

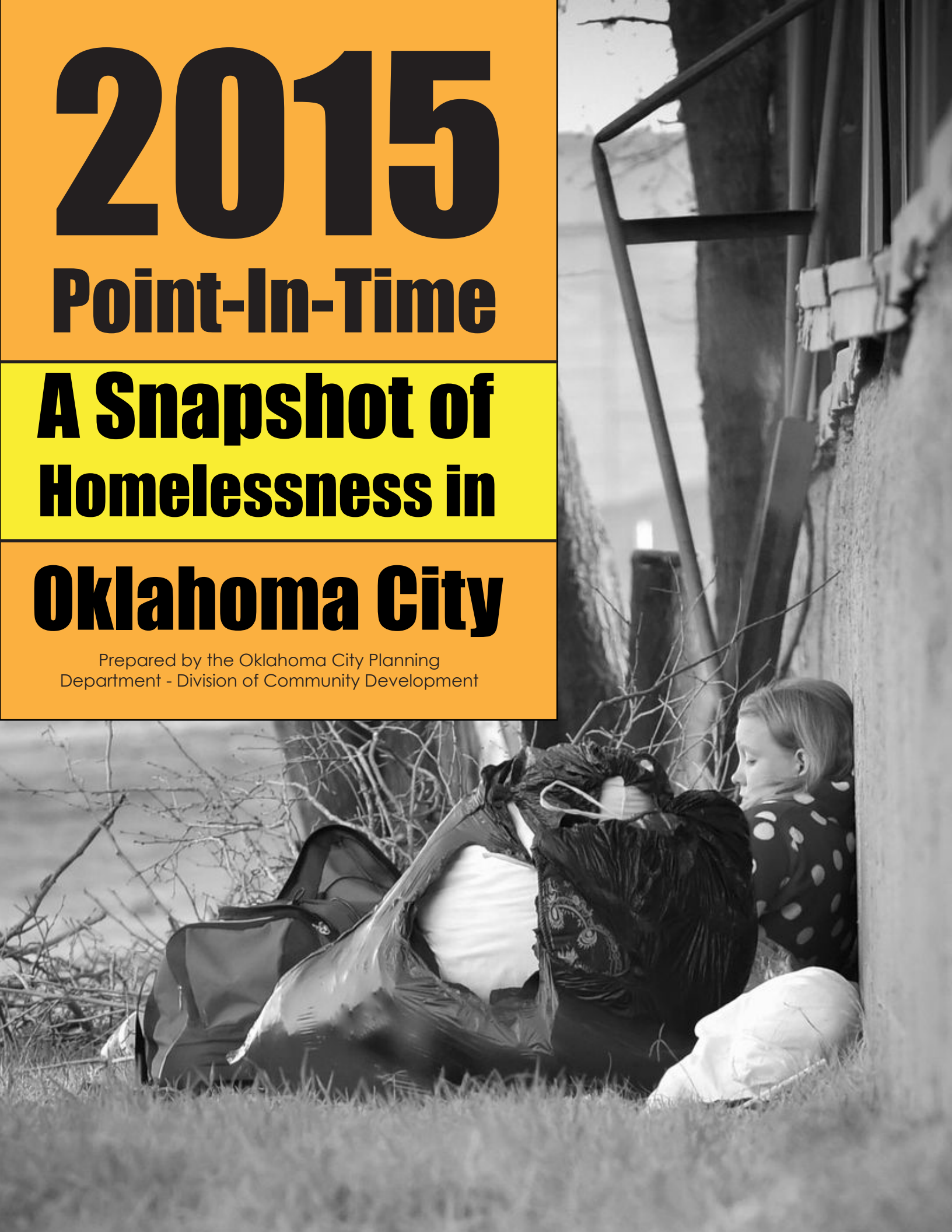
# 2015

## Point-In-Time

## A Snapshot of Homelessness in

## Oklahoma City

Prepared by the Oklahoma City Planning  
Department - Division of Community Development



# 2015 Point In Time - Participating Organizations

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The Point In Time (PIT) count helps the City of Oklahoma City and service providers identify the needs of our homeless population and how resources can most effectively be used to help improve their situation. In addition to demographic information, data is collected on special needs, veteran status and frequency and length of homelessness.

Although every attempt is made to have the PIT reflect the total number of homeless on a specific date, it is understood that some homeless go uncounted.

The City of Oklahoma City and local homeless service providers partner together to conduct the PIT count and would like to thank all of the volunteers who contribute their time every year. Without the help of these dedicated members of the community, this task could not be completed.

The following organizations contributed to help make the 2015 Point In Time count a success.

**The Homeless Alliance**

**City Rescue Mission**

**City Care**

**Oklahoma City Veterans Administration  
Medical Center**

**The Salvation Army**

**OKC Metro Alliance**

**Red Rock Behavioral Health Services**

**Upward Transitions**

**Catholic Charities-Sanctuary Women's  
Development Center**

**Oklahoma Department of Corrections**

**Be the Change**

**Neighborhood Services Organization**

**NorthCare**

**Community Health Centers**

**EMBARK**

**Hope House OKC**

**Jesus House**

**Heartline 211**

**Mental Health Association - Oklahoma**

**HOPE Community Services**

**Grace Rescue Mission**

**United States Department of Housing  
and Urban Development- Oklahoma Field  
Office**

**YWCA of Oklahoma City**

**Oklahoma City Police Department  
Homeless Outreach Unit**

**Oklahoma City Public Schools**

**Oklahoma Department of of Human  
Services**

**Urban League of Greater Oklahoma City**

# In Memory

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Individuals experiencing homelessness are three times more likely to die than the general population. The average life expectancy rate in the United States is almost 80 years but that rate for a homeless person is between 42 and 52 years. This year in Oklahoma City at least 13 individuals died without a roof over their heads. Those living with HIV/AIDS, street youth, the homeless mentally ill, veterans and those who are chronically homeless are the most vulnerable subpopulations. Dying on the street is not peaceful. Given that members of the homeless population experience disproportionately high rates of violence and health problems, it is reasonable to believe that the list below would be shorter if those on it had had a home and regular access to health care.

