



Homelessness in Johnson County, 2015

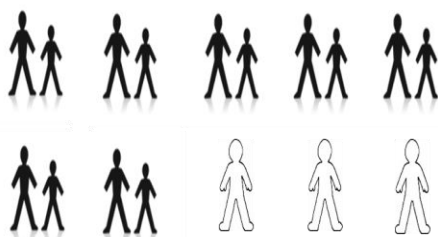
The term “homeless” is evocative – it conjures a variety of images and feelings. Even for those who work year round to assist households regain and sustain stable housing, the term has different meanings. For some, it is a limited definition that includes only those who are either living on the streets or in their cars, at an emergency shelter or in transitional housing having come from the streets. For others it is broader, and also includes those households who have lost their housing and who are temporarily moving from place to place, often “couch surfing” with family or friends, while seeking to re-establish their own home. Regardless of its definition, the experience of homelessness can result in significant barriers and challenges for adults and children both now and in the future.

The Johnson County Continuum of Care on Homelessness is a collaboration of public and private service providers working to reduce homelessness among local residents. Together, members assist households regain and maintain housing, improve employment and connect to needed services for ongoing stability.

<p>The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development requires that Continuums of Care count all homeless households within their geographic region annually. The Jo Co Continuum of Care conducted its 2015 point-in-time count on the night of January 27. A total of 174 persons were identified as homeless on that night, having been either in emergency shelter, transitional housing or living in a place not meant for human habitation. Of these, 94 or 54% were under the age of 18 years. Twenty three persons were unsheltered – up from 7 in 2014.</p>	2015 Point-In-Time Count				
	Emergency Shelter	Transitional Housing	Unsheltered	Total	
	Total Number of Households	33	21	15	69
	Total Number of Persons	94	57	23	174
	Number of Children	55	34	5	94
	Number of Adults 18-24 years	5	2	6	13
	Number of Adults 25+ years	34	21	12	67

Seven of Ten

Households Experiencing Homelessness in Johnson County Contain Children



The median age of a person experiencing homelessness in Johnson County in 2015 was 15 years. 87% of all persons identified as homeless in the 2015 point-in-time count were in households with children under 18 years of age. No unaccompanied youth were identified.

STATUS AMONG HOMELESS ADULTS

6 OF 10 Survivors of trauma or abuse

2.5 OF 10 Serious Mental illness

.25 OF 10 Substance Abuse Disorder

In Johnson County, 48 of 80 or 60% of homeless adults surveyed during the 2015 point-in-time count reported that they had been abused by a household member, either as an adult or a child.

All adults were asked about behaviors and past experiences that may act as barriers to holding a job or living in stable housing. One in four (25%) reported having a mental illness serious enough to affect employment and housing. Only 2 of the 80 reported that alcohol or illegal drug use affected their ability to keep a job or stay housed.



Trends in Homelessness:

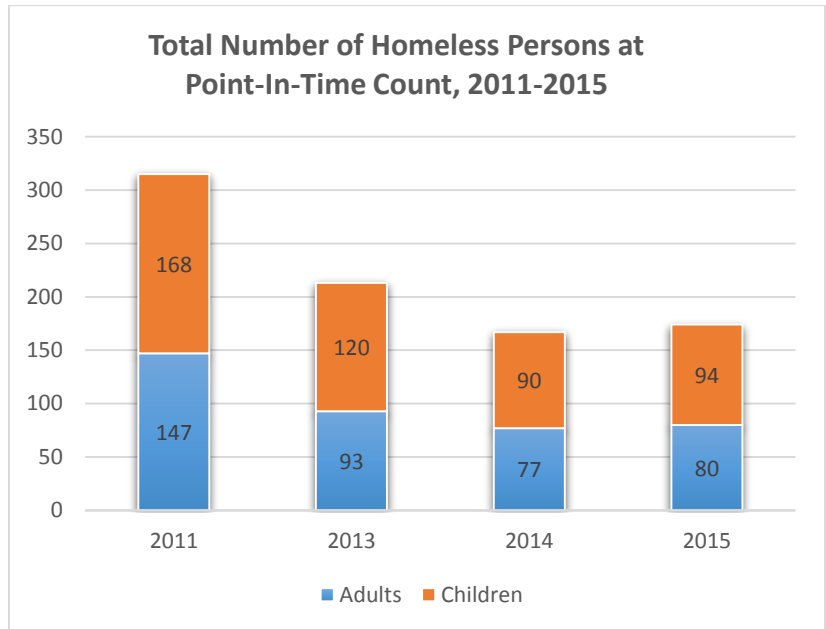
Since 2011, the overall number of persons identified as homeless on a single night in the last ten days of January during the annual point-in-time count has decreased from 315 in 2011 to 174 in 2015. The number of homeless identified in 2014 and 2015 in Johnson County was virtually unchanged.

Regardless of the overall number, the proportion identified that were under the age of 18 years has remained constant – slightly more than half.

Several findings from the most recent PIT count are worth watching: compared to prior years, there were a greater number of persons identified as homeless who:

- were unsheltered,
- had a disabling mental illness
- had been in the foster care system as children

If these trends continue, the Continuum of Care may need to develop additional housing and services to assist these persons and implement targeted prevention strategies.



Homelessness among School Age Children and Youth:

The Department of Education uses a broader definition than the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). But like HUD, school districts are also required to count and report out the number of children and youth in their district that has been identified as homeless. The Department of Education’s definition differs in that it also includes those students who are temporarily “doubled up” with family and friends in addition to those in shelter or on the streets. Additionally, the number reported is not a count of one night – but reflects the total number of students who were identified as homeless at some point during a particular school year.

School District	School Year				
	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014
Blue Valley	19	53	52	57	99
De Soto	38	64	60	56	51
Gardner Edgerton	32	95	123	113	71
Olathe	265	326	509	427	392
Shawnee Mission	301	266	292	445	456
Spring Hill	27	48	49	30	37
Total:	682	852	1,085	1,128	1,106

Overall numbers of homeless students in the six Johnson County school districts increased dramatically through the 2011-2012 school year and then stabilized around 1100 students per school year. Approximately 85% of those identified as homeless were “doubled up” and most were living with their families vs living independently.

2014-2015 school year numbers will not be available until Fall of 2015 from KS Dept. of Education.

All data was prepared by UCS based on annual Point in Time Counts, 2011-2015; Kansas Department of Education; and reports from the six Johnson County School Districts’ homeless liaisons.

July 2015