



Youth Experiences Survey: Exploring the Sex Trafficking Experiences of Homeless Young Adults in Arizona.

Year 2

November 2015

Authors

Dominique Roe-Sepowitz, MSW, Ph.D.

Melissa Brockie, MSW

Kristen Bracy, MA

This study was funded by Tumbleweed Center for Youth Development and the Arizona State University School of Social Work, Office of Sex Trafficking Intervention Research.

Thank you to Our Family Services in Tucson, Arizona, one•n•ten in Phoenix and the staff at Tumbleweed for their assistance in collecting this research.



tumbleweed
Homelessness has an address.



one.n.ten
Today's Youth. Tomorrow's Future.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Youth Experiences Survey: Exploring the Sex Trafficking Experiences of Homeless Young Adults in Arizona, Year 2.

The purpose of this study is to understand the scope and complexity of sex trafficking among homeless young adults in Arizona. This is achieved through surveying homeless young people about their experiences including sex trafficking victimization.

Identifying sex trafficking among homeless young people is challenged by issues such as they are transient, they are difficult to find, they are involved in fewer social service and medical service agencies due to their status as adults. This study targeted homeless young adults in transitional housing, drop in centers, and on the streets. A six-page survey was distributed to homeless young adults over two weeks in July 2014 and again in July 2015. This report will begin with a description of the 2015 survey results of the respondents, proceed to compare the respondents that reported that they were sex trafficking victims with the non-sex trafficking victim respondents, and then conclude with comparisons of 2014 and 2015 surveys regarding the experiences of the sex trafficking victims.

Status of Homeless Young Adults in Arizona

- The average age of the 215 homeless young adult respondents was 21.2 years old.
- At 51.6%, males represented just over half of the respondents, followed by females at 43.7% and transgender or other gender at 4.7%.
- Homeless young adults reported their living situations as couch surfing (24.7%), living in a shelter (23.7%), living in a transitional housing program (16.7%), living on the streets (13.5%), living in a hotel (12.6%), or living in their own place (3.7%).
- 60% of the respondents were born and raised in Arizona, while the others were from 25 other states and five other countries.
- Nearly two thirds of the respondents reported that they had used drugs or alcohol, while 14.9% believed they had an addiction to drugs and 7% an addiction to alcohol.
- The drug used most often by the respondents was marijuana (45.1%).
- A suicide attempt was reported by 87 (40.5%) of the respondents.
- 59% (n =127) of the respondents reported experiencing a current mental health problem with the most common mental health problems identified as depression (39.1%) and anxiety (27.4%).
- Only 44.7% of the respondents reported having received treatment services for their current mental health problem.
- More than half (51.6%) of the respondents identified a current medical problem with 23.3% reporting they had received treatment for the identified problem(s).
- The most common medical problems reported included vision problems (24.2%) and asthma (19.5%).

- Family connectedness and level of contact varied among the respondents with 31.2% reporting they has some limited but positive contact with their families and 45.6% reported that they would like to be more connected to their families.
- Negative life experiences reported by the homeless young adult respondents included:
 - Sexual abuse 66.5%
 - Having run away 47%
 - Emotional abuse by a parent or guardian 46.5%
 - Experienced dating violence 47.5%
 - Negative experiences with law enforcement 44.2%
 - Been bullied by school peers 40.9%
 - Being sex trafficked 35.8%
 - Having been in group or foster homes 33.5%
- Positive life experiences
 - Practiced safe sex 66%, 39.1% reported they said no when they felt they were being forced in to having sex.
 - Said no to drugs or alcohol when it was offered to them 63.3%
 - Having been in a club or youth organization 53%
 - They felt secure or safe standing up for themselves or protecting themselves 50.7%
 - Reported that they had a supportive, loving family or group of friends 49.8%
 - Enrolled in school or a technical program 48.8%
 - Having steady employment 45.6%

Status of Homeless Young Adult Victims of Sex Trafficking in Arizona

- Overall, 77 (35.8%) of the homeless young adults identified as being a sex trafficking victim.
- 45.7% of the female respondents self-reported that they had been sex trafficked.
- About one in four (24.3%) male participants self-reported a sex trafficking experience.
- The average age of first sex trafficking experience was 15.6 years old with 65.1% reporting that they were sex trafficked before the age of 18.
- 71.4% of the respondents who reported being sex trafficked reported they had a sex trafficker, with 3.7% of the respondents reporting that they were currently being sex trafficked.
- The most common reasons identified for exchanging sex for something of value (sex trafficking situation) were for money (12.7%) and for a place to stay (9.3%).
- When comparing the sex trafficked homeless young adult respondents with the non-sex trafficked homeless young adult respondents, the sex trafficked group was found to be more likely to:
 - Be female
 - Be LGBTQ

- Have a suicide attempt
- Have a mental health problem/diagnosis
- Report a medical problem
 - Chronic pain
 - Poor vision
- Use drugs
 - Be a methamphetamine user
- Have a history of running away
- Have a history of dating violence
- Have a history of childhood sexual abuse
- Have a history of emotional abuse by a parent or guardian

Brief Conclusion

While homeless young adults face a myriad of health, mental health and childhood trauma histories, sex trafficked homeless young adults emerged in this study as having uniquely problematic experiences which will require the homeless youth serving agencies that serve these young adults as well as the greater community to address if they are to best serve their needs.

Youth Experiences Survey: Exploring the Sex Trafficking Experiences of Homeless Young Adults in Arizona, Year 2.

INTRODUCTION

Homeless youth can be chronically or intermittently homeless, living in transitional shelters, “couch surfing” or living in temporary situations, such as in hotels, on the streets, in abandoned houses or in other dangerous housing conditions (National Healthcare for the Homeless Council, 2014; Woods, Samples, Melchiono, Harris, & Boston Happens Program Collaborators, 2003). Haley, et al. (2004) expanded the definition of homeless youth and young adults to include persons under the age of 25 years “who have dropped out of school, are without regular employment, live in precarious conditions and often have little social support from their families or communities” (p. 526). This population, homeless young adults from age 18 to 25, has proven difficult to count and therefore statistics are hard to estimate on the size of this population (National Alliance to End Homelessness, 2012). Nevertheless, data on homeless youth and young adults in the United States suggests that there has been an increase in their numbers over the last several years (United States Interagency Council on Homelessness, 2013). A recent estimate by the National Alliance to End Homelessness (2012) found that each year 550,000 single youth and young adults up to age 24 had experienced a homeless episode of longer than a week. In 2013, the Department of Housing and Urban Development reported counting 46,924 unaccompanied homeless youth under age 25 in the United States.

Recent research has shown that homelessness is a risk factor for sexual exploitation and sex trafficking (Hudson & Nandy, 2012), but much remains unknown regarding the prevalence, risks, and intervention needs of sexually exploited and trafficked young people relative to non-exploited or trafficked homeless young people. The purpose of this study is to explore the prevalence of sex trafficking among homeless young people transitioning into adulthood and compare the life experiences and treatment needs of sex trafficked and non-sex trafficked young adults from around Arizona. The findings from this study will be compared to the 2014 study to examine trends from year one to year two.

Risk Factors for Homelessness

Research on homeless young adults is complicated by their transience. Often, these youth will not identify as homeless if they have a place to stay, despite the fact that they acknowledge it may be unsafe or temporary. In some cases, homeless young adults are included among adult homeless individuals, making it challenging to provide them appropriate services for the unique challenges they face. Studies on homeless young adults have used a number of methodologies including 1) census surveys asking about their experiences of homelessness, 2) research in centers that serve homeless young adults through drop-in services and housing, and, 3) through street-level sampling (Toro, Dworsky, & Fowler, 2007).

Previous research has identified a number of risk factors for becoming homeless as a youth including childhood trauma, mental health problems, involvement in the child welfare system, substance use, and identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, questioning or queer (LGBTQ). In one study of 429 homeless and runaway youth in four different states, one quarter of respondents reported having been sexually abused by an adult caretaker (Whitbeck et al, 2004). These experiences have been found to push youth to flee their homes and become vulnerable because they are “running from something, not running to something” (Tyler, et al., 2001, p. 153). Maltreated children have been found to experience “caretaker fluidity” from the child welfare system (Doyle, 2007, p. 12) as well as poverty, substance abuse in the home, and sexual abuse in higher numbers than non-maltreated youth (Lankenau et al, 2004). These same risk factors can lead to homelessness (Lankenau et al., 2004; Park, Metraux, Culhane, and Brodbar, 2004). Homeless youth and adults experience increased rates of mental health issues as compared to other youth, including depression, posttraumatic stress symptoms, substance misuse, aggressive behaviors and problems regulating emotion (Cauce et al, 2000). Perlman et al. (2014) estimated that suicidal ideation might be as high as 80% among homeless youth, and a history of attempted suicide as high as 67%. Kral et al., (1997) and Lankenau et al. (2004) pointed out that homeless youth are more likely to engage in high-risk drug behaviors. These behaviors can complicate their health needs (Kral et al., 1997).

Homelessness and Sexual Exploitation

Sexual exploitation among homeless young adults is often called as survival sex, defined as the exchange of sex to meet subsistence needs including money, shelter, food, drugs or protection (Bailey, Camlin, & Ennett, 1998). In a nationally representative sample collected in 1992 of 640 homeless youth, 9.5 % of youth in shelters and 27.5% of homeless youth reported having engaged in survival sex (Greene, Ennett, & Ringwalt, 1999). A recent study reported that 13.6% of homeless youth and young adults exchanged sex for money and 17% exchanged sex for drugs (Hudson, & Nancy, 2012). Oftentimes, researchers and service providers view survival sex as a choice on the part of the youth; however, many of the youth engaging in survival sex meet criteria to be considered victims of sex trafficking, per the 2000 Trafficking Victims Protection Act.

