



# Middlesex County CoC Homeless Assessment Report

2013

## **I. Introduction**

In 2012, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development released the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing (HEARTH) Interim rules. These interim regulations require a high level of planning and coordination among all Continuums of Care (CoCs) throughout the Country. As with any planning process, data analysis of the needs and outcomes of the current system is essential to facilitate meaningful planning.

In order to assist the Continuums of Care throughout New Jersey with this data analysis, this report uses information from the New Jersey Homeless Information System (HMIS) to provide a snapshot of the characteristics of homeless households in the Middlesex County CoC. This report can serve as the foundation of a more in depth review of the population and its needs. Communities in New Jersey are well positioned to move towards data driven planning with the wealth of information available through HMIS.

## **II. Data Source**

This Homeless Assessment Report for Middlesex County CoC analyzed data from the Middlesex County HMIS system which utilizes Bowman Systems. The projects included in this report were all Emergency Shelter, Transitional Housing and Safe Haven projects (if available in the community) that were classified as “Homeless Only”.

The Homeless Assessment Report is based on information about unduplicated homeless families and individuals who used available emergency shelter, transitional housing and safe haven projects during the yearlong reporting period January 1, 2013 – December 31, 2013, as reported in HMIS.

For purposes of this report, families included any households that presented together at the HMIS participating project and would choose to be permanently housed together if that was an option. This can include, households with adults and children under the age of 18, households made of all adults, or unaccompanied youth (under age 18) that present together.

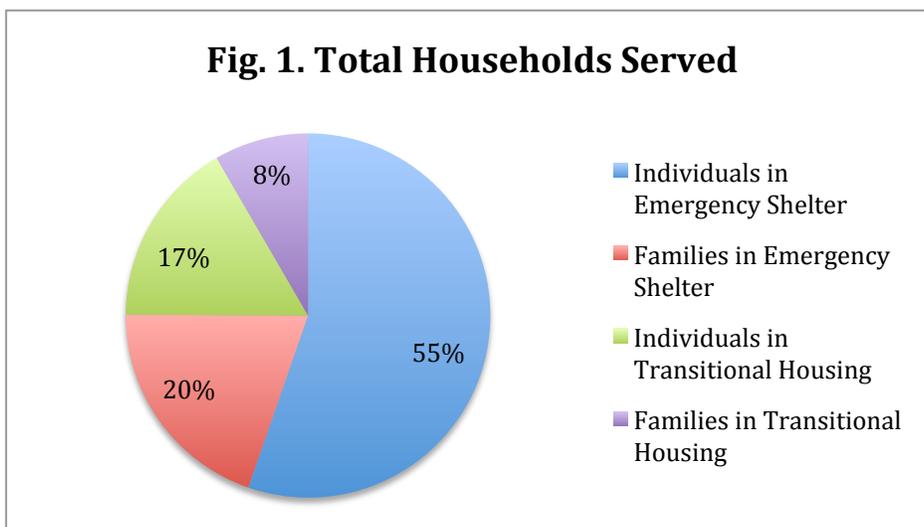
## **III. Findings for Total Population Served**

### **Key Findings:**

- A total of 658 households were served in HMIS participating emergency shelters and transitional housing projects during the January 1, 2013 – December 31, 2013 period
- There were 89 households identified as chronically homeless during this reporting period
- 21% of all adults served either as individuals or as part of a family identified having a disabling condition.
- 54% of the total population served was under age 30
- 36% of households moved on to permanent destinations after discharge from the projects

