KENT COUNTY HOMELESS STUDY

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
CENTER FOR URBAN AFFAIRS

FALL 2000

RESEARCH TEAM MEMBERS

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- MICHAEL STACHOWIAK – HOMELESS ASSISTANCE PROGRAM, SALVATION ARMY
- BETTY ZYLSTRA- DIRECTOR OF BOOTH SERVICES, SALVATION ARMY

KENT COUNTY HOMELESS STUDY

- INTRODUCTION
- DESCRIPTION OF DATA
- RESULTS OF DATA ANALYSIS
- RECOMMENDATIONS

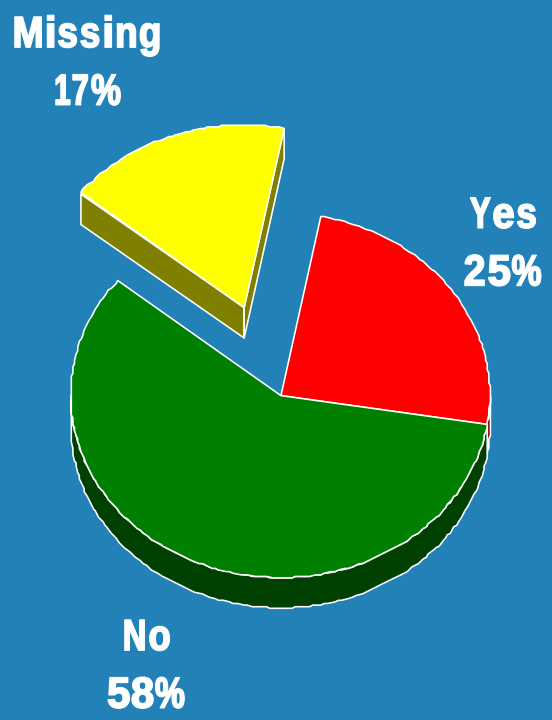
DESCRIPTION OF DATA

- PERIOD OF DATA COLLECTION
- PARTICIPATING SHELTERS
- CLIENT INFORMATION SHEET (INTAKE FORM)

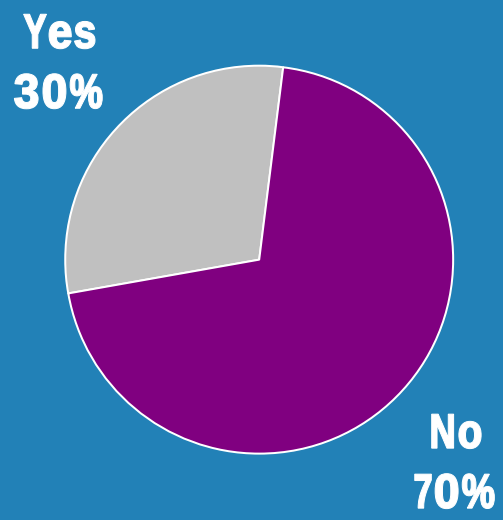
PARTICIPATING SHELTERS

- CASA DE LA PAZ
- THE BRIDGE
- DOMESTIC CRISIS CENTER
- GUIDING LIGHT WOMEN'S MISSION
- HOMELESS ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
- ICCF FAMILY HAVEN
- MEL TROTTER MISSION
- RAMOTH HOUSE
- RECUPERATION CENTER
- RED CROSS
- THE SALVATION ARMY
- SENIOR NEIGHBORS
- WELL HOUSE

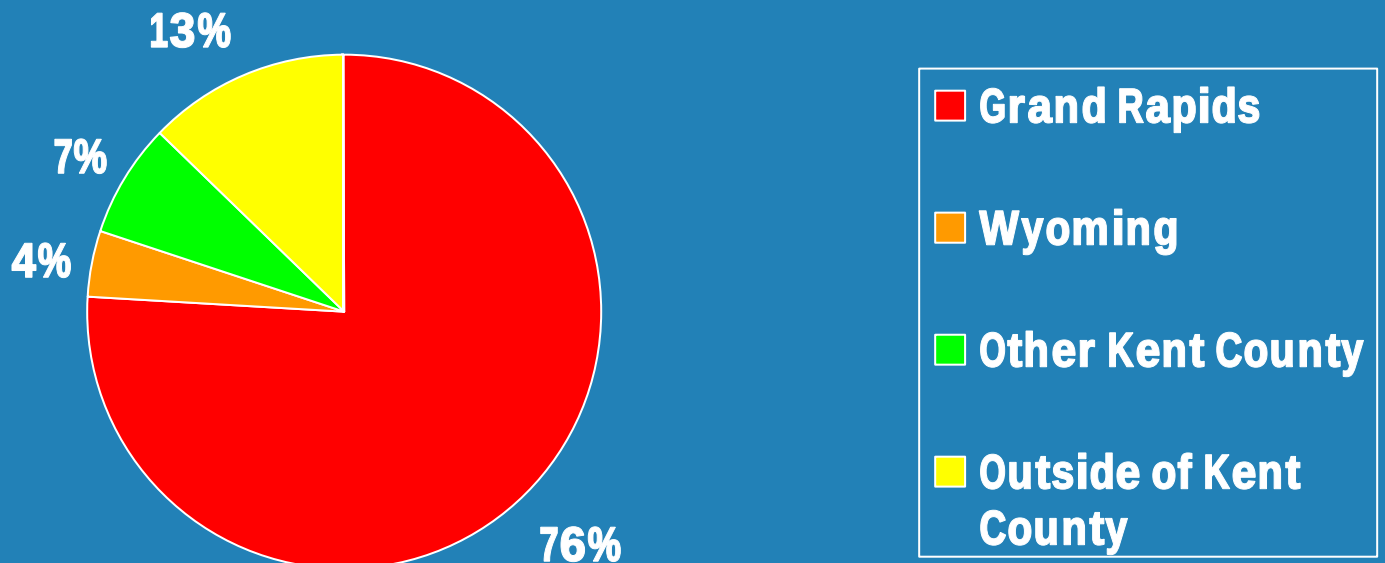
PRIOR SHELTER HISTORY (INCLUDING MISSING DATA)



