



**Sussex County 2013 Point in Time Survey  
Report on Homelessness**

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March, 2013

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## Executive Summary

The 2013 Point in Time survey of the homeless population of Sussex County was conducted on January 30, 2013. Surveys were collected through various agencies such as the Division of Social Services, Project Self-Sufficiency, Birth Haven, Samaritan Inn and Family Promise.

The quality of the data collected in 2013 was so good that this report is using 2013 as a baseline year to begin tracking two new data sets. For the first time, the County can begin to reliably look at gender, age, causative factors and duration of homelessness to explore correlations among these demographics. In addition, this report sets the baseline for new statistics on the number of children who are homeless with their parents, where they are living and how long they have been homeless.

A total of 303 homeless people responded to the survey, 40 of which meet the HUD definition for homelessness. Because the HUD definition no longer counts individuals receiving Temporary Rental Assistance (TRA) or Emergency Assistance (EA) as homeless, this report will discuss the total Sussex County homeless population and differentiate between HUD homeless and non-HUD homeless where appropriate.

An on-going concern is a lack of Spanish translators, and there are undoubtedly some individuals who were unable to complete the survey because of a language barrier. This means that the number of homeless individuals was higher than the numbers reflected in this report, but it cannot be determined how many homeless individuals were missed for this reason.

Discussion is currently taking place on determining ways to reach the homeless street population, that is, those who are living on the street, in cars, abandoned buildings or camping out in the woods. This population is most certainly under-counted, but outreach efforts have not been successful in connecting with them. These efforts will be reviewed in 2013 to try to make certain that the 2014 survey reaches more of this population.

As always, getting an accurate picture of the homeless is extremely difficult because the population itself fluctuates over time and from season to season. However, the Point in Time survey is designed to capture data on the homeless population at its most vulnerable, and at a time of year when they are most likely to reach out for assistance.

The 2013 report shows two trends that bear further exploration and action.

The number of women in the age group between 18 and 30 remains high, and comprises 28.8% of the entire homeless population surveyed. While the women 30 and under as a percentage of the total number of homeless respondents has dropped, this group as a percentage of all women has risen sharply.

The contributing factors for this high-risk population are also of significance. 59% of the women in this group cited the high cost of housing as a factor, followed by breakup of a relationship/death (56%), and those that lost jobs who couldn't find another (56%). Clearly, this age group is among the most vulnerable in Sussex County.

In addition, the number of respondents who have been homeless for more than a year continues to rise, and is now 52.5% of the total homeless population surveyed.

This report makes comparisons, wherever possible and meaningful, with previous point in time data in order to attempt to discern trends and gain a perspective over time. While certain conclusions can be drawn, it must always be with the understanding that no single point in time survey can be relied upon for a complete and accurate look at homelessness. However, with this understanding, trends can be observed and information can be used for human service planning.

## Introduction

The 2013 Point in Time Survey of Homelessness in Sussex County was conducted on January 30, 2013. The following report offers a snapshot of the face of homelessness as experienced by residents of Sussex County on that night.

The County of Sussex continues to struggle with obtaining an accurate "street count", that is, counting those who are living in cars, tent cities, abandoned buildings, or camping out. Because there is no longer an accompanying police presence while doing the count, a number of agencies have policies forbidding collecting data on foot due to safety issues.

In addition, informal feedback has suggested that many of these homeless individuals are deliberately avoiding the count out of fear that they will be arrested or otherwise penalized.

Another issue that has arisen is the difficulty in getting an accurate report on veterans, most of whom are reluctant to indicate that they are veterans. Outreach to the veteran population of Sussex County in general has been very difficult, and is the subject of on-going discussion to determine ways to identify veterans and offer them available services.

As was noted in 2012, homelessness as defined by HUD gives a very different picture of homelessness in Sussex County than the picture derived by including those who, except for rental assistance programs or the ability to reside with family or friends, would be homeless. For the purposes of this study, they will be included in this report, but each group will be identified for the sake of clarity. Those meeting the HUD definition will be identified as HUD and those that are living with family or friends, and those receiving temporary rental or emergency assistance will be identified as non-HUD. All totals will either specify the group or indicate that they are combined.