**Total Homeless Population.**

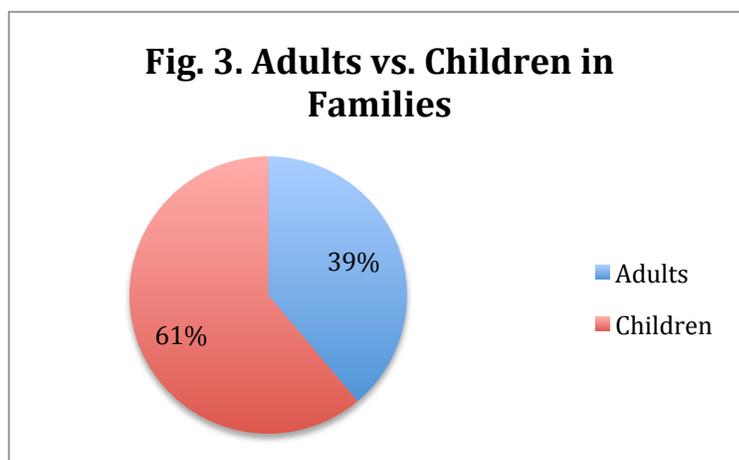
A total of 658 households composed of 1,023 persons were housed in Middlesex County CoC HMIS participating emergency shelters or transitional housing projects during the January 1, 2013 – December 31, 2013 reporting period. Out of the households served in 2013, the majority, 72% (473) were individuals, while the remaining 28% (185 households) were families. As shown in Figure 1, the most served population was individuals in emergency shelter, which made up 55% of the total population served. The 1,023 persons served throughout Middlesex County HMIS projects made up 4% of New Jersey’s total homeless population served in HMIS projects in 2013.



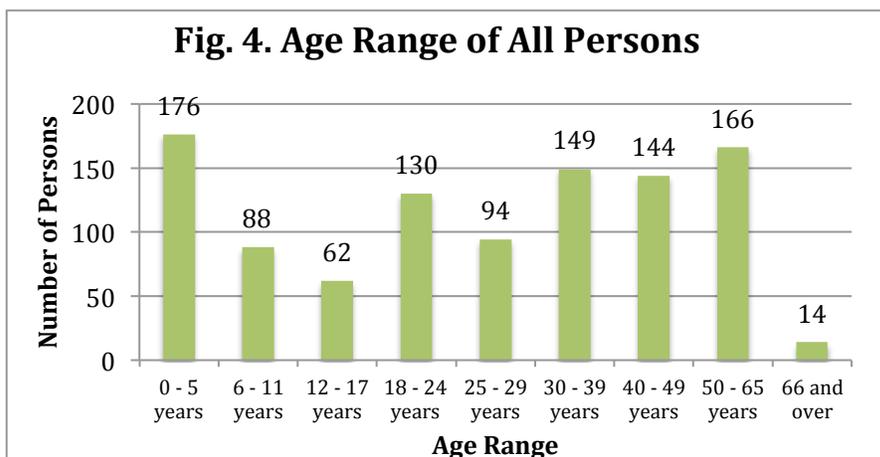
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	Middlesex County	New Jersey
<b>Total Persons Served</b>	1,023	23,949
<b>Emergency Shelter</b>	753	19,208
Individuals	364	12,639
Families	389	6,569
<b>Transitional Housing</b>	270	4,455
Individuals	109	2,176
Families	161	2,279

**Family Composition.** Of the 185 family households served throughout Middlesex County in 2013, 175 (95%) were households with adults and children under 18, 9 (5%) were adult only households and only 1 was a youth only household. As shown in Figure 3, children represented 61% of the persons included in adult and children families. The average size of a homeless family in 2013 was 3 and the average age of a child served between the two project types was 6 years old.



**Demographics.** Of the total homeless population that was served in the Middlesex CoC during 2013, the largest percent, 32%, of persons were children under age 18, with 326 aged between 0 and 18. As Figure 4 shows, the next highest age range served was persons between 18 and 29 (22%), showing that a little over half (54%) of the population served was under the age of 30.

