



HMIS 2008

Annual Data Report

A Report on Homelessness in Cincinnati and Hamilton County, OH

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Overview

In 2006, Cincinnati/Hamilton County became the first and only Continuum of Care (CoC) for the Homeless in the country to achieve 100% participation in our Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) by all HUD-funded and non-HUD-funded homeless providers.

The Partnership Center, Ltd. (PCL) owns and manages VESTA®, our HMIS software. PCL published a landmark report for calendar year 2006 -- the CoC's first ever continuum-wide, aggregated, unduplicated count of the homeless people served. The 2007 report was more comprehensive, providing data about chronic homelessness, homeless families, and financial and housing outcomes. This year, for the first time, we are including data from outside of HMIS. With the help of the Hamilton County Justice System, we have been able to look at how the homeless interact with the justice system.

The goal of HMIS is to learn more about homeless people — who they are, what barriers they face in obtaining and maintaining permanent housing, and how we can best help them to overcome those barriers. With this annual report of HMIS data, we hope to facilitate the process of moving closer to that goal so that, as a community, we can utilize our resources more effectively to end homelessness in Cincinnati and Hamilton County.

Our HMIS software

The HMIS software that our community uses is VESTA®, an online database application owned and managed by PCL. We developed VESTA here in Cincinnati, with our community of users as our advisory committee. It serves as an HMIS; more than that, it is a community-based product that fosters collaboration and innovation.

Where the data comes from

This report is based on the hard work of the CoC programs over the course of the year — both in serving the homeless and in entering reliable data into VESTA.

The program types included in this report are:

Street outreach — engaging homeless persons who live on the street or in places unfit for human habitation.

Emergency shelters — facilities which provide temporary housing for homeless families and single individuals.

Transitional housing programs—site-based and scattered-site programs which provide housing for homeless families or single individuals coming from the streets or shelter for up to two years to implement their plans to move from homelessness to permanent housing.

Permanent supportive housing — site-based and scattered-site programs which provide long-term, community-based housing with supportive services for homeless individuals with disabilities. This type of supportive housing enables special needs populations to live as independently as possible in a permanent setting.

Who we're counting

The people that our programs are funded to serve are those who are homeless according to the definition adopted by the federal government under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act. The definition includes: people living on the street or in a place unfit for human habitation, people staying in emergency shelters, and people in transitional housing for the homeless.

This report includes data only on these people and those in permanent supportive housing who fit the definition when they entered the program.

Programs with Participants Counted in this Report



Continuum of Care Street Outreach, Emergency Shelter, Transitional Housing, and Permanent Supportive Housing Providers

Street Outreach

DCI—Block-by-Block Outreach
Greater Cincinnati Behavioral Health PATH Outreach
Lighthouse Youth Outreach
Street Population

Emergency Shelter

Bethany House Services Family Shelter
Center for Respite Care
City Gospel Mission
Drop Inn Center Men’s Dorm
Drop Inn Center Women’s Dorm
Interfaith Hospitality Network
Lighthouse Youth Crisis Center
Mental Health Access Point—Quick Service Beds
Mercy Franciscan at St. John at Anna Louise Inn
Mercy Franciscan at St. John Temporary Housing
Mount Airy Shelter
Salvation Army Family Shelter
St. Francis St. Joseph Catholic Worker House
YWCA Battered Women’s Shelter*

Transitional Housing

Bethany Place
Caracole House
Caracole Recovery Community
Drop Inn Center Men’s Recovery Program
Drop Inn Center Transitional Housing
Grace Place Catholic Worker House
Hamilton County MHRS Board—Homeless Housing & Treatment

Joseph House
Joseph House—Moses 2 & 3
Justice Watch—Garden Street Transitional Housing
Lighthouse Youth Services—Bramble, DHHS Scattered Sites, HUD Scattered Sites, ODOD TLP, Outreach TLP, Reading
Ohio Valley Goodwill Industries—Dormitory
Ohio Valley Goodwill Industries—Transitional Housing Leasing Pool
Salvation Army Transitional Housing
Tender Mercies Transitional Housing
Tom Geiger Guest House—Geiger House & Gertrude House
YWCA Transitional Living Programs*

Permanent Supportive Housing

Caracole Shelter Plus Care
Center for Independent Living—Permanent Housing
Center for Respite Care—Permanent Housing
Drop Inn Center Shelter Plus Care
Excel Development Corporation Shelter Plus Care
First Step Home Permanent Housing
FreeStore/FoodBank Permanent Housing 1 & 2
Greater Cincinnati Behavioral Health Shelter Plus Care
Lighthouse Youth Services Shelter Plus Care
Ohio Valley Goodwill Industries—Permanent Housing 1 and 2
Over-the-Rhine Community Housing—Sharp Village, Buddy’s Place, Recovery Hotel, Spring Street
Talbert House Shelter Plus Care
Tender Mercies Permanent Housing
Tom Geiger Guest House—Bokenkotter House

*Does not participate in HMIS per VAWA, but participates in VESTA, a community-based system designed to support clients’ access to housing, services, and case management through maintenance of vigorous confidentiality protocols and procedures.