In a recent study of 185 homeless young people ages 18-23, Covenant House (2013) found that nearly 23% of their sample reported some experience of human trafficking, 8% specifically reported commercial sex exchanges (for something of value), while 48% reported a commercial sex exchange for a place to stay. The researchers found that survival sex “frequently turned into coercive and violent trafficking experiences” (Covenant House, 2013, p. 6). According to a study conducted by Dank et al, (2015), youths’ engagement with survival sex may change over time; i.e., a youth may be recruited by a trafficker but later independently trade sex; or a youth may independently sell sex until she meets someone who begins exploiting her.

LGBTQ Youth and Homelessness

LGBTQ youth are a particularly vulnerable subset of the homeless youth population. Many of these youth report having experienced discrimination and rejection from society and from their families (Dank et al, 2015). Additionally, they are likely to report past physical abuse, sexual abuse, exploitation (Dank et al, 2015; Whitbeck et al., 2004), and emotional trauma (Dank et al, 2015). LGBTQ homeless youth also experience increased risk for mental health problems, including suicide attempts and they report feelings of isolation more frequently than their heterosexual homeless peers (Kruks, 1991; Whitbeck et al., 2004), which can lead them to form relationships on the street that can serve as an additional barrier to helping them get off the streets. A study of professionals working with homeless youth indicated that LGBTQ young people may also enter sexually exploitative relationships if they are unable or unsure of how to explore healthy same-sex relationships and thus seek out relationships in unsafe (virtual or physical/geographical) locations (McNaughton Nicholls, Harvey, & Paskall, 2014). LGBTQ youth are often introduced to survival-sex through peer networks and may not have access to other types of employment due to discrimination (Dank et al, 2015).

Research Questions

The purpose of this study is to understand the scope and complexity of sex trafficking among homeless young adults in Arizona. To do this, homeless young adults were surveyed about their life experiences including sex trafficking victimization.

The specific research questions are:

1. Are sex trafficked homeless young adults different from non-sex trafficked homeless young adults on demographics, medical and mental health issues, high risk behaviors, school and social issues, child abuse experiences, and drug and alcohol use/abuse?

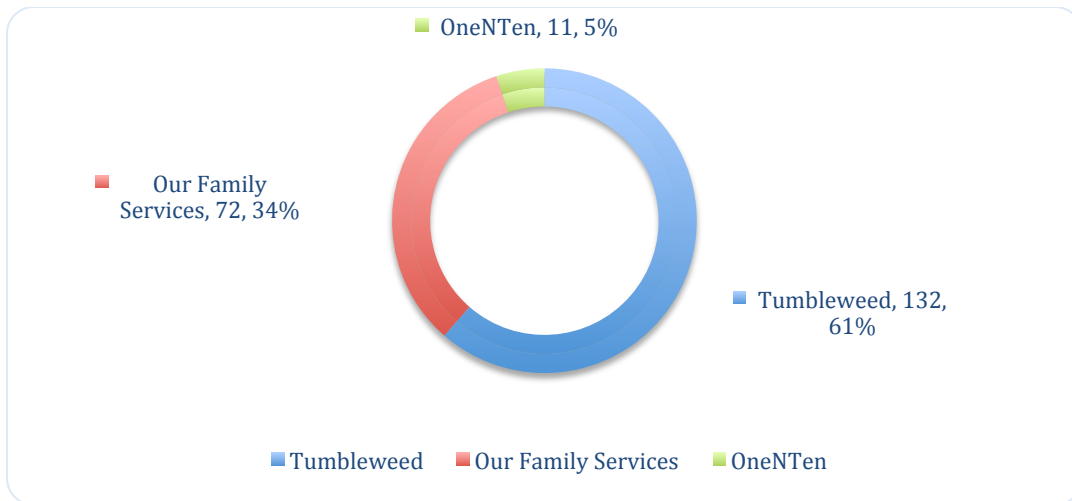
Within the sex trafficked young adults:

2. What were the most common reasons the sex trafficking victims identified as how they were sex trafficked (money, food, clothes, drugs, protection, a place to stay)?
3. How prevalent was the use of technology in their sex trafficking experience?

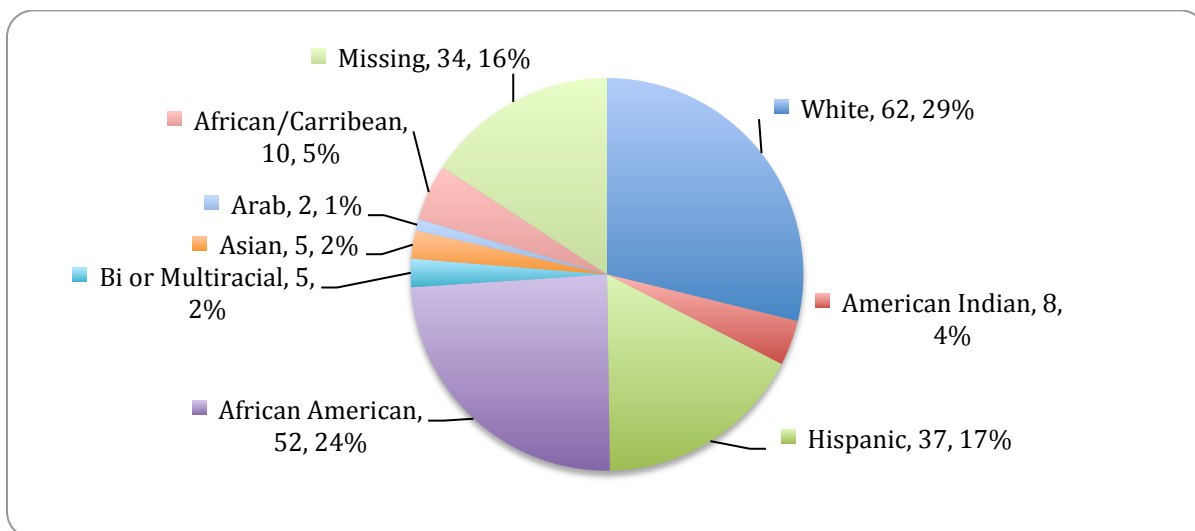
METHOD

Participants

In 2015, 215 homeless young adults from the greater Phoenix, Arizona area and Tucson, Arizona completed the survey. Respondents were drawn from three agencies including Tumbleweed Center for Youth Development (Phoenix, Arizona), Our Family Services (Tucson, Arizona), and One•n•ten (Phoenix, Arizona). Tumbleweed had 132 (61.4%) respondents, Our Family Services had 72 (33.5%) respondents, and One•n•ten had 11 (5.1%) respondents.



Respondents identified as female (n = 94, 43.7%), male (n = 111, 51.6%), and other gender (n = 10, 4.7%). Other gender included respondents who identified as the following: transgender (n = 3, 1.4%) non-conforming (n = 5, 2.3%), two-spirit (n = 1, 0.5%), and other (n = 1, 0.5%). The respondents age ranged from 18 to 25 ($M=21.2$, $SD=2.26$). The most prevalent races/ethnicities reported were White (62, 28.3%) and African American (52, 24.2%). Twenty-seven percent (n = 59) identified as having been in special education classes when in school.



The respondents reported they were from 26 states in the United States and five other countries. Sixty percent of the respondents were born and raised in Arizona. The majority of the respondents (69.8%) had lived in Arizona for more than a year with 16.3% living in Arizona for less than a year and 14% with no response.

Instrument

The Youth Experiences Survey is a 44-item survey with questions that ask about demographics, personal history, including where they are from, their living situation, drug and alcohol use, a health history section with questions about self harm, history of suicide attempts, mental health issues and mental health treatment, medical issues and medical treatment access, and pregnancy. The family history section includes questions about how they define their family, how they feel about their connectedness and support from their families, family religion as it differs from their own. The life experiences section includes questions about how they make money, and if they have experienced sex trafficking. If the respondent reported a sex trafficking experience, the survey directed them to questions about the presence of a sex trafficker and what technology was used in the sex trafficking situation.

Sex trafficking was identified if the respondents answered yes to any of the following questions:

1. Have you ever been compelled, forced, or coerced to perform a sexual act, including sexual intercourse, oral or anal contact for: money, food, clothing, drugs, protection, or a place to stay?
2. Do you currently have a person who encourages/pressures/forces you to exchange sexual acts for money, drugs, food, a place to stay, clothing or protection?
3. In the past, has anyone encouraged/pressured/forced you to exchange sexual acts for money, drugs, food, place to stay, clothing or protection?

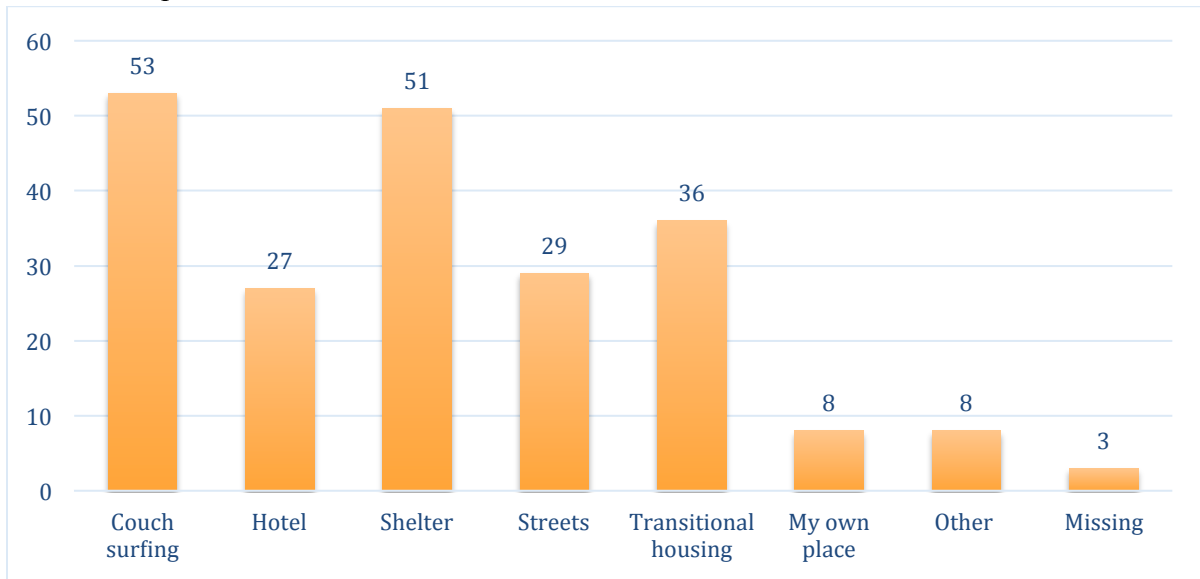
Another question about sex trafficking asked if the respondents have ever been afraid to leave or quit this situation due to fear of violence or other threats of harm to them or their families; however, the answer to this question did not contribute to the total number of sex trafficking victims identified.