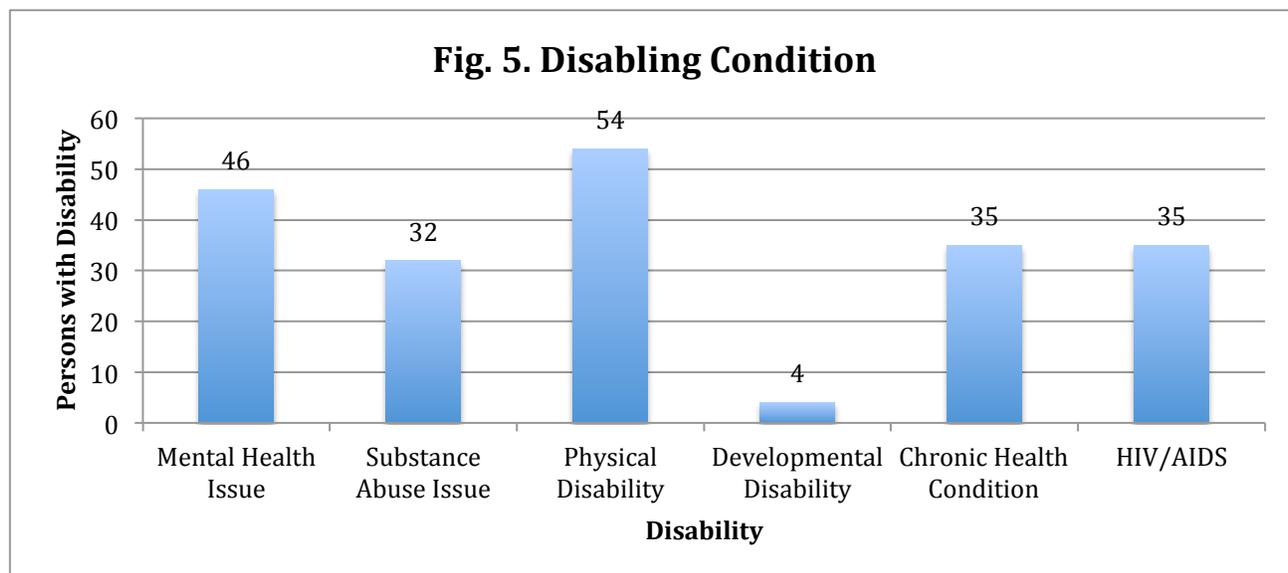


More than half (54%) of the homeless persons served in Middlesex CoC HMIS participating projects were male, with females representing 46% of the population.

In addition, 52% of the homeless persons served during 2013 identified their race as Black or African American, making that the largest racial subgroup. The next largest was White (43%), followed by Multi-Racial with 4%. With regards to ethnicity, 27% identified themselves as Hispanic/Latino.

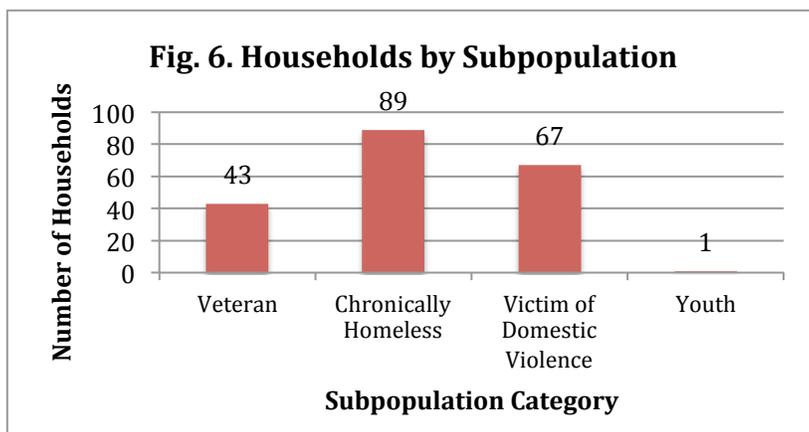
**Disabling Conditions.** Among all persons served throughout Middlesex County’s HMIS emergency shelter and transitional housing projects, 16% identified having a disabling condition; this number includes 21% of adults and 5% of children.

Among disabled adults, 37% reported a physical disability, making this the most prevalent disability; representing 8% of the total adult homeless population. 31% of disabled adults also reported a mental health issue. Among disabled children, 40% reported a physical disability. Another 40% of disabled children also reported a developmental disability.



**Subpopulation Characteristics.**

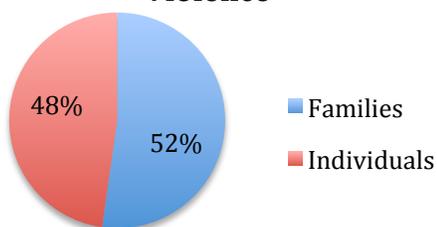
In its plan, *Opening Doors: Federal Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness*, the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) has prioritized ending youth, veteran and chronic homelessness across the Country. In 2013, Middlesex CoC served 89 households that were identified as chronically homeless households. 52% of the chronic households were served emergency shelters (3 of which were families). The other 48% were served in transitional housing project (8 of which were family households).



