Atlanta Youth Count 2018 Community Report: The Prevalence of Sex and Labor Trafficking Among Homeless Youth in Metro Atlanta

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Authors
Eric Wright, Ana LaBoy, Melanie Turner, Nicholas Forge, Cody Wallace, Asantewaa Darkwa, Kara Tsukerman, Zoe Webb, Madison Higbee, and Renee Shelby
Atlanta Youth Count 2018
Community Report

The Prevalence of Sex and Labor Trafficking Among Homeless Youth in Metro Atlanta

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Project Overview

The 2018 Atlanta Youth Count (AYC18) was a follow-up study to the 2015 Atlanta Youth Count and Needs Assessment (AYCNA), expanded in 2018 to specifically address sex and labor trafficking among youth experiencing homelessness in metro Atlanta. The goals of this project were to: 1) provide metro Atlanta service providers, policymakers, and youth advocates with practical information on the size, nature, and needs of the homeless, precariously housed, and runaway youth in our community who are involved in various forms of sex and labor trafficking; 2) collect information that can be used to develop and refine policies, programs, and interventions to help these youth in our community; and 3) encourage a community-wide dialogue about the needs and social determinants of youth homelessness and human trafficking. This study was funded by the National Institute of Justice and was conducted in partnership with local service providers, advocates, researchers, and students.

Data was collected from September-November of 2018. Students trained in a Domestic Field School at Georgia State University by working together with outreach workers, service providers, youth, and other trained volunteers to conduct sweeps of shelters, motels, and other street and community locations where homeless youth spend time and live in the five metro-area counties (Fulton, DeKalb, Clayton, Cobb, and Gwinnett). This study utilized sophisticated, systematic capture-recapture field sampling methods to locate homeless youth in order to ensure that the sample accurately describes the current population of homeless youth in metro Atlanta. All homeless and runaway youth ages 14-25 who did not have a permanent, stable residence of their own and who were living independently without consistent parental or family support were eligible and encouraged to participate.

Every youth encountered was invited to complete a brief 15-20-minute survey about their demographic background, history of homelessness, including exploitative sex and labor trafficking involvement, and select social experiences and behavior. In order to make the youth feel comfortable and to protect them from potential harm, the data were collected anonymously. No information was collected that could be used to identify or trace participants. Youth received a $10 gift card to thank them for participating. This study was reviewed and overseen by the Institutional Review Board at Georgia State University (Study Number H1050, H18049, H18166). All of the data collected were aggregated and analyzed by the local university-based, interdisciplinary team of researchers and advanced undergraduate and graduate students.
This document is the official public Human Trafficking Report and provides an overview of the study methodology and key findings, including the research team’s official estimates of the prevalence of trafficking among homeless youth in metro Atlanta, as well as a description of key characteristics of the population derived from the survey data collected. Members of the research team are continuing to analyze and use the data to improve the public’s and policymakers’ understanding of youth homelessness and trafficking and to guide community-based efforts to improve services for these young people. Additional in-depth reports and public issue briefs will be made available to the public via the project website, (www.atlantayouthcount.weebly.com), social media (www.facebook.com/atlantayouthcount), and in the professional, scientific literature.
Introduction

Human trafficking is the “acquisition of people by improper means such as force, fraud, or deception, with the aim of exploiting them” for sexual acts or labor services (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime 2014). While the number of trafficked persons in the United States remains unknown (Weiner and Hala 2008), research suggests that the majority of cases prosecuted in the United States involve sexual rather than labor trafficking (Banks and Kyckelhahn 2011; U.S. Department of State 2018). One of the biggest predictors of becoming a victim of trafficking is extreme poverty, with four common themes for introduction into trafficking: being born into slavery, kidnapped, sold or physically forced, or tricked (Logan, Walker, and Hunt 2009). The 2015 Trafficking in Persons (2015, p. 352) report indicated that children in the child welfare and juvenile justice systems, runaway and homeless youth (including both minors and youth age 18 and over), and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) individuals are among the most vulnerable for trafficking. Sex trafficking in particular has been linked to: childhood sexual abuse (Choi 2015); family environment, which can include not coming from a two-parent home, experiencing domestic abuse, family conflict or disruption, being physically abused by a caregiver or having a caregiver with a drug or alcohol problem (Choi 2015; Countryman-Roswurm and Bolin 2014; Greene, Ennett, and Ringwalt 1999; Institute of Medicine (U.S.) 2011); and education, including parents having received a less formal education (Edwards, Iritani, and Hallfors 2006) and/or victims having lower levels of educational attainment (Kramer and Berg 2003; McClanahan et al. 1999).

Since 2005, when the Federal Bureau of Investigation identified Atlanta as one of the 14 cities with the highest incidence of sexually trafficked children, Georgia has been considered a trafficking “hub”. In 2015, the Atlanta Homeless Youth Count and Needs Assessment (AYCNA) found that 43.5% of the estimated 3,374 homeless youth in metro Atlanta were involved in the commercial sex trade at some point in their lives, and that transgender and gender-nonconforming youth experiencing homelessness were most likely to have lifetime histories of paid sexual activities (Wright et al. 2016). More research is needed about the characteristics of vulnerable homeless and runaway youth, their sex and labor trafficking experiences, and how they interact with institutions to better estimate the prevalence of trafficking and to help build effective victim-centered institutional approaches that are responsive to both labor and sexual trafficking. This approach may also reveal hidden victims who are not being identified by law enforcement.
In light of these gaps in knowledge, the primary focus of the Atlanta Youth Count 2018 (AYC18) is to contribute concrete scientific data to the local policymaking process and share new scientific evidence regarding sex and labor trafficking among homeless youth in Metro-Atlanta. To this end, the AYC18 has three specific study objectives:

1) Provide metro Atlanta service providers, policymakers, and youth advocates with practical information on the size, nature, and needs of the homeless, precariously housed, and runaway youth in our community who are involved in forms of sex and labor trafficking;

2) Collect information that can be used to develop and refine policies, programs, and interventions to help these youth in our community; and

3) Encourage a community-wide dialogue about the needs and social determinants of youth homelessness.

This project is designed to have a meaningful impact on the court, law enforcement, and victim services practices at the jurisdictional level within Georgia, at the state level within Georgia, and within states and court systems across the United States. The project team is uniquely qualified to communicate research findings to both academic and public institutional audiences alike, especially court systems and law enforcement agencies. The team not only includes researchers with significant issue expertise on Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC) and juvenile sex trafficking but also in analyzing and reporting applied research data for non-academic audiences.

This report provides an overview of the study’s key methodology and key findings regarding the prevalence of various forms of human trafficking and offers some preliminary conclusions to guide future service and research initiatives. The team of investigators and many of the students involved in the project will continue to analyze the data in partnership with community and governmental agencies in order to disseminate the findings both to the public and in the professional, scientific literature.

These reports, as well as project updates, will be made available to the public via the project website www.atlantayouthcount.weebly.com and social media www.facebook.com/atlantayouthcount.
Methodology

The centerpiece of the AYC18 was a brief, anonymous field survey of homeless youth contacted through outreach efforts that were conducted and led by local homeless-serving agencies and organizations in metro Atlanta. The survey tool was designed to collect basic information about the demographic background, history of homelessness including exploitative sex and labor trafficking involvement, and select social experiences, characteristics, and behavior of homeless youth contacted at shelters, motels, and other street and community locations where homeless youth congregate. All homeless and runaway youth ages 14-25 who did not have a permanent, stable residence of their own, and who were living independently without consistent parental or family support were eligible and encouraged to participate. The study employed sophisticated, systematic capture-recapture field sampling methods to locate homeless youth and help ensure that the sample accurately described the current population of homeless youth in metro Atlanta, including all of Fulton, DeKalb, Clayton, Gwinnett, and Cobb Counties.