Negative life experience questions included a range of possible experiences, such as: residential treatment, negative contact with law enforcement, dating violence, foster care/group home, involvement with the juvenile justice system, academic difficulties, running away from home, expelled from school, special education classes, bullied by school peers, harassed by peers, working in the adult industry (pornography, stripping, escort, etc.), physical abuse by a parent/guardian, gang affiliation, emotional abuse by parent/guardian, sexual abuse (molested or raped) as a youth (ages 13-17), and sexual abuse (molested or raped) as a child (age 12-under). Protective factors were also surveyed, these included: said no to drugs, said no when they felt they were being forced into sex, steady employment, being a part of a club or organization, enrolled in school or technical program, volunteered in community, supportive, loving family or group of friends, healthy, safe and permanent place to live, safe sex, trust/good relationship with law enforcement, feel secure or safe standing up for yourself/protecting yourself, and awareness of community resources.

FINDINGS

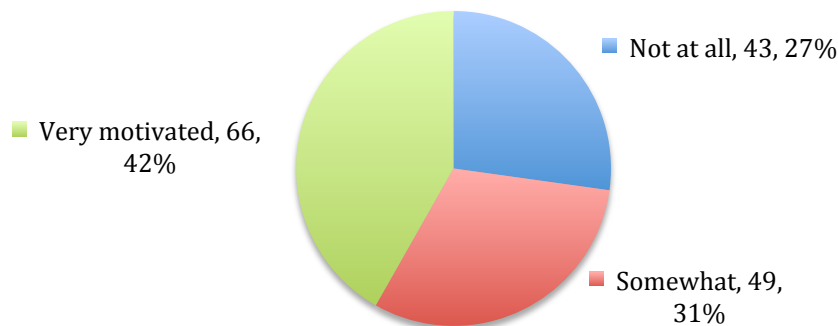
Housing

Homeless young adult respondents reported their living situations as: couch surfing (n = 53, 24.7%), living in a shelter (n = 51, 23.7%), living in a transitional housing program (n = 36, 16.7%), living on the streets (n = 29, 13.5%), living in a hotel (n = 27, 12.6%), or living in their own place (n = 8, 3.7%). Eight respondents indicated their housing as 'other' and three did not answer the question.



Drug Use

Drug and alcohol use was reported by 64.2% (n = 138) of the homeless young adult respondents, while 14.9% (n = 32) believed they had an addiction to drugs and 7% (n = 15) an addiction to alcohol. The age of first drug use ranged from 5 to 22 years ($M = 14.1$, $SD = 2.26$). Levels of reported motivation to change regarding drug use by the homeless young adult respondents were spread from: not at all motivated (n = 43, 20%), somewhat motivated (n = 49, 22.8%), and very motivated (n = 66, 30.7%).

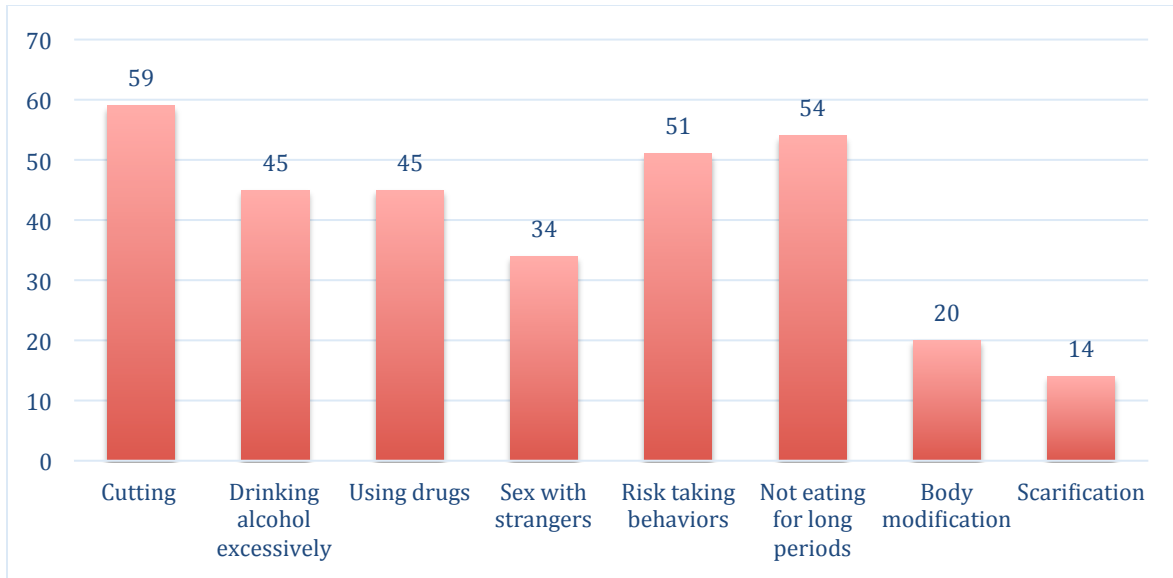


The types of drugs used by the respondents varied and some respondents identified using multiple drug types.

Drug Type	n	%
Marijuana	97	45.1%
Methamphetamine	18	8.4%
Crack/Cocaine	12	5.6%
Gamma Hydroxybutyrate Rohypnol	11	5.1%
MDA Methylenedioxyamphetamine Hallucinogen	11	5.1%
Special K/Ketamine	11	5.1%
Heroin	8	3.7%
Acid	5	2.3%
Spice	4	1.9%
All drugs	4	1.9%
Opiates/OxyContin	3	1.4%
Ecstasy	3	1.4%
Pills	3	1.4%
Percocet/Percodan	1	0.5%

Self Harm Behaviors

More than a third of the homeless young adult respondents reported that they participated in some form of self harming behavior including: cutting (n = 59, 27.4%), drinking alcohol excessively (n = 45, 20.9%), using drugs (n = 60, 27.9%), having sex with strangers (n = 34, 15.8%), risk taking behaviors (n = 51, 23.7%), not eating for long periods (n = 54, 25.1%), body modification (defined as altering or modifying the human anatomy or physical appearance for self expression, shock value or aesthetics (Featherstone, 1999) (n = 20, 9.3%), and scarification (n = 14, 6.5%).



A suicide attempt was reported by more than a third (n =87, 40.5%) of the homeless young adult respondents.

Mental Health Issues

Fifty-nine percent (n =127) of the homeless young adult respondents reported having a current mental health issue/diagnosis, with more than a third (n=80, 37.2%) reporting multiple mental health issues/diagnoses.

Types of Mental Disorders Reported	#	% (N =215)
Depression	84	39.1%
Anxiety	59	27.4%
Bipolar disorder	58	27%
ADD/ADHD	56	26%
Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder	30	14%
Borderline Personality Disorder	17	7.9%
Schizophrenia	16	7.4%
Oppositional Defiant Disorder	10	4.7%
Antisocial Personality Disorder	9	4.2%
Dissociative Identity Disorder	5	2.3%

One client reported having a diagnosis of Asperger’s Syndrome and another seven (3.3%) reported to have Autism Spectrum Disorder. Having received treatment for the reported mental health disorders was received by 96 (44.7%) respondents.

Medical Issues

More than half (n =126, 58.9%) of the respondents reported they had health insurance through the Arizona Health Care Cost Containment System. A current medical problem was reported by 111 (51.6%) of the respondents, with 31 (14.4%) reporting a current dental issue. Medical problems included the following: asthma, vision issues, chronic pain, sexually transmitted infections, open wounds, skin problems and broken bones.

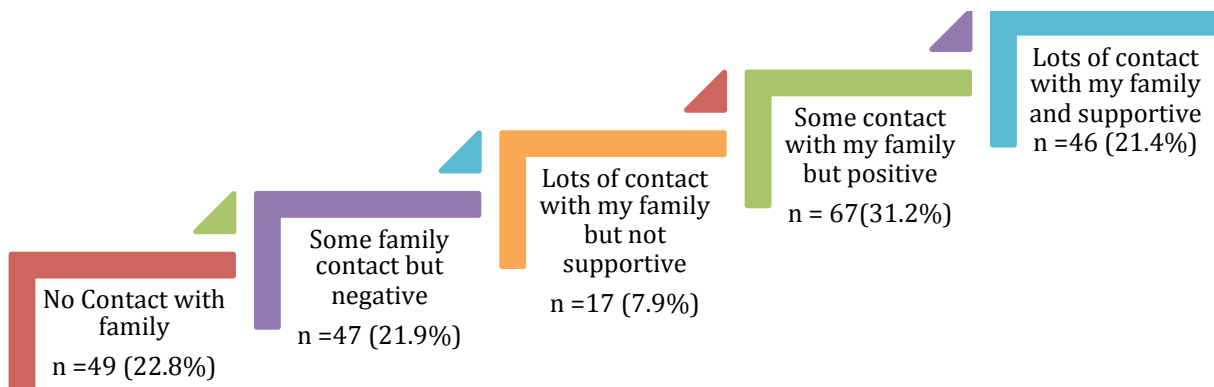
Medical Issues Reported	#	%
Poor vision	52	24.2%
Asthma	42	19.5%
Chronic Pain	35	16.3%
Skin problems	17	7.9%
Open wounds	12	5.6%
Broken bones	9	4.2%
Sexually transmitted infections	5	2.3%

The homeless young adult respondents reported less than a quarter (n = 50, 23.3%) were receiving medical treatment for their identified current medical problem. The sources of medical care varied from, using permanent sources (hospitals, clinics) to mobile clinics to self or friend treating the medical problem.