Continuum of Care Unduplicated Counts

8,372

unduplicated men, women, and children

were served by street outreach, emergency shelter, transitional housing, and/or permanent supportive housing programs in 2008.

Total Unduplicated Number of People Served by Program Type*

Street outreach - **1,162**

Emergency shelter - **6,055**

Transitional housing - **1,117**

Permanent supportive housing - **1,653**

Street outreach and/or emergency shelter - **6,780**

Street outreach, emergency shelter, and/or transitional housing - **7,221**

All program types - **8,372**



7,221

unduplicated men, women, and children

were served by street outreach, emergency shelter, and transitional housing programs in 2008. People in these programs are considered actively homeless according to the federal definition; thus, *our unduplicated count of homeless individuals for 2008 is 7,221.*

*No matter how many programs a person participated in or how many times that person entered the same program they are only counted one time for the unduplicated count of people served. A person served by three different emergency shelters is counted only once in the *Emergency shelter* category. Similarly, a person served in a street outreach program and an emergency shelter is counted once in the *Street outreach* category, once in the *Emergency shelter* category, and once in the *Street outreach and/or emergency shelter* category.

Basic Demographics for the 7,221 Actively Homeless

28%

of the homeless population of Cincinnati / Hamilton County in 2008 were under the age of 18. About 1,300 of the children are of school age, and face special challenges to stay in school and keep up with schoolwork as their families seek stable housing.



Age Groups

Under 1	180
1 to 5	590
6 to 12	489
13 to 17	800
18 to 30	1,317
31 to 50	2,720
51 to 64	1,046
65 or older	76
Adults missing date of birth	3

We report on each client's age as of January 1, 2008, or on the date they entered a CoC program for the first time during the year, whichever is later.

Gender

	Female	Male	Total
Adults	1,780	3,382	5,162
Children	1,086	973	2,059
Total	2,866	4,355	7,221

Transgendered clients are asked to select the gender they most identify with.

Race

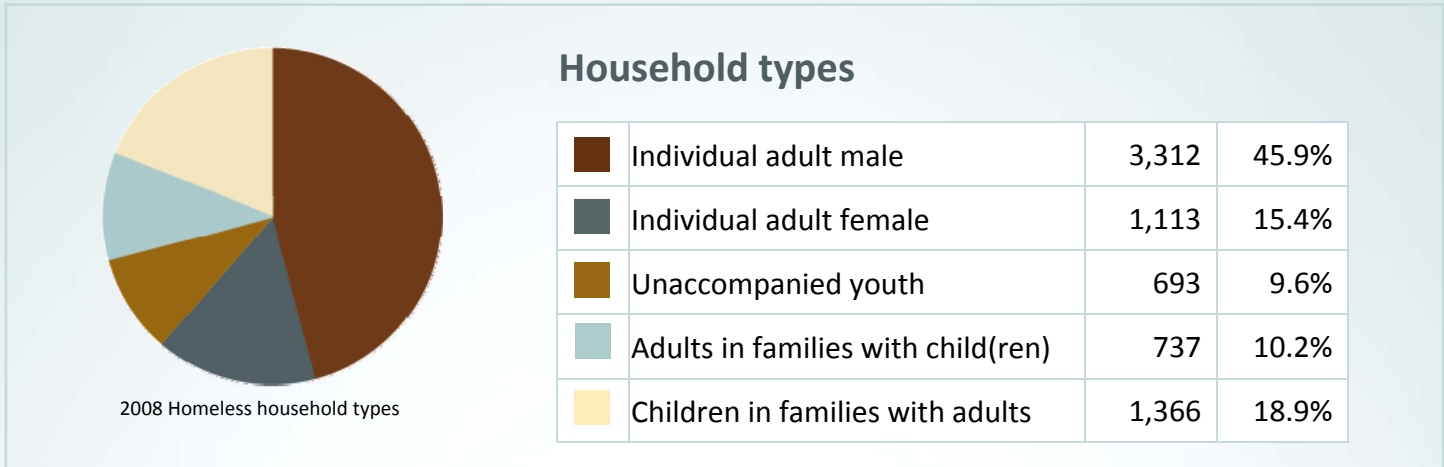
Black/African American	4,997
White	1,944
White, Black/African American	113
Black/African American, American Indian/Alaskan Native	43
American Indian/Alaskan Native	34
Asian	15
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	14
White, American Indian/Alaskan	14
Other multiracial	15
Unknown / Client refused	32

Federal standards emphasize self-reporting or self-identification as the preferred method of collecting data on race and ethnicity. Clients may select as many races as are applicable.