The AYC18 was completed in three phases involving different activities. In phase 1, which occurred from September 2017 to December 2018, the research team a) completed participant observation of agencies serving homeless youth, including informal discussions with outreach workers about their impressions and the movements of homeless youth, and b) recruited student research assistants to carry out the full count as part of a Georgia State University Sociology Domestic Field School course on "Homeless Youth and Trafficking."

In phase 2, which occurred from August 2017 to July 2018, the 2015 AYCNA survey tool was revised with the help of several partner agencies: three homeless youth service providers and an anti-sex trafficking youth service provider. Focus groups were conducted with these agencies’ clients and former clients, and their feedback was incorporated into the survey tool that would be used for 2018 data collection.

In phase 3, AYC18 survey data collection was conducted across the five-county metro Atlanta area. This phase was organized into three distinct ten-day “sweeps”, in September-November 2018. Homeless service providers and outreach workers worked in teams with student data collectors, who were trained as part of the Sociology Domestic Field School to contact and conduct interviews with homeless youth in shelters, motels, and other street and community locations where homeless youth live and spend time. The survey asked about participants’ personal and social background, health status, contact with various health and social service systems, and exposure to sex and labor trafficking. All surveys were conducted completely anonymously in order to encourage honesty and protect respondents from any
harmful or negative consequences stemming from their answers. No information was collected that could be used to identify or trace participants. Upon completion of the survey, respondents received a $10 Visa gift card, a list of useful resources available to them in the community, and assorted offerings (hygiene kits, condoms, snacks). The field teams recorded additional observational data on youth observed, but not contacted in the field, who appeared to fit the study eligibility criteria.

Across both sweeps, we had a total of 736 "contacts" with homeless youth. This included 641 surveys completed by eligible youth in the field as well as 95 windshield observations of youth the field team were reasonably confident were both homeless and met our additional eligibility criteria. Because the surveys were anonymous and youth could complete the survey more than once, we combined non-identifying descriptive variables such as a participant’s age, last initial, day of birth, number of siblings, self-reported gender identity, sexual orientation, and race/ethnicity to create a variable that enables us to identify potential duplicate survey respondents and therefore calculate capture-recapture equations with anonymity. This procedure resulted in the elimination of 77 duplicates who we believed were surveyed more than once. These procedures resulted in a final dataset of 564 unique homeless youth.

The survey data were entered into an online data entry program (Qualtrics) and cleaned and analyzed using IBM SPSS.

This study was reviewed and overseen by the Institutional Review Board at Georgia State University (Study Number H1050, H18049, H18166). All of the data collected were aggregated and analyzed by an interdisciplinary team of researchers and advanced undergraduate and graduate students.
**Estimation**

Using capture-recapture methodology, we were able to use the 641 surveys to estimate a size of the homeless youth population in the Metro-Atlanta area. There are an estimated 3,372 homeless youth in the metro-Atlanta area in a given fall month. Based on our sample population, we estimate that 76% of youth were from Atlanta City proper.

There are an estimated 3,372 youth experiencing homelessness in the metro-Atlanta area in a given fall month.

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1 Additional information on estimation procedures is available in Appendix A
Demographic Profile

Age (N=564)

Respondents qualified for the study if they were 14-25 years of age and were asked, “How old are you?” to determine their eligibility. Only 2.3% of respondents were under the age of 18. About half of the sample was 18-21 years old (52%) and 45.7% of the sample was 22-25 years old.

Sex Assigned at Birth (N=540)

Respondents were asked, “What sex were you assigned at birth on your birth certificate?” Respondents were overwhelmingly male (64.1%), with 35.9% of respondents being female.

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2 Statistics in this part of the report are from the sample of 654 individuals in our sample, and do not apply to the full estimation of the population.
Sexual Orientation (N=534)

Respondents were asked, “What is your current sexual identity?” Respondents were provided straight/heterosexual, lesbian, gay, bisexual, or different identity (please specify) with the option to check all that apply. About three quarters of respondents identified as straight (72.5%), 23.8% of respondents identified as lesbian, gay or bisexual, and 3.7% of respondents chose another sexual orientation or a combination of the categories.

Gender Identity (N=516)

Respondents were asked, “What is your current gender identity?” and respondents were able to choose between male, female, trans-male/ transman, trans-female/ transwoman, gender queer/gender non-conforming, or different identity. The majority of respondents identified as cisgender men (59.6%), followed by cisgender women (33.9%), and then the smallest category of individuals identified as some other gender (6.5%) which included respondents who were transgender, gender non-conforming, gender queer and other identities.
Race and Ethnicity (N=537)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White/Caucasian</td>
<td>7.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic/Latino/Spanish</td>
<td>2.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black/African American</td>
<td>55.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle Eastern</td>
<td>0.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Race</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiracial</td>
<td>32.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents were asked about their race and ethnicity using the question, “What is your race or ethnicity?” Respondents were able to choose from 8 main categories (White/Caucasian, Hispanic/Latino/Spanish, Black or African American, Asian, American Indian or Alaskan Indian, Middle Eastern or North African, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander) or provide an open-ended response. Respondents were then able to specify detail under each major racial category. For instance, under Black or African American, respondents could choose between African American, Jamaican, Haitian, Nigerian, Ethiopian, Somali, Ethiopian, Don’t know, or Other. The responses were aggregated into the major categories, with those who chose more than one major category being categorized as Multiracial.

The majority of respondents were Black/African American (55.9%) or Multiracial (32.4%), both of which are disproportionately represented among homeless individuals in Georgia compared to the general population. Only 7% of the sample were non-Hispanic white individuals (7.4%) and 2.4% of the sample were Hispanic. The remaining 1.9% of respondents were either American Indian, Middle Eastern, Native Hawaiian or some other unspecified race. There were 0 respondents that selected Asian as their only racial/ethnic identity and therefore it is not reported above.
Respondents were asked “How long have you been homeless this time?” Over half (58.2%) of respondents had been homeless during this episode for less than 6 months, and 14.4% of respondents had been homeless for 6 months to 1 year of time. A little over a quarter of respondents (27.5%) have been homeless for more than 1 year of time.
Respondents were asked the 11-question Adverse Childhood Experiences Survey (ACES)\(^3\), which divides childhood trauma into seven indicators: parental incarceration, parental domestic violence, parental mental illness, parental substance abuse, childhood sexual abuse, childhood physical abuse, and childhood psychological abuse.

- 41% of youth report household incarceration, having someone in their household serve time, or being sentenced to serve time in prison, jail, or another correctional facility when they were minors.
- 39.7% of youth report parental domestic violence or their parents slapping, hitting, kicking, punching or beating each other up when they were under the age of 18.
- 38.4% of youth report household mental illness or living with anyone who was depressed, mentally ill or suicidal when they were minors.
- 45.8% of youth report household substance abuse or living with anyone who used illegal street drugs or who abused prescription medication, or living with anyone who was problem drinker or alcoholic when they were minors.
- 35% of youth report childhood sexual abuse, which includes having an adult in the household touch them sexually, try to make them touch the adult sexually or force them to have sex when they were minors.
- 46.6% of youth report physical abuse which includes having a parent hit, beat, kick, or physically hurt them (not including spanking) when they were minors.
- 61.6% of youth report childhood psychological abuse which includes having a parent swear at you, insult you or put you down when they were minors.

\(^3\) The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) version of the ACEs was used.
Affirmative responses to each of the ACEs questions were summed resulting in an ACEs score that has a range of 0-7 depending on how many indicators of trauma respondents experienced in their lifetime.

Individuals who score from 0-2 are generally conceptualized as those who experienced average levels of childhood trauma (Felitti 2009). 16.9% of youth had no indicators of childhood trauma, 11.4% had one, and 12.1% had two. In total, 40.4% of our sample experienced average childhood trauma.