"This is where we have church at Grace Rescue. This is where we give thanks for food, shelter, clothing, and just being alive another day." - Robert

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Angela Clark

Harold "Undertaker" Milsap

Cathy Leach

Michelle Jones

Glenn White

Steve Dow

Kathy Hammond

Timothy Farrell

Leroy Pleasant

Vergy Lynn Smith

Louella Leflore

Marvin Culwell

Stephanie "Cheyenne" Whiteman

**2015 Point In Time**

# Point In Time Count of the Homeless - January 29, 2015

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Oklahoma City conducted its annual Point In Time count of the homeless on Thursday January 29, 2015. The intention of this one-day census was to determine the total number of people experiencing homelessness in Oklahoma City and gather information about their characteristics and needs. It should be noted that a one day count is only a snapshot and is not designed to be a complete analysis of the issues surrounding homelessness. The count provides one perspective on the state of homelessness in the city on only one day. It is estimated that a community's annual number is four to five times its one-night census.

## Definitions:

The following definitions apply to this report

- **Emergency Shelter.** Short-term lodging for people experiencing a housing crisis. Emergency shelters serve as the point of entry into the homeless assistance system by temporarily housing those confronted with eminent loss of housing or those who are already homeless. Emergency shelters generally have an official length of stay ranging from one to 90 days, depending on the individual program; however, some chronically homeless people manage to live in the emergency shelter environment for years. Most emergency shelters are congregate in nature, but can also include short-term hotel or motel vouchers.
- **Homeless Management Information System (HMIS).** A computerized data collection application designed to capture client-level information on the characteristics and service needs of adults and children experiencing homelessness over time. HMIS is designed to aggregate client-level data to generate an unduplicated count of clients served within a community's system of homeless services. For those included in an unduplicated count, HMIS can provide data on client characteristics and service utilization.
- **Permanent Supportive Housing.** Housing with integrated wrap-around services that is not time limited for persons who are homeless and have a disabling condition. It differs from transitional housing because tenants of supportive housing pay rent and sign leases, and there is no limit for duration of stay. Integrated services vary by the needs of the residents but can include basic healthcare, mental healthcare, support for recovery from addiction, case management, employment services and training.
- **Transitional Housing.** Time-limited temporary housing and services for persons who have multiple barriers to obtaining housing and employment. This type of housing, as defined by HUD, can be for up to 2 years and the living arrangements are usually similar to permanent housing. With assistance, people in transitional housing work to resolve their housing issues. Once residents are stabilized, Transitional housing providers are expected to help them locate permanent housing.



"This torn flag was given to me and I'm trying to repair it so that it represents life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness again" - John

**2015 Point In Time**

# Methods

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The Point In Time Planning Committee is responsible for organizing the count every year. This process entails locating counting sites, recruiting volunteers, developing survey instruments, entering survey data, locating and distributing incentives and reporting results. Members of this committee include representatives from Oklahoma City government, The Coalition to End Poverty, as well as the Homeless Alliance and other community providers. Planning begins several months prior to the count and concludes with the release of the PIT annual report later in the year.

The US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requires communities to conduct the Point In Time counts on a day in the last week of January every other year, so it can collect national data that is used to calculate funding for housing and supportive services. Oklahoma City has opted to conduct the count annually.

In 2015, the count had several components including standardized survey forms that were used to collect information from people found living on the streets, at meal sites, or in locations that do not participate in the community's Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). HMIS was employed to collect information for the 24-hour period from agencies that enter data about people who are homeless. The survey instruments were designed to mirror the HMIS data elements so that the count would be more accurate.

Information from the surveys was entered into a database and subsequently merged with HMIS data. Duplicates were identified electronically and then reviewed by members of the Data Committee to check for data quality.

The Homeless Alliance was the location for real-time data entry of the surveys. Guided by the HMIS administrator from the Homeless Alliance, community volunteers assisted with entering the information from the surveys into an online database. Entering the information on the same day allows for easily checking for duplication and reviewing preliminary numbers within a matter of days instead of weeks or months as in past counts.



"I walk this bridge every day to get from my campsite to different places downtown. I like to come here at night to sit and sing hymns. It brings me peace." - Booker

# Locations

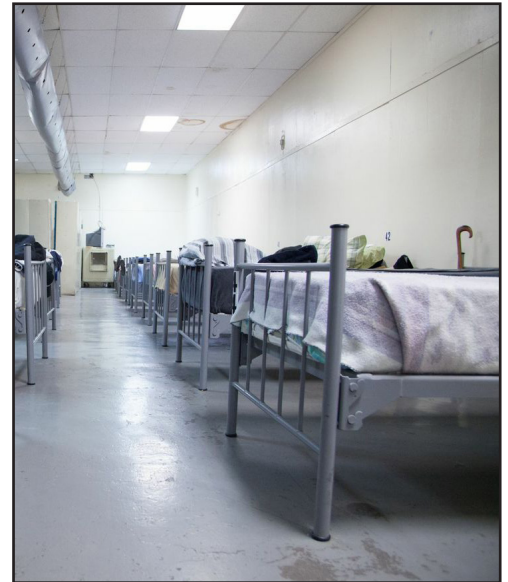
**Emergency Shelter Count:** Currently the three largest emergency shelters, City Rescue Mission, Salvation Army, and Grace Rescue Mission, enter information about the daily usage of emergency shelter beds into HMIS. This totals approximately 70% of the number of shelter beds available. In shelters that do not participate in HMIS, surveys were conducted or volunteers directly interviewed the residents of the shelter.