Currently being pregnant was reported by 20 (9.3%) respondents. More than a third (n =83, 38.6%) of the respondents reported they had children, with 26 (12.1%) reporting that the children were in their care, 14 (6.5%) reported their children were in foster care, 28 (13%) were in the care of their family, and 19 (8.8%) reported others situations. The number of children reported by the respondents ranged from one to eight children ($M=1.65, SD= 1.05$).

Family Connection

The homeless young adult respondents reported that relationships with their families and their level of connectedness with their families varied. Thirty-one (14.4%) respondents defined their family as ‘not having one’. The largest group, 31.2%, reported they had some (limited) positive contact with their family.



In response to a question about possible reasons for the respondents' contact with their families to not be supportive, 66 (30.7%) reported their family lives too far away, 29 (31.6%) reported that their home with their family was not a safe environment for them, and 68 (31.6%) reported that they were kicked out by their families.

Specific religious practice was reported by 80 (37.2%) of the homeless young adult respondents. Forty-six (21.4%) of the respondents reported they practiced the same religion as their families, whereas 98 (45.6%) reported they did not practice the same religion as their family. Nineteen (8.8%) of the homeless young adult respondents identified this as a contribution to a disconnection with their families. The desire to be more connected with families was reported by 100 (45.6%) respondents.

Economics of Homeless Young Adults

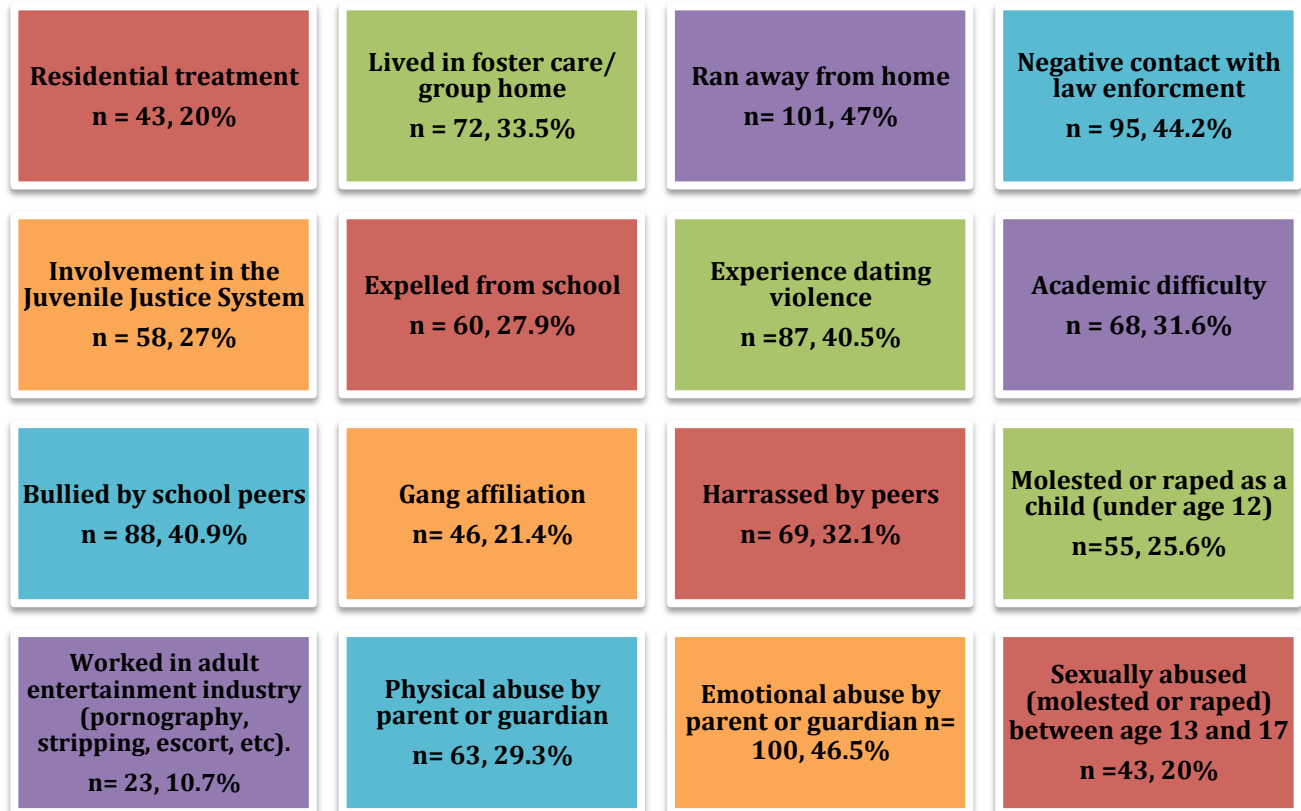
The respondents identified a variety of ways they earned money which included: having a steady job, working day labor, selling drugs, selling stolen things, selling their own belongings, working side jobs for cash, door to door sales, panhandling, pick pocketing, and sex trading.

How the Respondents make money to live	#	%
Steady job	66	30.7%
Side jobs for cash	64	29.8%
Panhandling	39	18.1%
Selling their own belongings	31	14.4%
Day labor	27	12.6%
Selling drugs	19	8.8%

Selling stolen things	9	4.2%
Sex trading	7	3.3%
Pick pocketing	4	1.9%
Door to door sales	2	0.9%

Negative Life Experiences

The homeless young adult respondents identified their negative life experiences as:



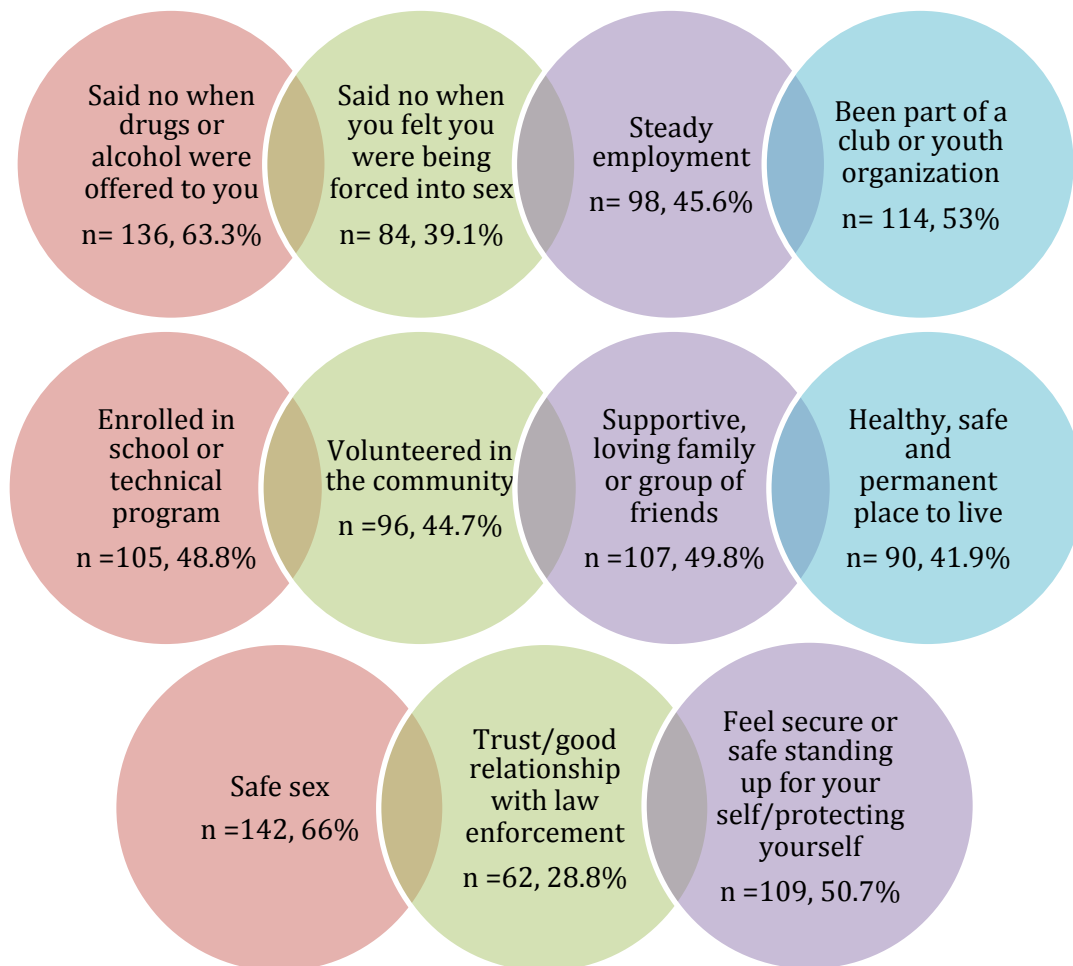
A total of 143 (66.5%) of the homeless young adult respondents reported that they had been sexually abused before the age of 18. The respondents identified the next most common type of childhood abuse as emotional abuse with 56.5% (n =100) identifying as having experienced emotional abuse by a parent or guardian. Nearly 30% (n =63, 29.3%) reported physical abuse by a parent or guardian.

Juvenile justice involvement was reported by 27% and 44.2% reported having negative experiences with law enforcement. More than a fifth (n =46, 21.4%) of the respondents reported being gang affiliated. Out-of-home custody in a foster or group home was reported by 33.5% (n =72) of the respondents with 20% (n =43) reporting that they had been in a residential treatment

center program. School issues were reported by the respondents to include having been expelled (n =60, 27.9%), having academic difficulty (n =68, 31.6%), and having been bullied by school peers (n =88, 40.9%). Having experienced dating violence was identified by 87 (40.5%) of the respondents.