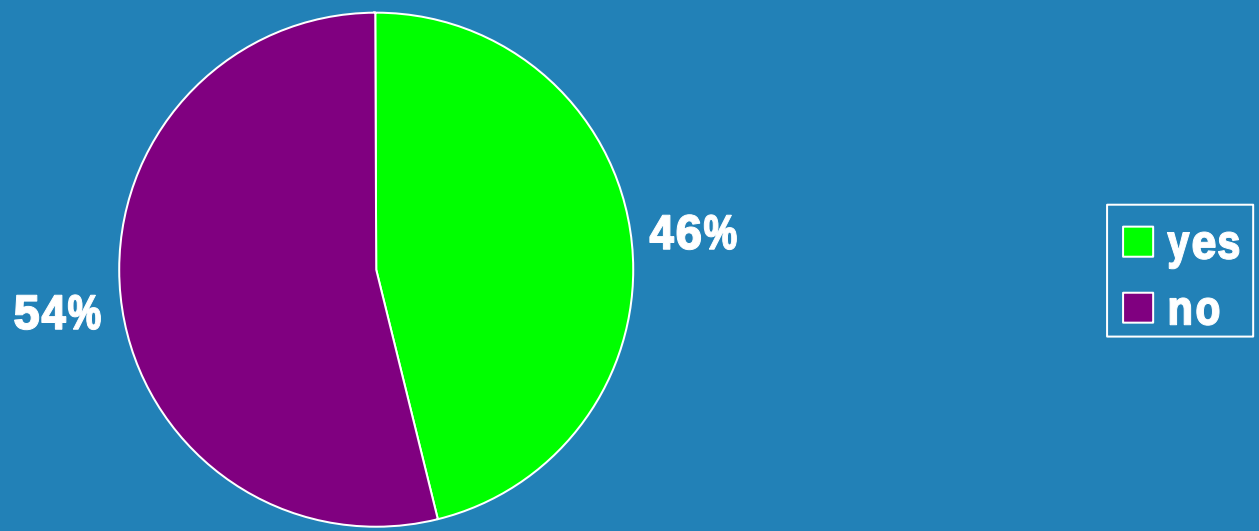
PRIOR SHELTER HISTORY



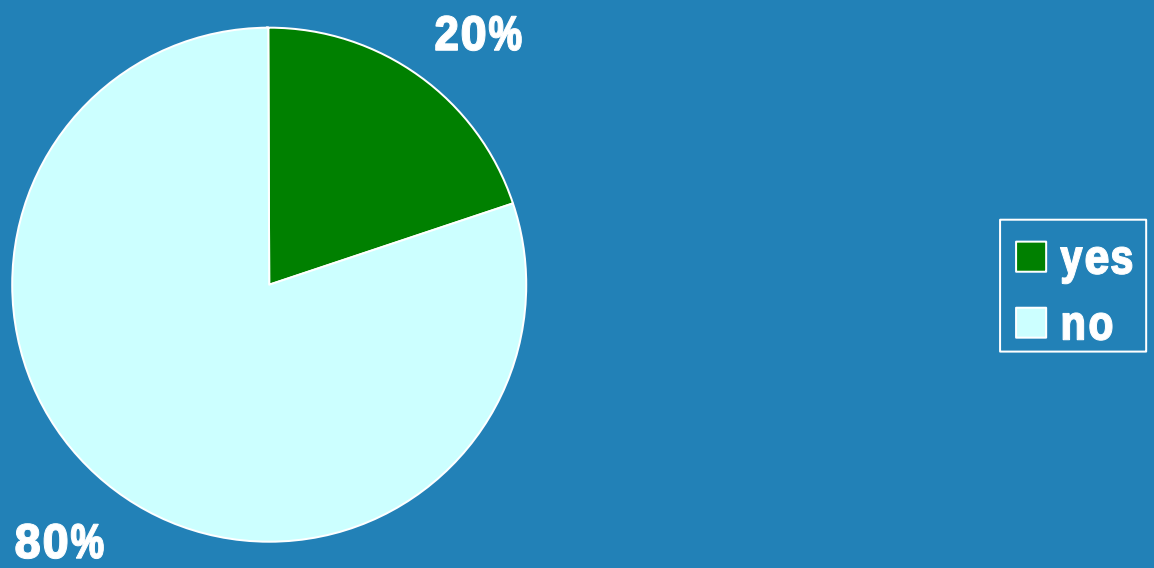
RECENT RESIDENCE



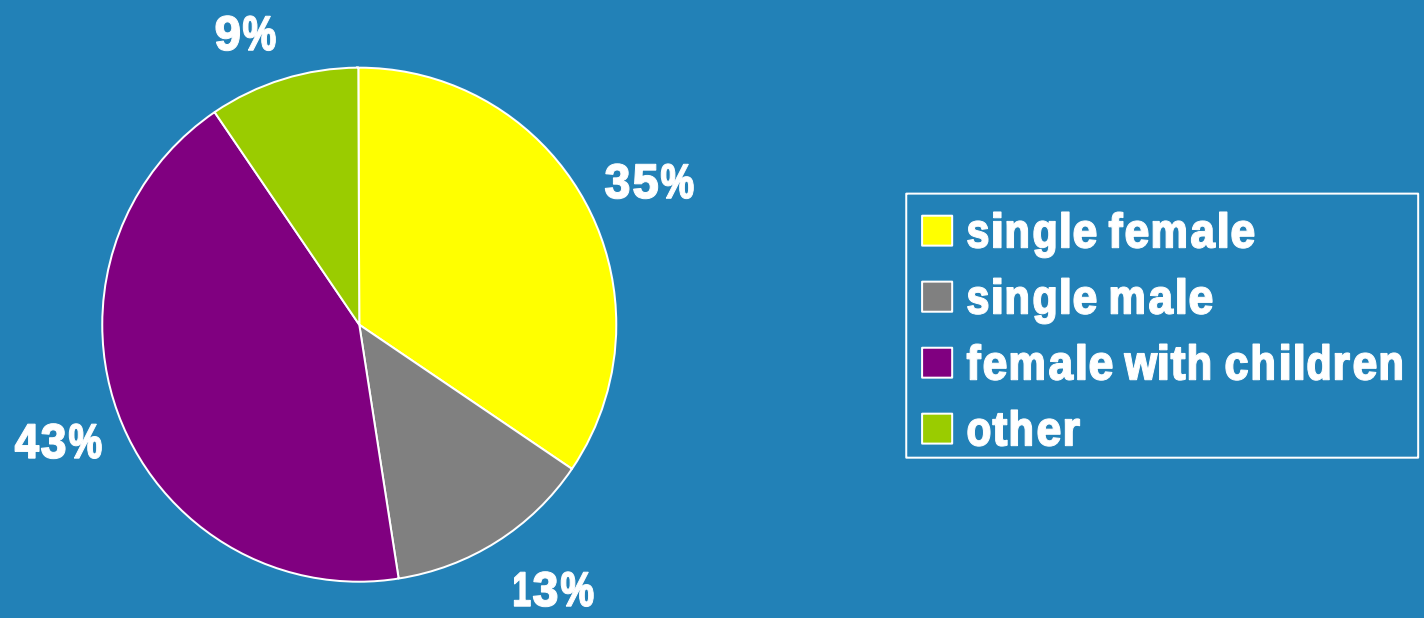
HIGH SCHOOL / GED



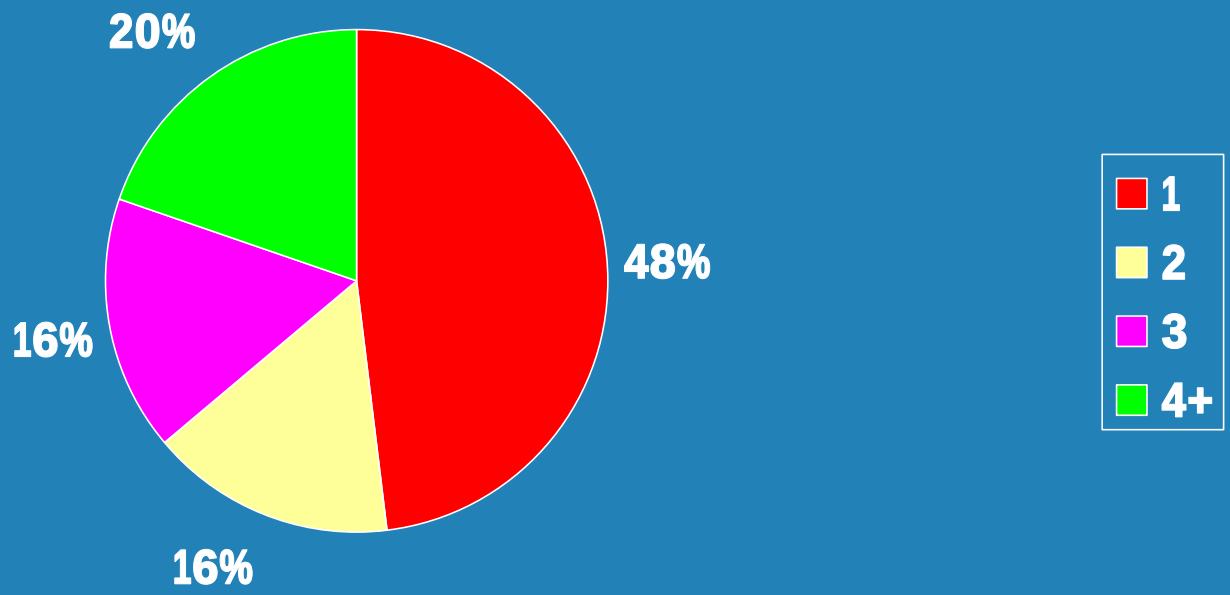
ATTENDED COLLEGE



FAMILY COMPOSITION

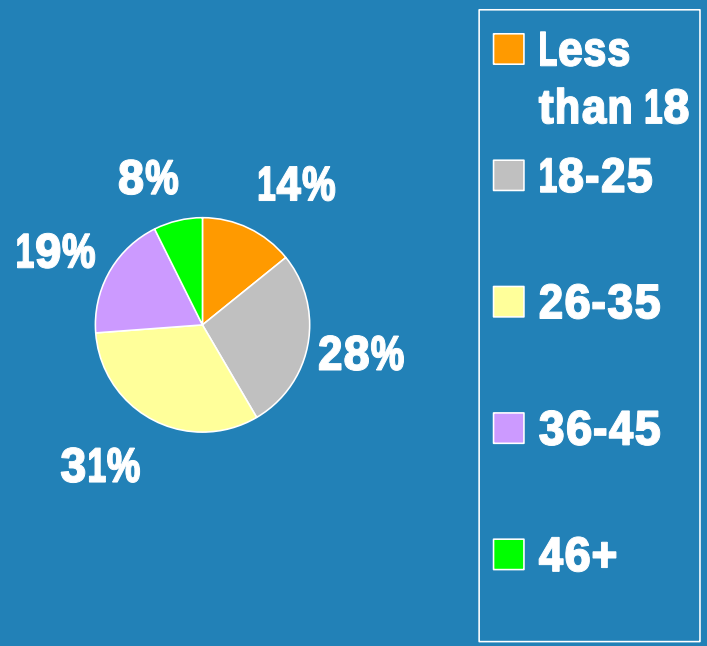


FAMILY SIZE

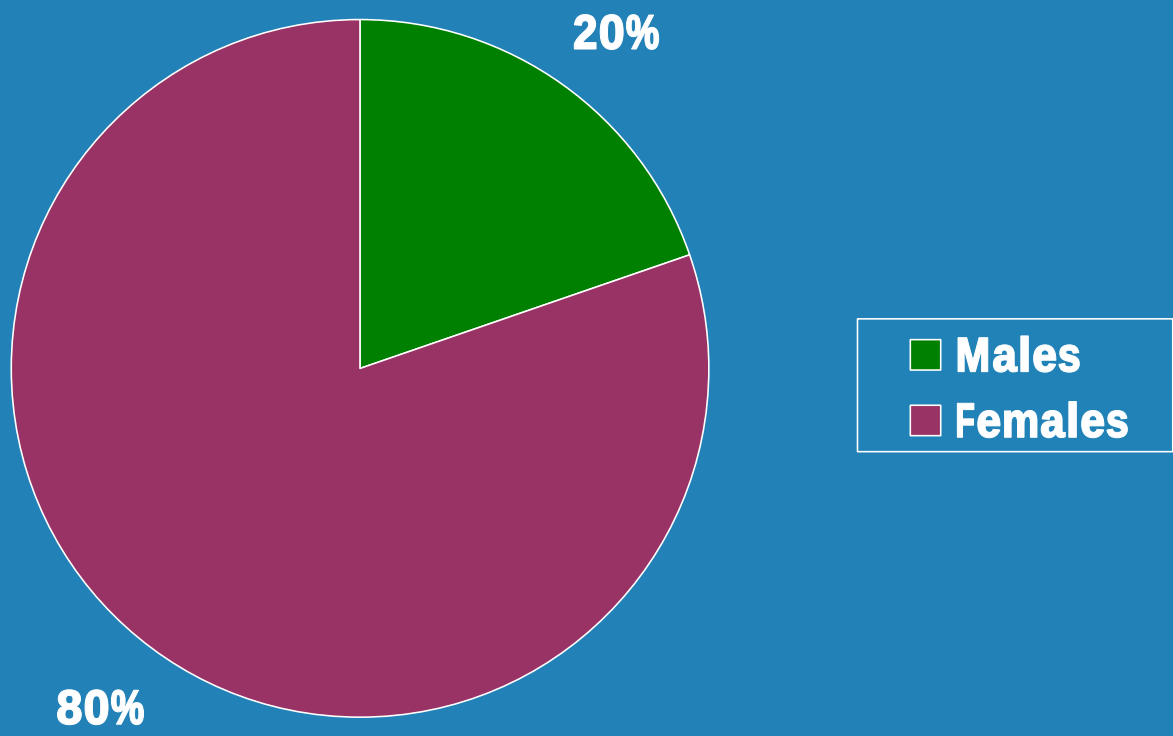


AGE OF PRIMARY CLIENT

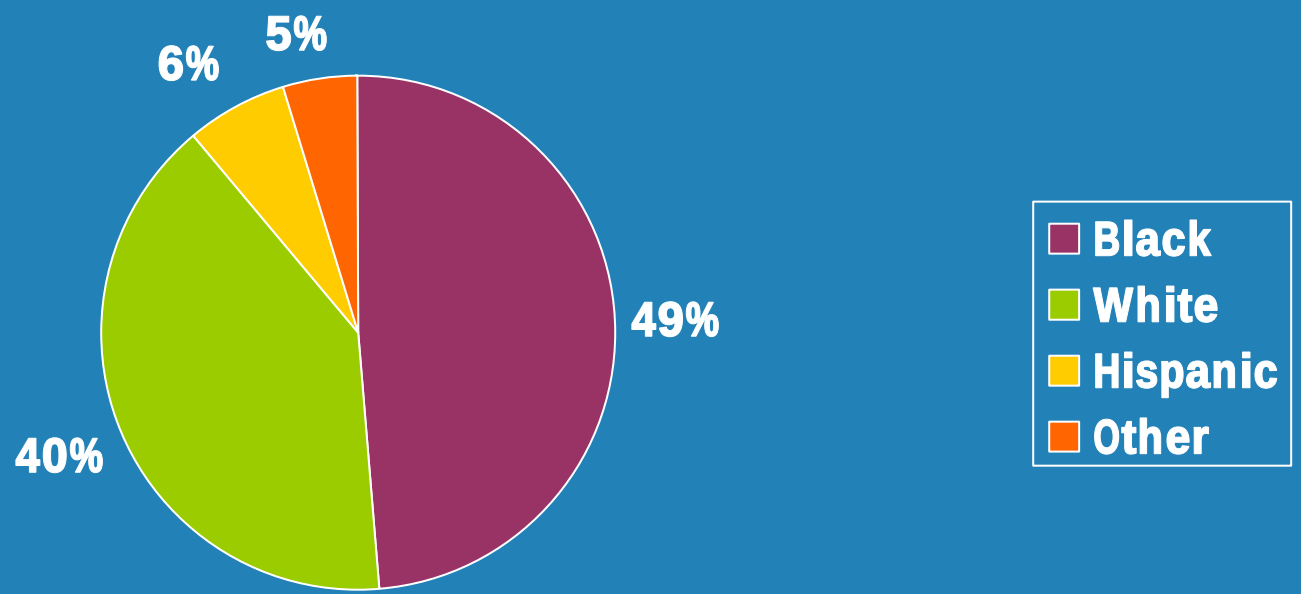
- Mean age was 29.2
- Youngest was 9
- Oldest was 87
- 92% were younger than 46 years