**Transitional Housing Count:** HMIS was used to collect data from transitional housing providers who participate in HMIS. For agencies not using HMIS, transitional housing staff completed computer based survey forms and returned the data to the PIT committee. This data was counted separately and then aggregated to determine total counts after eliminated duplications.

**Meal Site Count:** On January 29, volunteers visited sites where free meals were served to the public throughout the day. The meal site count was focused on identifying and interviewing people who were homeless but did not stay in one of Oklahoma City's homeless shelters that night.

**Street Count:** Prior to the count, a list of locations where homeless people were known to sleep was identified. Teams of trained outreach workers visited these locations to engage homeless individuals.

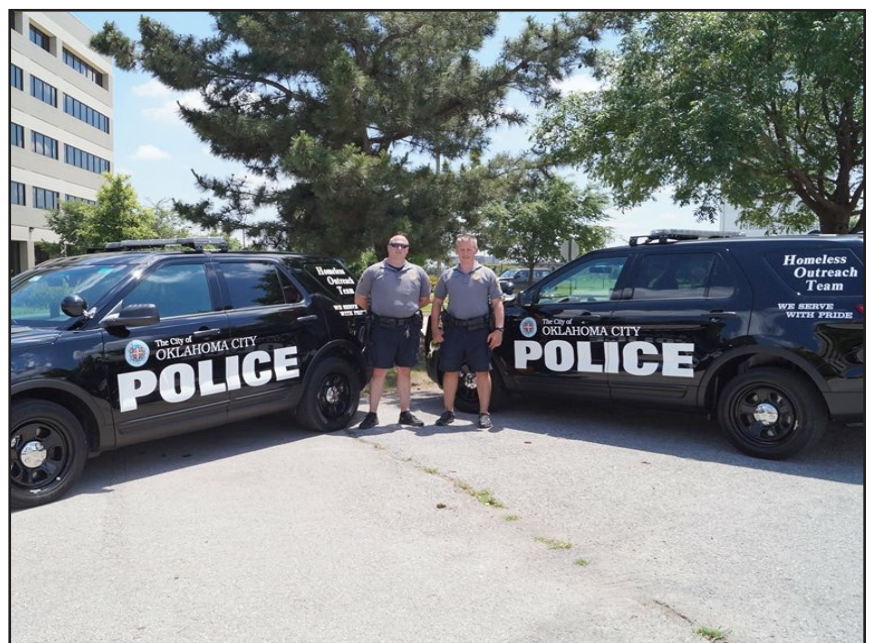
**Day Shelter Count:** Volunteers visited the city's largest day shelter on the Westtown Homeless Resource Campus and conducted surveys throughout the day.



"This is what the inside of a shelter looks like. Lots of beds in rows. It can be difficult being so close to strangers."  
- Robert

## OKCPD HOMELESS OUTREACH TEAM

In August 2014, members of the Oklahoma City Police Department started the OKCPD Homeless Outreach Team. Previously, homeless individuals were often arrested and/or fined for minor offenses. While this still may happen in some cases, the Outreach Team works with local service providers to try to connect people to services instead. From August 2014 - February 2015 the Outreach Team connected 87 homeless individuals with services, took 376 calls, and visited 138 homeless camps.



# Total Homeless

## definition

- An individual or family who lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence.
- An individual or family who will imminently lose their primary residence.
- An individual or family who is fleeing domestic violence and has no other residence or the resources and support networks to secure one.

Oklahoma City uses the information from the Point In Time count to identify possible trends in homelessness as well as the necessary resources to combat the problems that lead to homelessness. The total number of persons experiencing homelessness decreased by 12% in 2015 from 2014. The fluctuation in the total number of homeless individuals and families from year to year is a result of many factors including weather conditions on the day of the count, counting methods, and successful housing efforts by service providers over the course of the previous year.

## Total Count 2011-2014

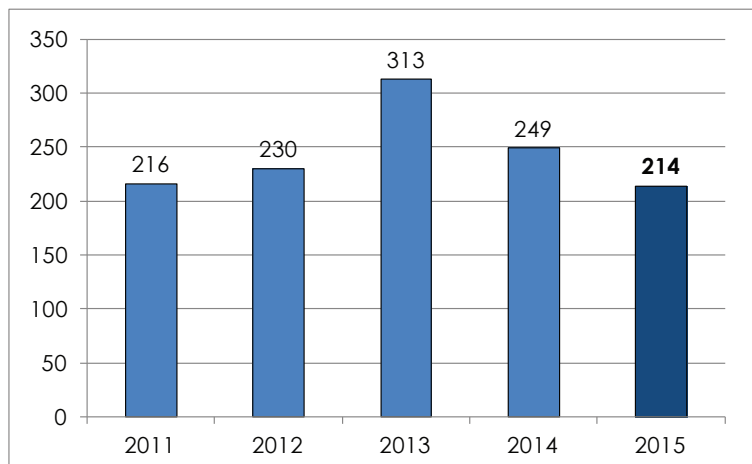
YEAR	SHELTER	TRANSITIONAL HOUSING	UNSHELTERED	TOTAL
2011	634	258	329	1,221
2012	630	312	361	1,303
2013	820	249	293	1,362
2014	1,029	194	258	1,481
2015	908	192	200	1,300

# Chronically Homeless

Sixteen percent of the city's homeless population are chronically homeless. This percentage represents a 14% decrease from last year and a 32% decrease since 2013. The success of housing the chronically homeless population can be attributed to the community joining 100,000 Homes and Zezo: 2016 campaigns aimed at housing the most medically-vulnerable chronically homeless individuals and homeless veterans.

