



NEWS RELEASE

March 6, 2013

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Study counts 10,214 homeless people in Minnesota including more than 3,500 children

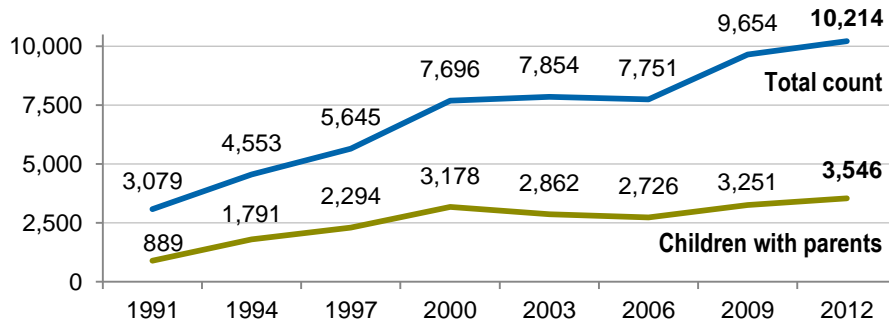
Homelessness still on the rise, but much less dramatically than during the Great Recession.

Saint Paul – Homelessness in Minnesota is up about 6 percent since 2009 according to initial findings from Wilder Research’s triennial statewide homelessness study. The one-day study, conducted October 25, 2012, counted 10,214 homeless adults, youth, and children in shelters, transitional housing, and non-shelter locations such as encampments, hot meal programs, and other drop-in service locations.

Nearly half (46%) of the homeless are age 21 and younger, of which 3,546 were children with their parents. The study also counted 1,151 youth on their own, including 146 youth age 17 and younger and 1,005 age 18 through 21.

Count of homeless people

Wilder Research Minnesota Statewide Study, 1991-2012



Most of the increase was in the number of people using emergency shelters, which was up 27 percent from 2009. According to study co-director Greg Owen, “Emergency shelter use was up throughout the state, but we saw the largest increase in the Twin Cities metro, including the addition of a church basement site less than 30 days before the study.”

Numbers reflect homeless people counted or interviewed for the study. The count underrepresents the total homeless population since many homeless people outside the shelter system are not found on the day of the

study, especially youth. Estimates of the total homeless population will be released when additional analyses are completed.

The report released today, *Statewide and Region Counts of Homeless People*, provides counts by geographic regions of the state. Within each region, counts are presented by shelter type, age categories, gender, and families/singles status. The report and a fact sheet are (available at www.wilder.org/Wilder-Research/Research-Areas/Homelessness/Pages/Statewide-Homeless-Study-Detailed-Data.aspx).

Additional findings from the report include:

- Young people are most at risk for homelessness. Children and youth age 21 and younger make up 46 percent of Minnesota’s homeless population. According to the U.S. Census, they make up just 30 percent of its overall population.
- There was a slight increase (4%) in the total number of families experiencing homelessness, but a 22 percent increase in the number of two-parent homeless families.
- Older adults had the largest percent increase in homelessness since 2009. Statewide, 777 homeless adults age 55 and older were counted in the 2012 study, up from 526 in 2009 – a 48 percent increase. However, adults age 55 and older represent only 8 percent of the homeless population and 26 percent of Minnesota’s total population and are the least at risk of homelessness.
- In greater Minnesota, the number of people found outside the shelter system increased while the number in the Twin Cities area was down. Greater Minnesota also saw an increase in homeless families not using shelter and a near doubling of the number of homeless adults age 55 and older. Increases in the metro area occurred almost exclusively in emergency shelters, including a 44 percent increase in the number of children in emergency shelters.

This is the first in a series of reports about the 2012 Statewide Study. Detailed data on the background and characteristics of homeless people will be available in mid-April, followed by an analysis of all data from the study and specialized reports on specific populations throughout 2013.

The study is an independent initiative of Wilder Research in partnership with public and private funders and in-kind support from service providers throughout the state. More than 1,200 volunteers conducted interviews in almost 400 locations. All of the people included in the study are in circumstances that meet the federal definition of homelessness.

Wilder Research, part of the Amherst H. Wilder Foundation in Saint Paul, is a nonprofit, nonpartisan research and evaluation center dedicated to the field of human services. Wilder Research issues nearly 150 reports per year that help improve understanding of major social issues and identify effective ways to strengthen individuals, families, and communities.

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