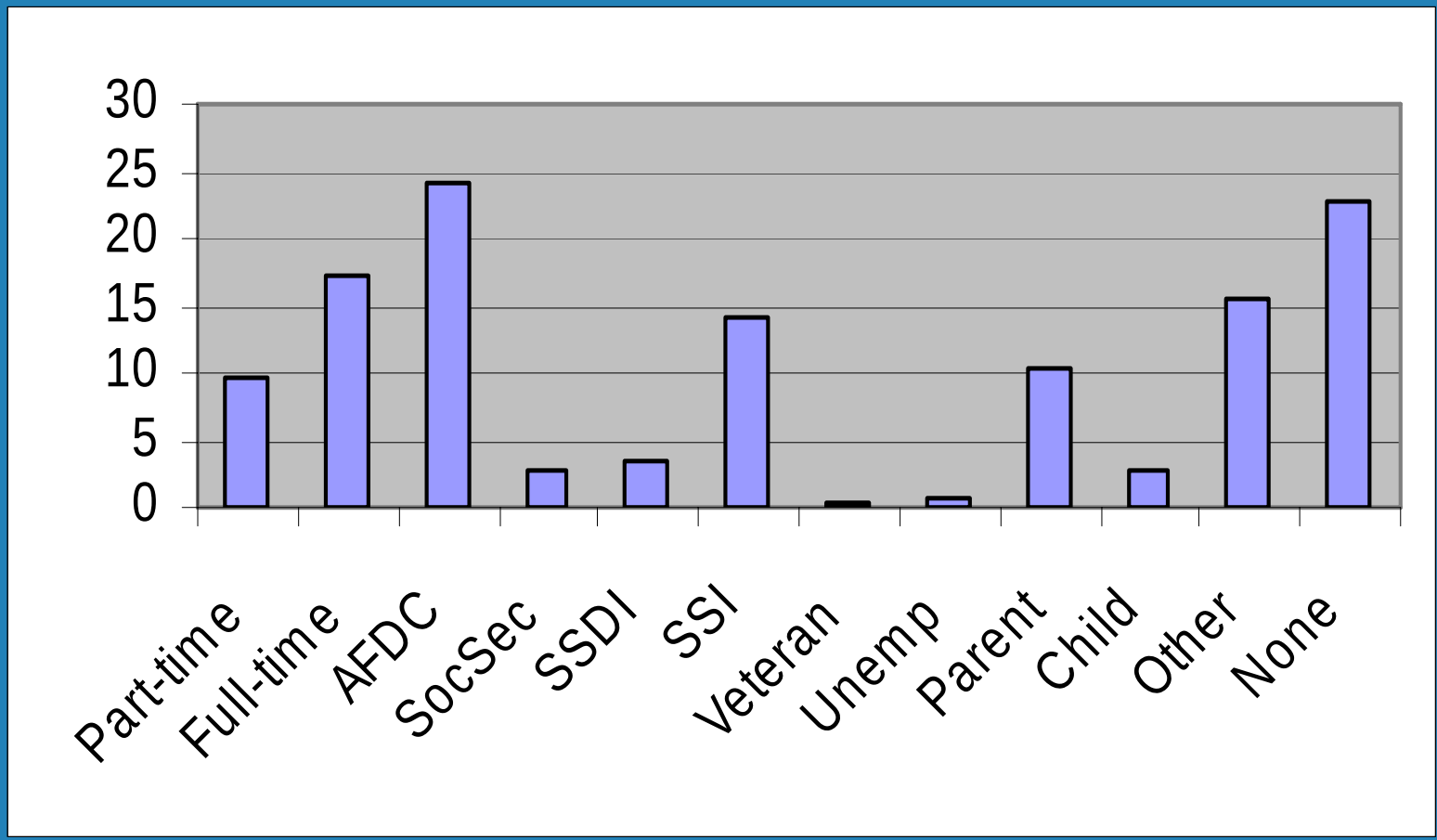
GENDER



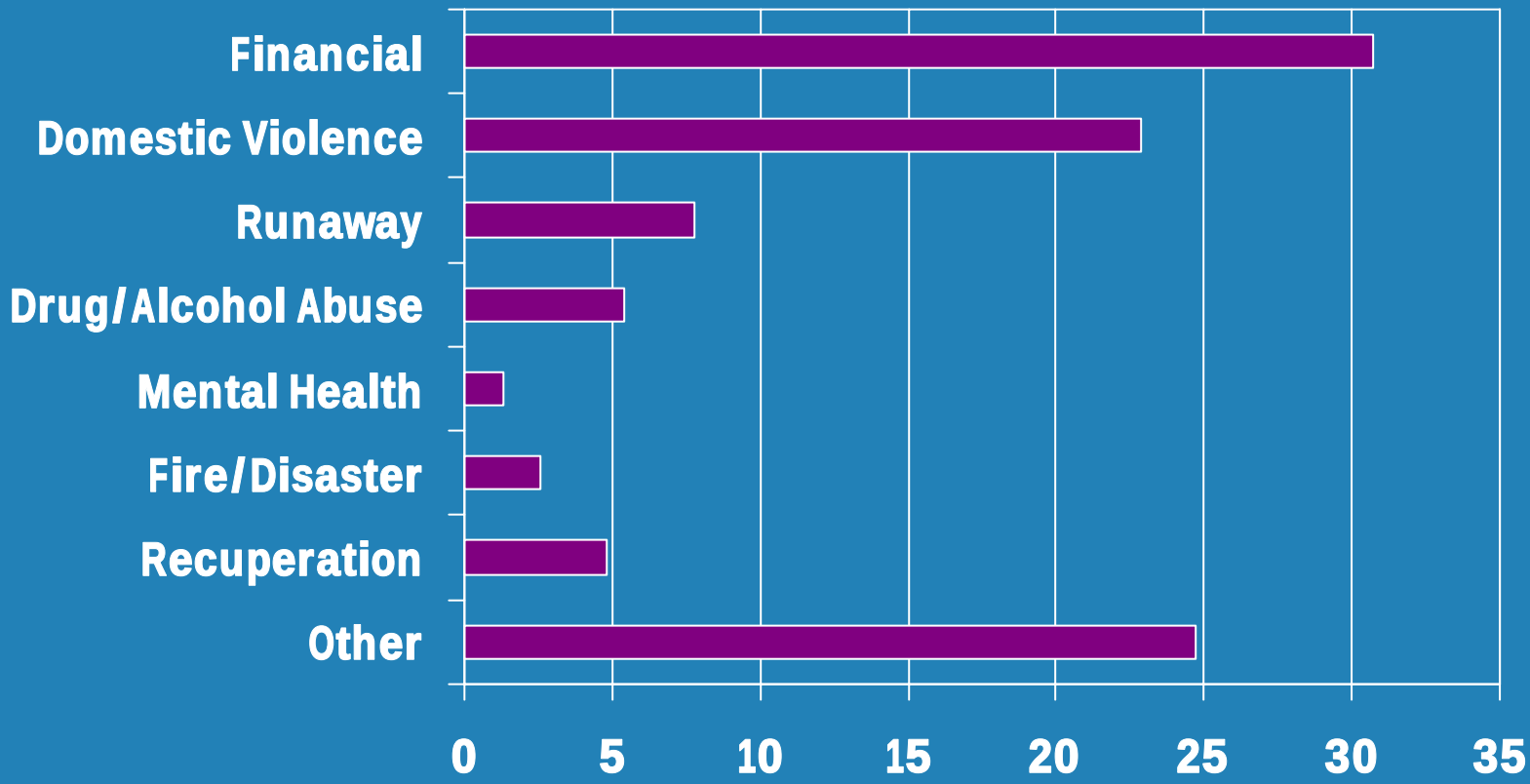
FAMILY RACE



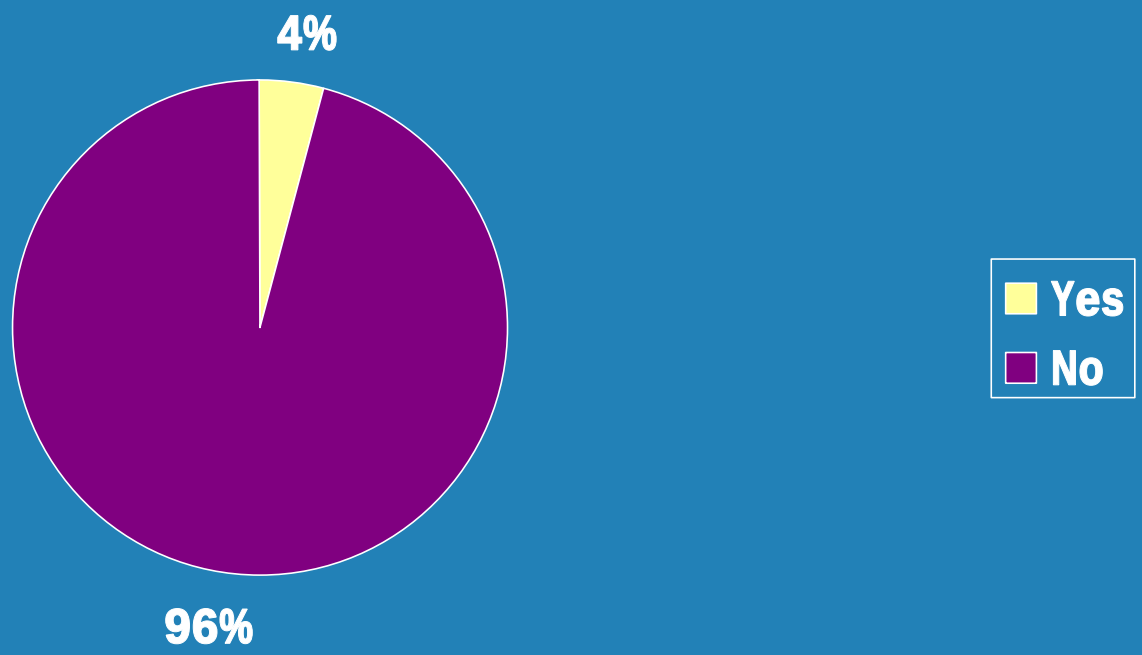
SOURCES OF FAMILY INCOME



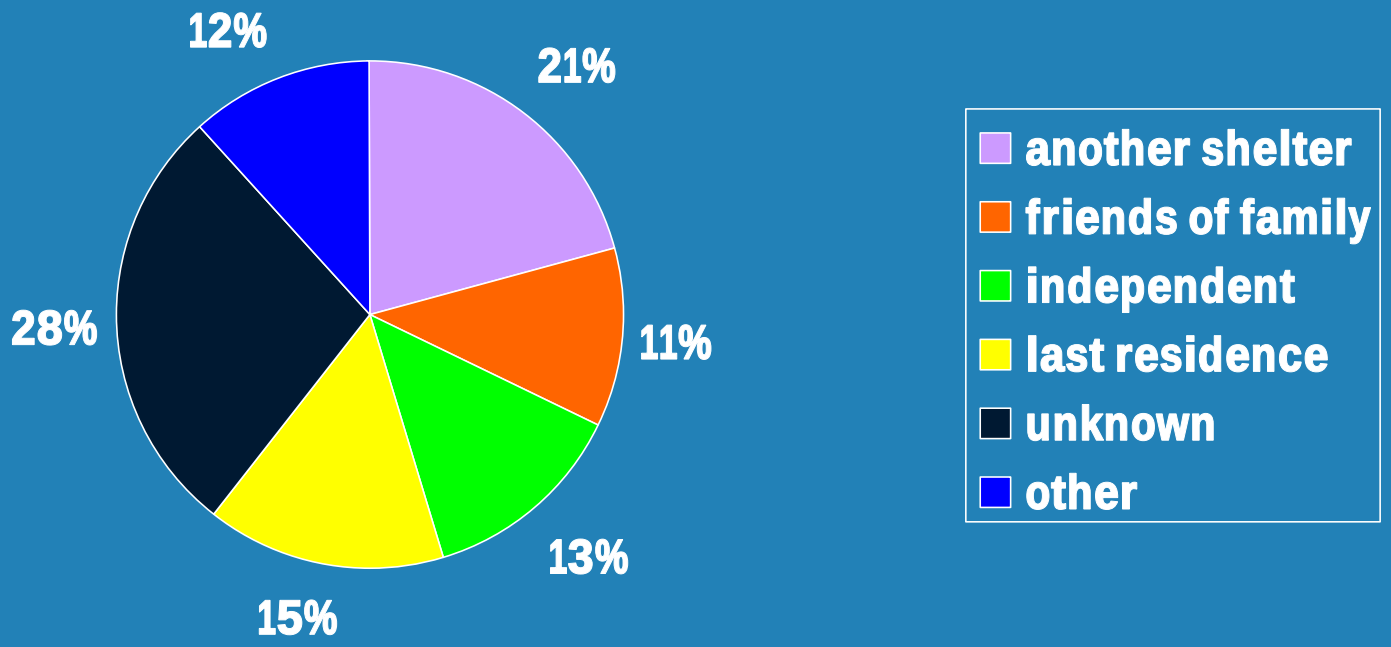
REASONS FOR HOMELESSNESS IN PERCENT



VETERAN HOUSEHOLD



MOVED FROM SHELTER TO:



RESULTS OF DATA ANALYSIS

- QUANTIFYING HOMELESSNESS
- OVERALL INCIDENTS
- LENGTH OF STAY
- RECIDIVISM
- DEMOGRAPHIC CROSSTABS

WAYS OF QUANTIFYING HOMELESSNESS

- Incidents - indicated by intake forms
  - Single person or a family
  - Unique incident or recidivism
- Unique ID's
- Length of stay: date left-date entered
- Bed-Nights: (family size) x (length of stay)