Ethnicity

Appalachian	216
Hispanic / Latino	101
Other / none	6,904

Basic Demographics for the 7,221 Actively Homeless (cont.)



Household type is based on how clients present for service. A mother who leaves her children with a family member to come into shelter is reported in the *Individual adult female* category. HUD does not have a category for adults in families without children (e.g. a married couple), but instead requires that we report these people as individuals.

Veteran status (adults only)

Non-veteran	4,229	81.9%
Veteran	711	13.8%
Missing this information	222	4.3%



Special needs (adults only)

Alcohol abuse	2,212	42.9%
Drug abuse	2,207	42.8%
Mental illness	2,069	40.1%
Dually diagnosed (SA / MH)	1,379	26.7%
HIV	131	2.5%
Physical / sensory disability	1,055	20.4%
Developmental / cognitive disability	373	7.2%
Illiterate	111	2.2%
Non-English speaking	21	0.4%

27%
of all homeless adults were *dually diagnosed* — meaning that they were identified as having both substance abuse (drug and/or alcohol abuse) and mental illness special needs.

Special needs as indicated in VESTA do not necessarily constitute a formal diagnosis of disability; they indicate barriers affecting clients' ability to maintain housing, as self-reported and identified by their case workers. Not all clients have special needs; many clients have multiple special needs. Each client is counted in as many special needs categories as are relevant.

Homeless Families with Children

Number of families served

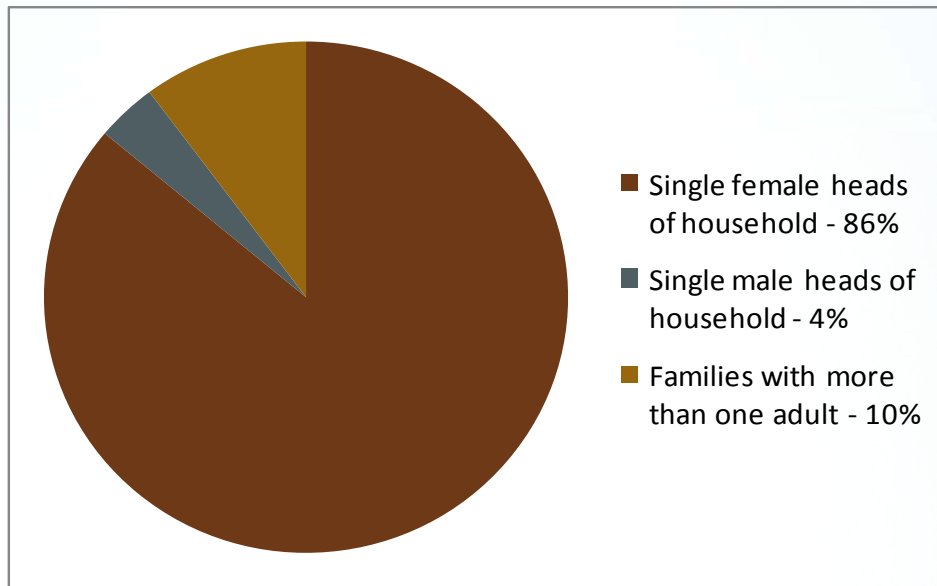
690 families with children — including 737 adults and 1,366 children — were served in emergency shelters and transitional housing combined (75 families were served in both emergency shelters and transitional housing)

603 families with children were served in emergency shelters

162 families with children were served in transitional housing

184 families with children were served in permanent supportive housing

Homeless families by household type (in all program types)