HUD has issued the final regulation to implement changes to the definition of homelessness contained in the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing Act. The definition affects who is eligible for various HUD-funded homeless assistance programs. The new definition includes four broad categories of homelessness:

- People who are living in a place not meant for human habitation, in emergency shelter, in transitional housing, or are exiting an institution where they temporarily resided. The only significant change from existing practice is that people will be considered homeless if they are exiting an institution where they resided for up to 90 days (it was previously 30 days), and were in shelter or a place not meant for human habitation immediately prior to entering that institution.
- People who are losing their primary nighttime residence, which may include a motel or hotel or a doubled up situation, within 14 days and lack resources or support networks to remain in housing. HUD had previously allowed people who were being displaced within 7 days to be considered homeless. The proposed regulation also describes specific documentation requirements for this category.
- Families with children or unaccompanied youth who are unstably housed and likely to continue in that state. This is a new category of homelessness, and it applies to families with children or unaccompanied youth who have not had a lease or ownership interest in a housing unit in the last 60 or more days, have had two or more moves in the last 60 days, and who are likely to continue to be unstably housed because of disability or multiple barriers to employment.
- People who are fleeing or attempting to flee domestic violence, have no other residence, and lack the resources or support networks to obtain other permanent housing. This category is similar to the current practice regarding people who are fleeing domestic violence.

HUD defines chronically homeless as those who are either (1) an unaccompanied homeless individual with a disabling condition who has been continuously homeless for a year or more, OR (2) an unaccompanied individual with a disabling condition who has had at least four episodes of homelessness in the past three years previous. It should be noted that for the purpose of this report, those who indicated either SSI (Supplemental Security

Income) or SSDI (Social Security Disability Insurance) as a source of income, or indicated that alcohol or other substance abuse, medical problems/physical or developmental disability, or mental illness/emotional problems are a cause of their homelessness in combination with a qualifying duration of homelessness shall be considered to meet the HUD definition.

Only five respondents answered with a qualifying duration of homelessness and requisite secondary factor as described above. Therefore, all data collected on the verifiably chronically homeless has been put into a separate narrative section for information purposes but has been excluded from all comparisons to previous years.

This report contains comparisons of data on the homeless population from Point in Time surveys for the last six years where it is logical to do so.

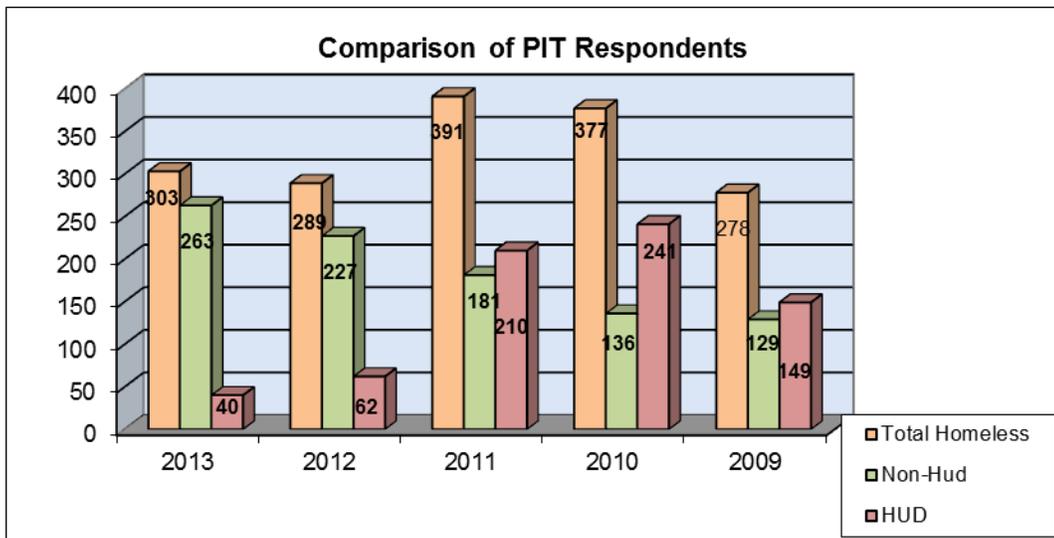
As with all Point in Time surveys, the number of individuals responding to the survey is exactly that – a point in time. It is difficult to ascertain whether or not these numbers accurately represent the numbers of people who experience homelessness in between surveys dates, or whether or not they represent the total homeless population on that night. Thus, the actual number of homeless individuals in Sussex County is undoubtedly higher than the Point in Time count shows because there were homeless individuals who could be not reached.

