



# Forsyth Futures

Putting Community Knowledge to Work



## MAKING PROGRESS REPORT Homelessness 2013

**F**ORSYTH FUTURES' MAKING PROGRESS REPORTS (MPR) serve as a tool to inform Forsyth County, N.C., residents about current issues, conditions, and trends in six areas: Educational Success, Economic Self-Sufficiency, Mental and Physical Health, Environmental Sustainability, Safety, and Community Engagement.

The **Making Progress Report: Homelessness** is part of the Economic Self-Sufficiency series. Residents who are economically self-sufficient have the ability to care for themselves and their families without relying on assistance for basic needs. Other indicators within the series include:

- | Income
- | Housing
- | Food Assistance
- | Employment
- | Employers

Data and analysis of other indicators in the series are located on the Forsyth Futures' website ([www.forsythfutures.org](http://www.forsythfutures.org)). The following report provides a description of the homelessness indicator, identifies measures of homelessness and key findings, and examines what is needed Forsyth County to continue to Make Progress.

### REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

- | An estimated 3194 persons experienced homelessness in Forsyth County at some point in 2011.
- | In January 2013, approximately 26 percent of persons experiencing homelessness were in families with children.
- | On average, about 90 percent of persons who are homeless are sheltered.
- | The number of persons in homeless families, persons who are chronically homeless, veterans who are homeless, or single adults who are homeless have all decreased since 2011.

## DESCRIPTION

Homelessness is related to several other indicators including affordable housing, job loss, poverty, mental health, and disabilities. The nature of homelessness makes it difficult to capture a firm picture of persons who are homeless. To measure homelessness, Forsyth Futures analyzed data from the Carolina Homeless Information Network (CHIN) and the Point in Time (PIT) count. CHIN collects client data from participating shelters. For the purpose of this report, homelessness is defined as a person sleeping on the street, at an emergency shelter, in transitional housing or in permanent supportive housing. The definition also includes children and families receiving Project Hope services through Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools (WS/FCS), who could be living with extended family or friends. The time frame for measurement of CHIN data is the 2011 calendar year based on available data.

### HOW WE MEASURED - CHIN DATA

**Number of Persons Receiving Homeless Services**  
(by demographics)

**Length of Stay**

**Number of Return Visits for Homeless Services**  
(within the year)

## KEY FINDINGS

In 2011, an estimated **3,194** persons experienced homelessness in Forsyth County at some point during the year.\* Almost **1 percent** of the population in Forsyth County experienced homelessness at some point in 2011.

## Demographics

- Approximately **60 percent** of all persons experiencing homelessness are male in Forsyth County.
- Of adults participating in Project Hope, but not staying in a shelter, approximately **82 percent** are female.
- Figure 1 shows that approximately **31 percent** of all persons experiencing homelessness are children under the age of 18. Almost half of these children are sheltered in emergency, transitional, or permanent supportive housing, and the other half are living with extended family or friends or staying in hotels.
- An estimated **72 percent** of persons receiving homeless services are Black or African-American, compared with 27 percent of the general population of Forsyth County that is Black or African American.
- Approximately **2 percent** of all persons who experienced homelessness identified themselves as Hispanic or Latino.
- In Forsyth County, **47 percent**, of adults who are homeless have a diagnosed disability.\*\* Of persons who reported having a diagnosed disability, the most common disabilities are mental illness, substance abuse, and physical disabilities.

## Length of Stay and Program Re-entry

- Figure 2 demonstrates that the majority of emergency shelter visits are less than a month long. Forsyth Futures estimates that half of emergency shelter stays are less than 16 days.\*\*\*
- As shown in Figure 3, about **33 percent** of client exits from emergency shelter programs before July are followed by returns to emergency shelter before the end of the year, while only **5 percent** of client exits from permanent supportive housing in the same time period are followed by returns to a shelter program in 2011.