Youth only households, households without someone over age 18, represented less than 1% of the total households served throughout Middlesex HMIS projects. There was only 1 individual youth served in an emergency shelter project in 2013.

As far as veterans served, Middlesex CoC served a total of 43 veterans throughout 2013. 84% of veterans served were individuals and only 12% were female. 56% of the veterans served were served in transitional housing projects. 19% of veterans reported having some kind of disability, with the most common disability reported being a chronic health condition (50%).

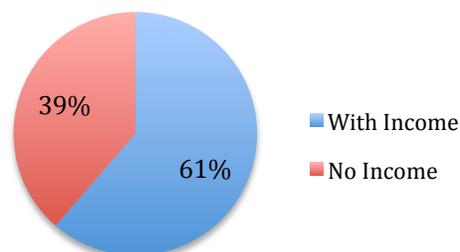
**Fig. 7. Household Type Among Victims of Domestic Violence**



In addition to the chronic, youth and veteran populations, there were 67 homeless households that reported having a victim of domestic violence. 52% of these households were families, while the remaining 48% were individuals. 61% of the domestic violence victims were served in emergency shelters. As a note, while there are victims of domestic violence being served in HMIS participating agencies, due to federal regulations, Domestic Violence specific projects are not able to enter data into HMIS, so the number of victims served in those projects are not included in this report.

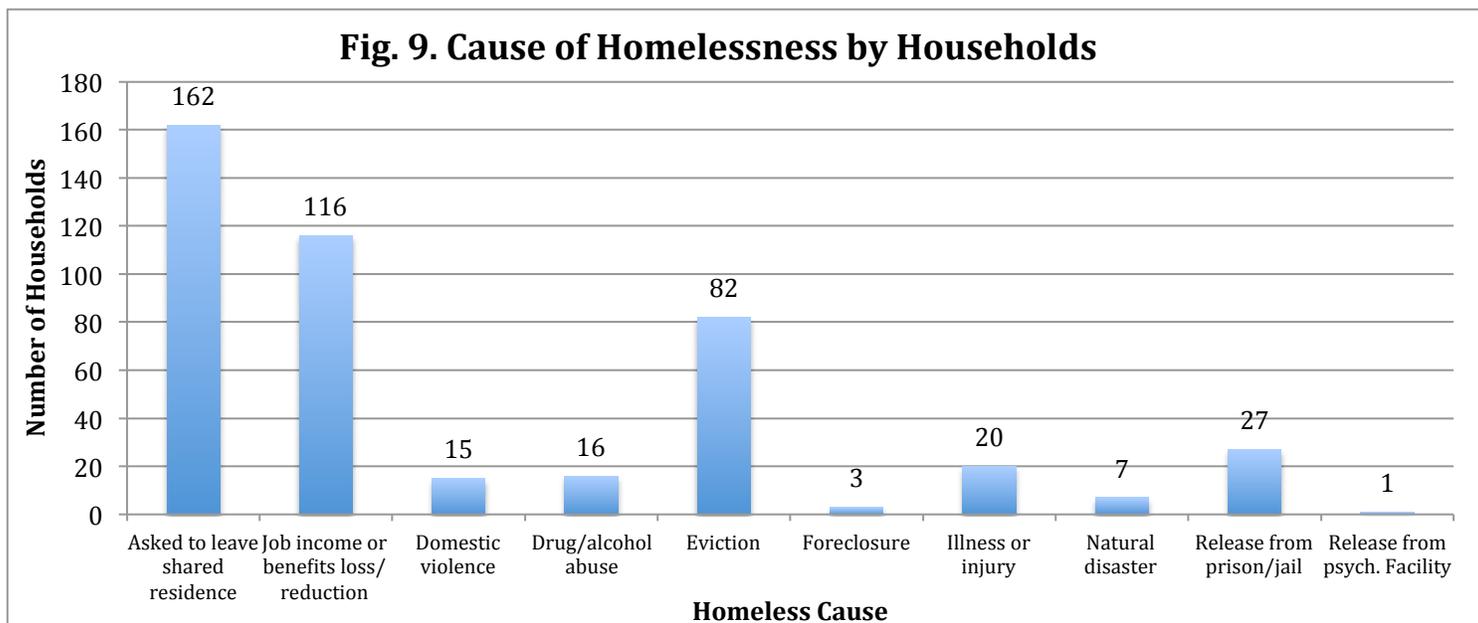
**Income and Benefits.** Among all homeless households served in emergency shelter or transitional housing projects during 2013, 39% had no source of income, while 18% reported receiving some form of earned income. The most common source of cash income among households was SSI (21%) and TANF (12%). The average monthly income for households in emergency shelter was \$351, while it was \$749 for households served in transitional housing projects.