**Who Are the Homeless?**

There were 303 total homeless respondents to this year’s survey. Of these, 40 meet the HUD definition and 263 are either living with family/friends or receiving temporary/emergency rental assistance, hereafter referred to as non-HUD. 5 individuals (12.5% of HUD) of those currently homeless meet the Federal criteria for “Chronically Homeless” as defined above, which is down slightly from 13.3% in 2012.

The total number of homeless individuals counted in 2013 rose slightly since 2012 from 289 to 303 (+4.8%), but the number of HUD homeless dropped by 26% from 62 to 40.

Chart 1

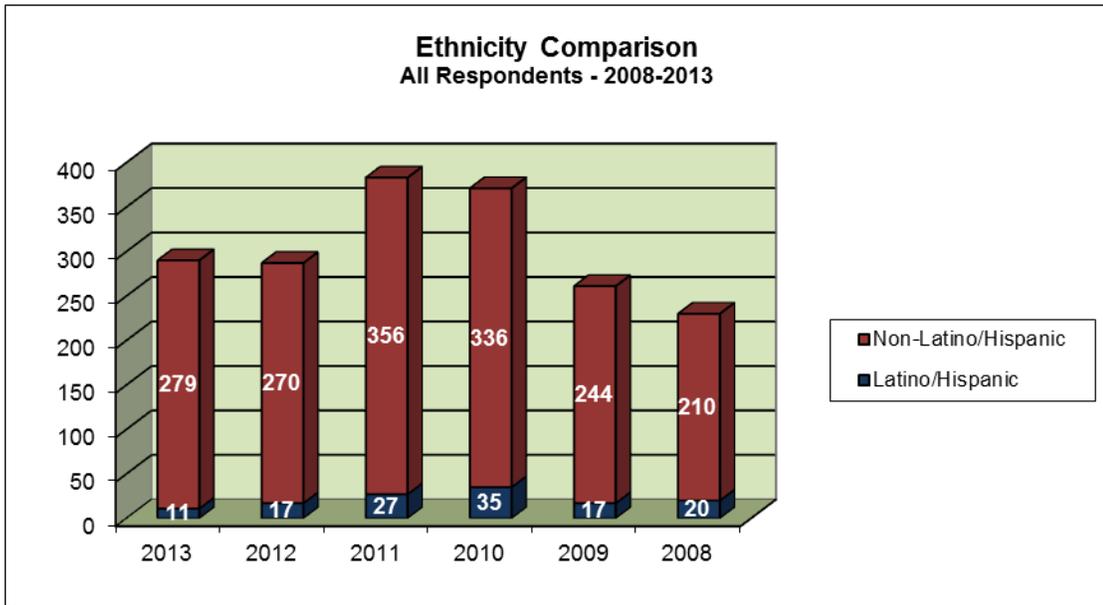


*Ethnicity and Racial Background*

Of those who responded to the question on their ethnicity (290), 11 (3.9%) are Latino or Hispanic. However, 10% (4) of the HUD homeless were Latino or Hispanic compared to only 2.7% (7) of the non-HUD homeless. There were no Latino or Hispanic respondents among the chronically homeless. However, none of these percentages accurately captures the actual number of Latino or Hispanic homeless in Sussex County because an unknown number of non-English speaking Latinos and Hispanics did not complete the 2013 survey because of a lack of

Spanish-speaking interviewers. Given this caveat, the percentage of homeless Latino or Hispanic individuals surveyed decreased by 2.5% from 2012 to 2013. The total Latino and Hispanic population in Sussex County as of the 2010 census was 6.4%. Unlike 2010 and 2011, there is no longer a reported disproportionate number of homeless individuals who are Latino and Hispanic.