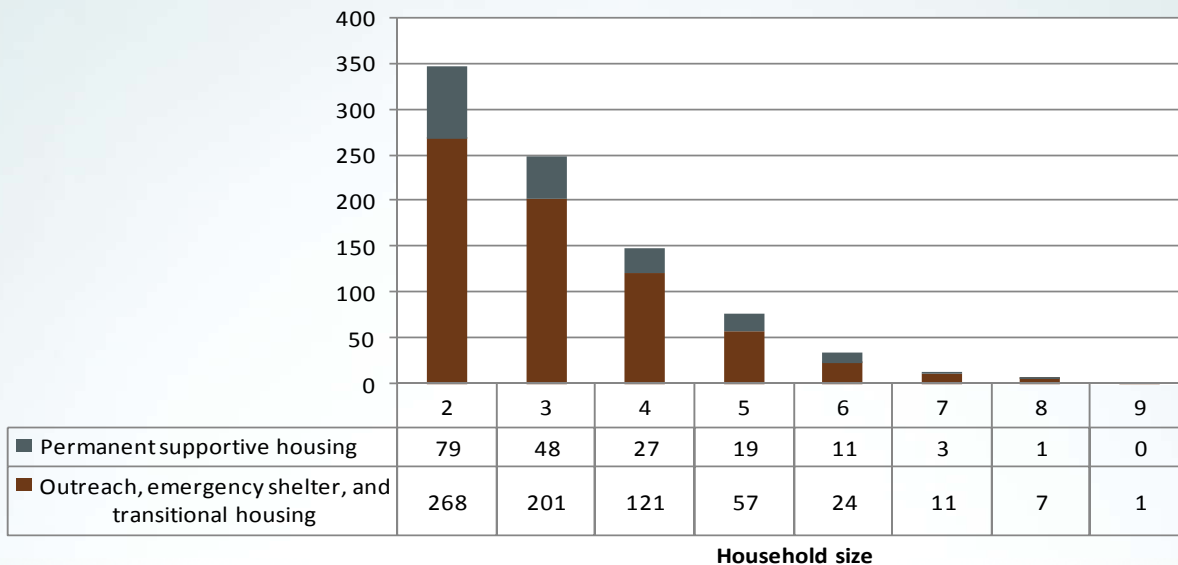
Income sources for families at intake and exit

	Recipients at first intake	Recipients at most recent exit
Child support	69	68
Earned income	86	138
Retirement income from Social Security	3	3
SSI or SSDI	60	66
Temporary Aid for Needy Families (TANF)	112	187
Other	16	21
No financial resources	218	136

89% of families (534 families) in emergency shelter were connected with Job and Family Services and received one or more welfare benefits including food stamps, Medicaid, CHIP, or TANF (OWF).

Homeless Families with Children (cont.)

Number of families with children by household size



Special needs for adults in families with children*

Alcohol abuse	54	7.3%
Drug abuse	92	12.5%
Mental illness	216	29.3%
Dually diagnosed (SA / MH)	75	10.2%
HIV	5	0.7%
Domestic violence	240	32.6%
Physical / sensory disability	49	6.6%
Developmental / cognitive disability	38	5.2%
Illiterate	5	0.7%
Non-English speaking	9	1.2%

33%
of the 737 homeless adults in families are victims of domestic violence.

*See page 14 for special needs for residents of permanent supportive housing, not included here.

Homeless Individuals

61% of the homeless population in Cincinnati / Hamilton County in 2008 were single adults without accompanying children — 3,312 men (75%) and 1,113 women (25%).

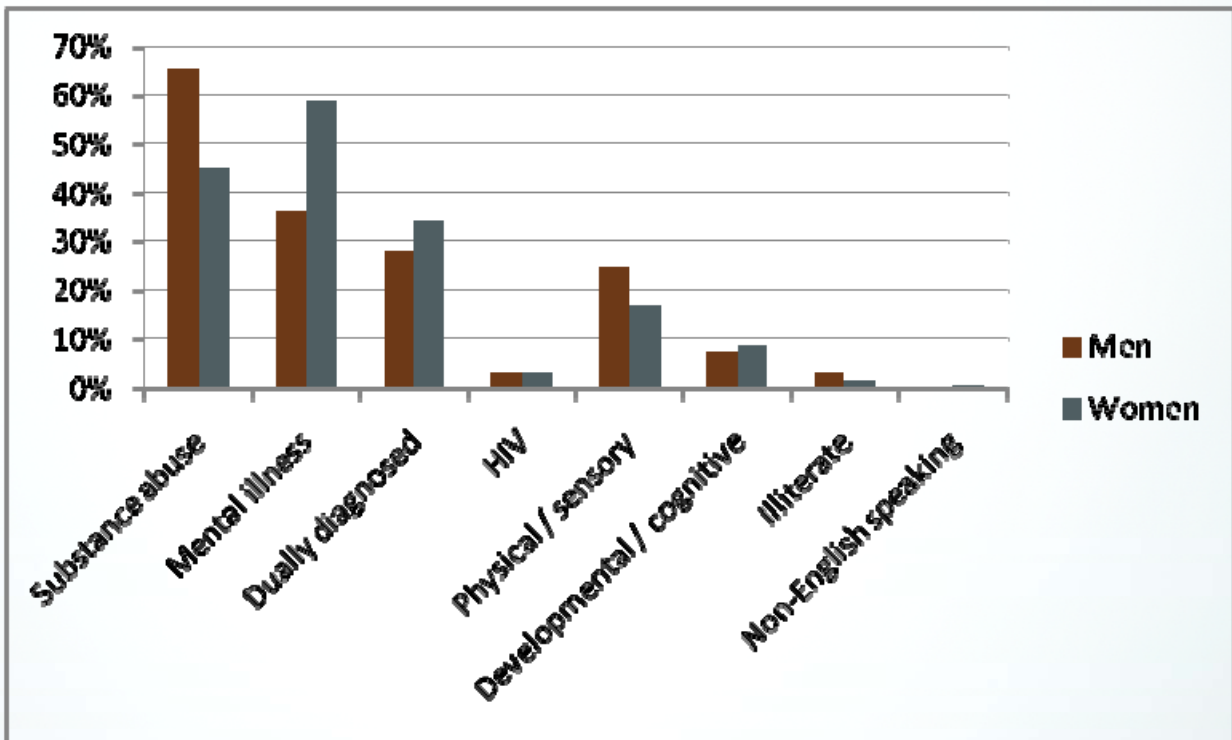
In October of 2008, Cincinnati City Council approved an ordinance directing the CoC to “take a blank slate” approach in designing a plan to improve provision of services to single homeless individuals in Cincinnati. This data-driven process, dubbed Homeless to Homes by the CoC, represents the first time in our region that a plan to address homelessness was based on actual data on homeless people in our community.