**Fig. 8. Percentage of Households with Income**



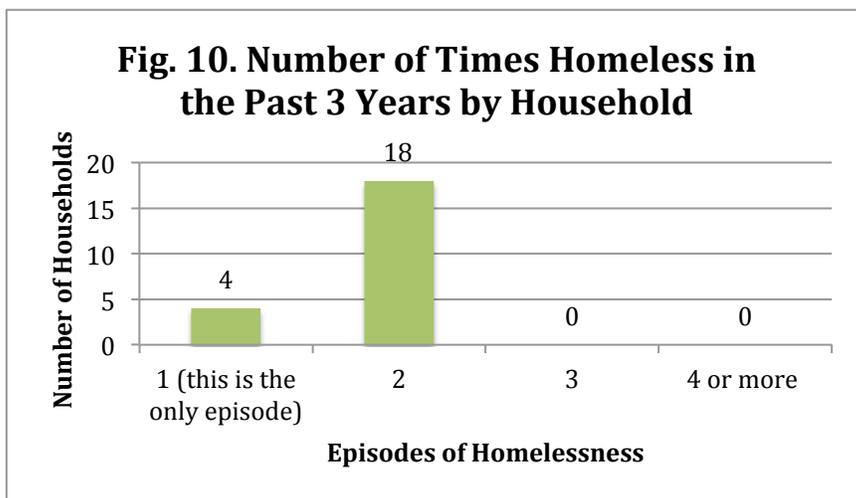
While 39% of households had no source of income, 49% of households were not receiving some kind of non-cash benefit. Food Stamps was the top reported non-cash benefit, which was reported by 45% of the households. Another 20% of households were connected to Medicaid benefits.

**Cause of Homelessness and Residence Prior to Project Entry.** When asked what the primary factor was that contributed to, or caused, their homelessness, more households attributed their homelessness to being asked to leave a shared residence (25%) than any other cause. As Figure 9 shows, the next most common factors were job income or benefits loss or reduction (18%) and eviction (12%).



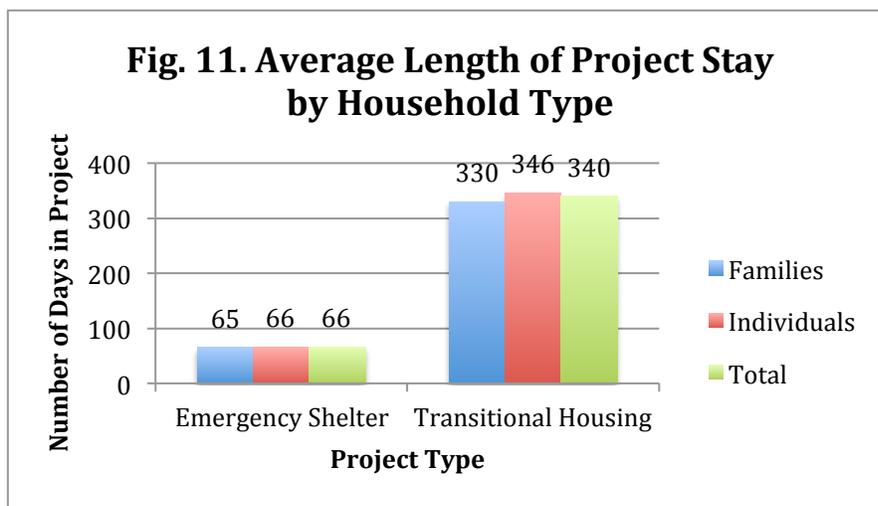
When asked their residence prior to project entry the most common response given by households was staying or living with family or friends (43%). The next most common response was rental by client (16%) followed by emergency shelter (15%).