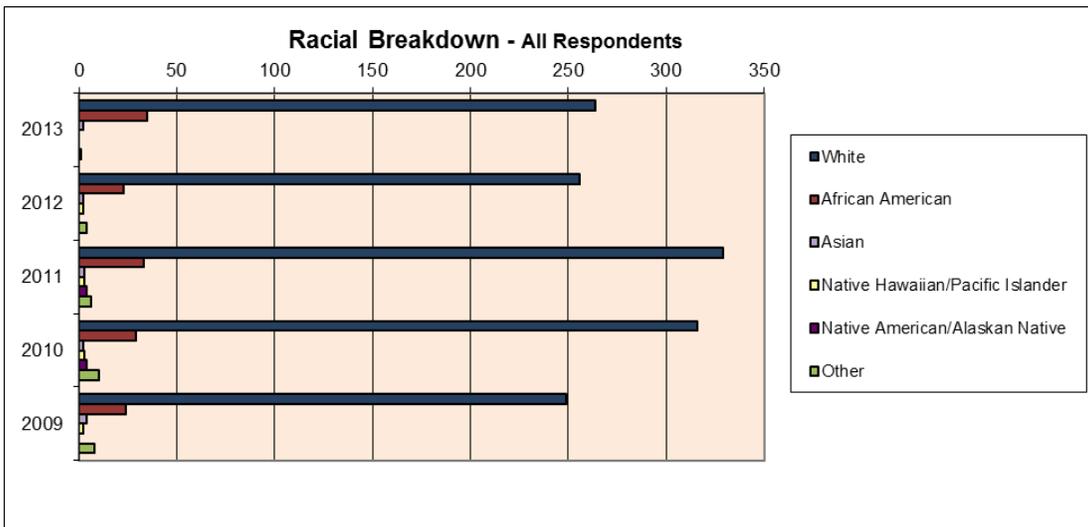
Chart 2



In 2013, 302 individuals answered the question on their racial background (see Chart 3):

- 264 (87.4%) White
- 2 ( .7%) Asian
- 35(11.6%) African American
- 1 ( .3%) Other

Chart 3

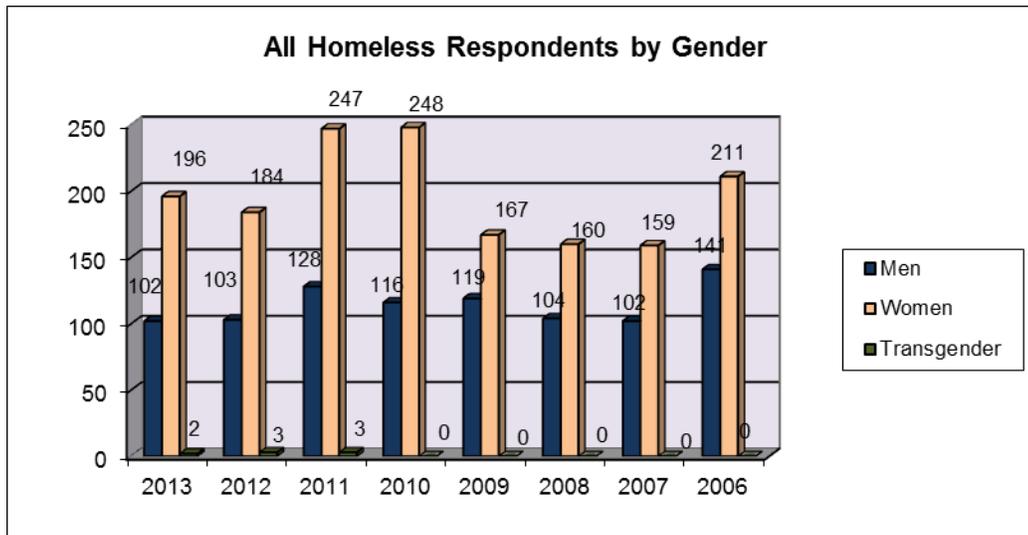


There was no significant difference in the racial background of respondents from the year 2008 through 2012, although in 2013 there were no Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders or Native American/Alaskan Natives surveyed. The percentage of white homeless has remained between 87% and 89% for the last five years. The percentage of White HUD homeless (70.0%) was again lower than the non-HUD homeless (90.0%). The percentage of White chronically homeless was 80.0% (4 of the 5 chronically homeless respondents).

