☐ No   ☐ Yes   ☐ No

Are you pregnant or parenting?   Have you ever served in the U.S. Armed Forces?
☐ Yes   ☐ No   ☐ Yes   ☐ No   ☐ Unsure
                                                          Are you an activated National Guard or Reservist?
                                                          ☐ Yes   ☐ No

If you don't have anywhere to sleep tonight, ask staff for the green piece of paper.
Thank you for filling out this survey!

**2016 Count Us In
Survey Training Tool**

This document provides training information for the 2016 Count Us In survey. Staff/volunteers should use this sheet as a reference to help participants answer the survey questions accurately. Please read this document before administering the survey to youth and young adults (YYA).

On January 28, 2016, and into the early morning of January 29rd for slumber party sites, service providers across King County, in coordination with United Way of King County, will host a point in time count. The goal of this effort is to gain a clearer understanding of the number of young people without a stable place to live on any given night in King County. By enhancing the community's knowledge of this issue, we can further our efforts to create a community where no youth or young adult is left without a safe place to sleep.

Quick Guide

1. Your agency will receive a packet of surveys with a cover sheet with your agency name and the number of surveys provided. Each survey will be numbered.

2. Instructions for what to do if your site runs out of surveys are on the front of this packet.

3. Strongly encourage youth or young adults (YYA) fill out the *entire* survey. Please have staff available to review submitted surveys and work with youth to answer any missed questions. Quality data requires that each question is answered accurately.

4. Privacy and confidentiality are important for an accurate count. Emphasize to YYA that the information on this survey is confidential and will not affect their eligibility for services. Avoid discussing a YYA's information in front of other YYA or staff.

5. After the count, please fill in the number of surveys that were used on the cover sheet (we will assess completeness/validity) and **BRING ALL SURVEYS TO THE COUNT US IN DEBRIEF ON FEBRUARY 1st** (2-3:30pm, 2100 Building, Community Room B, 2100 24th Avenue S., Seattle)

THANK YOU!

Administering the Survey

Who can take the survey?
This is a survey about **housing** that *any* young person ages 12-25 is invited to fill out. The Count Us In survey does not include the word "homeless" and is not limited to homeless or unstably housed young people. This

**2016 Count Us In
Survey Training Tool**

increases response rates by not uncomfortably singling out youth or young adults who are experiencing housing instability.

How to Administer the Survey
Because each Count Us In site is so different, we do not give strict instructions on how to administer the survey or plan count activities. Count Us In partner sites should plan count activities to target the youth and young adults in the communities that they serve.

There are several principles that we do want to keep consistent between Count Us In sites:
- **Consent** – young people can choose to take the survey or not
- **Privacy** – young people should feel safe to provide sensitive information
- **Accessibility** – the survey should be easy and convenient to complete
- **Safety** –Count Us In activities should not threaten the physical, emotional, or psychological safety of young people

Explaining Count Us In
All staff/volunteers involved with Count Us In should be able to explain the purpose of the survey and answer YYA's questions. A half-sheet explaining the survey will be attached to every survey. Make sure you read it and can explain the survey in your own words.

Count Us In Survey Questions

Have you already taken this survey today?
This question is **very important**. It is used to prevent duplication of surveys. If this question is not answered, none of the data in that survey can be analyzed.

As you ask the question, show the YYA the form so they can identify if they have taken the survey that day.
- ✓ *No* – proceed with filling out the survey
- ✓ *Yes* – the YYA does not need complete another survey, but can still participate in your agency's Count Us In activities

Basic Demographic Information (age, zip code, race, gender, sexual orientation)
These questions are used to help identify the characteristics of YYA who are unstably housed or homeless. This information helps ensure we have services to accommodate specific populations. We have included fill in the blank options on race, gender, and sexual orientation in order to include a broader range of young people.
Age
This question is **very important**. Without this information, the survey cannot be counted.