## definition

An unaccompanied homeless individual with a disabling condition, or a family with at least one adult or child with a disabling condition, who has either been continuously homeless for a year or more or has had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years.



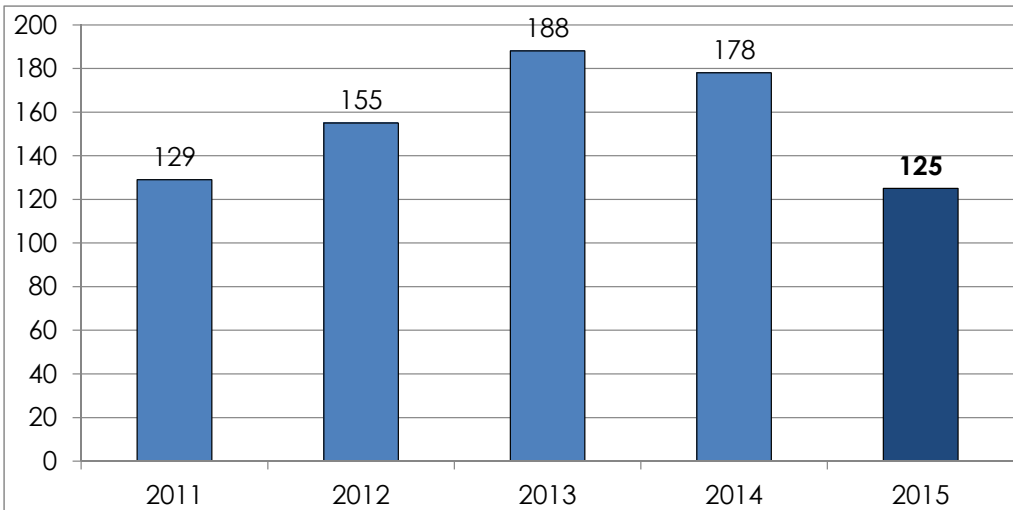
- Of the 214 chronically homeless individuals counted in 2015, 74 or 34% were staying in an unsheltered environment.

# Veterans

## definition

A person who has served on active duty in the Armed Forces of the United States. This does not include inactive military reserves or national Guard unless the person was called to active duty.

The total number of homeless veterans decreased from 178 in 2014 to 125 in 2015. To combat the problem of veteran homelessness, local housing providers work in partnership with HUD and the Veteran's Affairs Supportive Housing Program (VASH) to put more homeless veterans into permanent housing. In an effort to end veterans' homelessness by the end of 2015, the community has formed a Veterans Task Force. This task force will make a coordinated and concerted effort to house all homeless veterans.



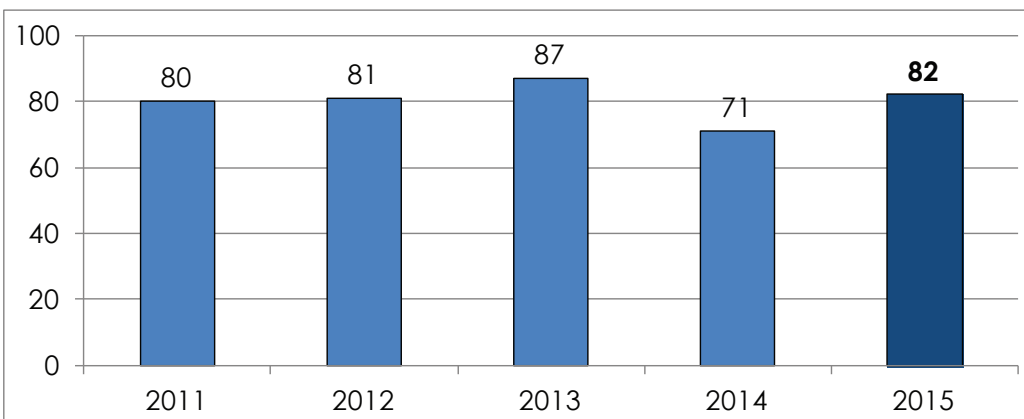
- Veterans make up approximately 10% of Oklahoma City and the national homeless population.
- On the night of the count, 20% of homeless veterans were unsheltered.
- 9% of the homeless veterans counted identified as female.

# Families

On the night of the count in Oklahoma City 82 families were experiencing homelessness. Homeless families are exposed to substantial amounts of stress impacting the health and well-being of adults and children. Homelessness increases the chances that a family will separate or disband. Oklahoma City has focused their efforts to decrease this subpopulation through the Emergency Solutions Grant and the Supportive Housing Program.

## definition

Homeless household living with at least one child under the age of 18.



- Individuals within a homeless family currently make up 18% of the total homeless population in Oklahoma City.
- In 2015, there were 237 people in a homeless family. This brings an average household size to just under three people per homeless family.