Positive Life Experiences

Positive life experiences of the homeless young adult respondents varied with almost two-thirds reporting that they had said no to drugs or alcohol when it was offered to them. Sixty-six percent of the respondents reported that they practices safe sex and 39.1% reported that they had said no when they felt they were being forced in to having sex. Having been in a club or youth organization was identified by 53% of the respondents. More than 50% reported that they felt secure or safe standing up for themselves or protecting themselves. Nearly 50% (49.8%) reported that they had a supportive, loving family or group of friends. Being enrolled in school of a technical program was identified by 48.8% of the respondents. Having steady employment was identified by 45.6% of the respondents and having some experience volunteering in the community was reported by 44.7% of the respondents.

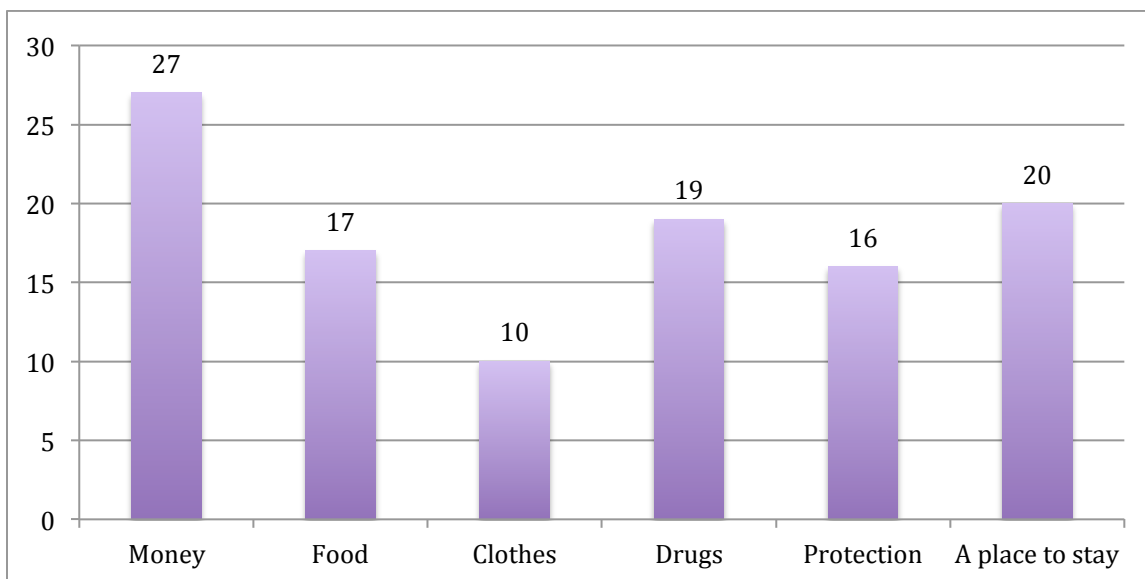


Sex Trafficking Experiences

Seventy-seven (35.6%) of the homeless young adult respondents reported they had been sex trafficked by answering affirmatively to any of the following questions:

1. Have you ever been compelled, forced, or coerced to perform a sexual act, including sexual intercourse, oral or anal contact for: money, food, clothing, drugs, protection, or a place to stay?
2. Do you currently have a person who encourages/pressures/forces you to exchange sexual acts for money, drugs, food, a place to stay, clothing or protection?
3. In the past, has anyone encouraged/pressured/forced you to exchange sexual acts for money, drugs, food, place to stay, clothing or protection?

Forty-three female homeless young adults reported that they were a sex trafficking victim; which is 45.7% of the total number of female homeless young adult respondents. Of the 111 male respondents, 27 (24.3%) reported they were a sex trafficking victim. Finally, of the 10 individuals who identified as other gender (transgender, two-spirit, non-conforming), seven (70%) reported that they were a sex trafficking victim. Regarding sexual orientation, the sex trafficked group identified as 32 (47.1%) as heterosexual and 36 (52.9%) as GLBTQ. The age of first being sex trafficked was only reported by 43 (55.8%) of the 77 respondents who reported being sex trafficked. The age of first sex trafficking victimization reported ranged from 5 to 24 years ($M=15.6$, $SD=4.57$). Of the 43 sex trafficked respondents that identified the age of their first sex trafficking victimization, 28 (65.1%) reported that they were sex trafficked before they were age 18. The two most commonly reported reasons the respondents identified as how they were sex trafficked were: they were compelled, forced, or coerced to perform a sexual act that was for money ($n=27$, 35.1%) followed by for a place to stay ($n=20$, 26%), for food ($n=17$, 22.1%), for protection ($n=16$, 20.8%), and clothes ($n=10$, 13%).



Having a sex trafficker was reported by 55 (71.4%) of the respondents that identified as being a victim of sex trafficking. The 71.4% who reported having a sex trafficker answered affirmatively to the following questions:

1. Do you currently have a person who encourages/pressures/ forces you to exchange sexual acts for money, drugs, a place to stay, clothing or protection?
2. In the past, has anyone encouraged/pressured/ forced you to exchange sexual acts for money, drugs, a place to stay, clothing or protection?
3. Have you ever been afraid to leave or quit this situation due to fear of violence or other threats to harm you or your family?

Eight (10.4%) of the 77 respondents who reported a sex trafficking experience identified they were currently being sex trafficked by a person who encourages/pressures/forces them to exchange sexual acts for money, drugs, protection, a place to stay, clothing or protection. Forty-three respondents (20%) reported that in the past they had someone who encouraged/pressured/forced them to exchange sexual acts for money, drugs, a place to stay, clothing or protection. Thirty four (44.2%) respondents who reported they had been in these situations (being encouraged/pressured/forced to exchange sexual acts for money, drugs, a place to stay, clothing or protection) also stated they had been afraid to leave or quit due to fear of violence or other threats to harm them or their family.

The use of technology for the purpose of the sex trafficking was identified by 32 (41.5%) of the 77 homeless young adult respondents who reported having been sex trafficked. The respondents responded affirmatively to the following survey question:

1. Were any of the following technological devices or means used to recruit you to trade sex, to keep you in the sex trading situation, or used as a tool in the sex trading situation?

Types of technology used in the sex trafficking situations (n=77)	#	%
Smart phone	21	27.3%
Facebook	17	22.1%
Craigslist.com	11	14.3%
Backpage.com	8	10.4%
Instagram	7	9.1%
Pornographic pictures	7	9.1%
Paypal	3	3.9%
Tinder	3	3.9%
Tumblr	3	3.9%

Twitter	3	3.9%
Bitcoin	1	1.3%

Comparing the Sex Trafficked Victims with the Non-Sex Trafficking Group

To compare the sex trafficked and the non-sex trafficked group chi square and t-test analysis were used. There were no significant differences between the two groups regarding age but the sex trafficked group was statistically more likely to be female (when excluding the other gender category) compared to the non-sex trafficked group ($X^2(1, N = 205) = 10.38, p < .001$).

Respondents who indicated their sexual orientation was in the category of gay, lesbian, pansexual, asexual, bisexual or other, were significantly more likely to have reported they were a sex trafficking victim when compared to those who reported heterosexual as sexual orientation ($X^2(1, N = 194) = 5.92, p < .015$).

Participants identifying as a drug addict was significantly more likely within the sex trafficked group than the non-sex trafficked group ($X^2(1, N = 198) = 5.81, p < .016$). The sex trafficked group was significantly more likely to report the use of methamphetamines compared to the non-sex trafficked group ($X^2(1, N = 204) = 5.27, p < .02$).

	Sex trafficked group (n =77)	Non sex trafficked group (n =138)
Gender**		
Female	43 (61.4%)	51 (37.8%)
Male	27 (38.6%)	84 (62.2%)
Sexual orientation**		
Heterosexual	32 (47.1%)	82 (65.1%)
LGBTQ	36 (52.9%)	44 (34.9%)
Drug addiction**	18 (24.3%)	14 (11.3%)
Methamphetamine use*	11 (14.9%)	7 (5.4%)

*Significance at a $p < .05$ level. **Significance at a $p < .01$ level.

Self-harm and risk taking behaviors

Self-harming behaviors were significantly more likely to have been reported by the sex trafficked group when compared to the non-sex trafficked group ($X^2(1, N = 207) = 4.96, p < .026$). The sex trafficked homeless young adults were more likely to report they were participating in cutting behaviors when compared to the non-sex trafficked group ($X^2(1, N = 204) = 5.82, p < .016$). Drinking alcohol excessively was significantly more likely to be reported by the sex trafficked group of homeless young adult respondents than the non-sex trafficked group ($X^2(1, N = 211) = 7.44, p < .006$). Drug use as a high risk behavior was significantly more likely to have been reported by the sex trafficked respondents when compared to the non-sex trafficked group ($X^2(1, N = 211) = 4.13, p < .042$). The two groups did not differ on age of first

drug use. Having sex with strangers as a risky behavior was significantly more likely to have been reported by the sex trafficked respondents than the non-sex trafficked group ($X^2(1, N = 211) = 5.04, p < .025$). Engaging in body modification behaviors was more likely to be reported by the sex trafficked homeless young adult respondents when compared to the non-sex trafficked group ($X^2(1, N = 212) = 5.35, p < .021$).

Self-Harming and Risk Taking Behaviors	Sex trafficked group (n =77)	Non-sex trafficked group (n =138)
Self-harming behaviors*	38 (50.7%)	46 (34.8%)
Drug use*	28 (36.8%)	32 (23.7%)
Cutting*	29 (37.7%)	30 (22.2%)
Drinking alcohol excessively**	24 (31.6%)	21 (15.6%)
Sex with strangers*	18 (23.7%)	16 (11.9%)
Body modification*	12 (15.6%)	8 (5.9%)

*Significance at a $p < .05$ level. **Significance at a $p < .01$ level.