FIGURE 1. Persons Experiencing Homelessness by Age, 2011

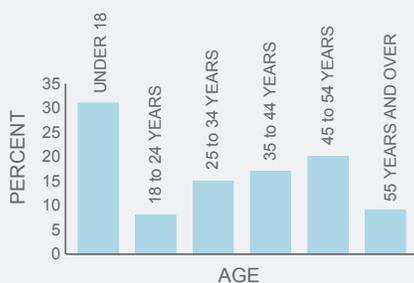


FIGURE 2. Length of Stay in Emergency Shelters, 2011

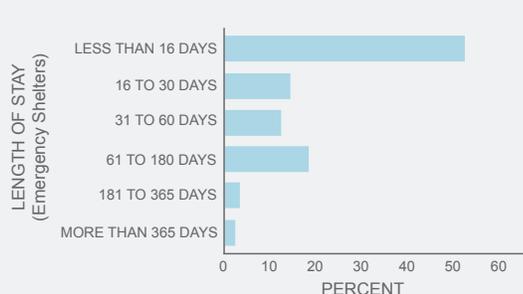
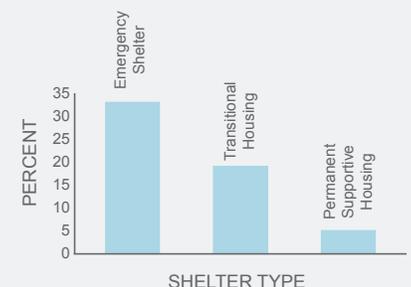


FIGURE 3. Shelter Returns by Type of Shelter, 2011



## Point in Time

Point in Time data provides an idea of how many persons are homeless on a given night. The PIT count takes place twice a year, in January and July. PIT data from the January 2002 count to January 2013 count allow for an analysis of trends in homelessness over time.

TREND STATUS	HOW WE MEASURED - PIT DATA
	Number of Persons in Homeless Families
	Number of Single Adults who are Homeless
	Number of Persons who are Chronically Homeless
	Number of Veterans who are Homeless

- From January 2002 to January 2013, on average **480** persons were homeless on the night of the PIT count. The highest number of persons was 556 in January 2012, and the lowest was 394 in January 2013.
- On average, about **90 percent** of persons who were homeless were sheltered.
- Approximately **74 percent**, of individuals who were homeless on the night of the PIT count were single adults. About **26 percent** of persons experiencing homelessness were in families.
- At the January 2013 PIT count about **10 percent** of persons who were homeless were also veterans, and about **11 percent** of veterans were females.

## HOW DO WE MAKE PROGRESS?

In the fall of 2011, Forsyth Futures introduced homelessness as an indicator in the *Making Progress Report: Economic Self Sufficiency*. Included in the MPR 2011 were targets for ending homelessness for families, persons who are chronically homeless, and veterans experiencing homelessness. These targets are based on goals of the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) to prevent and end homelessness. Since the USICH did not set a target for ending homelessness among single adults Forsyth Futures set a target to reduce this number by 10 percent. Measures from the most recent PIT count compared with the previous MPR and a baseline year provide a picture of progress for the homelessness indicator.

Table 1 demonstrates an annual average change (since the baseline year) in the number of persons who are homeless, percent changes since the previous MPR, and an estimated change needed to reach the target. Since the last *MPR: Economic Self Sufficiency 2011*, Forsyth County experienced a decrease in all three USICH targeted populations. Even though the number of persons in homeless families decreased from the previous MPR, since the baseline year (2002) the number of families has increased by an average of 1 person a year.

In January 2013, the targets set in the MPR 2011 for the number of single adults who are homeless were met. To continue to make progress in this area and reduce the number of single adults who are homeless by 10 percent in 2020, 4 single adults need to secure housing each year.

TABLE 1. Making Progress by Measures of Homelessness

MEASURE	WHERE WE ARE			WHERE WE COULD BE	
	CURRENT JANUARY 2013	AVERAGE ANNUAL CHANGE BY # OF PERSONS (BASELINE YEAR)	CHANGE SINCE MPR2011	NEEDED ANNUAL CHANGE BY # OF PERSONS <span style="font-size: small;">TO GET TO</span>	TARGET (YEAR)
Number of Persons in Homeless Families	101	1 (2002)	-21%	-14	0 (2020)
Number of Persons who are Chronically Homeless	82	-14 (2005)	-41%	-41	0 (2015)
Number of Veterans who are Homeless	38	-6 (2007)	-19%	-19	0 (2015)
Number of Single Adults who are Homeless	293	-7 (2002)	-24%	-4	264 (2020)

\* Not all programs that serve persons who are homeless in Forsyth County enter data in CHIN, and some clients do not give permission for their data to be entered in the program. Therefore, this is likely an underestimation of the number of persons experiencing homelessness in 2011.

\*\* Disability data includes only those staying in shelters or on the street, and not individuals in Project Hope.

\*\*\* Forsyth Futures measured length of stay as the median lengths of stay for individual program visits. Clients can have multiple visits to each program type over the course of the year.