Using VESTA data, we looked at special needs for homeless individuals separated by gender, which we had never done before.

We found that a majority of men — 65% — in this category have substance abuse issues. We also found that a majority of women — 59% — have mental health issues. These findings had a significant impact on the recommendations in the Homeless to Homes report.

Special needs for individuals	Men		Women	
Alcohol abuse	1,837	55%	321	29%
Drug abuse	1,693	51%	422	38%
Substance abuse (drug and/or alcohol)	2,162	65%	500	45%
Mental illness	1,200	36%	653	59%
Dually diagnosed (SA / MH)	925	28%	379	34%
HIV	93	3%	33	3%
Physical / sensory disability	821	25%	185	17%
Developmental / cognitive disability	237	7%	98	9%
Illiterate	89	3%	17	2%
Non-English speaking	5	0%	7	1%

Special needs for homeless individuals by gender



Chronically Homeless Individuals

By federal definition, a **chronically homeless** person is an unaccompanied individual with a disabling condition who has either been continuously homeless for more than one year or who has had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years.

- 34% — 1,685 of the 4,896 adults served by street outreach and/or emergency shelter programs in 2008 — were identified as chronically homeless.
- These 34.4% accounted for almost half of the bed-nights in emergency shelters — 112,415 out of a total of 230,230 bed-nights in 2008.
- The average number of bed-nights for chronically homeless individuals in 2008 was 60; for people who are not chronically homeless, the average was 33 nights.

Special needs for chronically homeless

Alcohol abuse	1,145	68.0%
Drug abuse	1,133	67.2%
Mental illness	961	57.0%
Dually diagnosed (SA / MH)	759	45.0%
HIV	60	3.3%
Physical / sensory disability	534	31.7%
Developmental / cognitive disability	191	11.3%

45% — 759 —

of the chronically homeless were *dually diagnosed* — meaning that they were identified as having both substance abuse (drug and/or alcohol abuse) and mental illness special needs.

Moving out of chronic homelessness



Of the 829 adults housed in transitional housing in 2008, 266 — 32% — were identified in VESTA as chronically homeless before their entry into transitional housing.

Of the 1,335 adults housed in permanent supportive housing in 2008, 449 — 34% — were identified in VESTA as chronically homeless before their entry into housing.

Homeless Individuals / Hamilton County Justice System

The Hamilton County Justice System provided The Partnership Center, Ltd. (PCL) with data on all people arrested and incarcerated in calendar year 2008. We matched this data with VESTA data to find that a total of 929 individuals spent time both in jail and on the streets or in emergency shelters in 2008.

We found that in 2008, 929 homeless people spent a total of **45,763 nights in jail** — an average of 42 jail nights per person. The cost of housing a person within the Hamilton County Justice System is \$65.00 per night; the total cost of jailing these homeless individuals in 2008 was **\$2.97 million**.

800 of these people spent a total of **36,885 nights in emergency shelters** — an average of 46 shelter nights per person. 129 others did not enter emergency shelters at all, but were living on the streets or in a place unfit for human habitation and had contact with a street outreach worker in 2008.

The cost to provide basic emergency shelter — a bed, limited services, and food — is approximately \$25.00 per night. The total cost of sheltering the homeless people who were also jailed in 2008 was about \$900,000.