*Gender and Age*

300 of the 303 respondents answered the question on gender. As was true ever since 2008, there were more homeless women than men responding to the survey. The percentage of women as part of the homeless population surveyed remained fairly consistent from 2006 to 2013, ranging from 58% to 68.1% (see Chart 4). There was a very small increase in the percentage of homeless women responding to the survey from 2012 to 2013, from 64.1% to 65.3% (67.5% HUD, 64.5% non-HUD). The percentage is slightly lower for the chronically homeless in 2013, dropping to 60.0% women. There were 2 transgendered respondents in 2013 (1.04% of the total, one under 30 and one in the 41-50 age bracket), both non-HUD.

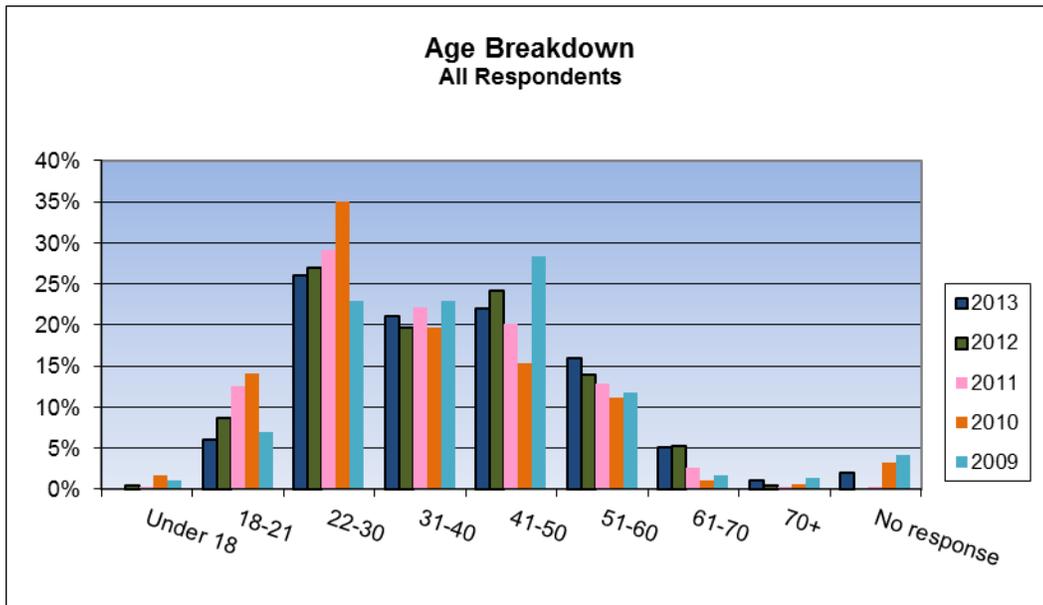
Chart 4



In 2013, there were two significant changes in the ages of homeless respondents who answered the question on age:

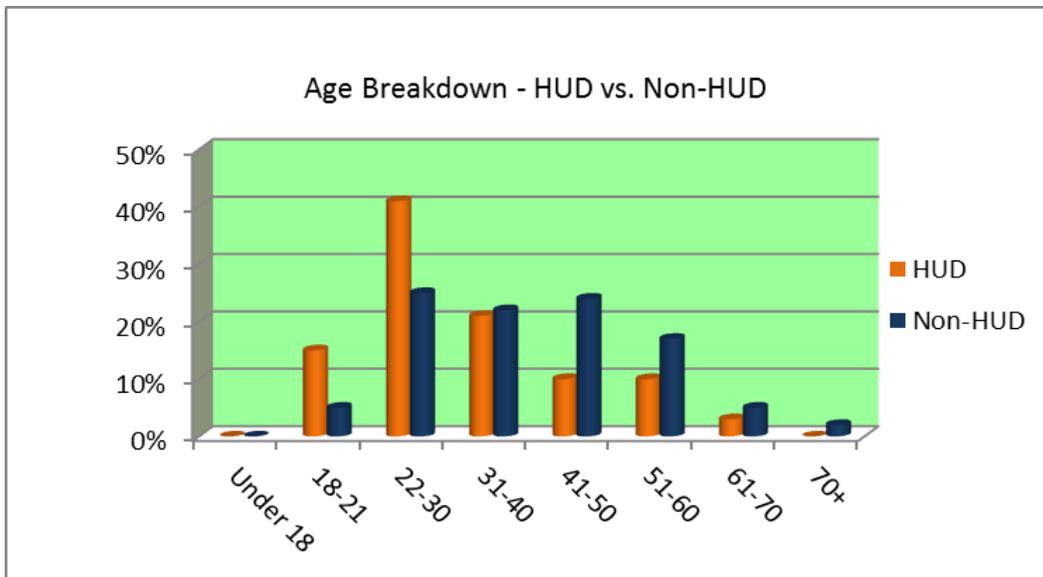
- An increase the number of homeless people over age 70 from 1 in 2012 to 4 in 2013, including an 80 year old woman
- 25.8% of the total of all homeless respondents were women under age 31, which is down from 42.9% of all homeless respondents in 2012. However, as a percentage of all women respondents, this equals 38.7% which is a significant jump from 27.2% of all women respondents in 2012.