Individuals who score from 3-7 are categorized as those who experienced adverse trauma in their childhood (Felitti 2009). A majority of youth in our sample (59.6%) experienced adverse trauma in their childhood; 17.8% report 3 indicators, 13.8% report 4 indicators, 12.3% report 5 indicators, 8.3% report 6 indicators, and 7.4% of our sample report all 7 indicators of trauma.
Youth were asked about their involvement in the criminal justice system and the foster care system. Respondents were asked two questions to determine if they had been involved in criminal justice under the age of 18. Respondents were asked, “Have you ever been involved with the department of juvenile justice (i.e. been arrested, been on probation, placed in a non-secure or secure facility) before the age of 18?” and also “Have you been arrested as child (under the age of 18)?” About half of the respondents (48.4%) report being arrested before the age of 18. Respondents were asked about their foster care involvement with the question, “Have you ever been in foster care?” 38.1% of respondents report being involved in foster care before the age of 18. Respondents who report either being arrested before the age of 18 or being involved in the foster care system are reported as being “system involved”. The majority of youth (63%) experienced system involvement under the age of 18.
Prevalence of Human Trafficking Among Youth Experiencing Homelessness

The prevalence of human trafficking (sex and labor trafficking) among homeless youth was measured using the Dank, et al. 2017 Human Trafficking Screening Tool (HTST) developed by the Urban Institute (Dank et al. 2017). The HTST was developed in partnership with youth serving homeless agencies in New York, Texas, and Wisconsin, and it was pretested on over 617 young homeless individuals.

The screening instrument starts by asking respondents, “Which of the following kinds of work have you ever done for someone? Keep in mind that by “work” we mean anything you did to get money or something of value – including food, clothes, a place to stay, protection, drugs or gifts – for yourself (or your family.) Please check all that apply”. Respondents were given a list of 16 potential things they may have done for work in their lifetime, including work in the formal economy (i.e. serving food at a restaurant or café or in a retail store) and work in the informal economy (i.e. asking for change or donations on the street or in the subways). The work list also included commercial sex work (i.e. trading sex for money, clothes, shelter, or other things and participating in sexual videos or photos for money, clothes, shelter or other things). Respondents were also able to list any other kinds of work they may have done for money.

In addition to the HTST screening questions, the AYC2018 also asked respondents, “Thinking about ALL the work you have done in the past month, please list the TOP THREE things you have done to make money”. Respondents were asked to detail the work, the amount of income earned, and if they were paid on a daily, weekly, or monthly basis. When administering the survey, many respondents wrote in “biweekly” and “hourly” under their income, so these categories were also added.

After work was defined, respondents were asked 18 questions from the HTST to determine if respondents had experienced force, fraud, coercion, or commercial sexual exploitation ever in their life or while homeless. The following percentages were derived from the survey data.

Based on pre-testing of the instrument, one measurement for commercial sexual exploitation was left off of the AYC 2018 screening tool.
Human Trafficking Estimates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>While Homeless</th>
<th>Lifetime</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Force</td>
<td>18.4%</td>
<td>32.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fraud</td>
<td>25.5%</td>
<td>40.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coercion</td>
<td>27.3%</td>
<td>39.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commercial Sexual Exploitation (CSE)</td>
<td>16.0%</td>
<td>19.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Trafficking Estimate</td>
<td>36.7%</td>
<td>54.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents’ scores on the HTST were each collapsed into different variables. Individuals who experienced force, fraud, coercion, or commercial sexual exploitation were then collapsed into total trafficking experiences.

- 18.4% of youth experienced **FORCE** at the hands of someone they work for while homeless, and 32.5% of youth experienced it in their lifetime.
- 25.5% of youth experienced **FRAUD** at the hands of someone they work for while homeless, and 40.0% experienced it in their lifetime.
- 27.3% of youth experienced **COERCION** at the hands of someone they work for while homeless, and 39.2% experienced it in their lifetime.
- 16.0% of youth experienced **COMMERCIAL SEXUAL EXPLOITATION** at the hands of someone they work for while homeless, and 19.9% experienced it in their lifetime.
- 36.7% of youth experienced **FORCE, FRAUD, COERCION, or COMMERCIAL SEXUAL EXPLOITATION** at the hands of someone they work for while homeless, and 54.1% experienced it in their lifetime.

In the next section, the indicators of force, fraud, coercion, and commercial exploitation are broken down by each indicator, as well as their prevalence.
54.1% of homeless youth experienced Human Trafficking in their lifetime

36.7% of homeless youth experienced Human Trafficking while homeless
Force

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Did someone you work for...</th>
<th>While Homeless</th>
<th>Lifetime</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physically force you into doing something you didn't feel comfortable doing?</td>
<td>11.6%</td>
<td>23.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lock you up, restrain you, or prevent you from leaving?</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
<td>17.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physically harm you in any way (beat, slap, hit, kick, punch or burn)?</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
<td>22.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As described before, **18.4% of youth experienced FORCE at the hands of someone they work for while homeless, and 32.5% of youth experienced it in their lifetime.** To have experienced force, a youth had to report one of the three indicators above.

- **11.6% of youth** said they had someone they worked for physically force them into doing something they did not feel comfortable doing while homeless, and **23%** report experiencing that in their lifetime.
- **9.5% of youth** said they had someone they worked for lock them up, restrain them or prevent them from leaving while homeless, and **17.1%** report experiencing that in their lifetime.
- **11.4% of youth** report someone they worked for physically harming them in some way (beating, slapping, hitting, kicking, punching, or burning them) while they were homeless, and **22%** report experiencing that in their lifetime.
Fraud

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Did someone you work for....</th>
<th>While Homeless</th>
<th>Lifetime</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Trick you into doing different work than was promised?</td>
<td>15.1%</td>
<td>25.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Make you sign a document without understanding what it stated, like a work contract?</td>
<td>9.0%</td>
<td>15.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refuse to pay you or pay you less than they promised?</td>
<td>20.2%</td>
<td>32.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As reported earlier, **25.5% of youth experienced FRAUD at the hands of someone they work for while homeless, and 40.0% experienced it in their lifetime.** To have experienced fraud, a youth had to report one of the indicators listed above.

- 15.1% of youth report an employer tricked them into doing different work than was promised while homeless, and 25.9% report experiencing this in their lifetime.
- 9.0% of youth report an employer making them sign a document without understanding what it stated, like a work contract, while 15.7% of youth report experiencing this in their lifetime.
- 20.2% of youth report that employers refused to pay them or paid them less than was promised while homeless, and 32.7% of youth report experiencing this in their lifetime.
Coercion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Did someone you work for....</th>
<th>While Homeless</th>
<th>Lifetime</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Restrict or control where you went or who you talked to?</td>
<td>14.1%</td>
<td>22.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deprive you of sleep, food, water, or medical care?</td>
<td>11.2%</td>
<td>17.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not let you contact family or friends even when you weren't working?</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep all or most of your money?</td>
<td>14.5%</td>
<td>23.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep your ID documents from you?</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
<td>16.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threaten to get you deported?</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threaten to harm you or your family or pet?</td>
<td>10.2%</td>
<td>16.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physically harm or threaten a co-worker or friend?</td>
<td>8.0%</td>
<td>14.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As described above, **27.3% of youth experienced COERCION at the hands of someone they work for while homeless, and 39.2% experienced it in their lifetime.** To have experienced coercion, respondents had to experience one of the 8 indicators above.