## DEFINITIONS

**CAROLINA HOMELESS INFORMATION NETWORK (CHIN):** A centralized, homeless management information system (HMIS) for North Carolina required for use by programs receiving funding from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). *Source: About CHIN, Carolina Homeless Information Network, North Carolina Housing Coalition. [http://www.nchomeless.org/about\\_chin.html](http://www.nchomeless.org/about_chin.html).*

**DIAGNOSED DISABILITY:** A diagnosable substance abuse disorder, serious mental illness, developmental disability, or chronic physical illness or disability, including the co-occurrence of two or more of these conditions. A disabling condition limits an individual's ability to work or to perform one or more activities of daily living. *Source: "Key Terms", (2008) HUD's Homeless Assistance Programs: Supportive Housing Program Desk Guide. U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. [www.hudhre.info](http://www.hudhre.info).*

**EMERGENCY SHELTER:** Any facility, the primary purpose of which is to provide a temporary shelter for the homeless in general or for specific populations of the homeless, and which does not require occupants to sign leases or occupancy agreements. Emergency shelter clients are not required to participate in case management services. *Source: 24 CFR- Code of Federal Regulations-Title 24: Housing and Urban Development, Part 91: Consolidated Submissions for Community Planning and Development Programs, Subpart A-General, 91.5 Definitions. [www.hud.gov](http://www.hud.gov).*

**PERMANENT SUPPORTIVE HOUSING:** Decent, safe, and affordable community-based housing that provides tenants with the rights of tenancy under state and local landlord tenant laws and is linked to voluntary and flexible support and services designed to meet tenants' needs and preferences. *Source: NC DHHS Division of Mental Health, Developmental Disabilities and Substance Abuse Services. Accessed February 6, 2013 <http://www.ncdhhs.gov>*

**PROJECT HOPE:** Project HOPE is a program offered by the Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools that addresses the needs of homeless children and their families through the services of a homeless liaison/case manager, teacher assistant, social worker, transportation assistant, and administrative assistant. *Source: Project HOPE. Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools. [wsfcs.k12.nc.us](http://wsfcs.k12.nc.us).*

**POINT IN TIME:** The Point in Time Count is a national, unduplicated count of homeless people held on one night in the last week of January each year. *Source: North Carolina Coalition to End Homelessness. North Carolina Point-in-Time Count Data. [www.ncceh.org](http://www.ncceh.org).*

**TRANSITIONAL HOUSING:** A housing facility that is designed to provide housing and appropriate supportive services to homeless persons to facilitate movement to independent living within 24 months, or a longer period approved by HUD. *Source: 24 CFR- Code of Federal Regulations-Title 24: Housing and Urban Development, Part 91: Consolidated Submissions for Community Planning and Development Programs, Subpart A-General, 91.5 Definitions. [www.hud.gov](http://www.hud.gov).*

**TREND STATUS:** For the purposes of this project, the Trend Status is defined as a positive or negative trend from a baseline year to most recent available data. The trend was determined by an annual average change over the total years. Positive (indicated by a green icon) meaning the trend is going in the desired direction, and negative (indicated by a red icon) meaning the trend is moving away from the desired direction.

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## Sources

HOW WE MEASURED	CURRENT DATA SOURCE	SOURCE OF TARGET GOAL
Number of Persons Receiving Homeless Services	CHIN. Forsyth Futures Raw Data Enrolled Report. Automatic Reporting Tool, Carolina Homeless Information Network. Retrieved by Forsyth Futures staff on October 24th, 2012 from <a href="http://www.nchomeless.org">www.nchomeless.org</a> .	N/A
Length of Stay		
Number of Return Visits for Homeless Services		
Number of Persons in Homeless Families	PIT Counts 2002 - 2007: Personal communication with Winston-Salem Continuum of Care Staff. 21 March 2013.	USICH
Number of Single Adults who are Homeless	PIT Counts: 2008 - 2009, 2013: North Carolina Coalition to End Homelessness. (2013, March 12). North Carolina Point-in-Time Count Data. Retrieved from <a href="http://www.ncceh.org/PITdata/">www.ncceh.org/PITdata/</a> .	10 % Change
Number of Persons who are Chronically Homeless	PIT Counts 2010 - 2012: Homeless Data Exchange, United States Department of Housing and Urban Development. Point in Time Summary for NC-500- Winston Salem/Forsyth County CoC. Retrieved by Winston-Salem Continuum of Care staff on 21 March 2013.	USICH
Number of Veterans who are Homeless		USICH