Zip Code
The phrasing on the survey "Zip code of last permanent address" is consistent with how this information is collected in HMIS. A more youth-friendly way to ask this may be **"***What is your family's home zip code?***"** or **"***What was your last permanent zip code?***"**

**2016 Count Us In
Survey Training Tool**

Race and Ethnicity
YYA's may choose as many Race and Ethnicity options as they identify with. These are two separate questions, consistent with the US Census.

Gender Identity
A possible script to explain this question: "*Now I am going to ask a few questions about your gender identity and sexual orientation. We would like to know these things because it will help us figure out how to improve services for all youth, including lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning youth.*"

You should not assume that you can tell a young person's gender identity from their appearance or body shape. The answer to this question may or may not be different than the sex assigned to them on their birth certificate.

If a young person asks why you are asking this question, you can explain that this is simply part of the data being collected and encourage the young person to choose the answers that best describe them. You should also reiterate that the information being collected is confidential and no personal identifiers are being collected on this survey.

Some of these answer options are words that not everyone is familiar with. If a young person asks you for the definition for one of these words, you can say: "*Not everyone identifies as male or female. These are words that some people use to describe their gender. We want everyone to be able to answer this question with the words that they feel most comfortable with. For this question, please choose the responses that you identify with.*"

Sexual Orientation
Unless care is taken to ensure *privacy* and *anonymity* during survey administration, the stigma associated with specific identity labels may reduce response rates or increase false responses.

A glossary of terms related to sexual orientation and gender identity:
- GLAAD Media Reference Guide Glossary http://www.glaad.org/reference

More resources for LGBTQ youth and allies:
- PFLAG (Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) http://community.pflag.org/
- GLSEN (Gay, Lesbian, and Straight Education Network) www.glsen.org
- YouthResource www.youthresource.org
- University of Wisconsin LGBT ally guide www.lgbt.wisc.edu/allies.htm
- True Colors Youth Count toolkit https://truecolorsfund.org/2014/12/15/true-youth-count-toolkit/

Housing Questions
These questions help us identify which YYA are currently experiencing homelessness or housing instability. These questions also help us ensure that that our housing services are responsive to the entire range of young people's housing needs.

**2016 Count Us In
Survey Training Tool**

Where did you stay last night? (Check One)
This question asks where the participant stayed overnight from Wednesday to Thursday. Check one option only. If a young person stayed in more than one place, check the place where they stayed the longest.

Location explanations
Apartment/house/ trailer– includes private apartment or home, a rented room, a stationary trailer, or subsidized rental units (section 8, other Housing Authority vouchers, permanent supportive housing, or other subsidized non-time limited housing apartments).

Drug/Alcohol Treatment/ Detox Center –includes a substance abuse inpatient treatment facility/rehab or a detox facility.

Hospital – includes youth who were admitted into the hospital for any reason including, but not limited to, the following reasons: medical, mental health, and chemical dependency.

Overnight/ Emergency Shelter – includes emergency shelter for youth and families (including young parents). Examples of shelters include YouthCare's Shelter and Friends of Youth Youth Haven. Also includes youth who are staying in a shelter with parents, friends, and/or relatives.

Transitional Living Program (not associated with foster care) – includes most Transitional Living Programs in which age and/or time-limits are a factor such as YouthCare housing, etc. This does not include juvenile detention facilities such as Spruce Street or foster care temporary placement homes.

Outside/Tent **or** *Car/Truck/ RV* **or** *Abandoned/foreclosed building/squat or Bus/Transit Station*– includes youth who are living outside, under bridges, in the park, in doorways, on the street, in alley ways, etc. Abandoned/foreclosed building/squat includes youth who are squatting or illegally living in foreclosed or empty homes/trespassing. Living in a car includes YYA's finding shelter in a car, van, or camper. Youth living in a tent includes any young person living outside in a tent as housing. Bus/ transit station includes any young people spending the night riding public transit or in a transit station. Any place not meant for habitation also falls into these categories.