Mental Health Issues

Suicide attempts were significantly more likely to have been reported by the sex trafficked homeless young adults when compared to the non-sex trafficked group ($X^2(1, N = 205) = 4.99, p < .025$). The sex trafficked respondents were more likely to have a current mental health issue/diagnosis than the non-sex trafficked group ($X^2(1, N = 209) = 4.03, p < .045$).

Although not significantly different from the non-sex trafficked homeless young adults, 44.7% of the sex trafficked group reported a diagnosis of depression, 28.9% with ADD/ADHD, 11.8% with schizophrenia, and 19.7% with posttraumatic stress disorder.

Mental Health Issues	Sex trafficked group (n =77)	Non-sex trafficked group (n =138)
Mental health issue/diagnosis*	53 (69.7%)	74 (55.6%)
Ever received mental health treatment	38 (50%)	58 (46.4%)
Suicide attempts*	39 (52.7%)	48 (36.6%)
Depression	34 (44.7%)	50 (38.2%)
Anxiety	25 (32.9%)	34 (25.8%)
Bipolar disorder	26 (34.2%)	32 (24.4%)
ADD/ADHD	22 (28.9%)	34 (26%)
Post-traumatic stress disorder	15 (19.7%)	15 (11.5%)
Borderline Personality Disorder	7 (9.2%)	10 (7.6%)

Schizophrenia	9 (11.8%)	7 (5.3%)
Oppositional Defiant Disorder	5 (6.6%)	5 (3.8%)
Antisocial Personality Disorder	1 (1.3%)	8 (6.1%)
Autism	4 (5.3%)	3 (2.3%)
Dissociate Identity Disorder	2 (2.6%)	3 (2.3%)
Asperger's	0	1 (0.8%)

*Significance at a $p < .05$ level. **Significance at a $p < .01$ level.

Medical Problems and Services

The sex trafficked homeless young adult respondents were significantly more likely to report having a current medical issue than the non-sex trafficked homeless young adult respondents ($X^2(1, N = 212) = 7.67, p < .006$). Chronic pain was more likely to be reported by the sex trafficked respondents than the non-sex trafficked respondents ($X^2(1, N = 212) = 4.14, p < .042$). Poor vision was indicated as a medical problem at a significantly higher rate in the sex trafficked group compared to the non-sex trafficked group ($X^2(1, N = 212) = 5.57, p < .018$). Although not significant, nearly 10% of both groups reported currently being pregnant.

Medical Problems	Sex trafficked group (n =77)	Non-sex trafficked group (n =138)
Current medical problem**	50 (64.9%)	61 (45.2%)
Poor vision*	26 (33.8%)	26 (19.3%)
Asthma	13 (16.9%)	29 (21.6%)
Chronic pain*	18 (23.4%)	17 (12.6%)
Dental problems	14 (18.2%)	17 (12.5%)
Skin problems	7 (9.1%)	10 (7.4%)
Open wounds	4 (5.2%)	8 (5.9%)
Broken bones	3 (3.9%)	6 (4.4%)
Sexually transmitted infections	3 (3.9%)	2 (1.5%)

*Significance at a $p < .05$ level. **Significance at a $p < .01$ level.

Medical Services Accessed	Sex trafficked group (n =77)	Non-sex trafficked group (n =138)
Emergency room	27 (44.3%)	44 (37.6%)
Urgent care/walk-in clinic	22 (36.1%)	49 (42.2%)
Currently receiving medical care	22 (31%)	28 (24.6%)
Primary doctor	13 (21.3%)	19 (16.5%)

Treat it myself	10 (16.4%)	19 (16.4%)
Crews'n Mobile	2 (3.3%)	12 (10.4%)
Use internet to learn how to treat it	4 (6.6%)	8 (7%)
Alternative medicine	1 (1.6%)	8 (7%)
Friend/relative treats it	2 (3.3%)	7 (6%)
City public health clinic	5 (8.2%)	3 (2.6%)

*Significance at a $p < .05$ level. **Significance at a $p < .01$ level.

The two groups did not differ regarding the number of children they have and were similar in the locations of their children.

Pregnancy and Children	Sex trafficked group (n =77)	Non-sex trafficked group (n =138)
Have children	34 (44.7%)	49 (37.1%)
Children with family	13 (34.2%)	15 (26.3%)
Children in the respondent's care	10 (26.3%)	16 (28.6%)
Currently pregnant	7 (9.9%)	13 (9.8%)
Children in foster care	4 (10.5%)	10 (17.5%)

*Significance at a $p < .05$ level. **Significance at a $p < .01$ level.

Family Connection and Support

In comparison to the non-sex trafficked respondents, the sex trafficked group reported significantly higher levels of family living too far ($X^2(1, N = 211) = 5.47, p < .019$) and of having a different religion than their family ($X^2(1, N = 212) = 5.57, p < .001$). Although not significant, 20% of the sex trafficked homeless young adult respondents identified that their family was not a safe environment for them when compared to the 10.4% of the non-sex trafficked group.

Family Connection and Support	Sex trafficked group (n =77)	Non-sex trafficked group (n =138)
Some family contact, but positive	26 (34.2%)	41 (30.8%)
No contact with my family	19 (25%)	30 (22.6%)
Some family contact, but negative	16 (21.1%)	31 (23.1%)
Lots of family contact, supportive	14 (18.4%)	32 (24.1%)
I have no family	12 (15.6%)	19 (14.5%)
Lots of family contact, not supportive	7 (9.2%)	10 (7.5%)

Reasons for disconnection and lack of support:		
They live too far away*	31 (41.3%)	35 (25.7%)
The family was not a safe environment	15 (20%)	14 (10.4%)
They kicked me out	26 (34.7%)	42 (31.1%)
Family practices a specific religion*	37 (50.7%)	43 (33.3%)
The family religion was different from mine and has contributed to a disconnection with the family**	14 (28.6%)	5 (6%)

*Significance at a $p < .05$ level. **Significance at a $p < .01$ level.

How Respondents Earn Money

The sex trafficked homeless young adult respondents and the non-sex trafficked homeless young adult respondents did not differ significantly on any of the methods of earning money.

How Respondents Earn Money	Sex trafficked group (n =77)	Non-sex trafficked group (n =138)
Steady job	25 (32.9%)	41 (30.4%)
Side jobs for cash	22 (28.9%)	42 (30.9%)
Panhandling	19 (25%)	20 (14.8%)
Selling my own things	13 (17.1%)	18 (13.3%)
Day labor	8 (10.5%)	19 (14%)
Selling stolen things	4 (5.3%)	5 (3.7%)
Pickpocket	3 (3.9%)	1 (0.7%)

Negative Life Experiences

Childhood abuses were reported by both the sex trafficked and non-sex trafficked homeless young adults but the sex trafficked respondents were more likely to report emotional abuse by a parent or caregiver ($X^2(1, N = 208) = , p < .006$), childhood sexual abuse ($X^2(1, N = 207) = 9.06, p < .003$), and sexually abused between the ages of 13 -17 years old ($X^2(1, N = 207) = 13.8, p < .001$). The sex trafficked homeless young adults were more likely to report having experienced dating violence than the non-sex trafficked group ($X^2(1, N = 207) = 10.253, p < .001$). The sex trafficked group of respondents was also significantly more likely to have reported that they ran away from home when compared to the non-sex trafficked group ($X^2(1, N = 208) = 6.15, p < .01$). Two issues related to being bullied or harassed by peers was significantly more likely to be reported by the sex trafficked group. They were more likely to report that they had been bullied by school peers ($X^2(1, N = 208) = 12.86, p < .001$) and harassed

by peers ($X^2(1, N = 207) = 7.62, p < .006$). Finally, the sex trafficked homeless young adults were more likely to report experiences of working in the adult entertainment industry ($X^2(1, N = 207) = 4.61, p < .032$) than the non-sex trafficked homeless young adult respondents.

Negative Life Experiences	Sex trafficked group (n =77)	Non-sex trafficked group (n =138)
Ran away from home**	45 (60%)	56 (42.1%)
Emotional abuse by parent or guardian**	47 (62.7%)	53 (39.8%)
Bullied by school peers**	44 (58.7%)	44 (33.1%)
Experienced dating violence**	42 (56.8%)	45 (33.8%)
Negative contact with law enforcement	37 (49.3%)	43 (43.3%)
Foster care/group home	22 (29.3%)	50 (37.6%)
Childhood sexual abuse**	36 (48%)	36 (27.3%)
Harassed by peers **	34 (45.3%)	35 (26.5%)
Academic difficulties	27 (36%)	41 (30.8%)
Physical abuse by parent or guardian	27 (36%)	36 (27.1%)
Expelled from school	23 (30.7%)	37 (28%)
Been in special education classes	25 (33.3%)	34 (25.8%)
Juvenile justice involvement	20 (26.7%)	38 (28.6%)
Sexually abused (age 12 and under)	24 (32%)	31 (23.5%)
Gang affiliation	18 (24%)	28 (21.2%)
Sexually abused (ages 13-17)**	26 (34.7%)	17 (12.9%)
Residential treatment	21 (28%)	22 (16.7%)
Worked in the adult entertainment industry*	13 (17.3%)	10 (7.6%)

*Significance at a $p < .05$ level. **Significance at a $p < .01$ level.

Protective Factors

The sex trafficked homeless young adult respondents were more likely to report that they said no when they felt they were being forced into sex ($X^2(1, N = 207) = 4.96, p < .026$). The non-sex trafficked homeless young adults were more likely to report that they had steady employment ($X^2(1, N = 209) = 5.57, p < .018$).