- 14.1% of youth report someone they worked for restricting or controlling where they went or who they talked to while homeless, while 22.1% report experiencing that in their lifetime.
- 11.2% of youth report someone they worked for depriving them of sleep, food, water, or medical care while they were homeless, and 17.1% report experiencing that in their lifetime.
- 8.6% of youth report someone they worked for not letting them contact family or friends even when they were not working while homeless, while 15.0% report experiencing that in their lifetime.
- 14.5% of youth report someone they work for keeping all or most of their money while homeless, and 23.2% of youth have experienced that in their lifetime.
- 10.9% of youth report someone they work for keeping their ID documents from them while homeless, while 16.6% report experiencing it in their lifetime.
- 5.2% of youth report someone they work for threatening to get them deported while homeless, while 8.0% report experiencing it in their lifetime.
- 10.2% of youth report someone they work for threatening to harm their family or pet while homeless, and 16.5% report experiencing it in their lifetime.
- 8.0% of youth report someone they work for physically harming or threatening a co-worker or friend, and 14.4% report experiencing it in their lifetime.
Commercial Sexual Exploitation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Did someone you work for....</th>
<th>While Homeless</th>
<th>Lifetime</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Force you into doing something sexually that you didn't feel comfortable doing?</td>
<td>12.2%</td>
<td>17.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Put your photo on the internet to find clients to trade sex with?</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
<td>11.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Force you to engage in sexual acts with family, friends or business associates for money or favors?</td>
<td>7.6%</td>
<td>11.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Force you to trade sex for money, shelter, food, or anything else through online websites, escort services, street prostitution, informal arrangements, brothels, fake massage businesses or strip clubs?</td>
<td>9.8%</td>
<td>13.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As described earlier in the report, **16.0% of youth experienced COMMERCIAL SEXUAL EXPLOITATION at the hands of someone they work for while homeless, and 19.9% experienced it in their lifetime.** For a youth to have experienced commercial sexual exploitation, they had to answer yes to one of the indicators described above.

- 12.2% of youth report someone they work for forcing them into doing something sexually that they didn’t feel comfortable doing, and 17.4% experienced that in their lifetime.
- 7.8% of youth report someone they work for putting their photo on the internet to find clients to trade sex with while homeless, and 11.4% experienced that in their lifetime.
- 7.6% of youth report someone they work for forcing them to engage in sexual acts with family, friends, or business associates for money or favors while homeless, with 11.2% of youth experiencing that in their lifetime.
- 9.8% of youth report someone they work for forcing them to trade sex for money, shelter, food or anything else through online websites, escort services, street prostitution, informal arrangement, brothels, fake massage businesses, or strip clubs while homeless, and 13.4% experienced that in their lifetime.
Risk Factors for Human Trafficking

The following analysis looks at the risk factors for some of the most vulnerable groups for sex and labor trafficking. The intersection of homelessness with adverse trauma, experiences of system involvement, LGBT status, and chronic homelessness are major risk factors for youth to experience sex and labor trafficking\(^5\).

Cross tabular analyses were performed on each risk factor for trafficking, force, fraud, coercion, commercial sexual exploitation, adverse trauma, lesbian, gay, and bisexual identity, transgender identity, and chronic homelessness to determine correlations. Significant differences (p<0.05) between groups are noted with an asterisk (*) in the tables below. Only statistically significant results are summarized in the text accompanying the tables.

\(^5\) Additional analysis was conducted on differences between race/ethnicity. Our sample was majority African American or Multi-Racial, and we did not find any statically significant differences to report.
Human Trafficking for Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual (LGB) Youth

Experiences with Human Trafficking for LGB Youth while Homeless

*indicates statistically significant difference between LGB and non-LGB respondents

While homeless, LGB youth have a significantly higher risk of experiencing human trafficking than their straight peers and are significantly different than their cisgender peers for force, fraud, and commercial sexual exploitation.

Of our sample, **43.8% of LGB youth experienced trafficking** in comparison to 34% of their straight peers.

- 27.5% of LGB youth experienced force while homeless in comparison to 14.8% of their straight peers.
- 34.4% of LGB youth experienced fraud while homeless in comparison to 21.7% of their straight peers.
- 26.4% of LGB youth experienced commercial sexual exploitation while homeless in comparison to 11.9% of their straight peers.
Experiences with Human Trafficking for LGB Youth in their Lifetime

*indicates statistically significant difference between LGB and non-LGB respondents

LGB youth were significantly different than their straight peers in their experiences of lifetime trafficking, force, and commercial sexual exploitation; however, they were not significantly different than their straight peers in experiences of fraud and coercion.

Of our sample, **61.3% of LGB youth experienced trafficking in their lifetime**, as compared to 51.2% of their straight peers.

- 47.3% of LGB youth experienced force in their lifetime, compared to 26.0% of their straight peers.
- 29.5% of LGB youth experienced commercial sexual exploitation in their lifetime, compared to 16.1% of their straight peers.
Human Trafficking for Transgender Youth

Experiences with Human Trafficking for Transgender Youth while Homeless

*indicates statistically significant difference between transgender and cisgender respondents

Transgender youth were significantly different than their cisgender peers in their experiences of trafficking, force, fraud, coercion, and commercial sexual exploitation while homeless.

Of our sample, **64.5% of transgender youth report experiencing trafficking while homeless**, compared to 34.4% of their cisgender peers.

- 40.0% of transgender youth experienced force while homeless, compared to 16.3% of their cisgender peers.
- 58.6% of transgender youth experienced fraud while homeless, compared to 22.7% of their cisgender peers.
- 53.3% of transgender youth experienced coercion while homeless, compared to 25.1% of their cisgender peers.
- 44.8% of transgender youth experienced commercial sexual exploitation while homeless, compared to 12.9% of their cisgender peers.

---

6 Transgender youth in this sample as youth who identified as transgender, gender non-conforming, gender queer and other gendered youth
Experiences with Human Trafficking for Transgender Respondents in their Lifetime

*indicates statistically significant difference between transgender and cisgender respondents

Transgender youth were significantly different than their cisgender peers in their experiences of trafficking, force, fraud, coercion, and commercial sexual exploitation in their lifetime.

Of our sample, **71.0% of transgender youth report experiencing trafficking in their lifetime**, compared to 52.3% of their cisgender peers.

- 60.0% of transgender youth experienced force in their lifetime, compared to 28.9% of their cisgender peers.
- 62.1% of transgender youth experienced fraud in their lifetime, compared to 38.0% of their cisgender peers.
- 56.7% of transgender youth experienced coercion in their lifetime, compared to 37.3% of their cisgender peers.
- 44.8% of transgender youth experienced commercial sexual exploitation in their lifetime, compared to 16.9% of their cisgender peers.
Human Trafficking and Chronic Homelessness for Youth

HUD defines chronic status for youth 18-25 years of age as “an individual (or head of household) with a disabling condition who has experienced homelessness for longer than a year, during which time the individual may have lived in a shelter, Safe Haven, or place not meant for human habitation OR someone who has a disability condition who has been homeless four or more times in the last three years”. Because of the unique stressors and issues facing homeless youth, it is often assumed when a youth has been homeless for more than one year that they will meet the chronicity definition, since experiencing homelessness over a year for a young adult is often accompanied by a co-morbid trauma, mental health, physical health or substance abuse diagnosis.

The following analysis examines the relationship between one of the defining measures of chronicity, time spent homeless this episode, and experiences of human trafficking.
Experiences with Human Trafficking for Chronically Homeless Youth while Homeless

Chronically homeless youth have significantly different experiences while homeless compared to their non-chronic peers with trafficking, fraud, coercion, and commercial exploitation while homeless. Chronic youth have similar experiences to their non-chronic counterparts with experiences of force while homeless.

Of our sample, **47.8% of chronically homeless youth have experienced trafficking while homeless**, compared to only 32.2% of their non-chronic peers.

- 35.6% of chronically homeless youth experienced force while homeless, compared to 21.2% of their non-chronic peers.
- 37.6% of chronically homeless youth experienced coercion while homeless, compared to 22.8% of their non-chronic peers.
- 20.0% of chronically homeless youth experienced commercial sexual exploitation while homeless, compared to 12.6% of their non-chronic peers.