**Length of Stay at Prior Residence and Episodes of Homelessness.** 38% of households served during 2013 had resided in their last residence for one year or longer before entering the emergency shelter or transitional housing project. Another 26% were in their prior residence for more three months but less than one year. As this was a new category, not as much data was collected on the households episodes of homelessness, as shown in Figure 10.



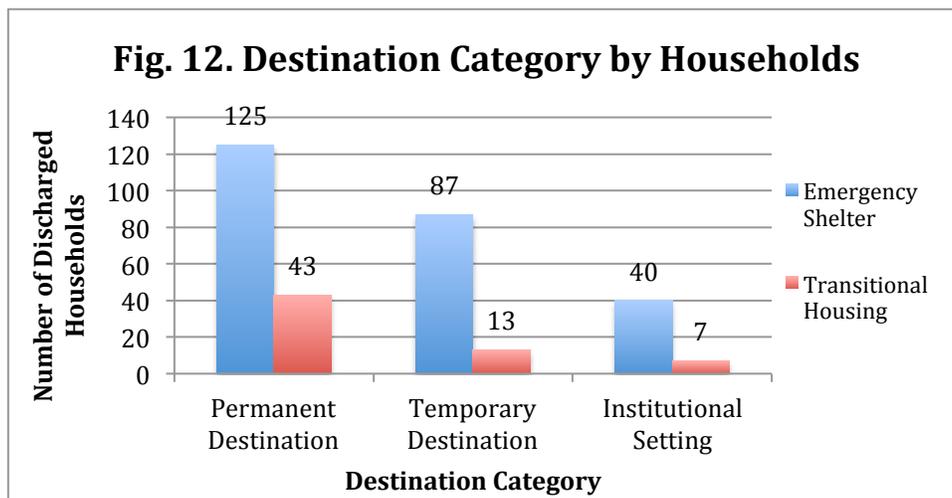
**Average Length of Project Stay.**

The average length of project stay for families and individuals was nearly identical in emergency shelter projects, but it was found that individuals stayed on average 16 days longer than families in emergency shelter projects in 2013.



**Reason and Destination at Discharge.**

A total of 464 households were discharged from emergency shelter and transitional housing projects during the 2013 reporting period. 28% of these households were discharged from projects after completing the program while 20% left for a housing opportunity before completing the project.



36% of households discharged in 2013 moved on to permanent destinations upon discharge from the project. A permanent destination includes a unit owned or rented by a client, permanent housing project, living with a family member or friend permanently, foster care, a long-term care facility or a hotel or motel the household pays for.

The most common permanent destination was rental by client with 28% of total households moving into a rental upon discharge. This rental could be with or without a subsidy. 22% of households moved on to a temporary destination at discharge, which could include an emergency shelter, hotel or motel paid for by an agency, place not meant for habitation, staying with a family member or friend temporarily, safe haven, or transitional housing for homeless persons. The most common form of temporary housing as a destination was staying with family or friends temporarily, which involved 14% of the total households. An institutional destination, which was the destination of 10% of households, includes hospitals (psychiatric or non-psychiatric), a halfway house, jail or prison, or a substance abuse treatment facility. Substance abuse treatment facility was the most common institutional destination reported with 4% of the total discharges.

## Appendix A: HMIS Projects Included in Report

### I. Emergency Shelter Projects

Agency	Project Name
Catholic Charities	Overflow Rotating Shelter
	Ozanam Family Shelter
	Ozanam Inn
FISH	FISH – Hospitality Program
Salvation Army	Emergency Winter Shelter for Men

### II. Transitional Housing Projects

Agency	Project Name
Catholic Charities	Naomi's Way
	State Street Transitional Housing
MIPH	Amandla Crossing
	Imani Park
	Powers
Salvation Army	Care House