Foster care placement– includes youth currently under the care of DSHS (under 18) who are wards of the state, or young adults who have signed a Voluntary Placement Agreement (VPA) with the state (if over 18) and live in foster homes or a temporary foster care facility.

Hotel/Motel (paid for by DSHS/ foster care, self, or other, such as through a housing voucher or an agency) – Check boxes to provide further detail are also offered: Paid for by self (includes youth that are staying in a hotel or motel week-to-week or day-to-day due to a lack of money for long term housing. This situation is temporary and cannot be sustained); paid for by others (such as a youth receiving hotel/motel vouchers, or an agency subsidy for hotel/motel payment); or paid for by DSHS/ foster care (youth in DSHS custody placed in a hotel due to inability to find a foster care placement).

**2016 Count Us In
Survey Training Tool**

Jail/ Juv detention/ Prison – includes any youth who were in detention or jail. This also includes youth who stayed in county juvenile detention facilities, in a Crisis Residential Center such as Spruce Street, or in a residential program, such as Echo Glen Children's Center.

Other – this category is meant to capture all other options that may not fit into any of the above categories. Do not check this if the youth is unsure, please look over the options with them and help them decide if their situation fits into one of the above categories before checking this box.

Whom did you stay with last night? (Check all that apply)
This is a new question we added this year to better understand young people's housing experiences, including whether youth are with their families or are unaccompanied.

Can you live where you stayed last night for the next month? (Yes, No, I don't know)
This question determines whether a YYA is unstably housed.
   ✓ *Yes* – YYA can stay where they stayed last night for the next month.
   ✓ *No* – YYA cannot stay where they stayed last night for the next month. Includes if the YYA is moving from place to place during the month or is at-risk of eviction from their current housing.
   ✓ *I don't know* – YYA is unsure where they will stay for the entire month

Do you feel safe where you stayed last night?
This should be answered based on the how the YYA experiences and defines safety.

Where did you live in the last 3 months? (check all that apply)
This asks the YYA where they have stayed in the past 3 months. If the YYA has stayed at more than one of the locations over the past three months then check all that apply. If a YYA has difficulty remembering the last three months, you can help them walk through their memory going backwards in time (i.e. *Where did you stay in this past week? What about the week before that?*).

Has there been a time in the past when you didn't know where you would be sleeping at night? (Check one)
   ✓ *Yes* – check if the YYA has ever been unsure of where they would sleep from night to night.

Have you ever been evicted from an apartment where your name was on the lease?
If a young person is not sure, have them check "no."

Education Status - Questions are designed to tell us more about the YYA's education history/goals
   • **What is the last grade you completed?** Check the last grade completed (e.g. if currently in 11th grade, they would check "10th"). If the YYA has graduated with a college degree, describe in "other" (e.g. AA, BA, or BS).
   • **Are you currently enrolled in school?** Check yes if the YYA is currently enrolled in school, which can include college, technical school, high school, or GED programs.

The rest of the questions are yes/no questions designed to tell us more about the YYA's circumstances and life history.

**2016 Count Us In
Survey Training Tool**

Do you have a job?

Are you currently looking for a job?

Have you ever been in foster care?

Have you ever been to detention or jail?

Are you pregnant or parenting?

Have you ever served in the U.S. Armed Forces?

Are you an activated National Guard or Reservist?

- Veterans, and dependents of a veteran, can contact **877-904-8387** (regardless of their discharge status) for services. An outreach worker will come meet with the individual, or they will provide locations for the individual to meet with staff.