*indicates significant difference between chronically homeless youth and non-chronic youth
Experiences with Human Trafficking for Chronically Homeless Youth in their Lifetime

*indicates significant difference between chronically homeless youth and non-chronic youth

Chronically homeless youth have significantly different experiences than their non-chronic peers in their lifetime with trafficking and fraud, while they have similar experiences to their non-chronic peers with force, coercion, and commercial sexual exploitation.

Of our sample, 61.3% of chronically homeless youth experienced trafficking in their lifetime, compared to 51.3% of their non-chronic counterparts.

- 47.4% of chronically homeless youth experienced fraud in their lifetime, compared to 36.8% of their non-chronic counterparts.
Human Trafficking and Traumatic Childhood Experiences

Experiences with Human Trafficking for Youth who Experienced Adverse Trauma while Homeless

*indicates a statistically significant difference between youth who experienced high levels of childhood trauma and youth who reported no or average levels of trauma

While experiencing homelessness, high-trauma youth (i.e. those who scored 3-7 on the ACEs scale) were significantly more likely to experience trafficking, force, fraud, coercion, and commercial exploitation compared to youth with average trauma backgrounds.

From our sample, **46.7% of youth who experience high levels of trauma report trafficking while homeless**, in comparison to only 18.9% of their average traumatized peers.

- 24.6% of youth who experienced high levels of trauma experienced force while homeless, in comparison to only 6.6% of their average traumatized peers.
- 33.5% of youth who experienced high levels of trauma experienced fraud while homeless, in comparison to only 13.2% of their average traumatized peers.
- 35.6% of youth who experienced high levels of trauma experienced coercion while homeless, in comparison to only 12.5% of their average traumatized peers.
- 20.5% of youth who experienced high levels of trauma experienced commercial sexual exploitation while homeless, in comparison to only 7.7% of their average traumatized peers.
Experiences with Human Trafficking for Youth who Experienced Adverse Trauma in their Lifetime

*indicates a statistically significant difference between youth who experienced high levels of childhood trauma and youth who reported no or average levels of trauma.

In their lifetime, youth with higher levels of trauma in their background (i.e. those who had ACEs scores of 3-7) were significantly more likely to experience trafficking, force, fraud, coercion, and commercial exploitation compared to their peers with no or average levels of trauma.

From our sample, **65.1% of highly traumatized youth experienced trafficking in their lifetime**, compared to only 37.6% of their average traumatized peers.

- 41.3% of highly traumatized youth experienced force in their lifetime, compared to only 18.7% of their average traumatized peers.
- 50.4% of highly traumatized youth experienced fraud in their lifetime, compared to only 25.1% of their average traumatized peers.
- 49.3% of highly traumatized youth experienced coercion in their lifetime, compared to only 22.2% of their average traumatized peers.
- 25.5% of highly traumatized youth experienced commercial sexual exploitation in their lifetime, compared to only 9.9% of their average traumatized peers.
Human Trafficking for Youth with Childhood System Involvement

Experiences with Human Trafficking for Childhood System Involved Youth while Homeless

*indicates statistically significant difference for youth who experience system involvement v. youth who have not experienced system involvement

Youth who have experienced childhood system involvement (youth who had been arrested or in department of juvenile justice under the age of 18 and those who had been in foster care) had significantly different experiences than their non-system involved counterparts with trafficking and fraud. However, they were not significant different than their non-system involved counterparts in experiences of force, coercion or commercial sexual exploitation while homeless.

From our sample, **41.1% of system involved youth experienced human trafficking while homeless**, as opposed to 27.8% of youth who do not have experiences with childhood system involvement.

- 29.7% of system involved youth experienced fraud as opposed to their 18.0% of their non-system involved counterparts.
Experiences with Human Trafficking for Childhood System Involved Youth in their Lifetime

*indicates statistically significant difference for youth who experienced system involvement v. youth who have not experienced system involvement

System involved youth were significantly different than their non-system involved counterparts in experiences of trafficking, force, fraud, and coercion while homeless. They were not significantly different in their experiences of commercial sexual exploitation.

From our sample, **60.3% of system involved youth experience human trafficking in their lifetime**, as compared to 43.8% of their non-system involved counterparts.

- 36.2% of system involved youth experienced force in their lifetime, as opposed to 26.2% of their non-system involved counterparts.
- 43.9% of system involved youth experienced fraud in their lifetime, as opposed to 33.7% of their non-system involved counterparts.
- 43.1% of system involved youth experienced coercion in their lifetime, as opposed to 32.4% of their non-system involved counterparts.
Conclusion

The Atlanta Youth Count 2018 uncovered critical insights into the experiences of sex and labor trafficking among homeless youth in the metro-Atlanta area. Based on preliminary analysis, there are four main recommendations for providers, detailed below:

1) Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender youth stand out as being particularly at risk of being trafficked. We find that LGB and transgender youth both have a higher prevalence of trafficking compared to their heterosexual and cisgender counterparts, respectively. These youth require special attention in the provision of safe and secure services, as well as services that are grounded in trauma-informed care principles.

2) Gendered definitions of trafficking need to be expanded. While cisgender female individuals are often conceptualized as the main targets of trafficking vulnerabilities, transgender respondents report significantly higher rates of trafficking than their cisgender counterparts (including both male and female cisgender respondents). The full spectrum of gender identity must be understood and accepted in order to fully serve transgender youth and effectively address the needs of trafficked youth.

3) Early intervention among youth who become homeless is critically important to prevent trafficking and other negative outcomes. The longer the youth are homeless or experiencing housing insecurity, the more likely they are to experience trafficking. Service providers should concentrate on both prevention of homelessness of the youth they serve and early housing interventions for those youth experiencing homelessness.

4) Trauma-informed care is imperative for homeless youth who have been trafficked. The homeless youth population had higher than normal experiences of childhood trauma, which may have contributed to their homelessness. Trauma was significantly linked to a youth’s experiences with all forms of sex and labor trafficking. Agencies and staff encountering and serving with this subpopulation of homeless youth need to continue to be trained and continuously informed regarding the best and most current practices in trauma-informed care.
Appendix A: Estimation Technical Report

Introduction

In homeless populations, as in other “hidden populations,” researchers cannot calculate the probability of individuals selected into a given sample because the true number of individuals in the population is unknown. Researchers can use advanced sampling techniques to estimate hidden populations. Capture-Recapture estimation techniques, developed first for the estimation of wildlife populations, have been used successfully to estimate the size of hidden populations, such as individuals who use drugs, those who commit crimes, and homeless individuals (Bloor et al. 1991; Brewer et al. 2006; Rossmo and Routledge 1990; Smith 2016). In this regard, these estimation procedures can help researchers better understand the size of populations of individuals that are not easily counted.

In the Atlanta Youth Count 2018, the field period was designed so that capture-recapture could be used to give an estimation of the homeless youth population in the metro-Atlanta area. The field period lasted for several weeks in September, October, and November 2018, with three different data collection time periods: the “Token Period” lasted nine days from September 17-September 28, “Sweep 1” lasted fourteen days from October 1-October 18, and “Sweep 2” lasted eleven days from October 27-November 16. Survey days were not consecutive during "Sweep 3." Survey respondents were able to take the survey multiple times. Some respondents took the survey multiple times, while others only took the survey once.

Researchers used two different tools to ‘mark a capture’; first by the creation of unique identifiers based on respondents' answers to questions that remain unchanged through an individual’s lifetime; and second by asking respondents about their recollection of a memorable picture. Researchers used the different methods of estimation and duplication identification to come up with a final estimation of the population, taken from the midpoint of the various estimation procedures.