Protective Factors	Sex trafficked group (n =77)	Non-sex trafficked group (n =138)
Has safe sex	55 (73.3%)	87 (65.4%)
Said no when drugs and alcohol were offered	47 (62.7%)	89 (66.9%)
Been part of a club or youth organization	38 (50.7%)	76 (56.7%)
Feel secure or safe standing up for yourself/protecting yourself	37 (49.3%)	72 (54.1%)
Have a supportive, loving family or group of friends	37 (49.3%)	70 (52.6%)
Enrolled in a technical program	39 (52%)	66 (49.6%)
Steady employment*	27 (36%)	71 (53%)
Aware of community resources	40 (53.3%)	56 (42.1%)
Volunteered in the community	31 (41.3%)	65 (49.2%)
Having a health, safe and permanent place to live	32 (42.7%)	58 (43.9%)
Said no when you felt you were forced into sex*	38 (50.7%)	46 (34.8%)
Trusting/good relationship with law enforcement	25 (33.3%)	37 (28%)

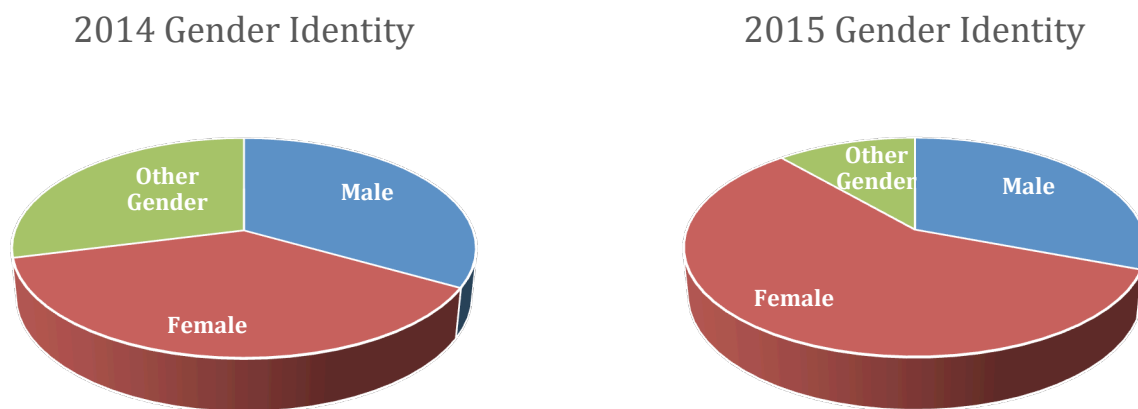
*Significance at a p< .05 level. **Significance at a p< .01 level.

2014 and 2015 Finding Comparisons

In 2014, 246 homeless young adults participated in the Youth Experiences Survey. The 2015 Youth Experiences Survey was completed by 215 homeless young adults. Due to the transient nature of this population and the anonymity of the respondents, duplication from year to year was not accounted for. Additions to the 2015 Youth Experiences Survey included questions about respondent origins, such as hometown and how long the respondent has resided in Arizona, what types of medical services the respondent utilizes, and if the respondent has children or is currently pregnant. New questions addressing family history and connectedness, spirituality, how the respondent makes money, and how technology was used in a sex trafficking situation were also included in the 2015 Youth Experiences Survey.

In 2014, one in four (63, 25.6%) homeless young adult respondents self-reported they had experienced a sex trafficking situation. The 2015 respondents demonstrate an increase in the number of reported sex trafficking experiences by homeless young adults, with over one in three (77, 35.8%) respondents self-reporting a sex trafficking experience. The number of males reporting a sex trafficking experience has increased from 21.8% (n=26) in 2014 to almost one in

four (27, 24.3%) male respondents in 2015. Almost half (43, 45.7%) of the total female respondents reported a sex trafficking experience in 2015, which is two times greater than the 2014 findings (25, 24.8%). Another important finding from the 2015 Youth Experiences Survey is that, similar to the 2014 findings, a disproportionate number of transgender or other gender respondents reported a sex trafficking experience, with 80% (n=12) in 2014 and 70% (n=7) in 2015.



The reported age of first sex trafficking experience was similar from 2014 to 2015, with 2014 findings ranging in age from 5-23 ($M=15.2, SD=3.77$) and 2015 findings ranging from 5-24 ($M=15.6, SD=4.57$), with the average age of entry into sex trafficking occurring at age fifteen. The number of respondents who reported experiencing sex trafficking as a minor (under the age of 18) increased from 54% (n=34) in 2014 to 65.1% (n=28) in 2015. The increase in this finding may result from the number of respondents that did not respond (34, 44.2%) to this question on the 2015 Youth Experiences Survey.

Results

The findings of this study confirm that sex trafficking victimization is occurring among homeless young adults in Arizona. More than a third (35.6%) of the respondents identified as being a sex trafficking victim. Nearly three quarters (71.4%), reported having a sex trafficker who encouraged/pressured/forced them to exchange sex acts or that they were afraid to leave or quit this situation due to fear of violence or other threats to harm them or their family.

The first research question was, *are sex trafficked homeless young adults different from non-sex trafficked homeless young adults on demographics, medical and mental health issues, high risk behaviors, school and social issues, child abuse experiences, and drug and alcohol use/abuse?* The sex trafficked group was significantly more likely to be female when compared to the non-sex trafficked group. The two groups also significantly differed on sexual identity with more

than half (52.9%) of the sex trafficked group identifying as LGBTQ while the non-sex trafficked group had 34.9% identify as LGBTQ. The sex trafficked group was more likely than the non-sex trafficked group to report having a medical problem with the two primary medical issues being chronic pain and poor vision. The sex trafficked group was more likely to report a mental health issue than the non-sex trafficked group with the sex trafficked group having more than half reporting a suicide attempt compared to 36.6% of the non-sex trafficked group.

More than half of the sex trafficked group reported self-harm behaviors with the non-sex trafficked group reporting 34.8%. The sex trafficked group was also more likely to report high risk behaviors including drug use, cutting, drinking alcohol excessively, sex with strangers, and modification. School issues for the sex trafficked group were only unique in reports of bullying by school peers which were reported significantly more by the sex trafficked group than the non-sex trafficked group. Social issues including having runaway from home, experiencing dating violence and being harassed by peers were all reported significantly more often by the sex trafficked group than the non-sex trafficked group. Experiences of childhood abuse were significantly more reported by the sex trafficked group for emotional abuse by parents/guardians and childhood sexual abuse. Drug addiction, using alcohol and methamphetamine use were all significantly more reported by the sex trafficked group than the non-sex trafficked group.

The second research question was, *what were the most common reasons the sex trafficking victims identified as how they were sex trafficked (money, food, clothes, drugs, protection, a place to stay)?* The reasons most commonly reported regarding how they were sex trafficked were for money, a place to stay, drugs, food, protection and clothes.

The final research question was: *How prevalent was the use of technology in their sex trafficking experiences?* The use of technology in the sex trafficking experiences of the homeless young adults to recruit them to trade sex, to keep them in the sex trading situation, and used as a tool in the sex trading situation was pervasive. It was present in 41.5% of the cases in some form to recruit the victim into sex trafficking, maintain their involvement in the sex trafficking situation or to advertise them to be sold for sex. The most common technology device identified as a tool in the sex trafficking situations was a smart phone and the most common websites used as a tool in the sex-trading situation were Facebook, Craigslist.com, Backpage.com and Instagram. Pornographic pictures were reported to be a part of seven sex trafficking situations.

Discussion

This study found that one out of every three homeless young adults in two major cities in Arizona reported sex trafficking victimization, which was defined in this study as having been compelled, forced, or coerced to perform a sexual act, including sexual intercourse, oral or anal contact for: money, drugs, food, a place to stay, clothing or protection. Nearly half (45.7%) of the female homeless young adult respondents reported having an experience of sex trafficking

victimization with almost a quarter (24.3%) of the male respondents. Of the ten individuals who identified as 'other' genders (transgender, two-spirit, non-conforming), 70% reported being a sex trafficking victim. The average age reported by the sex trafficking victim group was 15.6 years old which is older than a number of other studies with youth and young adults in Arizona (Roe-Sepowitz, et al 2015, 2014). Nearly two thirds of the homeless young adult respondents reported having been sex trafficked before the age of 18 years old.

The use of technology for the purpose of recruiting the sex trafficking victim, keeping them in the sex trafficking situation or used as tool in the sex trafficking situation was reported by 32 (41.6%) of the sex trafficked homeless young adults. The respondents reported the use of smart phones and sex selling websites like Craigslist and Backpage.com as well as social media in their sex trafficking experiences. Facebook was reported by 22% of the sex trafficked respondents, which is one out of every four of the sex trafficked homeless young adults surveyed.

When comparing the sex trafficked homeless young adults with the non-sex trafficked homeless young adults, important differences were discovered. These differences included that sex trafficking victims were more often female and LGBTQ, were more likely to report being addicted to drugs and to specifically use methamphetamines, to participate in self-harm behaviors such as cutting, drinking alcohol excessively, having sex with strangers and participate in body modification. The sex trafficking victims were more likely to report a mental health and medical problem, report having attempted suicide, have poor vision and chronic pain. Regarding their families, they were more likely to report that their family was too far away to support them and that their families practiced a specific religion that was different from the one they practiced. The sex trafficking victims were more likely to report that they had experienced childhood emotional abuse by a parent or caregiver, childhood sexual abuse, having runaway, having been bullied by school peers and harassed by peers, and experienced dating violence. Few protective factors differed between the two groups (sex trafficked and non-sex trafficked) but having a steady job was more likely to be reported by the non-sex trafficked respondents. The sex trafficked group was more likely to report having said no when you felt you were forced into sex.

When exploring the changes from the 2014 and 2015 studies, there was a 10.2% increase in the rate of reported sex trafficked victims. This rise in the percentage of respondents reporting sex trafficking victimization from 2014 (25.6%) to 2015 (35.6%) may be due to a number of factors. Perhaps there was a surge in sex trafficking among this population however the authors of this study find it more reasonable to conclude that in the year since the first study brought to light the prevalence of sex trafficking among homeless young adults in Arizona. The service providers involved in the support and care of homeless young adults have integrated prevention and identification activities into the services provided thus increasing the likelihood of a sex trafficking victim self-identifying as they have language to describe their experience and the stigma of having a sex trafficking victimization history has decreased in these service agency environments.