# Special Needs

## definition

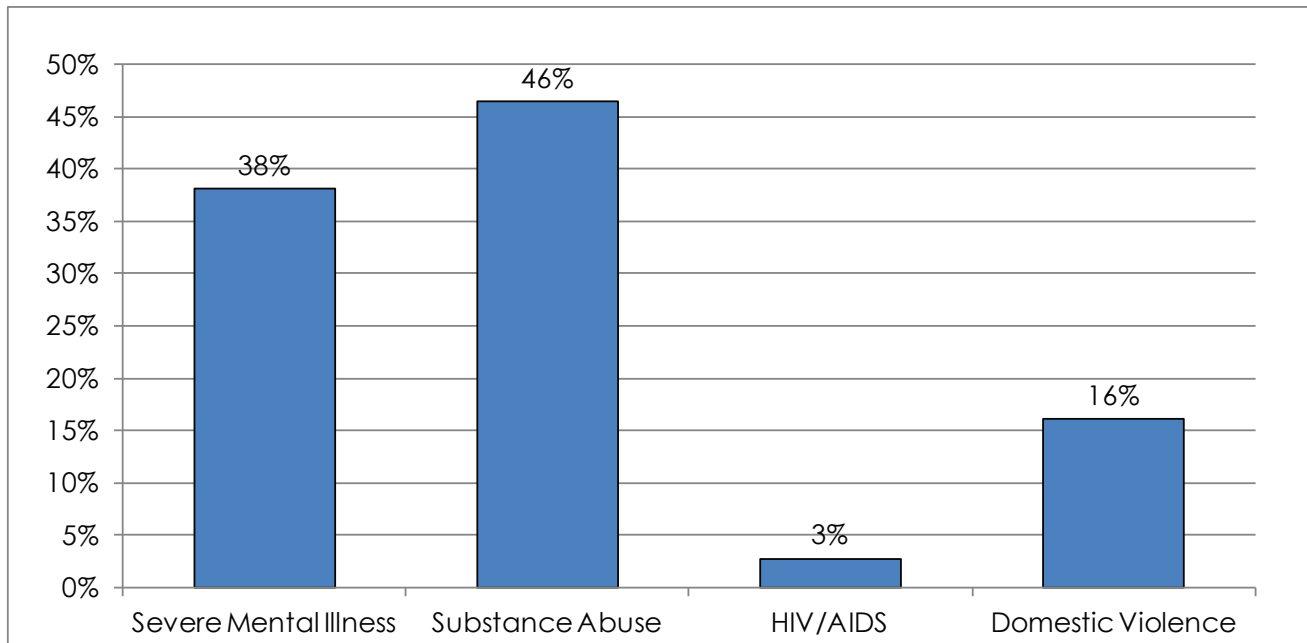
A person living in an emergency shelter, transitional housing, or a place not intended for human habitation who has one or more disabling conditions.

The special needs population includes persons with physical, mental, or behavioral disabilities, person with HIV/AIDS, and/or persons with alcohol or drug addictions. As of 2011, unaccompanied minors were also added to this category.

## Special Needs Total Count, 2011-2015

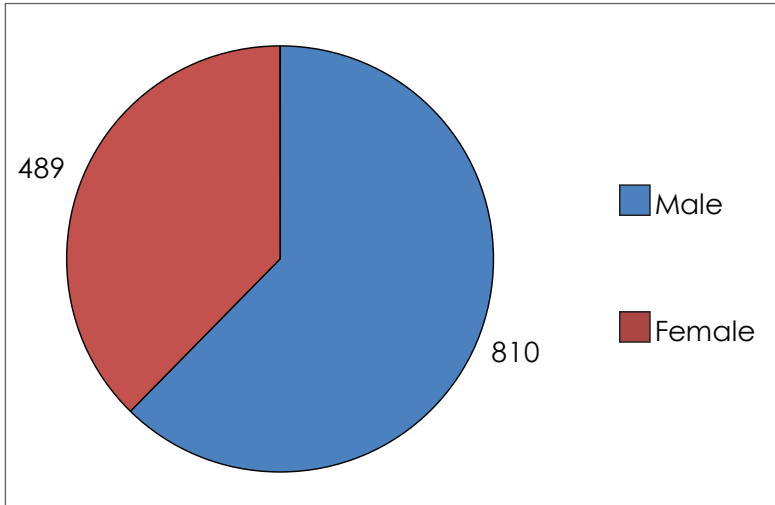
SPECIAL NEEDS	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Severe Mental Illness	235	304	502	522	495
Substance Abuse	519	473	571	484	603
HIV/AIDS	20	21	25	20	36
Domestic Violence	97	202	168	181	209
Unaccompanied Minors (Under 18)	10	21	7	0	2

## Special Needs as Percent of Total Homeless Population



- While it would appear that all individuals surveyed reported they had a disabling condition, this number is actually lower. Many people reported having more than one condition and so are included in more than one category.
- The number of individuals reporting severe mental illness decreased from 522 in 2014 to 495 in 2015.
- Many unaccompanied minors make an effort to avoid contact with service providers. Only two were identified the day of the 2015 count which is less than 1% of the total homeless counted. Additional efforts and resources are being made available to identify and serve this subpopulation.