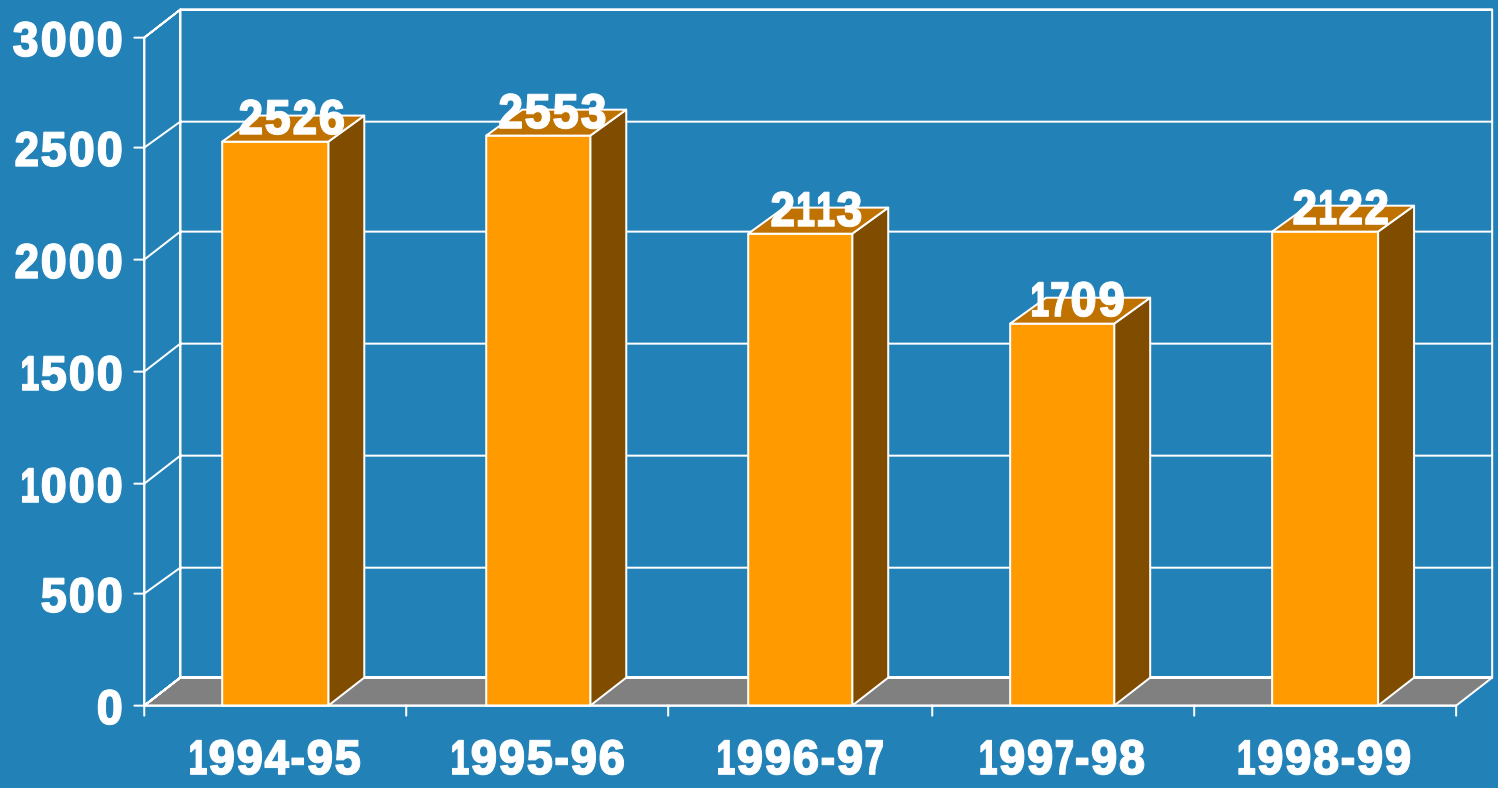
MEASURES OF HOMELESSNESS IN THE FIVE YEAR PERIOD

- 11,132 incidents in five years
  - 5,104 unique incidents
  - 2,005 individuals were recidivists
  - 6,028 repeated incidents
- Family size mean = 2.2
- Length of stay averaged 9.5 days
- Average incident used 20.9 bed-nights
- 226,803 total bed-nights

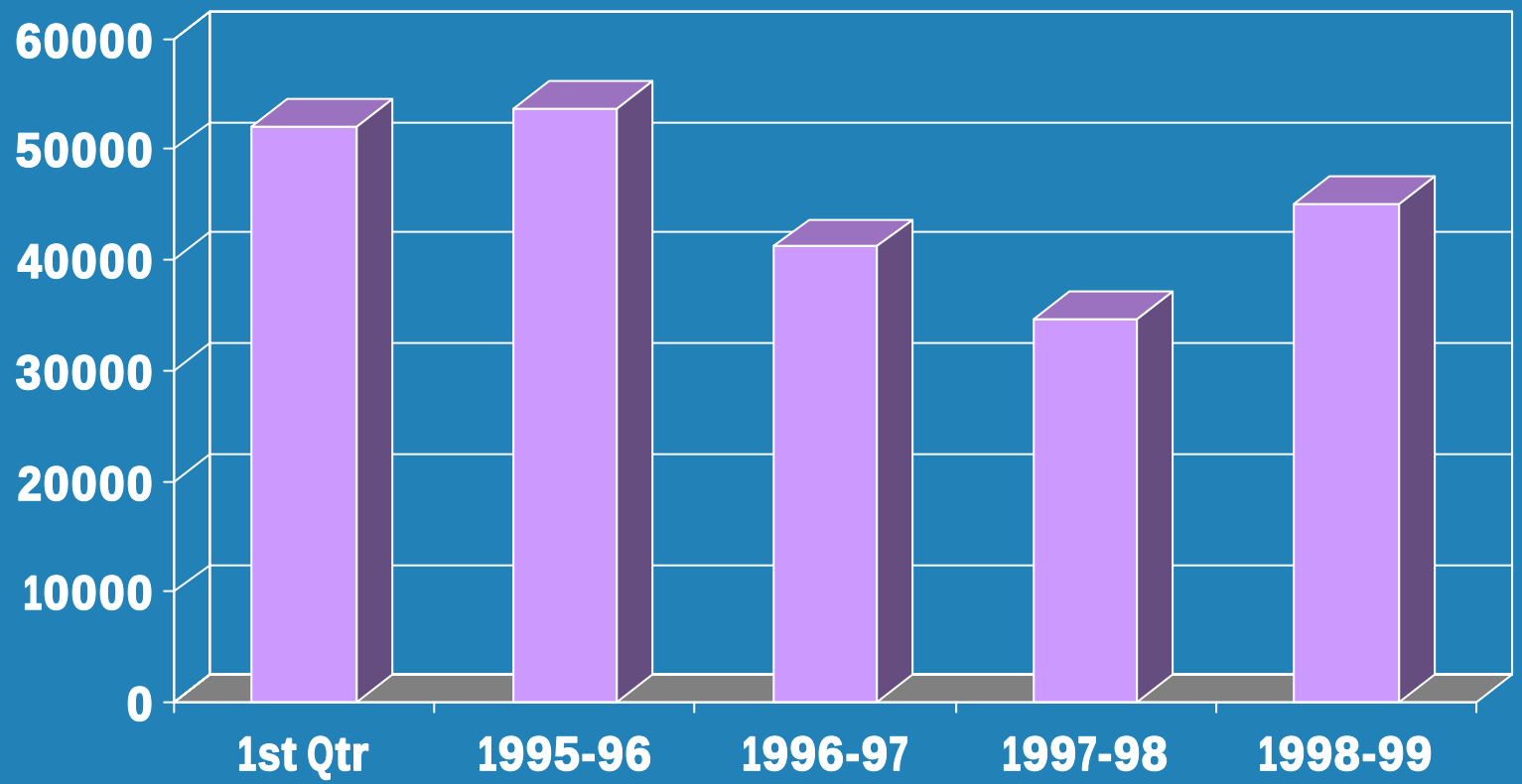
INCIDENTS OF HOMELESSNESS INVOLVING CHILDREN

- 66% of the incidents involved children
  - 37%involved children under age 6
  - 32% involved children aged 6-17
  - 15% of the incidents were single children under age 18
- There were 14,211 children involved in homeless incidents
- 129,240 bed-nights were used by children