	Total	Jailed
Unaccompanied men	3,167	760
Unaccompanied women	1,063	169
Total	4,230	929

Special needs for jailed homeless

Alcohol abuse	613	66%
Drug abuse	619	67%
Mental illness	504	54%
Dually diagnosed (SA / MH)	432	47%
HIV	45	5%
Physical / sensory disability	244	26%
Developmental / cognitive disability	105	11%
Chronically homeless	518	56%

Most frequent charges for jailed homeless individuals in 2008*

Men	
Possession of open flask	450
Theft	396
Poss illeg drug paraphernalia	341
Criminal trespass	263
Disorderly conduct	200
DC-intox, annoy or alarm	135
Trespass-knowingly	133
Assault	114
Pedestrian violation	108
Poss cocaine	101

Women	
Soliciting	119
Poss illeg drug paraphernalia	108
Possession of open flask	42
Theft	40
Disorderly conduct	28
Obstruct official business	28
Criminal trespass	23
Receiving stolen property	21
DC-intox, annoy or alarm	20
Assault	20

*Charges are listed as we received them from the Hamilton County Justice System.

Homeless Individuals / Hamilton Co. Justice System (cont.)

Number of jail stays in 2008

	All homeless	Mentally ill	% Mentally ill
1	522	265	51%
2	233	132	57%
3	85	48	56%
4	36	25	69%
5	13	10	77%
6	12	7	58%
7	14	9	64%
8	4	3	75%
9	4	2	50%
10	3	3	100%
11	1	0	0%
13	2	0	0%
Total	929	504	54%
Recidivists	407	239	59%
> 3 jail stays	89	59	66%

59%

of homeless people who were jailed more than once in 2008 have been identified as mentally ill in VESTA.

Among homeless people who were jailed more than 3 times in 2008, the rate of mental illness is

66%.



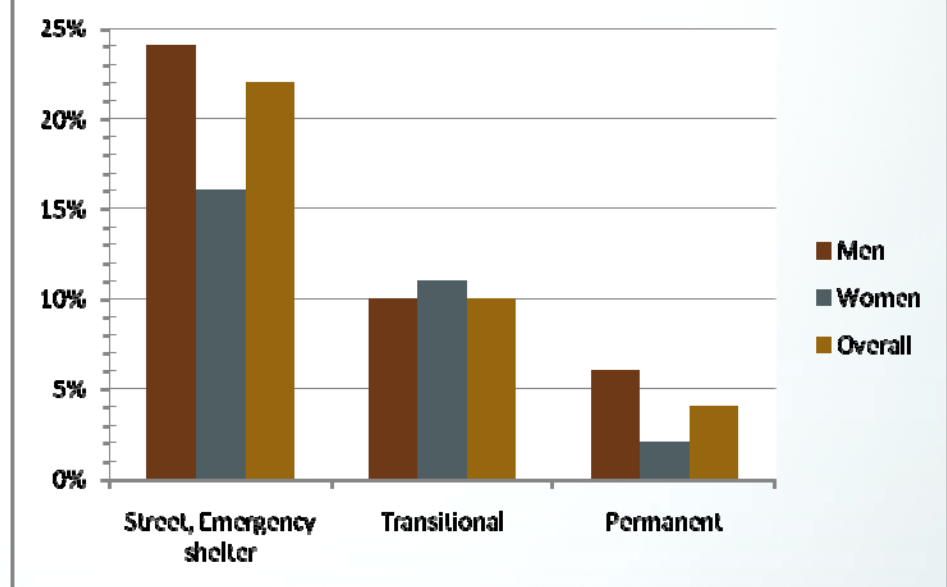
Housing is the answer

24% of men and 16% of women — 22% of individuals — who stayed in emergency shelters and/or on the streets in 2008 were also jailed by the Hamilton County Justice System at some point in the year.

Of 210 individuals in transitional housing in 2008, 22 of them — 10% — were also in jail at some point in 2008.

Of 809 individuals in permanent housing in 2008, only 35 — 4% — spent time in jail in 2008.

Incarceration rates by living situation for homeless individuals



Outcomes Matter



The main goals of the Continuum of Care for the Homeless are:

- *Helping clients to obtain an income or increase their skills to improve income potential*
- *Helping clients to find and maintain permanent housing*

For 2008, we have financial outcomes on 2,066 households and individuals who exited street outreach, emergency shelter* and transitional housing programs .