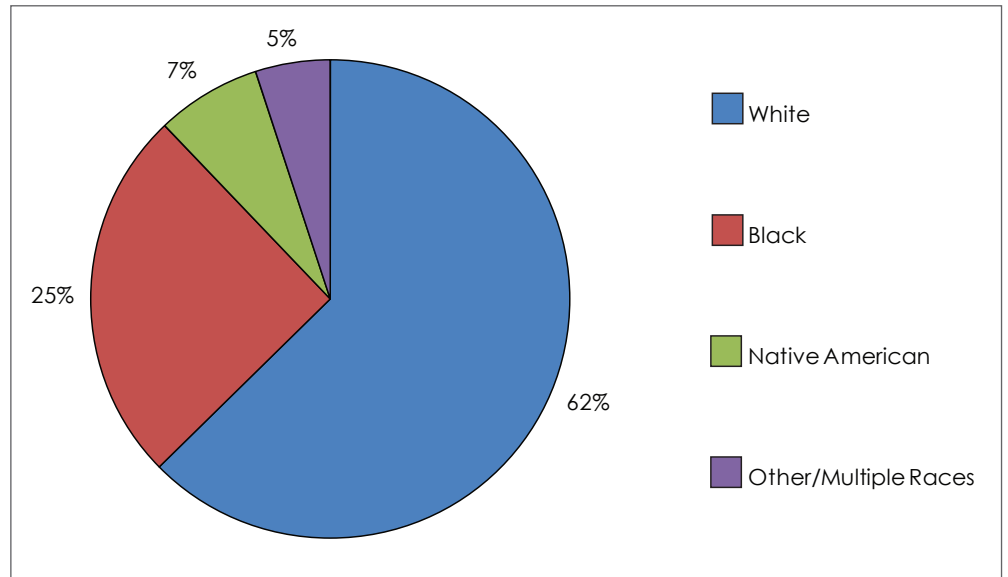
# Sex



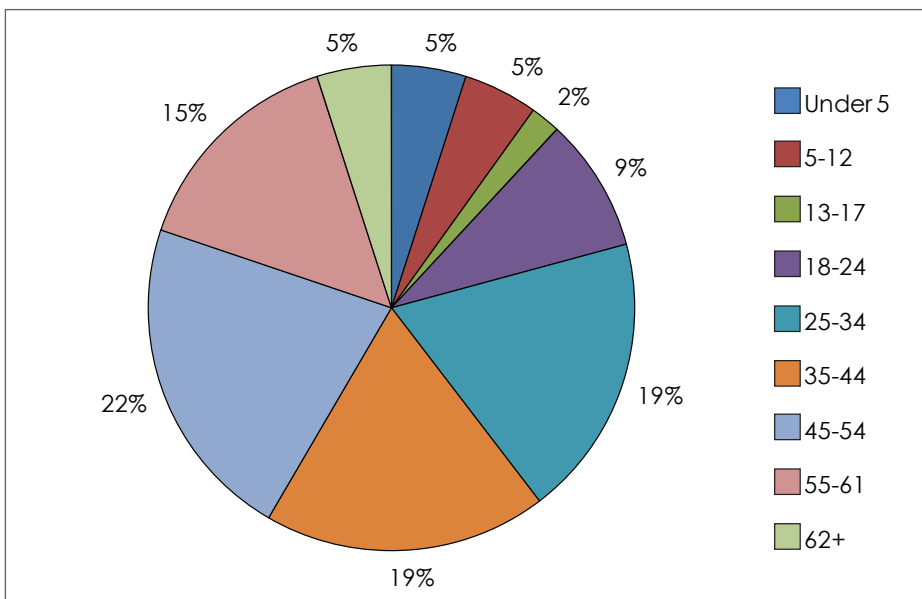
Though the number of females surveyed changed very little from 2014 to 2015 (an increase of only 4 from 485 to 489), the number of males counted dropped by 186 (from 996 to 810). While housing was not the only factor that contributed to this reduction, it was a significant component. Additionally, **1 transgendered** person was identified during the count.

# Race

While the number of respondents identifying as Hispanic increased from 2014 to 2015, most other groups showed either moderate to no increase or a reduction. Only 5 respondents identified as Asian this year which is under 1% of the total homeless population. 7% of individuals identified as being of Hispanic ethnicity.



# Age



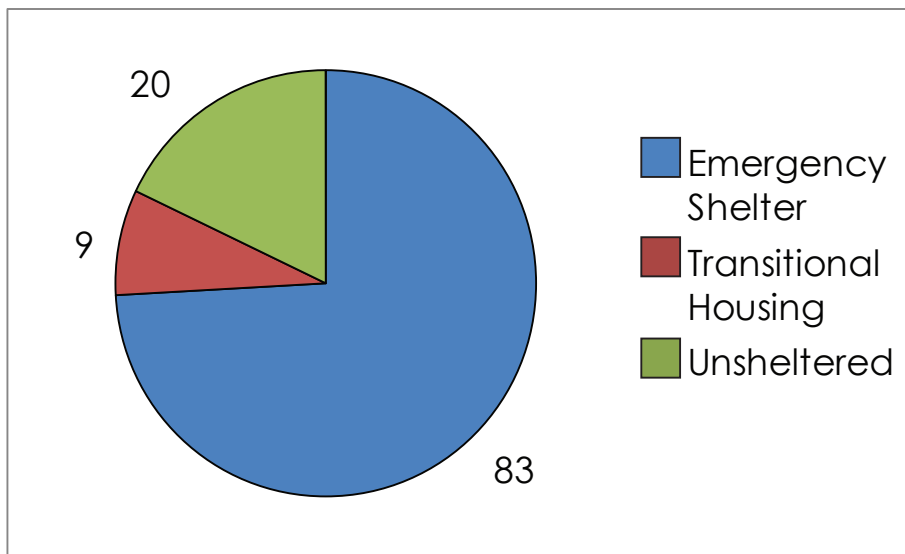
Though the overall number of individuals in each age category may fluctuate from year to year, the percentage that each group makes up of the overall total population typically remains fairly stable. 2015 was no different as individuals ages 45-54 continued to make up the largest age group with 280 respondents.

# Unaccompanied Youth

The methods regularly used for counting homeless adults do not accurately capture the number of youth experiencing homelessness. The homeless youth population tends to be hidden and transient, often trying to blend in with peers who are not homeless. They often times do not access services due to the lack of knowledge, apprehensions about mandated reporting, and the perceived rules. These youth are often times exposed to higher rates of violence, involvement in illegal activities, sexual assault, physical illness, and are at a risk of anxiety and depression.

## definition

persons under the age of 25 who are not presenting or sleeping in the same place as their parent or legal guardian, including: single youth, youth couples, and groups of youth.



- A total of 112 unaccompanied youth were counted in 2015.
- These youth made up over 8% of the total homeless population in Oklahoma City.
- 18% of unaccompanied youth slept in a place not meant for human habitation on the night of the count.