INCIDENTS OF HOMELESSNESS BY YEAR

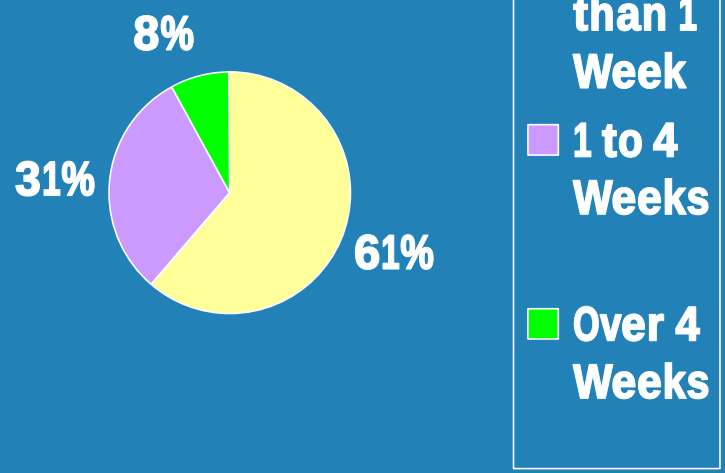


BED-NIGHTS BY YEAR

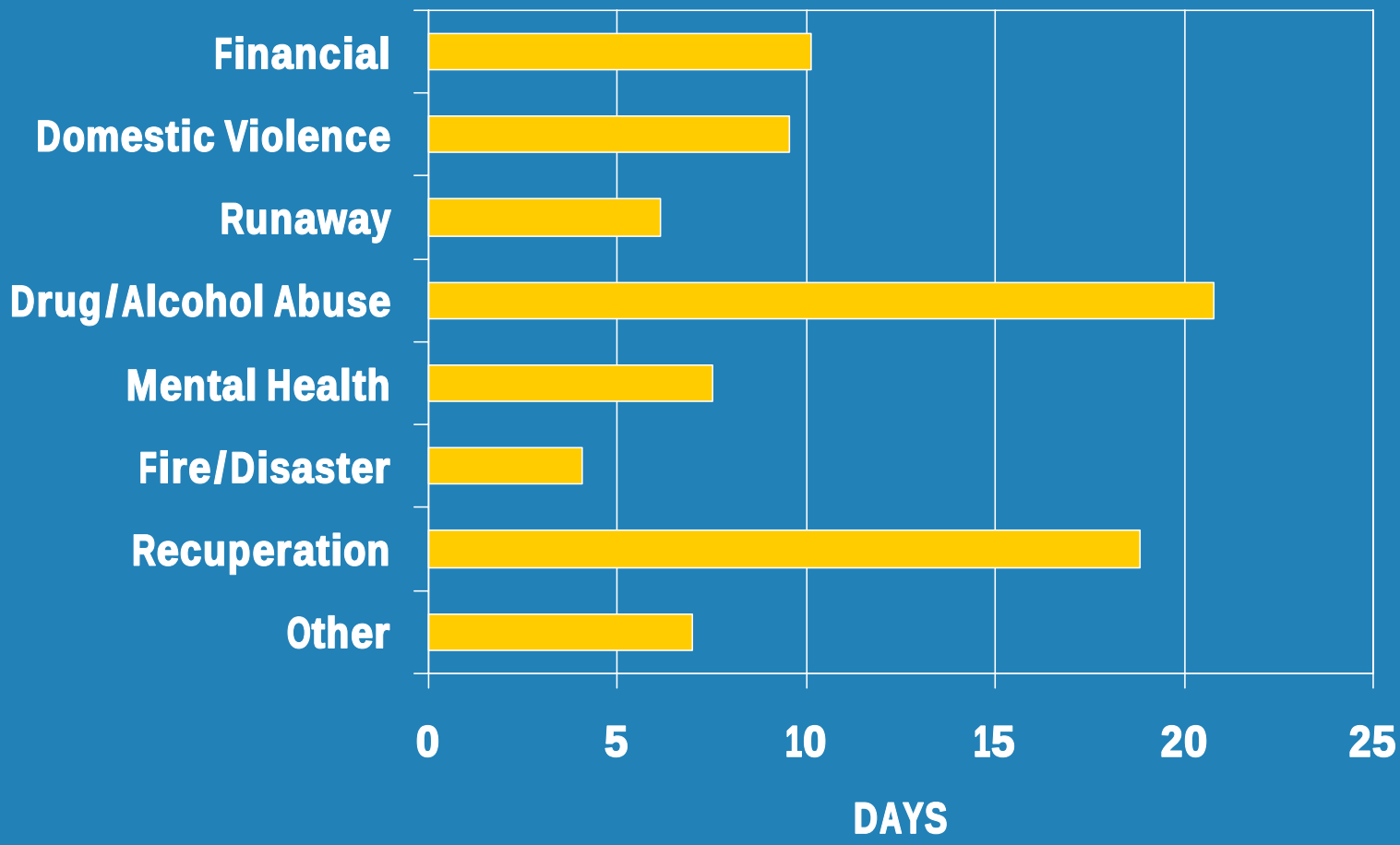


LENGTH OF STAY

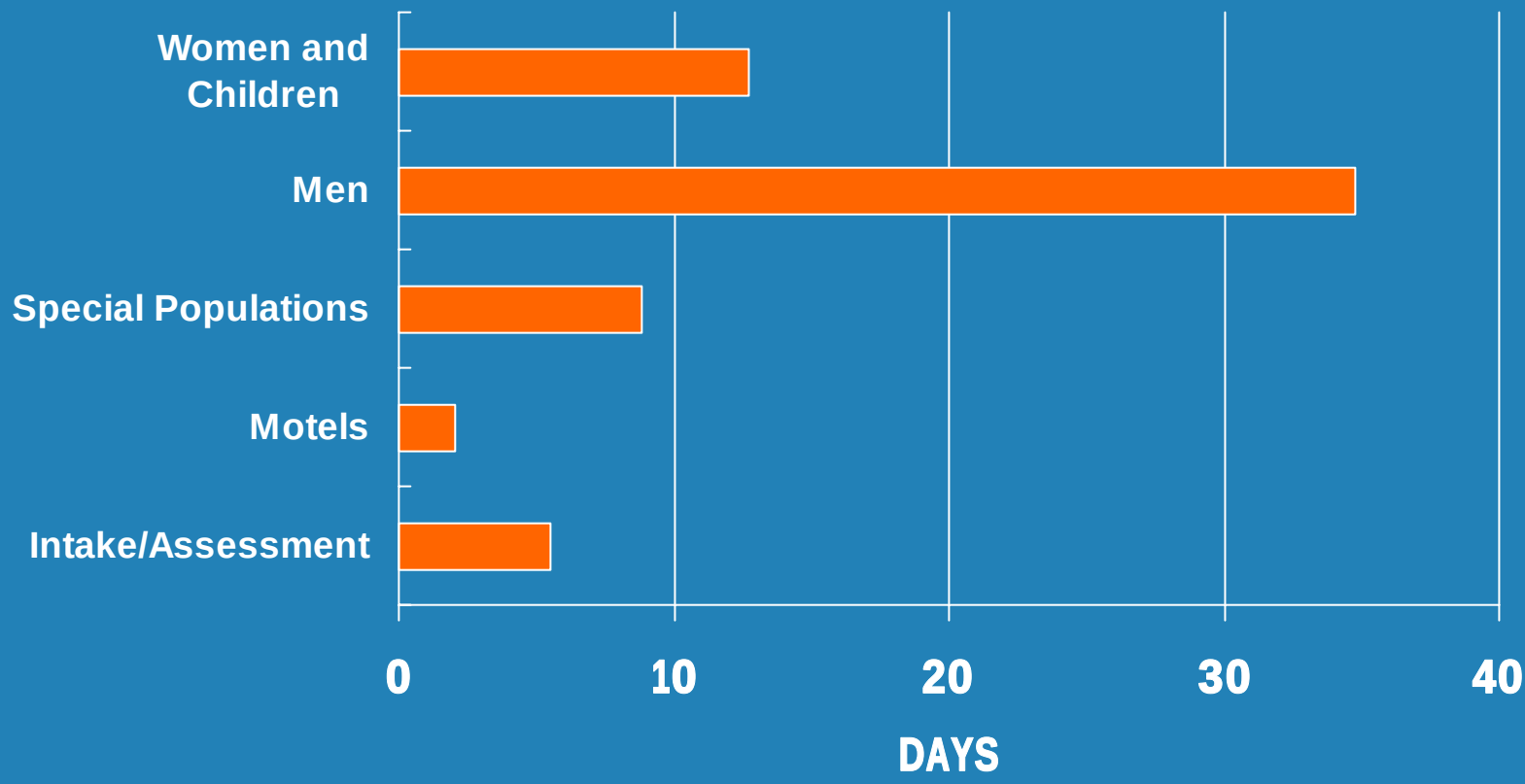
- Average length was 9.5 days
- Most frequent (18%) was 1 day
- 61% stayed less than 1 week
- 8% stayed more than 4 weeks



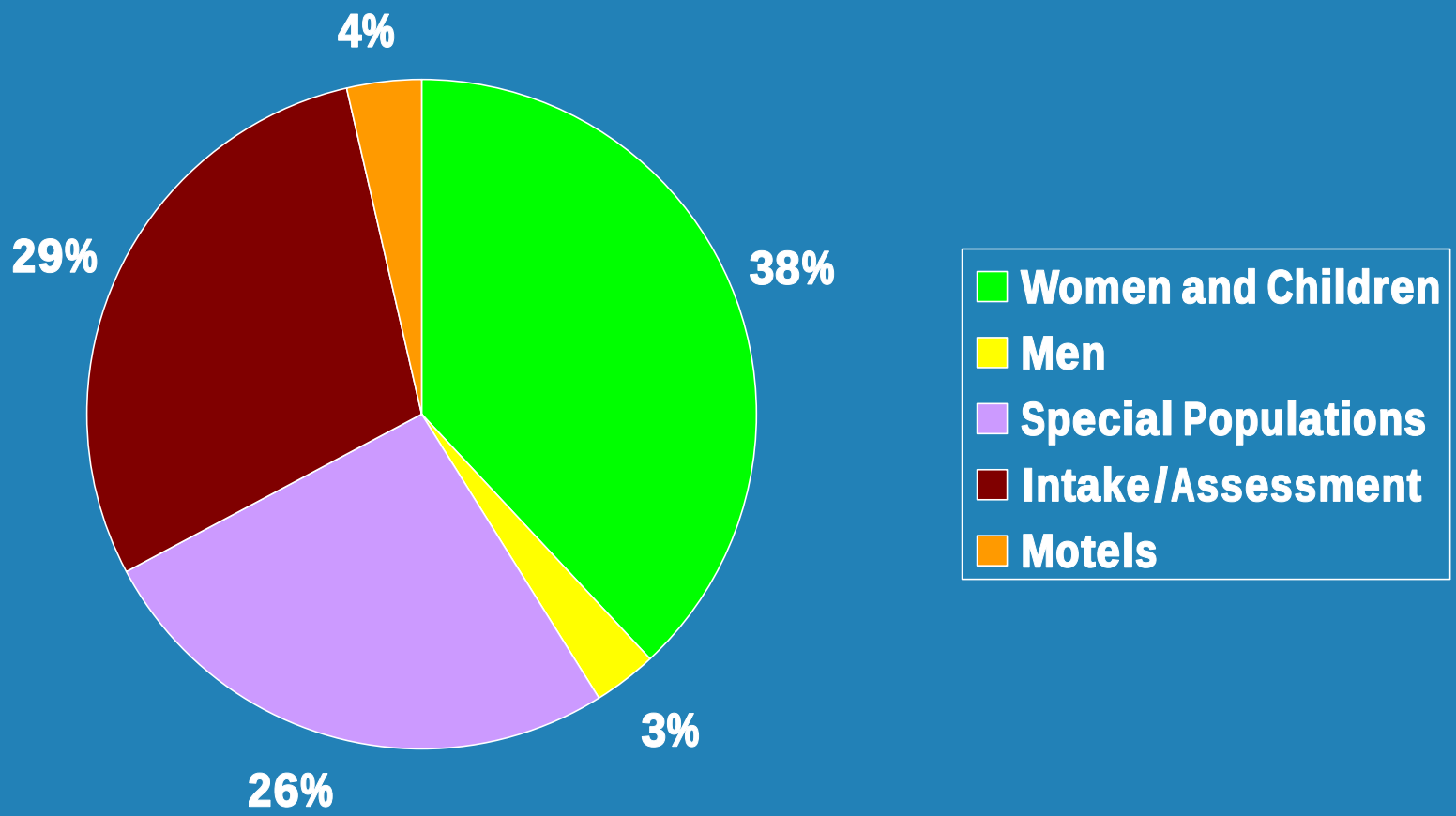
LENGTH OF STAY (DAYS) BY REASON FOR HOMELESSNESS