Definitions and Terminology

History of Instability	YYA who reported that there has been a time in the past when they didn't know where they would be sleeping at night.
Survey Youth	YYA who completed the Count Us In survey on January 28, 2016 and met the following criteria: • Identified that they had not already taken the survey that day, • Were between 12-25 years of age, • Were either unsheltered or at risk of losing housing, and • Did <u>not</u> stay in shelter or transitional housing the night of January 27, 2016. Surveys of youth who identified that they stayed in shelter or transitional housing this night were removed from the eligible data to avoid duplication of HMIS data.
The Night of the Count	Data from HMIS was included for unaccompanied young people, 12-25, who were in shelter or transitional housing programs on the night of January 27, 2016. Count Us In surveys were administered on January 28, 2016. The question "Where did you stay last night?" refers to January 27, 2016 and was used to identify characteristics of homeless and unstably housed youth and young adults for Count Us In.
Unsheltered	YYA who slept in one of the following locations: outside/ tent, car/truck/ RV, hotel/motel, bus/ transit station, abandoned/ foreclosed building/ squat.[7]
Unstably Housed	YYA at risk of losing housing; YYA who a) did not stay in a shelter or transitional housing b) were not sleeping in one of the "unsheltered" locations or jail/ detention, and c) did not know whether they could stay in the same place as the night of January 27, 2016 for the following month.
YYA	Youth and Young Adults ages 12-25

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[7] Count Us In data in 2011-2012 used the term "literally homeless" to describe youth who slept outside, or in a tent, car/RV, hotel/motel or abandoned building. To avoid confusion with the Department of Housing and Urban Development's (HUD) definition of "literally homeless", Count Us In reports beginning with 2013 use the term "unsheltered" instead of "literally homeless" to describe these youth.

APPENDIX D

Count Us In Partner locations

Partner Location	Number Surveyed	Number Analyzed
Asian Counseling & Referral Service	0	0
Atlantic Street Family Resource Center	22	8
Auburn Youth Resources	82	42
Consejo Counseling and Referral Service	23	9
Friends of Youth	95	46
Interagency - Alder	16	4
Interagency - Beacon	22	4
Interagency- King County Juvenile Detention	43	43
Interagency- King County Jail	17	17
Interagency - Opportunity Skyway Academy	18	3
Interagency - Queen Anne Recovery School	13	4
Interagency - Southeast	10	7
Interagency - Southwest Ed	10	8
Interagency - Southwest	21	8
Interagency - UDYC	23	5
Interagency – Queen Anne	10	4
Interagency - YEP	20	5
Interagency - YMCA/Columbia School	8	4
King County Library System (KCLS) - Auburn Library	17	9
KCLS - Burien Library	9	2
KCLS - Carnation	0	0
KCLS - Enumclaw	9	4
KCLS - Fairwood	2	1
KCLS - Federal Way 320th	2	1
KCLS - Foster	44	16
KCLS - Issaquah	10	4
KCLS - Kent Library	14	2
KCLS - Kingsgate Library	1	1
KCLS – Lake Hills	12	1
KCLS - Newcastle	2	0
KCLS - Newport Way	1	0
KCLS - North Bend	13	0
KCLS - Redmond Library	0	0
KCLS - Renton Highlands	13	9
KCLS - Sammamish	4	0
KCLS - Shoreline	0	0
KCLS - Skyway	4	0
KCLS - Vashon Island	17	5
KCLS - White Center Library	5	1
KCLS - Woodmont	0	0
Learning Center North	61	21

1407 surveys were completed for Count Us In. Surveys not eligible to be included in the analysis indicated that youth had already completed a survey, had stayed in a shelter or transitional housing program, were stably housed, or were not within the valid age range.