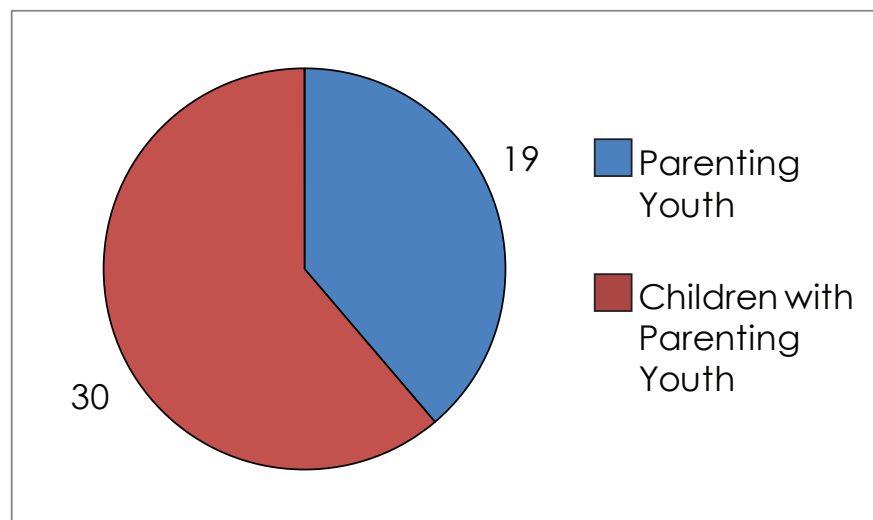
# Parenting Youth Households

## definition

youth who identify as the parent or legal guardian of one or more children who are present with or sleeping in the same place as the youth parent, where there is no person over the age of 24 in the household.

- 19 households with parenting youth were identified in the count.
- All 19 households were sheltered on the night of the count.

In addition to youth individuals, 2015 was the first year that HUD required communities to report the total number of youth households (persons under age 25) who are parenting other youth and unaccompanied minors.



# Summary and Strategies



"When I was living in my truck, I kept a picture of Jesus, my drinks, and my snacks on my dashboard. I kept the picture of Jesus for safety. He watched over me on the streets" - Gary

Oklahoma City uses information obtained from the annual Point in Time count to quantify and prioritize housing and service needs of homeless persons. Simultaneously, Oklahoma City completes a Housing Inventory Chart that details the number of units and beds available in emergency shelters, transitional housing, and permanent supportive housing.

This snapshot allows Oklahoma City to track trends and information concerning subpopulations to better assess our community needs for housing. The Cost of Homelessness Study conducted by the City in 2010 reinforced the cost effectiveness of permanent supportive housing by pointing out that it costs 20% less to provide permanent supportive housing to people who are homeless with disabilities than to house them in emergency shelter.

With the findings of the Cost of Homelessness Study in mind, the Oklahoma City Continuum of Care (CoC) joined the national 100,000 Homes Campaign in 2013 and the Zero: 2016 Campaign in 2015. The Journey Home OKC group that is implementing these campaigns consists of more than 40 nonprofits and government agencies working in collaboration. Since 2013, 189 additional permanent supportive housing beds have been added in Oklahoma City.

Additionally, for several years local agencies have successfully used Emergency Solutions Grant funds to rapidly re-house newly homeless individuals and families or prevent them from becoming homeless in the first place. After initial assistance, a case manager works with each person or family that receives assistance to help them stabilize their housing situation and, hopefully not have to need assistance again in the future. Last year, ESG funding was used to assist over 6,000 people.



"I walk an hour and fifteen minutes every morning from my campsite to downtown. It's about 4 miles away. Walking is my main mode of transportation. I thank God for legs and strength." - Booker

**2015 Point In Time**

# Summary and Strategies

## Emergency Shelter

Organization	Program	Year Round Beds	PIT Count	Utilization Rate
Birth Choice	Rose Home	17	5	29%
City Rescue Mission	City Rescue Mission	640	530	83%
Grace Rescue Mission	Grace Rescue	80	66	82%
Jesus House	Jesus House	88	72	82%
OKC Metro Alliance	First Step for Women	56	47	84%
OKC Metro Alliance	First Step for Men	70	91	130%
Phoenix House	Phoenix House	4	0	0%
Red Rock Behavioral Health Services	Park View	6	6	100%
Salvation Army	Families	75	19	25%
Salvation Army	Men	44	22	50%
Sunbeam	Elder Shelter	11	10	91%
Oklahoma Veteran's Affairs	HCHV/EH-Serenity Recovery Outreach Community	8	8	100%
*YWCA	Passageways	67	32	48%
	<b>Total 2015</b>	1166	908	78%
	Total 2014	1197	1039	87%
	Change from Previous Year	-31	-131	

## Transitional Housing

Organization	Program	Year Round Beds	PIT Count	Utilization Rate
Catholic Charities	Transitional Housing	26	13	50%
City Care Inc.	Pershing Center	60	60	100%
Hope House OKC	HopeHouse	11	9	82%
Neighborhood Sercies Organization	Carolyn Williams	6	3	50%
Neighborhood Sercies Organization	Gatewood	8	7	88%
Neighborhood Sercies Organization	Martha's House	28	21	75%
Phoenix House	Phoenix House	18	16	89%
RAIN OK	Bungalows	7	3	43%
Red Rock Behavioral Health Services	Parkview Apartments	26	24	92%
Oklahoma Veteran's Affairs	Friendship House	20	17	85%
Winds House	Winds House	13	8	62%
*YWCA	YES!	20	11	55%
	<b>Total 2015</b>	243	192	79%
	Total 2014	248	194	78%
	Change from Previous Year	-5	-2	