LENGTH OF STAY BY SHELTER GROUP

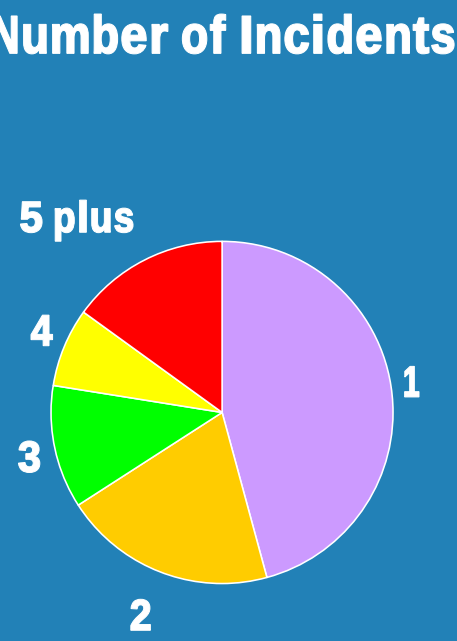


INCIDENTS OF HOMELESSNESS BY SHELTER GROUP

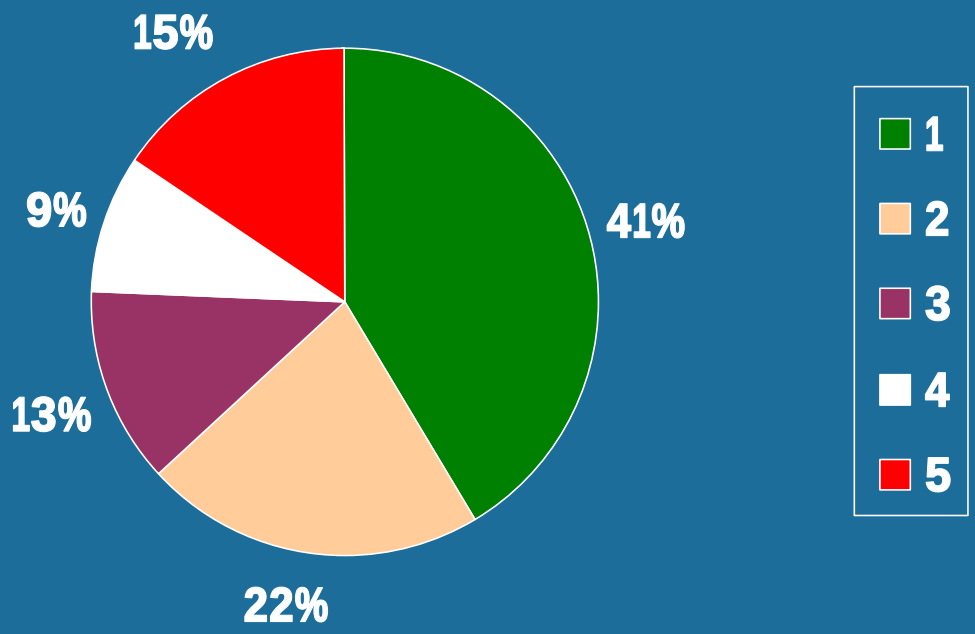


REPEATED INCIDENTS OF HOMELESSNESS

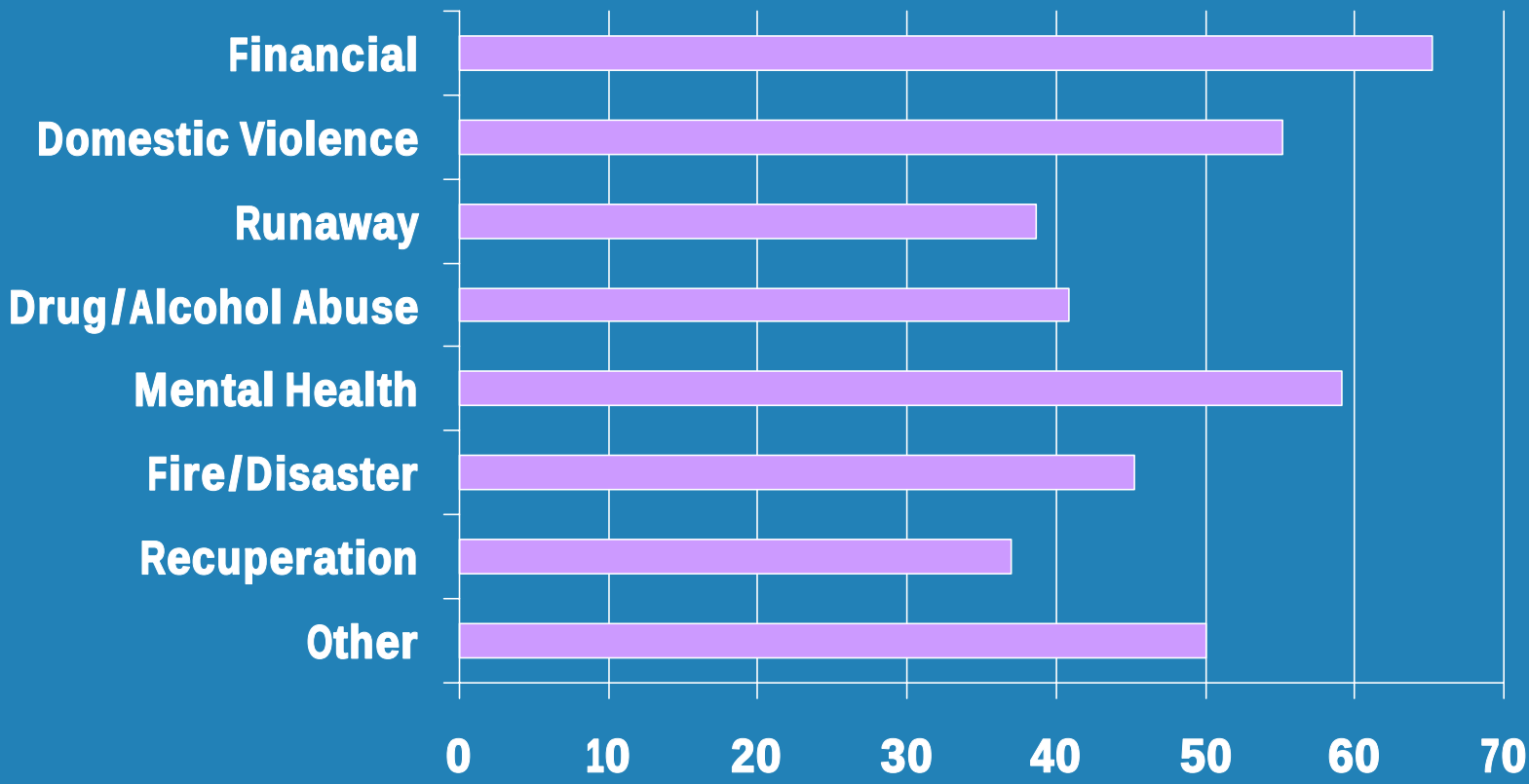
- Of the 11,132 incidents, 46% were one timers
- 20% were persons who had two incidents
- 15% had 5 or more incidents of homelessness in the five year period