Income source	Recipients at earliest intake	Recipients at most recent exit
Earned income	285	471
Retirement income from Social Security	6	7
SSI or SSDI	309	328
Temporary Aid for Needy Families (TANF)	146	231
VA disability or pension	46	54
Other	148	153
No financial resources	1168	899

Comparing income and benefits data from intake to exit†

- 23% of individuals / households with no financial resources gained some kind of income.
- Income for families increased by an average of 40%. For families, the average household monthly income at exit was \$1,031.37.
- Income for individuals increased by an average of 10%. For individuals, the average household monthly income at exit was \$763.29.
- There was a 32% increase in the number of individuals / households receiving food stamps (from 947 to 1,247.)
- There was a 27% increase in households receiving WIC (Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children) (from 67 to 85).
- There was a 25% increase in the number of households / individuals receiving Medicaid (including Children’s Health Insurance Program) (from 678 to 845).

*High-volume drop in shelters do not record exit data because of the nature of their programs.

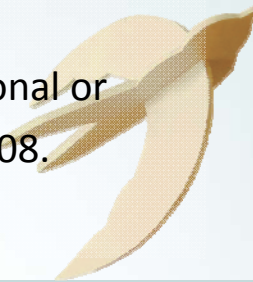
†In the event that an individual / household had multiple program exits during 2008, intake data from the earliest intake is compared to exit data from the latest exit.

Housing Outcomes

Of the 7,221 people served in street outreach, emergency shelter*, and transitional housing programs in 2008, 3,932 of them had exited by 12/31/2008 and had data about their exit destination recorded in VESTA.

74%

of clients exited CoC programs to transitional or permanent housing destinations in 2008.



Exits by destination type†

Permanent 2,082 people — 53% of people for whom we have exit data — exited to permanent housing destinations.	Room, apartment, or house that is rented	1,210
	Staying or living in a family member's room, apartment, or house	531
	Permanent housing for homeless persons w/ CoC subsidy	227
	Staying or living in a friend's room, apartment, or house	79
	House owned by person named in this intake	28
	Returning to domestic violence situation	7
Transitional 829 people — 21%	Staying or living in a family member's room, apartment, or house	511
	Staying or living in a friend's room, apartment, or house	164
	Transitional housing for homeless persons	154
Institution 116 people — 3%	Jail, prison, or juvenile detention facility	38
	Substance abuse treatment facility or detox center	37
	Psychiatric hospital or other psychiatric facility	21
	Hospital (other than psychiatric or substance abuse)	20
Other 905 people — 23%	Client disappeared or refused to disclose destination	750
	Foster care home or foster care group home	95
	Emergency shelter (including youth shelter, hotel, motel, or campground)	46
	Place not meant for human habitation (e.g. car, abandoned building, bus)	10
	Hotel or motel paid for without emergency shelter voucher	4
	TOTAL	3,932

*High-volume drop in shelters do not record exit data because of the nature of their programs.

†In the event that an individual / household had multiple program exits during 2008, intake data from the earliest intake is compared to exit data from the latest exit.

Permanent Supportive Housing

1,653

men, women, and children

lived in Continuum of Care permanent supportive housing in 2008. All heads of household in permanent supportive housing have a documented disability and were homeless prior to entering the program.



Age groups

Under 1	34	2%
1 to 5	108	7%
6 to 12	102	6%
13 to 17	74	4%
18 to 30	214	13%
31 to 50	777	47%
51 to 64	318	19%
65 or older	26	2%

Length of stay *

Less than 6 months†	243	15%
Six months to one year†	317	19%
One to two years	366	22%
Two to four years	445	27%
Four to six years	219	13%
Six to ten years	34	2%
More than ten years	29	2%

*For exited clients, we report on total length of stay; for clients still in the program, we report on length of stay up to 12.31.2008.

†Includes people who entered the program during 2008.

Household status

Individual adult male	733	44%
Individual adult female	392	24%
Adult in family, with child(ren)	210	13%
Children in families, with adults	318	19%

Race

Black/African American	1170	71%
White	444	27%
Black/African American, White	16	1%
Other multiracial	23	1%