# Summary and Strategies

## Permanent Supportive Housing

Organization	Program	Year Round Beds	PIT Count	Utilization Rate
City Care Inc.	Westlawn Gardens (all locations)	38	37	97%
City Rescue Mission	City Rescue Mission (all locations)	93	100	108%
Community Enhancement Corporation	CEC-302	28	24	86%
Community Enhancement Corporation	CEC-602	12	11	92%
Community Enhancement Corporation	CEC-702	24	29	121%
Homeless Alliance Inc	Building Foundations for Families	85	53	62%
HOPE Community Services	Hope Housing Plus	15	20	133%
HOPE Community Services	Hope Chronic 32	32	39	122%
HOPE Community Services	Hope Partners in Housing	25	35	140%
HOPE Community Services	Hope S+C 8	8	7	88%
HOPE Community Services	Shelter Plus Care Families -2	4	7	175%
HOPE Community Services	Shelter Plus Care -39	43	53	123%
Neighborhood Services Organization	Palo Duro (all locations)	35	30	86%
Neighborhood Services Organization	NSO PSH Program-Men	5	6	120%
Neighborhood Services Organization	NSO PSH Program-Women	6	8	133%
OCHA	100K HOMES	55	20	36%
OKC Metro Alliance	Firststep Housing Program	5	5	100%
Red Rock Behavioral Health Services	The Lodges	16	10	62%
Red Rock Behavioral Health Services	Parkside	12	12	100%
*Oklahoma Veterans Affairs	Vouchers for Homeless Veterans	226	208	92%
	<b>Total 2015</b>	767	714	93%
	Total 2014	655	753	115%
	Change from Previous Year	112	-39	

\* The VASH program is not required to enter into HMIS. Data is collected and aggregated with supportive housing programs.

\*Persons living in permanent supportive housing are not considered to be homeless and are not included in the total count numbers.

\*Client level data regarding victims of domestic violence is de-identified before aggregate reporting.

# Local Resources

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If you are in need of assistance, please call **Heartline** by dialing **2-1-1**. They will take your information and refer you to one of the service providers listed below.

## Local Service Providers:

Be The Change  
[bethechangeok.org](http://bethechangeok.org)

Catholic Charities  
[catholiccharitiesok.org](http://catholiccharitiesok.org)

City Care  
[citycareinc.org](http://citycareinc.org)

City Rescue Mission  
[cityrescue.org](http://cityrescue.org)

Grace Rescue Mission  
(405) 232-5756

Greater Oklahoma City Urban League  
[urbanleagueok.org](http://urbanleagueok.org)

The Homeless Alliance  
[homelessalliance.org](http://homelessalliance.org)

Hope Community Services  
[hopecsi.org](http://hopecsi.org)

Jesus House  
[jesushouseokc.org](http://jesushouseokc.org)

Latino Community Development Agency  
[lcdaok.com](http://lcdaok.com)

Neighborhood Services Organization  
[nsookc.org](http://nsookc.org)

OKC Metro Alliance  
[okcmetroalliance.com](http://okcmetroalliance.com)

Oklahoma AIDS Care Fund  
[okaidscarefund.com](http://okaidscarefund.com)

Phoenix House  
(405) 525-0201

RAIN OK  
[rainoklahoma.publishpath.com](http://rainoklahoma.publishpath.com)

Red Rock Behavioral Health  
[red-rock.com](http://red-rock.com)

Salvation Army of Central Oklahoma  
[salvationarmyokcac.org](http://salvationarmyokcac.org)

Sunbeam Family Services  
[sunbeamfamilyservices.org](http://sunbeamfamilyservices.org)

Upward Transitions  
[upwardtransitions.org](http://upwardtransitions.org)

Winds House  
[windshouseokc.org](http://windshouseokc.org)

The Wonderfually Made Foundation  
[www.wonderfullymadefoundation.com](http://www.wonderfullymadefoundation.com)

Youth Services of Oklahoma County  
[ysoc3.publishpath.com](http://ysoc3.publishpath.com)

YWCA  
[ywcaokc.org](http://ywcaokc.org)

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HUD Homeless Data Exchange  
[www.hudhdx.info/](http://www.hudhdx.info/)

National Alliance to End Homelessness.  
[www.endhomelessness.org/pages/issues](http://www.endhomelessness.org/pages/issues)

National Center on Family Homelessness. American Institutes for Research  
[www.familyhomelessness.org/facts.php?p+tm#](http://www.familyhomelessness.org/facts.php?p+tm#)

National Coalition for the Homeless: Violence Against the Homeless.  
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National Conference of State Legislatures.  
[www.ncsl.org/research/human-services/homeless-and-runaway-youth.aspx](http://www.ncsl.org/research/human-services/homeless-and-runaway-youth.aspx)

"The Hard, Cold Facts About the Deaths of Homeless People. National Health Care for the Homeless Council. 2006.

## **IMAGES:**

*Special thanks to the Curbside Chronicle for providing images for this report.*

Cover: *What People Think*. Marcos & Shannon Cornman.

Pg. 2: *Sermon*. Robert & Geovanny De Leon.

Pg. 3: *Ol' Glory*. John & Hunter Brothers.

Pg. 4: *Crosstown Bridge*. Booker & Joshua Officer.

Pg. 5: *Insider View*. Robert & Geovanny De Leon.

Pg. 11: *Dashboard Confessional*. Gary & Christian Bruggeman.

Pg. 11: *Kicking Gravel*. Booker & Joshua Officer.



the  
**CURBSIDE**  
chronicle

The Curbside Chronicle magazine is sold by homeless and at-risk individuals as a way to earn income and transition back into housing. Support Curbside vendors by purchasing the magazine for \$2 around OKC. The magazine features articles written about local social issues in addition to pop culture and general interest content.

**The Curbside Chronicle is  
employing and empowering  
OKC's homeless**



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