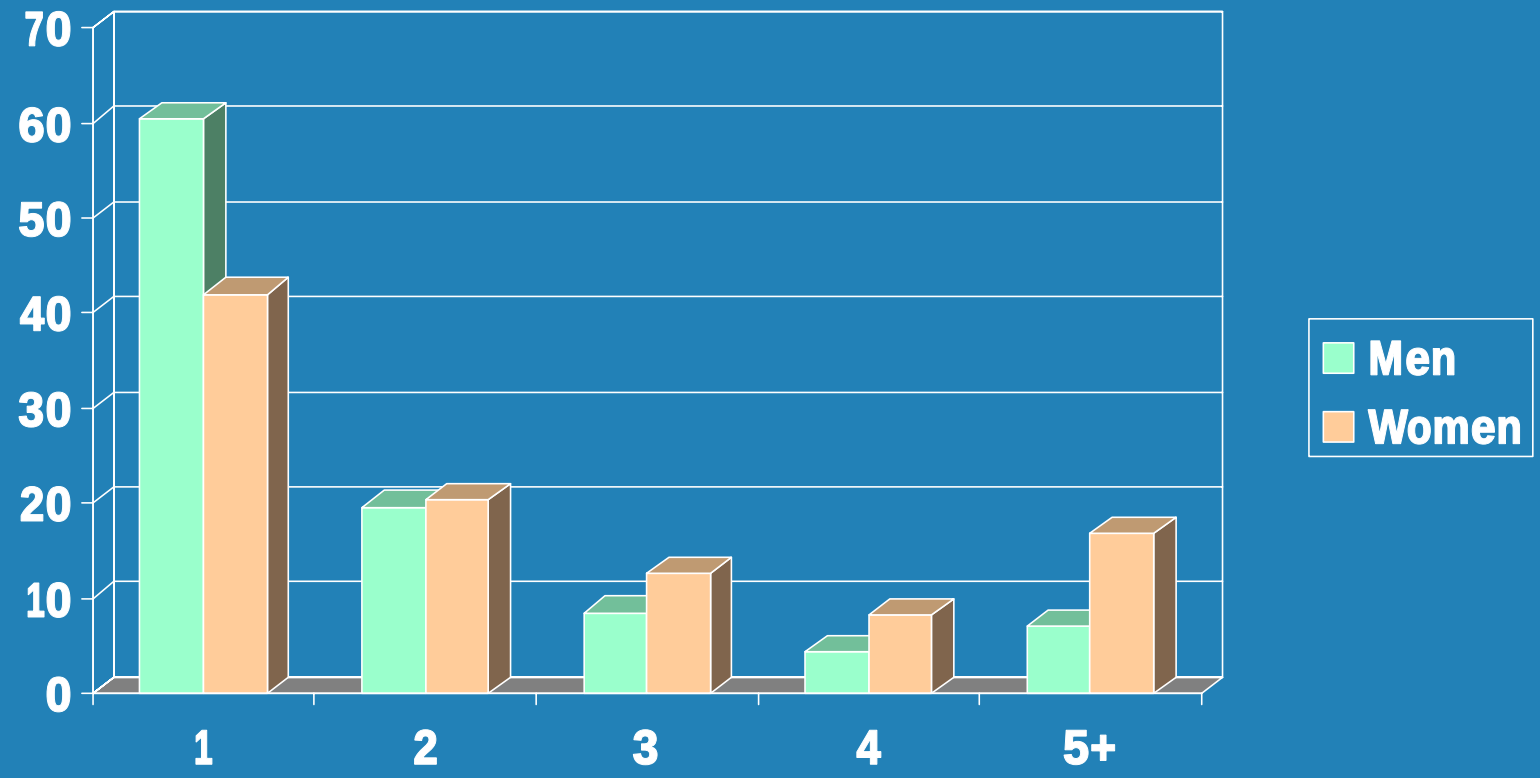
USE OF HOMELESS SHELTERS IN BED-NIGHTS BY RECIDIVISM



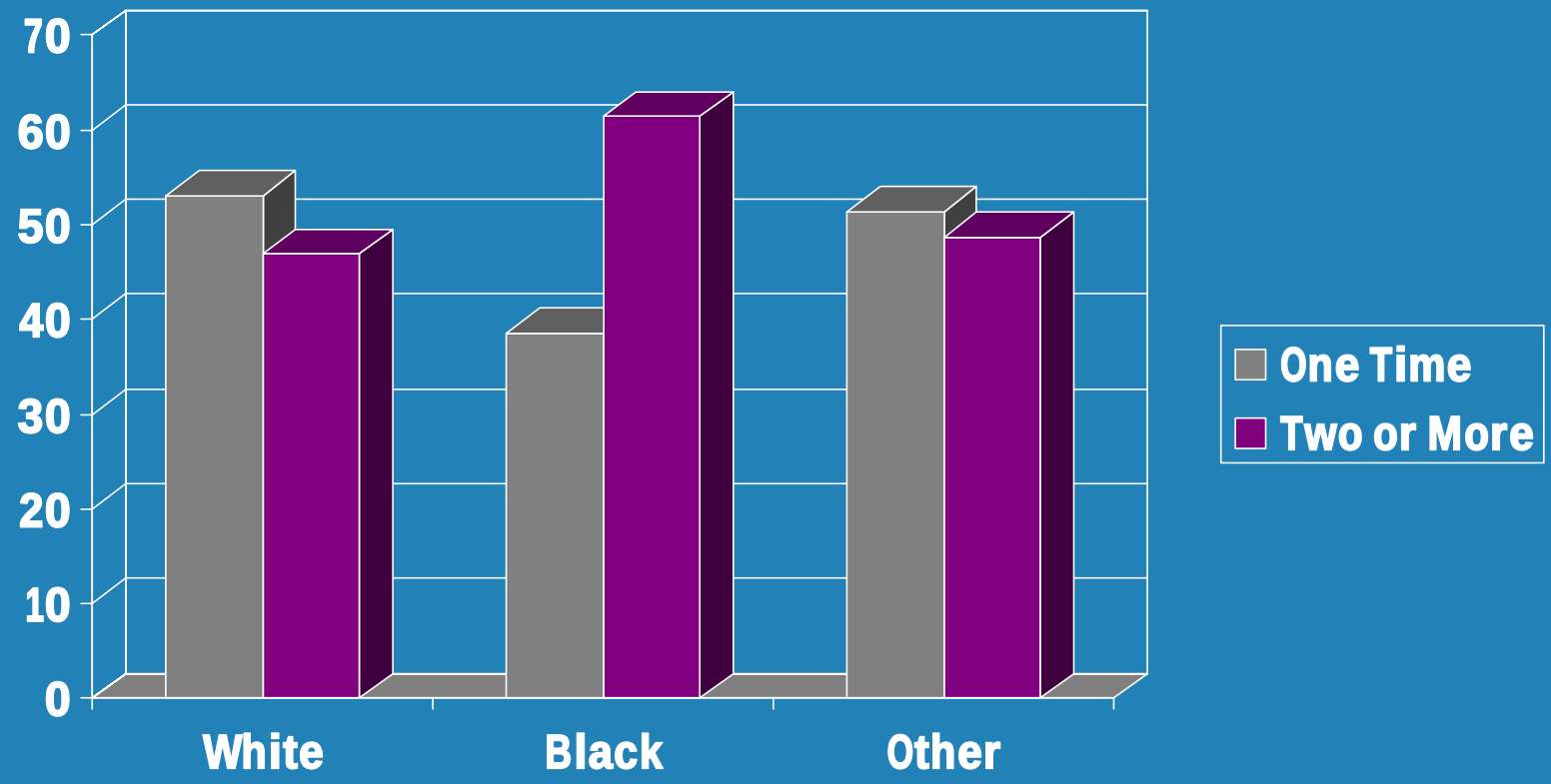
PERCENT OF RECIDIVISM BY REASONS FOR HOMELESSNESS