Differences were also found including an 11.1% increase in respondents reporting they were sex trafficked before the age of 18 and an 8% increase in the respondents reporting that they had a sex trafficker. In the comparison of the 2014 and 2015 survey respondents with similar ages at the time of response to the survey as well as of those reporting they were sex trafficked, similar ages of their first sex trafficking experience.

Limitations

There are a number of limitations to consider when interpreting the findings from this study. The data was drawn from the two largest cities in Arizona, Phoenix and Tucson, with three unique service providers but data was not collected from rural areas or smaller cities. In the rural and smaller cities, sex trafficking prevalence along with the other issues presented in this study among homeless young adults may vary from the urban sample used in this study. Another limitation of this study is that the sample was limited to those in contact with a homeless young adult service provider whether through street outreach, at a resource/drop in center, or in transitional housing. The \$5 gift card given to survey completers may have influenced their decision to complete the survey but no surveys were turned in that were incomplete or appeared to be marked in a pattern. Finally, during the year between the two surveys (July 2014 to July 2015) significant efforts were made to train the staff at all of the participating agencies and new targeted services provided to clients who identified as sex-trafficked and those staff may have inadvertently focused on those clients to give the survey.

Implications

The findings from the 2014 and 2015 Youth Experiences Survey gives evidence to support the recommendation that all administrators, staff and clinical workers in agencies that serve homeless young adults be trained and provided with ongoing training opportunities on what sex trafficking is and means but also how traumatic experiences weave throughout the lives of most of the homeless young adults surveyed. Homeless young adult respondents reported that 40% were from other states and five other countries highlighting the need to have information about targeted services for young adults in Arizona available. Drug and alcohol use was reported by nearly two thirds of the respondents, thus interventions focusing on drug and alcohol abstinence and support are recommended for the agencies serving these young adults. Mental health issues, most commonly depression and anxiety were reported by nearly 60% of the respondents with only 44.7% reporting receiving mental health treatment. This leads to the recommendation for increased therapeutic services to be provided to these young adults through the service agencies they contact. Medical problems were identified by more than 50% of the survey respondents and reports of finding medical care was reported by less than 25%, although 58.9% reported that they had state health insurance.

Family connectedness of the respondents was reported to be limited by the respondents with only 31.2% reporting some limited positive contact with their families and 45.6% reporting that they would like to be more connected to their families. Efforts implementing Kevin Campbell's

Family Finding model and tailoring interventions have already begun within two of the agencies (Tumbleweed and One•n•ten), which is an intervention that works through known systems to find supporters for the young adults.

Childhood trauma was reported by many of the respondents with childhood sexual abuse being reported by 65.5%. This supports the training of all administrators, staff and therapeutic providers in trauma-informed care and having therapeutic services available to and provided to the respondents.

Due to the high percentage (35.8%) of the homeless young adult respondents identifying as having a sex trafficking experience, targeted interventions should be developed and implemented, including individual and group treatment focused on the sex trafficking experiences and the implication of those experiences for each victim related to sense of self, shame/stigma, coping strategies, and relationship and communication skills. Other social and childhood trauma that were found to be prevalent in the sex trafficked group including dating violence and experiences of emotional and sexual abuse should also be addressed in the context of individual or group intervention. The unique nature of the treatment needs of sex trafficking victims found in this study included extensive mental health and medical support, particularly around suicide attempts and chronic pain. Increased access to mental health services through trauma-informed therapists and medical providers with insight and awareness of sex trafficking are recommended based on this study. Drug addiction was significantly more likely to be found among the sex trafficked group and opportunities to address their drug use and addiction such as 12-step meetings and addiction group intervention are suggested.

Future research on this population should focus on the process of how homeless young adults are recruited and maintained in sex trafficking situations as well as how they successfully exit and what tools and assistance they need to successfully get out of the sex trafficking situations. Future research should also focus on developing new interventions to prevent future sex trafficking victimization, address risk factors, screen clients appropriately to identify if they have been sex trafficked and develop and provide treatments that decrease trauma symptoms and develop increased protective factors.

References

- Busen, N. H., & Engebretson, J. C. (2008). Facilitating risk reduction among homeless and street-involved youth. *Journal of the American Academy of Nurse Practitioners*, 20(11), 567-575.
- Cauce, A. M., Paradise, M., Ginzler, J. A., Embry, L., Morgan, C. J., Lohr, Y., & Theofelis, J. (2000). The Characteristics and Mental Health of Homeless Adolescents Age and Gender Differences. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders*, 8(4), 230-239.
- Covenant House New York. (2013). Homelessness, survival sex, and human trafficking: As experienced by the youth of Covenant House New York. *Covenant House*. Retrieved from <http://www.covenanthouse.org/sites/default/files/attachments/Covenant-House-trafficking-study.pdf>
- Dank et al, (2015). Surviving the streets of New York: experiences of LGBTQ youth, YMSM, and YSWW engaged in survival sex. *The Urban Institute Publication, Elevate the debate*, 1-88.
- ECPAT USA. (2013). And boys too: An ECPAT-LSA discussion paper about the lack of recognition of the commercial sexual exploitation of boys in the United States. Retrieved from http://ecpatusa.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2013/08/AndBoysToo_FINAL_single-pages.pdf
- Featherstone, M. (1999). Body Modification: An Introduction. *Body and Society*, 5, 1-13.
- Forst, M. L. (1994). Sexual risk profiles of delinquent and homeless youths. *Journal of Community Health*, 19(2), 101-114.
- Greene, J. M., Ennett, S. T., & Ringwalt, C. L. (1999). Prevalence and correlates of survival sex among runaway and homeless youth. *American journal of public health*, 89(9), 1406-1409.
- Gwadz, M. V., Gostnell, K., Smolenski, C., Willis, B., Nish, D., Nolan, T. C., & Ritchie, A. S. (2009). The initiation of homeless youth into the street economy. *Journal of adolescence*, 32(2), 357-377.
- Halcón, L. L., & Lifson, A. R. (2004). Prevalence and predictors of sexual risks among homeless youth. *Journal of youth and adolescence*, 33(1), 71-80.
- Kidd, S. A., & Carroll, M. R. (2007). Coping and suicidality among homeless youth. *Journal of adolescence*, 30(2), 283-296.
- Kral, A. H., Molnar, B. E., Booth, R. E., & Watters, J. K. (1997). Prevalence of sexual risk behavior and substance use among runaway and homeless adolescents in San Francisco, Denver and New York City. *International journal of STD & AIDS*, 8(2), 109-117.
- Kruks, G. (1991). Gay and lesbian homeless/street youth: Special issues and concerns. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 12(7), 515-518.
- Lankenau, S. E., Clatts, M. C., Welle, D., Goldsamt, L. A., & Gwadz, M. V. (2005). Street careers: Homelessness, drug use, and sex work among young men who have sex with men (YMSM). *International Journal of Drug Policy*, 16(1), 10-18.

- Perlman, S., Willard, J., Herbers, J.E., Cutuli, J.J., & Eyrich Garg, K.M. (2014). Youth homelessness: Prevalence and mental health correlates. *Journal of the Society for Social Work and Research*, 5(3), 361-377.
- Roe-Sepowitz, D., Bracy, K., Cunningham, J., Beverly, J., Van Kleek, C., Hickle, K., Cantelme, L., McKinley, K., Schuler, C., Atkins, P., Mazerbo, L., Hawman, A., & Cavaliere, S. (2014). YES Project: Youth Experiences Survey: Exploring the Sex Trafficking Experiences of Arizona's Homeless and Runaway Young Adults. Tumbleweed Youth Services and ASU School of Social Work, College of Public Programs.
- Roe-Sepowitz, D., Bracy, K., Hickle, K., & Campbell, C. (2014). Arizona DMST Count Report: Assessing the Incidence of Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking in Delinquency Services in Arizona. McCain Institute and the Arizona Office of the Courts/Arizona Supreme Court. ASU School of Social Work, College of Public Programs.
- Savin-Williams, R. C. (1994). Verbal and physical abuse as stressors in the lives of lesbian, gay male, and bisexual youths: associations with school problems, running away, substance abuse, prostitution, and suicide. *Journal of consulting and clinical psychology*, 62(2), 261.
- Solorio, M. R., Rosenthal, D., Milburn, N. G., Weiss, R. E., Batterham, P. J., Gandara, M., & Rotheram-Borus, M. J. (2008). Predictors of sexual risk behaviors among newly homeless youth: a longitudinal study. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 42(4), 401-409.
- Tyler, K. A., Hoyt, D. R., Whitbeck, L. B., & Cauce, A. M. (2001). The impact of childhood sexual abuse on later sexual victimization among runaway youth. *Journal of Research on Adolescence*, 11(2), 151-176.
- Tyler, K. A., & Johnson, K. A. (2006). Trading sex: Voluntary or coerced? The experiences of homeless youth. *Journal of Sex Research*, 43(3), 208-216.
- Tyler, K. A., Whitbeck, L. B., Hoyt, D. R., & Cauce, A. M. (2004). Risk factors for sexual victimization among male and female homeless and runaway youth. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 19(5), 503-520.
- Van Leeuwen, J. M., Hopfer, C., Hooks, S., White, R., Petersen, J., & Pirkopf, J. (2004). A snapshot of substance abuse among homeless and runaway youth in Denver, Colorado. *Journal of Community Health*, 29(3), 217-229.
- Walls, N. E., & Bell, S. (2011). Correlates of engaging in survival sex among homeless youth and young adults. *Journal of sex research*, 48(5), 423-436.
- Whitbeck, L. B., Chen, X., Hoyt, D. R., Tyler, K. A., & Johnson, K. D. (2004). Mental disorder, subsistence strategies, and victimization among gay, lesbian, and bisexual homeless and runaway adolescents. *Journal of Sex Research*, 41(4), 329-342.
- Williams, L.M. & Frederick, M.E. (2009). *Pathways into and out of Commercial Sexual Victimization of Children: Understanding and responding to sexually exploited teens*. Lowell, MA: University of Massachusetts Lowell.