Determining Duplication

The Atlanta Youth Count 2018 collected data in three separate time intervals. Surveys were administered without collecting identifiable information, and respondents were allowed to take the survey multiple times. To estimate the number of respondents who took the survey more than once, researchers used two different methods: unique identification concatenation and picture recognition marking.
**Unique Identification Concatenation**

Researchers created unique identifiers based on the responses to the questions regarding each respondent’s gender, race, sexuality, number of siblings, letter of last name, and date of birth. Unique identifiers were 8 characters long. It was statistically unlikely that two different respondents would have the same unique identifier. There were 60 unique identifiers created as a result of the concatenation which totaled 145 surveys. Of the 145 surveys, there were 139 surveys that matched at least one other survey, with 2 unique identifiers and 6 surveys to yield false results. There was a total of 641 surveys completed in total, but only 564 surveys remained after duplicate surveys were deleted. There were 146 surveys completed in the token period, 242 completed in sweep 1 and 204 completed in Sweep 2, with 8 duplicates in sweep 1 and 20 duplicates in sweep 2.

**Marked Picture Recognition**

Traditional capture-recapture techniques usually do not have personal information about respondents to “mark” them and calculate duplication. In person-centered research, respondents are often asked about a unique photo or identifier which would determine if they had taken the survey previously. Respondents were asked at the conclusion of the survey if they had previously seen a photo of a lady bug (shown below). Respondents were also asked to describe the lady bug, as a way to remember the photo for later iterations of the surveys. The photo was chosen to be both unique, memorable, and unlike a photo in current pop culture. Surveys were deemed “marked” or duplicate if respondents answered yes to seeing the photo before.

For this identification of duplication, only raw data is used to determine the number of duplicates in order to not inflate or deflate the number of duplicates. There were 641 total surveys completed, 158 completed in Token Period, 264 in Sweep 1, and 219 in Sweep 2, with 66 marked in Sweep 1 as captured in the token period, and 51 marked in Sweep 2 as captured in the token period or sweep 1. Given the geographic boundary assumptions of capture-recapture (Otis et al. 1978), our entire geographic boundary was covered within a sweep, but not on any given day within that sweep. This means that duplicates within a wave (e.g. sweep 1) that were not captured either of the other two capture periods, were not true re-captures, and were dropped from the dataset.
Estimation Methods

Two different estimation procedures were used to determine the estimation of the population for two reasons: both survey estimation tools have been used in sparse data and have been found in several previous research studies of hidden populations to be effective methods of estimation. The initial Two Sample Estimation measure is a more liberal measure of the population, not taking into account the potential for deflation or escalation in survey responses based on time in the field, while the one sample estimation technique requires estimations of deflation and exit of the population that must be estimated by researchers, leading to a more conservative estimate of the population (Lohr 2009). Researchers believe that using both estimations in multiple iterations researchers is the best estimation procedure for the sparse data that are present in this study.

Two Sample Estimation

Two sample estimation relies on two “capture” periods where respondents are able to be “marked” or surveyed more than once. In the current study, respondents were able to participate in any and all of the three “capture” periods. Using the Chapman et al 1951 less biased estimator, four different estimations can be gathered using the following formula (Chapman 1951):

\[ N = \frac{(C_1 + 1)(C_2 + 1)}{R_{12} + 1} - 1 \]

- \( C_1 \) - Population Surveyed at Point 1
- \( C_2 \) - Population Surveyed at Point 2
- \( R_{12} \) - Number of duplicates between Point 1 and Point 2

The confidence intervals can be calculated using

\[ \hat{N} \pm 1.96 \sqrt{\hat{V} (\hat{N})} \]

With variance being calculated using Seber, 1970 formula for variance.

\[ \hat{V} (\hat{N}) = \frac{(n_1 + 1)(n_2 + 1)(n_1 - m)(n_2 - m)}{(m + 1)^2(m + 2)} \]

Using the two-sample estimation, there are four different estimations that can be made using the formula above.

1. Token Period can be compared to Sweep 1
2. Sweep 1 can be compared to Sweep 2
3. Token Period can be compared to Sweep 2
4. Token period can be compared to both Sweep 1 and 2 together

Using multiple sampling estimations gives the broadest view of the estimation of the population, ensuring that deflation or inflation does not occur.

**One Sample Estimation**

One sample estimation only relies on one capture period where respondents are able to be “marked’ or surveyed more than once. In the current study, respondents were able to participate in any and all of any of the three “capture” periods. Using the Roberts and Brewer 2006 estimator called Vmethod which was originally (originally what? This sentence appears incomplete). In addition to the program Vmethod, the methodological framework was copied in a Stata do file which was able to use bootstrapping to estimate the confidence intervals. While the Vmethod program and the Stata do file did not create substantially different estimates of the population, both were reported and used to determine the estimation of the population. The small differences in estimations can be accounted for by the different estimation methods and iteration techniques that C++ and Stata use when calculating methodologies.

Using the Roberts and Brewer estimation methodology, the following information must be obtained

- \( T \) - the number of days in the study period
- \( x \) - the daily exit probability
- \( F \) - the number of initial contacts (first arrests)
- \( R \) - the number of second contacts (rearrests)
- \( D \) - deterrence or escalation, expressed as difference from 1. A value of 1.0 represents no deterrence or escalation, while numbers less than 1 indicate deterrence and numbers greater than 1 indicate escalation.

For this estimation procedure, we used 0.05 for the daily exit probability which would mean that individuals came and left the system in an average of 20 days. Because of the movement of youth throughout the system, this estimation was chosen for the most conservative estimate of the population. In the sample population, few respondents conducted the survey more than 3 times, (less than 0.01% of the population). As a result, we kept deterrence/escalation as 1, again for the most conservative estimation of the population.
Unique Identification Estimates

Duplicate surveys were determined using a unique identifier created using respondents' gender, race, sexuality, number of siblings, letter of last name, and date of birth to create a unique identifier. There were 60 unique identifiers created as a result of the concatenation which totaled 145 surveys. Of the 145 surveys, there were 139 surveys that matched one another. Responses that were duplicated within the same sweep were not calculated, and a total of 28 responses were deemed to be duplicate based on the unique identifier and examination of the survey. There was a total of 641 surveys completed, with 564 surveys left after duplicate surveys were deleted, in total 592 total surveys that were completed including the 28 duplicate surveys. There were 146 surveys completed in the token period, 242 completed in sweep 1, and 204 completed in Sweep 2, with 8 duplicates in sweep 1 and 20 duplicates in sweep 2.
Two Sample Calculation

Two sample estimation techniques were calculated using the Chapman et al Estimation formula. Estimations were developed comparing Token period and Sweep 1, Sweep 1 and Sweep 2, Token Period and Sweep 2, and the token period vs. sweep 1 and 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unique Identification Estimation: Two Sample</th>
<th>Estimation</th>
<th>Confidence Intervals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Token v. Sweep 1</td>
<td>3968</td>
<td>(1629,6307)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweep 1 v. Sweep 2</td>
<td>2371</td>
<td>(2351,2392)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Token v. Sweep 2</td>
<td>1434</td>
<td>(882,1986)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Token v. Sweep 1 and 2</td>
<td>2265</td>
<td>(1562,2967)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Average: 2509  
Range: 1434-3968  
Midpoint: 2318

The two-sample unique identification estimation had an average estimation of 2509 homeless youth in the metro-Atlanta area, with a range of 1434-3968 and a midpoint of 2318.

- Estimation of the Token Period and Sweep 1, the estimation is 3968 [CI 1629, 6308].
- Estimation using Sweep 1 v. Sweep 2, the estimation for the population is 2371 [CI 2351, 2392].
- Estimation using the Token Period v. Sweep 2, the estimation for the population is 1434 [CI 882, 1986].
- Estimation using the full survey population, comparing the Token Period v. Sweep 1 and 2 combined, the estimation for the population is 2265 [CI 1562, 2967].
One Sample Calculation

One sample estimation technique was calculated using the Roberts and Brewer Estimation program and a modified method using Stata. Estimations were developed comparing Token period and Sweep 1, Sweep 1 and Sweep 2, Token Period and Sweep 2, and the Token period vs. sweep 1 and 2.