APPENDIX D

Count Us In Partner locations

Partner Location	Number Surveyed	Number Analyzed
NeighborCare Health – 45th Street Youth Clinic	3	1
New Horizons Ministries	62	26
Seattle Parks & Recreation – Green Lake Community Center	7	0
Seattle Parks & Recreation – Jefferson	37	6
Seattle Parks & Recreation – Rainier Beach	40	4
Seattle Parks & Recreation – Rainier	8	1
Seattle Parks & Recreation – Van Asselt	46	5
Peace for the Streets by Kids from the Streets	5	2
POCAAN/CURB	59	26
Renton YouthSource	24	10
Rising Out of the Shadows (ROOTS)	17	2
Sanctuary Arts Center	12	4
Seattle Public Library (SPL) - Ballard Library	1	0
SPL – Broadview	8	2
SPL – Capitol Hill	1	0
SPL - Central Library	14	5
SPL - Columbia Library	4	0
SPL - Lake City	8	4
SPL - Southwest	13	1
SPL - University	18	2
Street Youth Ministries	5	1
Teen Feed	35	21
The Northwest Network of Bisexual, Trans, Lesbian & Gay Survivors of Abuse*	NA	NA
Therapeutic Health Services	118	24
Tukwila School Distsrict	15	3
Union Gospel Mission - Rainer	40	7
Union Gospel Mission – White Center Remix	42	7
YMCA Young Adult Services	13	8
YWCA	34	14
YouthCare – Orion Center	53	31
TOTAL	1407	605

*The Northwest Network partnered with Lifelong AIDS Alliance/ HEYO on Count Us In, numbers are combined under Lifelong AIDS Alliance.

Count Us In Recommendations
The Mockingbird Society
Americorps VISTA

The Mockingbird Society hosted an Americorps VISTA from February 2015 through February 2016 to make recommendations regarding improvements to Count Us In (CUI). The Americorps VISTA researched literature about survey methodology, interviewed service providers and other partners who had participated in CUI 2015, and interviewed homeless youth, including members of Youth Advocates Ending Homelessness.[8]

A summary of the recommendations from the Americorps VISTA is provided below.

Guiding Principles for a Successful Count

Trust and relationships
Transparency
Youth-friendly language
Clear benefits for youth
Accessible for youth

Recommendations for Improvement

Overall
- In order for the survey to work in diverse situations and contexts, it must be as clear and self-explanatory as possible.
- The best way to make sure that all of the sites administer the surveys effectively is to make sure all of the sites receive materials that explain how to effectively administer the surveys, and also to make surveying as easy as possible through the development of an easy to use survey tool.

Survey questions
- Gender identity
    o Add a fill in the blank option. The current terms work for the 2016 CUI, but gender options should be reviewed and updated annually because preferred language is changing fast among young people.
- Race and ethnicity
    o Combine the race and ethnicity sections so that "Hispanic" isn't singled out. This is not an unprecedented option, and would reduce confusion for youth filling out the CUI survey.
- Sexual orientation

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[8] The Mockingbird Society is a nonprofit advocacy organization dedicated to improving foster care and ending youth homelessness. Mockingbird's Youth Advocates Ending Homelessness (YAEH) program trains young people ages 13-24 who have experienced homelessness to speak up, tell their stories, and advocate for programs and services they think will improve the lives of young people living on the streets. YAEH participants advocate for budget and policy changes at all levels of government in the effort to end youth homelessness.

AmeriCorps VISTA members are passionate and committed to their mission to bring individuals and communities out of poverty. Members make a year-long, full-time commitment to serve on a specific project at a nonprofit organization or public agency. They focus their efforts to build the organizational, administrative, and financial capacity of organizations that fight illiteracy, improve health services, foster economic development, and otherwise assist low-income communities.

- o Include "pansexual" as an answer option, and add a fill in the blank option. Review the language in this question every year because preferred language is changing fast among young people.
- "Where did you live in the last 3 months?"
  - o Replace the word "live" with the word "stay." In surveyor training, prepare count partners for the possibility that a young person will have a hard time answering this question. If a young person struggles with this question, surveyors can help them by walking through the last three months in reverse chronological order (i.e. "Where did you stay last week? What about the week before that?").
- "What is the last grade you completed?"
  - o Add a question about whether the respondent has a GED, and add a question about college attendance.