Chart 5



In comparing age bracket percentages between HUD and non-HUD, there are a number of major variations.

Chart 6



56% of the 2013 of HUD respondents were in the under 30 age bracket, compared to 48% in 2012, and 29-30% for non-HUD homeless in both years, while the 31-50 HUD category dropped to 31% in 2013 from 39% in 2012. Non-HUD homeless between 31 and 50 remained relatively static, moving from 48% in 2012 to 46% in 2013. The HUD group showed 15% under age 21 (down slightly from 16% in 2012) compared to 4.6% for non-HUD (up .6% from 2012), while only 10% of HUD respondents were aged 51-60 (the same as 2012) compared to 17% for non-HUD in the same age bracket (up 1% from 2012). The only other difference is 7% of respondents over age 61 for non-HUD (same as 2012) compared to 3% for HUD (down 1% from 2012).

Age data was not included in the 2008 or 2007 reports, and in 2006, the groupings were insufficient for detailed data analysis and comparison.

**Where are the Homeless?**

*Town of Last Permanent Address*

Newton continues to have the largest percentage of respondents who stated that this was their last permanent address before becoming homeless (33.6%, up from 27.7% in 2012, but not as high as 2011). One individual lived in the Philippines and 3.0% lived in other states ranging from New York and Pennsylvania to Florida, North Carolina, Virginia and Tennessee. The overall out-of-state percentage has dropped by a little less than 50%. Another 6.0% lived in other counties in NJ. These numbers represent a continuing drop in the overall percentages of individuals whose last permanent address was out of county, but an increase in the out-of-county population in the HUD homeless from 16.1% to 28.9%. However, once again, the overall percentage of homeless individuals whose last permanent address was in Sussex County rose from previous years (90.0% in 2013, 83.8% in 2012, 80.3% in 2011 and 71.1% in 2010).

Table 1

	2013			2012			2011	2010	2009
	All	HUD	Non-HUD	All	HUD	Non-HUD	All	All	All
No response	.7%	5.3%	0%	2.4%	1.7%	3.0%	2.0%	4.8%	11.3%
Other country	.3%		.4%	.3%	.8%		.3%	.5%	.34%
Out of State	3.0%	5.3%	2.7%	5.2%	8.3%	3.0%	7.2%	9.0%	4.45%
Out of County	6.0%	23.7%	3.4%	8.3%	15.8%	3.0%	10.2%	14.6%	8.9%
Andover	1.7%	2.6%	1.5%	.7%	.8%	.6%	.8%	2.65%	1.37%
Augusta							.3%		
Branchville	2.3%		2.7%	1.0%		1.8%	3.3%	1.6%	3.42%
Byram								.8%	.34%
Frankford	.3%		.4%	.3%	.8%		.3%		
Franklin	5.0%	2.6%	5.3%	5.5%	2.5%	7.7%	5.6%	3.2%	5.48%
Fredon	.7%		.8%					.3%	.34%
Hamburg	4.7%		5.3%	5.2%	5.0%	5.3%	6.9%	2.9%	6.51%
Hampton				1.0%	.8%	1.2%	.3%		
Hardyston	.7%	2.6%	.4%	.3%	.8%		.8%		
Highland Lakes				.3%	.8%		.3%	.3%	1.03%
Hopatcong	8.6%	2.6%	9.5%	8.7%	7.5%	9.5%	6.4%	4.5%	4.79%
Lafayette	1.3%	2.6%	1.1%	3.1%	4.2%	3.3%	1.0%	.8%	3.03%
Lake Neepaulin			.4%						
McAfee	.3%	2.6%					.3%		
Montague	1.7%	2.6%	1.9%	1.4%		3.3%	3.6%	2.4%	1.71%
Newton	33.6%	26.3%	34.6%	27.7%	25.8%	29.0%	48.8%	30.2%	31.51%
Ogdensburg	.7%	5.3%				.6%	.3%	.8%	.34%
Sandyston	.7%		.8%	.7%	1.7%		.3%		
Sparta	1.3%		1.5%	.7%	1.7%	1.2%	1.8%	2.1%	.68%
Stanhope	2.3%	7.9%	1.5%	1.4%		2.4%	1.0%	.5%	1.3%
Stillwater									
Stockholm	.7%		.8%	1.4%	.8%	1.8%	.3%		.68%
Sussex	16.6%	10.5%	17.5%	16.6%	15.0%	17.8%	12.5%	10.3%	8.9%
Swartwood								.5%	.68%
Vernon	3.7%	2.6%	3.8%	4.2%	1.7%	5.9%	1.5%	2.1%	2.4%
Wantage	2.7%	2.6%	2.7%	1.4%	3.3%			3.4%	2.0%
Sussex County	1%		1.1%					2.1%	.3%