**Unique Identification Estimation: One Sample**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Estimation</th>
<th>Stata Method</th>
<th>Confidence Interval</th>
<th>Vmethod</th>
<th>Confidence Interval</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Token v. Sweep 1</td>
<td>6116</td>
<td>[3777,8455]</td>
<td>6043</td>
<td>[3704,8382]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweep 1 v. Sweep 2</td>
<td>3273</td>
<td>[3253,3273]</td>
<td>3218</td>
<td>[3198,3238]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Token v. Sweep 2</td>
<td>2268</td>
<td>[1716,2820]</td>
<td>1860</td>
<td>[1308,2412]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Token v. Sweep 1 and 2</td>
<td>3662</td>
<td>[2960,4364]</td>
<td>3630</td>
<td>[2928,4332]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Average: 3710
Range: 1860-6116
Midpoint: 3271

The one sample unique identification estimation had an average estimation of 3710 homeless youth in the metro-Atlanta area, with a range of 1860-6116 and a midpoint of 3710.

- Estimation of the Token Period and Sweep 1, the estimation is 6116 [CI 3777,8455] using the Stata method and 6043 [CI 3704,8382] using Traditional Vmethod.
- Estimation using Sweep 1 v. Sweep 2, the estimation for the population is 3273 [CI 3253,3273] using Stata method and 3218 [CI 3198,3238] using traditional Vmethod.
- Estimation using the Token Period v. Sweep 2, the estimation for the population is 2268 [CI 1716,2820] using Stata Method and 1860 [CI 1308,2412] using Traditional Vmethod.
- Estimation using the full survey population, comparing the Token Period v. Sweep 1 and 2 combined, the estimation for the population is 3662 [CI 2960,4364] using the Stata method and 3630 [CI 2928,4332] using traditional Vmethod.
Marked Picture Calculations

Using raw data, researchers completed 641 total surveys, with 158 completed in token period, 264 in sweep 1, and 219 in sweep 2. Using Marked Calculations, researchers marked 66 surveys in sweep 1 and 51 in sweep 2.

Two Sample Calculation: Marked

Two sample estimation techniques were calculated using the Chapman et al Estimation formula. Estimations were developed comparing Token period and Sweep 1, Sweep 1 and Sweep 2, Token Period and Sweep 2, and the token period vs. sweep 1 and 2.

Marked Estimation: Two Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Period</th>
<th>Estimation</th>
<th>Confidence Intervals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Token v. Sweep 1</td>
<td>628</td>
<td>[530, 726]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweep 1 v. Sweep 2</td>
<td>1120</td>
<td>[875,1366]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Token v. Sweep 2</td>
<td>672</td>
<td>[520,824]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Token v. Sweep 1 and 2</td>
<td>871</td>
<td>[70, 1573]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Average: 810
Range: 628-1120
Midpoint: 746

The two-sample unique identification estimation had an average estimation of 810 homeless youth in the metro-Atlanta area, with a range of 628-1120 and a midpoint of 746.

- Estimation of the Token Period and Sweep 1, the estimation is 628 [CI 530, 726].
- Estimation using Sweep 1 v. Sweep 2, the estimation for the population is 1120 [CI [875,1366]].
- Estimation using the Token Period v. Sweep 2, the estimation for the population is 672 [520,824].
- Estimation using the full survey population, comparing the Token Period v. Sweep 1 and 2 combined, the estimation for the population is 871 [CI [70, 1573]].
One Sample Calculation

One sample estimation technique was calculated using the Roberts and Brewer Estimation program and a modified method using Stata. Estimations were developed comparing Token period and Sweep 1, Sweep 1 and Sweep 2, Token Period and Sweep 2, and the Token period vs. sweep 1 and 2.

Marked Estimation: One Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Stata Method</th>
<th>Confidence Intervals</th>
<th>Vmethod</th>
<th>Confidence Intervals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Token v. Sweep 1</td>
<td>1140</td>
<td>[1042,1238]</td>
<td>1119</td>
<td>[1021,1217]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweep 1 v. Sweep 2</td>
<td>2037</td>
<td>[1792,2037]</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>[1760,2250]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Token v. Sweep 2</td>
<td>1340</td>
<td>[1188,1492]</td>
<td>1308</td>
<td>[1156,1460]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Token v. Sweep 1 and 2</td>
<td>1337</td>
<td>[586,2088]</td>
<td>1326</td>
<td>[575,2077]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Average 1451
Range 1140-2037
Midpoint 1331

The one sample marked picture estimation had an average estimation of 1451 homeless youth in the Metro-Atlanta area, with a range of 1140-2037 and a midpoint of 1331.

- Estimation of the Token Period and Sweep 1, the estimation is 1140 [CI 1042,1238] using the Stata method and 1119 [CI 1021,1217] using traditional Vmethod.
- Estimation using Sweep 1 v. Sweep 2, the estimation for the population is 2037 [CI 1792,2037] using Stata method and 2005 [CI 1760,2250] using traditional Vmethod.
- Estimation using the Token Period v. Sweep 2, the estimation for the population is 1340 [CI 1188,1492] using Stata method and 1308 [CI 1156,1460] using traditional Vmethod.
- Estimation using the full survey population, comparing the Token Period v. Sweep 1 and 2 combined, the estimation for the population is 1337 [CI 586,2088] using Stata method and 1326 [CI 575,2077] using traditional Vmethod.
Estimation

The table below gives a synopsis of the results of the four estimations detailed above. The range of all four samples was 628-6116, with an average of 2120 and a midpoint of 3372. Researchers used the midpoint to determine the size of the population.

We estimate that there are **3372** youth experiencing homelessness in the metro-Atlanta area in a given fall month.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Average</th>
<th>Midpoint</th>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Two Sample Unique ID</td>
<td>2509</td>
<td>2318</td>
<td>1434-3968</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One Sample Unique ID</td>
<td>3710</td>
<td>3271</td>
<td>1860-6116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two Sample Marked</td>
<td>810</td>
<td>746</td>
<td>628-1120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One Sample Marked</td>
<td>1451</td>
<td>1331</td>
<td>1140-2037</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2120</td>
<td>3372</td>
<td>628-6116</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2015 Estimates vs. 2018 Estimates

Researchers at Georgia State University conducted a similar study in the Summer of 2015, with goals of estimating the homeless youth population in the Metro-Atlanta area. Researchers estimated there were 3,374 homeless youth in the metro-Atlanta area in a given summer month, while the current study estimates 3,372 homeless youth in the metro-Atlanta area in a given fall month.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2015 Estimation</th>
<th>2018 Estimation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3,374</td>
<td>3,372</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Estimation procedures from both 2015 and 2018 used capture-recapture methodologies. Researchers worked to improve the estimation procedures in two ways. First, researchers increased the efficiency and reliability of determining duplicates, and secondly researchers refined the geographical specificity of surveys.

Capturing Duplicates

Researchers from the 2015 dataset gave out flashlight tokens during outreach to individuals during the token period to identify their recapture. During data collection sweeps, youth were asked if they had seen the token, and were also shown a unique photo for them to remember. From 2015 to 2018, traditional street outreach has significantly declined due to the loss of funding from street outreach grants in both the City of Atlanta and Dekalb County. From ethnographical research in the field prior to data collection, researchers concluded that handing out flashlights, while mildly successful during the 2015 count, would not be successful in 2018. As a result, instead of distributing an item in the token period, respondents were asked to complete a full survey. As a result, researchers were able to use unique identifiers during all three phases of research to determine duplicates. Researchers also asked about a unique photo and could also use that to discern duplications. We believe that this change in methodology allowed for a more precise and accurate representation of duplication estimations.