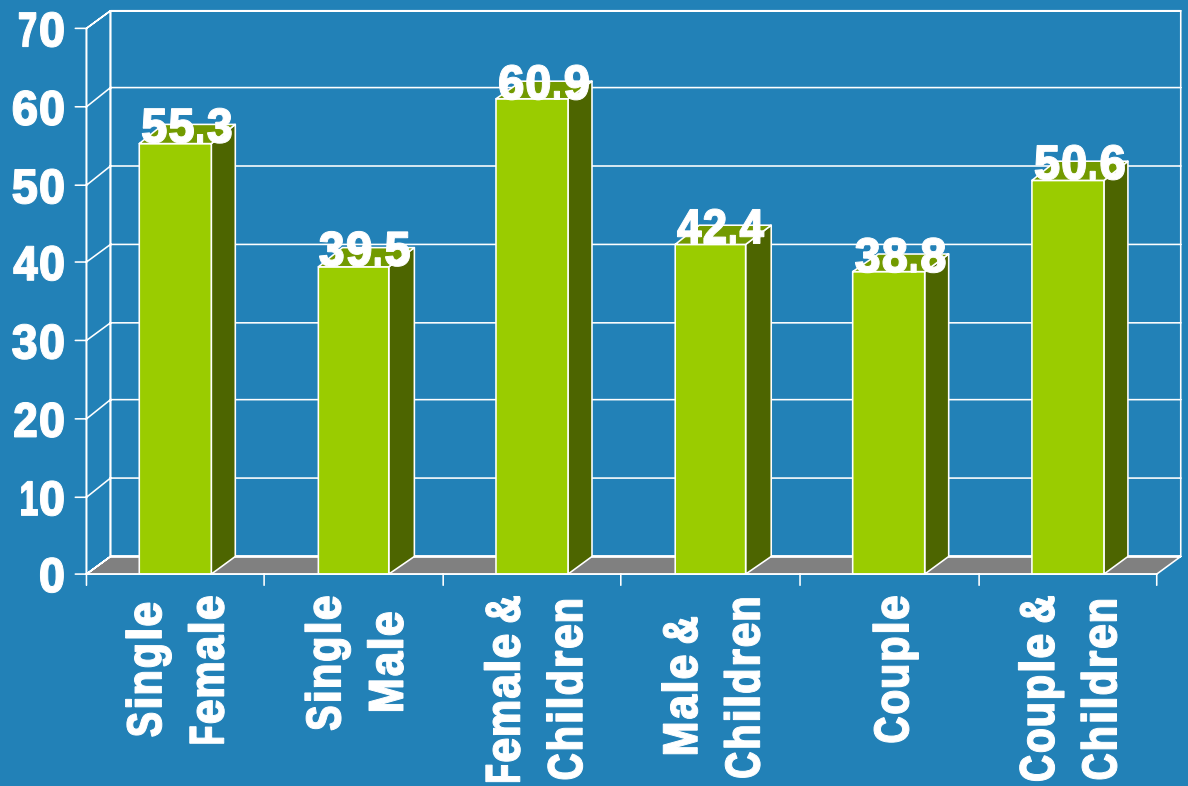
RECIDIVISM BY GENDER



RECIDIVISM BY RACE



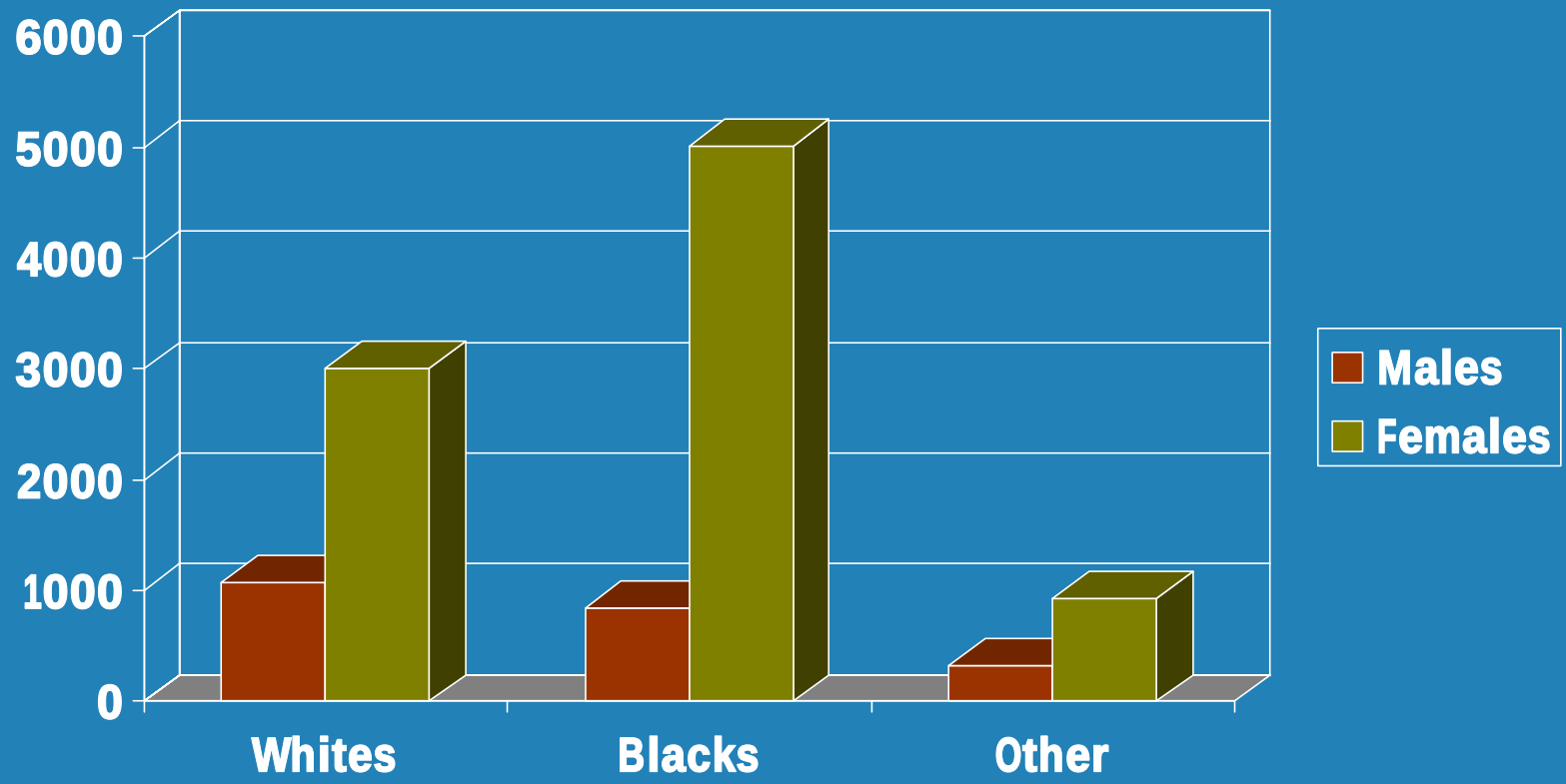
RECIDIVISM BY FAMILY COMPOSITION



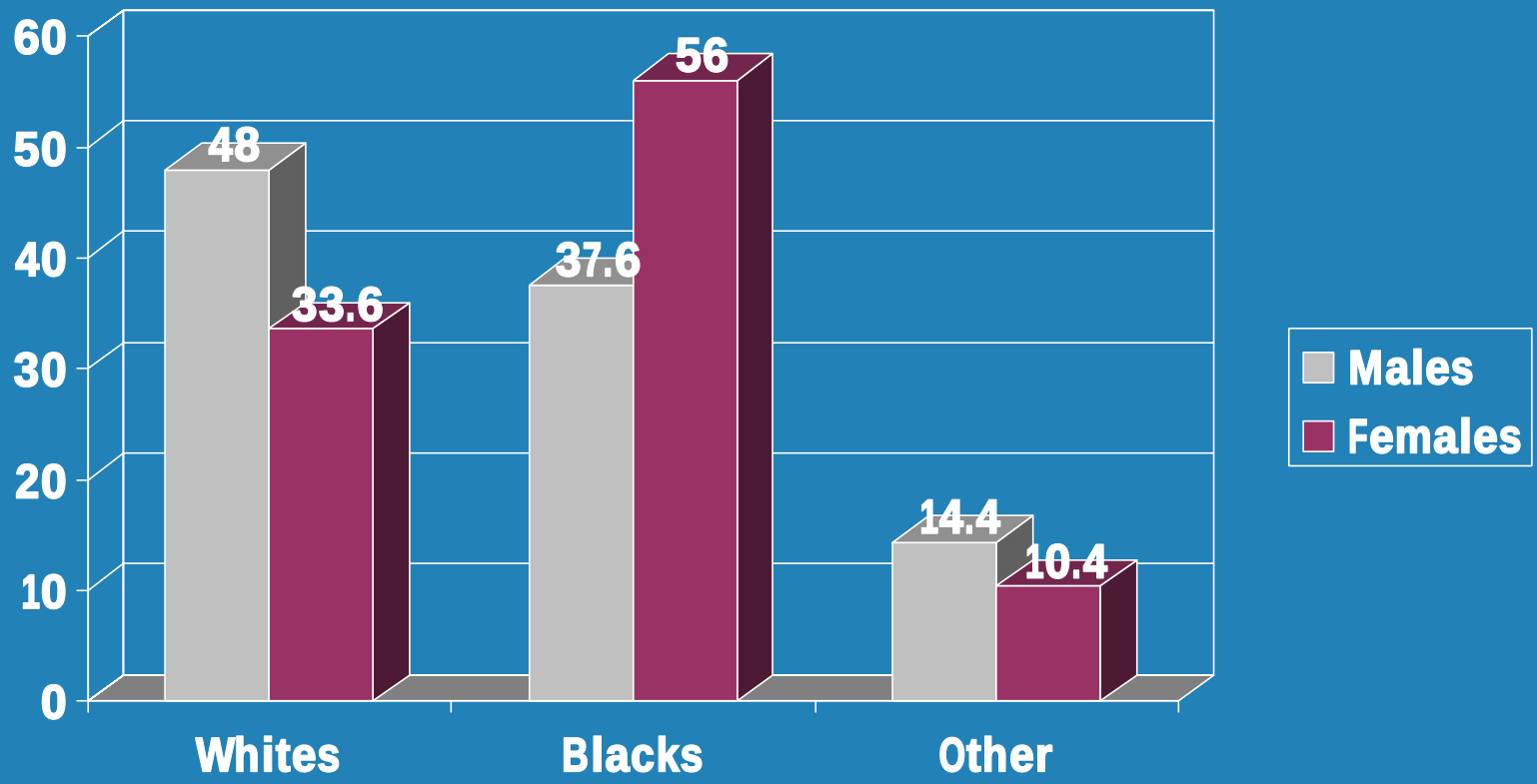
RECIDIVISM BY WHERE CLIENT MOVED TO

- More Likely to Repeat Homeless Episode
  - Another shelter
  - Substance abuse treatment
- Less Likely to Repeat
  - Out of town
  - Returned to last residence
  - VA facility

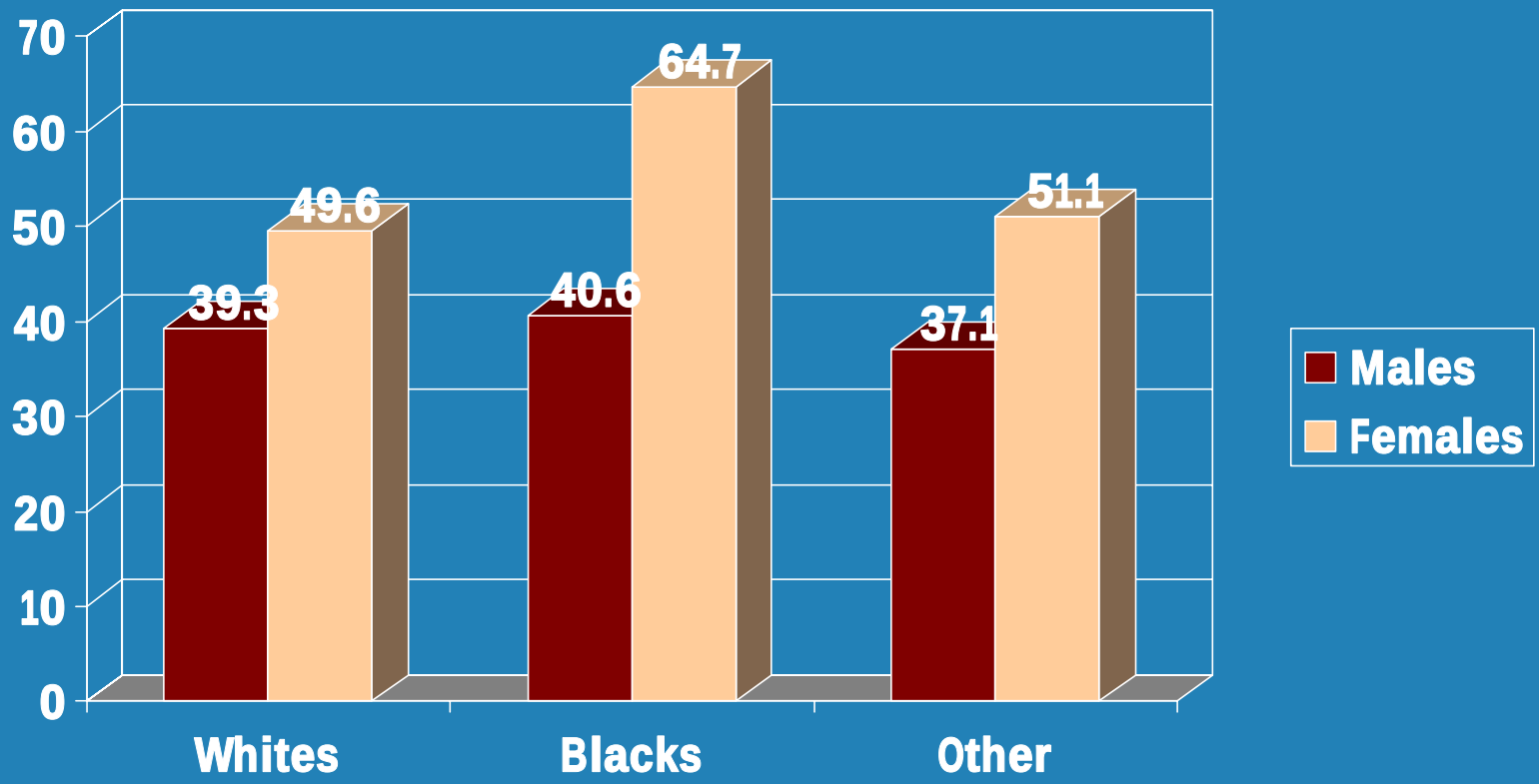
NUMBERS OF HOMELESS PEOPLE BY RACE AND GENDER



PERCENT OF HOMELESS MALES AND FEMALES BY RACE



RECIDIVISM BY RACE AND GENDER



RECOMMENDATIONS

- INTAKE FORM
- CHILDREN AS CUSTOMERS
- REASON FOR HOMELESSNESS
- PARTNERSHIPS

INTAKE FORM

- TRAINING FOR INTAKE WORKERS
- EDUCATIONAL LEVEL- ENTER HIGHEST GRADE COMPLETED
- PRIMARY REASON FOR STAY CATEGORY - SPECIFY WHAT "OTHER" MEANS
- SIZE OF FAMILY CATEGORY - REPLACE WITH THE ACTUAL NUMBER OF PEOPLE SEEKING SHELTER

INTAKE FORM

- INCLUDE A CATEGORY FOR REFERRING AGENCY, WALK-IN, POLICE DROP-OFF, ETC.
- FAMILY COMPOSITION -COMPLETE A SEPARATE INTAKE FORM FOR EACH ADULT SEEKING SHELTER

CHILDREN AS CUSTOMERS

- 66% OF INCIDENTS INVOLVE CHILDREN
- 37% OF INCIDENTS INVOLVE CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 6YRS.
- HOW DO THESE CHILDREN PERCEIVE THEIR HOMELESS EXPERIENCE

REASON FOR HOMELESSNESS

- FINANCIAL - RECIDIVISM
- DRUG AND ALCOHOL ABUSE - RECIDIVISM
- TANF - TEMPORARY ASSISTANCE FOR NEEDY FAMILIES
- LACK OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING UNITS BEING PRODUCED

PARTNERSHIPS

- YOU CAN'T GO IT ALONE
- NEED FOR A PATH TO STABLE HOUSING PRODUCTION (IF UNITS ARE AVAILABLE)
- STRONG COOPERATION WITH DOMESTIC ASSUALT, MENTAL HEALTH, AND LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

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