Ethnicity

Appalachian	94	6%
Hispanic / Latino	5	0%
Other / none	1554	94%

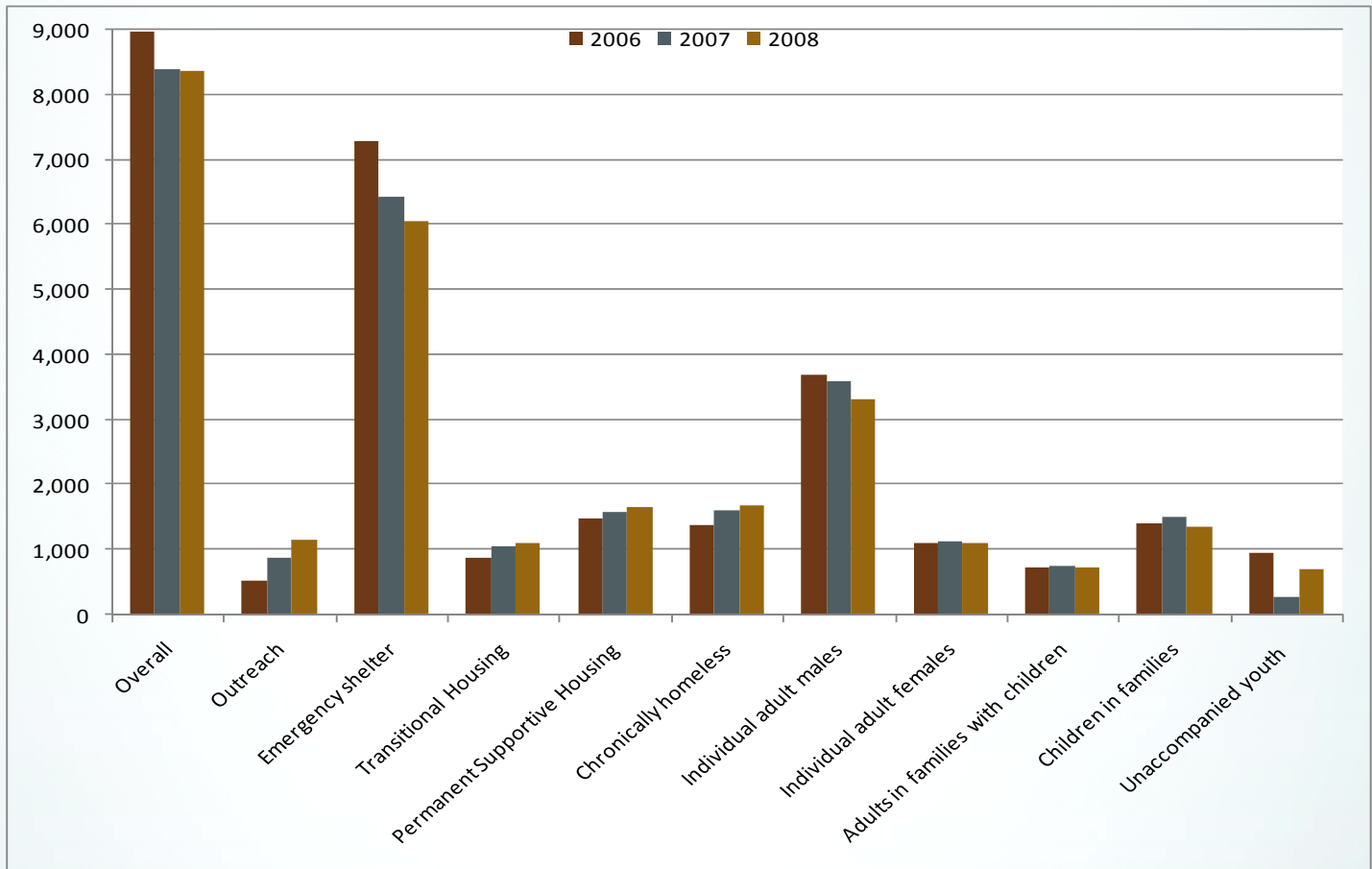
Special needs (adults only)

Alcohol abuse	561	42%
Drug abuse	573	43%
Mental illness	946	71%
Dually diagnosed (SA / MH)	443	33%
HIV	129	10%
Domestic violence	140	10%
Physical / sensory disability	246	18%
Developmental / cognitive disability	109	8%
Illiterate	21	2%

Comparing 2008 with Previous Years



Unduplicated count of clients by program type	2006	2007	2008
Overall — unduplicated total	8,965	8,392	8,372
Outreach	516	870	1,162
Emergency shelter	7,282	6,444	6,055
Transitional housing	870	1,051	1,117
Permanent supportive housing	1,494	1,577	1,653
Outreach and/or emergency shelter — unduplicated	7,545	6,900	6,780
Outreach, emergency shelter, and /or transitional housing	7,936	7,298	7,221





The Cincinnati / Hamilton County Continuum of Care for the Homeless coordinates services and funding for organizations serving the homeless of Cincinnati and Hamilton County.

Cincinnati / Hamilton County Continuum of Care for the Homeless, Inc.

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The Partnership Center, Ltd. (PCL) owns and operates VESTA®, a highly secure web-based client-tracking database in use as the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) software for the Cincinnati/Hamilton County Continuum of Care. VESTA provides over 40 agencies the opportunity to use the system not only as their HMIS provider, but as a key database resource for all activities of their agency or programs.

Under contract to the Continuum of Care, PCL also provides project management, data analysis, and technical assistance to the HMIS project.

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