Ideal Setting and Surveyors

- Safety, trust, and accessibility must be prioritized in every aspect of CUI implementation, including the choice of count partners, the time/date, the surveyors, and CUI surveyor training.

Additional Materials Needed
- Add an explanatory half-sheet to the survey with information about the purpose and use of the survey.

Marketing
- Send marketing materials to count partners earlier, ensure materials are easy to customize to specific CUI sites, and are in easy to access formats.

Surveyor Training
- Provide more comprehensive training for count partners earlier in advance of CUI. Distribute a training guide in both paper and PDF format to accommodate surveyors who could not attend the trainings and to support the training of other participating partners.

Improved Count Review System
- Create a survey for partner locations to complete after the count. This survey could be online (Google Forms, SurveyMonkey) or paper, and would ask questions about methodology and suggestions. These forms could let CUI planners discover strategies that were successful and those that were not, and learn more about the fidelity of methodology across sites. It would provide an easy way for CUI partners to provide feedback and ideas for how to improve the count. It could also collect success stories to fuel future count efforts.

Comparability: 2015 → 2016

Survey and HMIS Data

2015	2016
824 homeless and unstably housed YYA identified through Count Us In *24% (199) in shelter* *39% (322) in transitional housing* *16% (133) unsheltered* *21% (170) unstably housed*	824 homeless and unstably housed YYA identified through Count Us In *26% (216) stayed in shelter* *16% (131) were unsheltered* *40% (327) stayed in transitional housing* *18% (150) were unstably housed*
12% (102) under age 18	13% (111) under age 18
54% (448) youth of color	53% (436) youth of color
13% (108) Hispanic, 75% (619) non-Hispanic	13% (107) Hispanic, 67% (548) non-Hispanic
49% (203) female 49% (203) male 1% (9) transgender/gender-queer	47% (384) female 48% (392) male 3% (26) transgender/gender-queer
230 additional YYA reported having a history of housing instability	188 additional YYA reported having a history of housing instability

APPENDIX F

Comparability: 2015 → 2016

Survey Data Only

2015	2016
303 homeless and unstably housed YYA identified through Count Us In surveys	303 homeless and unstably housed YYA identified through Count Us In surveys
39% (119) are enrolled in school	38% (108) are enrolled in school
46% (84) who are not enrolled in school have graduated from high school or received a GED	37% (57) who are not enrolled in school have graduated from high school or received a GED
22% (66) identify as LGBTQ	27% (75) identify as LGBTQ
25% (77) are currently employed	27% (77) are currently employed
57% (172) are looking for a job	59% (165) are looking for a job
46% (138) have been to detention/jail	49% (138) have been to detention/jail
24% (74) have been in foster care	22% (62) have been in foster care
13% (39) are pregnant or parenting	16% (46) are pregnant or parenting
47% (141) report having stayed with family during the past three months	43% (121) report having stayed with family during the past three months

Many thanks to the people and organizations who were vital in making Count Us In happen!

Special thanks to…

Community partners who participated in Count Us In (listed in Appendix D). There were 72 Count Us In partners in 2016!

Jixia Ao, Americorps VISTA at **The Mockingbird Society** who worked with young people and count partners to make recommendations to improve Count Us In.

Seattle/King County Coalition on Homelessness (SKCCH) for partnership and ongoing conversations about counting young people in our community.

United Way of King County for funding stipends for Count Us In partners and funding the Community Resource Exchange held on the day of Count Us In.

Volunteers who participated by administering Count Us In survey at Seattle Public Library locations and elsewhere.

Matthew Ridgeway and **Charlotte Gavell**, Americorps Members at the United Way of King County, for coordinating the Community Resource Exchange.

New Horizons Ministries, for hosting the Community Resource Exchange.

Malin Hamblin, MSW student at the University of Washington, who was the primary author of this report.

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For more information on the All Home Youth and Young Adult Initiative, please visit
http://www.allhomekc.org.