Geographical Breakdown

One major critique from the 2015 estimation was the inability to discern where youth were captured during survey collection. The Atlanta Metro-Area relies heavily on city and county boundaries to determine funding opportunities. One complex feature of Atlanta proper is its geographical split between Fulton and Dekalb Counties. Even more complex is the youth’s relationship to these areas. Oftentimes youth may cycle in and out of the three geographical areas, without real knowledge of the change of district. Many of the service providers cross boundaries in their service provision or even have locations on the border of the boundaries.
To enhance geographical soundness, researchers geocoded surveys and attached geocodes to each survey number\(^7\). Researchers also were bound to very strict geographical bounds for every survey collection time period. The enhancement of methodology allows for a better understanding of where homeless youth were captured, which in turn ensured that estimations for each geographical area could be distinguished.

**Geographical Location of Survey (N=564)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Geographical Area</th>
<th>Estimation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>City of Atlanta</td>
<td>2562</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fulton County</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dekalb County</td>
<td>236</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clayton County</td>
<td>270</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gwinnett County</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The majority of respondents in the sample were surveyed in the city of Atlanta proper (76%), with 5% surveyed in Fulton County, 7% surveyed in Dekalb County, 3% surveyed in Cobb County, 8% surveyed in Clayton County, and 1% surveyed in Gwinnett County.

Estimates of the population for each geographical area are as follows: Atlanta 2562, Fulton 169, Dekalb 236, Cobb 101, Clayton 270, and Gwinnett 34.

---

\(^7\) Respondents were geocoded at the location they were surveyed. One Metro-Atlanta service provider’s location geocoded to both City of Atlanta proper and Dekalb depending on where youth were surveyed on the property. All youth were coded to City of Atlanta from that provider.

\(^8\) Dekalb County and Fulton County estimates are outside of the bounds of City of Atlanta.
Limitations and Areas for Future Research

From the 2015 study, the authors learned substantially about how to refine collection of data. While these refinements lead to what we believe to be a more standard estimate of the population, the true size of youth experiencing homelessness in the Metro-Atlanta area continues to be unknown. While estimation procedures that were chosen above reflect what we believe to be the most accurate estimate of the population based on the data that we had, using both conservative and liberal estimates, we are unable to compare our estimate to the size of the population because unlike animal trials, the size is wholly unknown.

Additionally, while some methodologists would agree with the authors about the sparsity the data collected during the AYC 2018 (based on the vast geographic boundaries and relatively short time periods), other methodologists would disagree with that statement. It is important to note that an estimation is not a true count of the population, and rather uses advanced statistical techniques to count those who are wholly hidden. Given those disagreements, we believe that our estimation is much closer to the actual number of youth experiencing homelessness in the Metro-Atlanta area than the traditional point-in-time estimations, based on a yearlong ethnography in the Metro-Atlanta area.

Future research should concentrate around using various methodologies to produce an estimation, similar to what the authors did above, to refine estimation techniques. Estimation techniques can be tested in areas where the size of the population is known, to refine instrumentation and data collection.
Policy Recommendations

Traditional Point in Time (PIT) Methodologies and other statistics that rely solely on one week or one day counts undercount the hidden population of homeless youth. The advent and requirement of HMIS (Homeless Management Information Software) for all federally funded agencies leads to a large named data repository of homeless individuals, which can be an important source for estimation procedures. Capture-Recapture estimations could be used by Continuums of Care throughout the year to estimate population numbers within their system using data already collected through HMIS. Using HMIS also would have a more accurate result than de-identified data to determine duplication. Data from HMIS in capture-recapture estimations could also enhance the capture-recapture methodologies for individuals who experience homelessness because calculation of deterrence and exit rates of the population could be calculated rather than estimated. Using a capture-recapture estimation tool could be an innovative way to ensure external funding for capacity building and could be used alongside traditional PIT methods to secure federal funding for specialty grants that are released from HUD.
Conclusion

The HUD estimations for homeless youth from 2015-2018 declined slightly (575 homeless youth throughout the state of Georgia in 2015, and 494 in the state of Georgia in 2018). Homeless estimates in Georgia have had a marked change, with a 6.5% decrease from 2017-2018, and a 51.6% overall decrease in homelessness from 2007-2019. Based on our capture-recapture methodologies, we found that the homeless youth population in the Metro-Atlanta area has remained relatively stable between 2015 and 2018. While this estimate differs from the HUD estimates, it does reflect the experiences of service providers in the Metro-Atlanta area who have not observed a noticeable change in the demand for services from youth.
Appendix B. Acknowledgements

First and foremost, we would like to acknowledge the young people who we interviewed as part of this study across metro-Atlanta. The life stories and experiences that were shared with us were invaluable, and our survey data do not adequately capture their life experiences. The youth experiencing homelessness in Atlanta face numerous adverse circumstances, but most youth remain resilient and positive about their future. Consequently, we dedicate this report to you, your resilient nature, and your future!

Many governmental and community leaders as well as homeless, trafficking, and social service organizations across the Metro-Atlanta area contributed to this project in important ways. In addition to collaborating with our team during outreach efforts, many offered insights at different stages of the research project. Without their support, this project would not have been possible.

We wish to extend a heart-filled thanks to the many students involved in collecting data on which this report is based. The students worked long hours over many months preparing for data collection and during the data collection period. They readily shared their insights from the field and made the project even more successful than we anticipated.

Finally, we would like to thank the National Institute of Justice for their generous funding of this project. Without their financial contribution, this project would not have been possible.
Appendix C. Research Team

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**Nicholas Forge, PhD (Co-PI, Clinical Director)**
Clinical Associate Professor, School of Social Work, Georgia State University

**Renee Shelby, MA (Co-PI, Clinical Consultant)**
Research Director, youthSpark

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<tr>
<th>Graduate Research Team</th>
<th>Undergraduate Research Team</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Asantewaa Darkwa, MA</td>
<td>Cody Wallace</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kara Tsukerman, MA</td>
<td>Madison Higbee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Melanie Turner, MA</td>
<td>Zoe Webb</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Student Researchers**

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Niya Pasha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arielle Hooks</td>
<td>Kai Thibodeaux</td>
<td>Olivia Maley</td>
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<tr>
<td>Athanasia Platis</td>
<td>Kamil Taylor-Diggs</td>
<td>Pedro Chavez</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brian Ball</td>
<td>Katherine Mazer</td>
<td>Rick Lang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brill Carrington</td>
<td>Kathleen Elliott</td>
<td>Roger Long</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cameryn Lacy</td>
<td>Ke’asia Conley</td>
<td>Rosalyn Quarcoo</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dang Nguyen</td>
<td>Kennedy Doss</td>
<td>Ruhee Charania</td>
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<tr>
<td>Daniel Mines</td>
<td>Leen Almoner</td>
<td>Sam Horwitz</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fallon Proctor</td>
<td>Linda Cross</td>
<td>Sara Taylor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George Usmanov</td>
<td>Marcus Broderick</td>
<td>Stefanie Wellons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gloria Cudd</td>
<td>Meredith Green</td>
<td>Tamia Anthony</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hayley Hinton</td>
<td>Mia Milne</td>
<td>Tiffany Edwards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jade Roberts</td>
<td>Mica Istre</td>
<td>Turner Price</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Appendix D. Community Partners

Atlanta Coalition for LGBTQ Youth
Chris 180
Covenant House
DeKalb County Continuum of Care
First Light Vision
Gateway Center
Hearts to Nourish hope
HOPE Atlanta
Justice for All Coalition
Living Room
Lost N Found Youth
Mercy Care
Recovery Consultants of Atlanta
Sconiers Homeless Prevention Organization
Solid Rock Community Center
Stand Up for Kids
Taskforce for the Homeless
The Table on Delk
Village of Hope
YO Gwinnett

Special Thanks to Community Partners Suzanne Struble and Ryan Peterson in their close collaboration with the Atlanta Youth Count project!
Appendix E. References


Chapman, D. G. 1951. *Some Properties of the Hypergeometric Distribution with Applications to Zoological Sample Censuses*. Berkeley,


Stay in touch!

www.atlantayouthcount.weebly.com