*Night of January 30<sup>th</sup> – Breakdown by Town*

Because non-HUD homeless are currently housed, the town breakdown will show HUD homeless only.

87.5% of HUD respondents indicated that they would spend the night of January 30<sup>th</sup> in either Newton (62.5%), Sussex (15.0%) or Vernon (10.0%).

Table 2

Town in Which HUD Respondents Will Spend January 30th, 2013		
No Response	2	5.0%
Andover	1	2.5%
Hopatcong	1	2.5%
Montague	1	2.5%
Newton	25	62.5%
Sussex	6	15.0%
Vernon	4	10.0%

*Night of January 30th – Breakdown by Type of Accommodation*

In order to make any reasonable comparisons to past years, HUD and non-HUD homeless have been grouped together.

One of the most significant changes is the increase in Temporary Rental Assistance (TRA) recipients to 58.7% in 2013 from 41.5% in 2012.

The percentage of those on the street or who didn't know where they were spending the night went from 6.3% in 2012 to 3.4% in 2013, a drop just slightly under 50%. Both transitional housing and hotel/motel paid by agency rose by approximately 100% in both categories (a little over 100% for transitional housing and a little under for hotels/motels paid for by agency) but the hotel/motel paid by agency still did not approach the 2009-2011 levels.

There was also a significant drop in the number of people staying temporarily with family or friends from 20.1% in 2012 to 14.5% in 2013.

Table 3

Where Respondents Will Spend the Night					
	2013*	2012*	2011	2010	2009
On the street	1.70%	4.20%	0.30%	1.10%	0.30%
Don't Know	1.70%	2.10%	1.30%	1.30%	0.70%
Emergency shelter	1.30%	4.50%	5.70%	3.20%	0.70%
Transitional housing	7.90%	3.80%	3.10%	5.30%	6.50%
Hotel/motel paid by agency	4.00%	2.10%	10.80%	13.30%	10.60%
Temporarily w ith family/friends	14.50%	20.10%	22.10%	27.10%	6.50%
Domestic violence shelter	0.70%	0.30%	0.50%	1.90%	0.30%
Hotel/motel individual paid for	2.30%	0.70%	2.30%	5.00%	1.70%
Psychiatric hospital					0.30%
Jail			0.30%	0.30%	5.10%
Substance abuse treatment facility			0.30%	4.50%	5.50%
Farm labor housing				0.80%	
Medical Hospital		0.30%			
Other: (see below )	66.00%	45.00%	53.20%	37.40%	55.60%
Apt. paid for by agency					46.40%
Rooming/boardng house	5.90%	8.30%	4.30%	1.10%	10.10%
Own apartment					1.10%
No explanation					1.10%
Temporary rental assistance	58.70%	41.50%	46.30%	36.10%	
DMHS			2.30%		

\*Note: For purposes of comparison, these figures reflect all homeless surveyed.

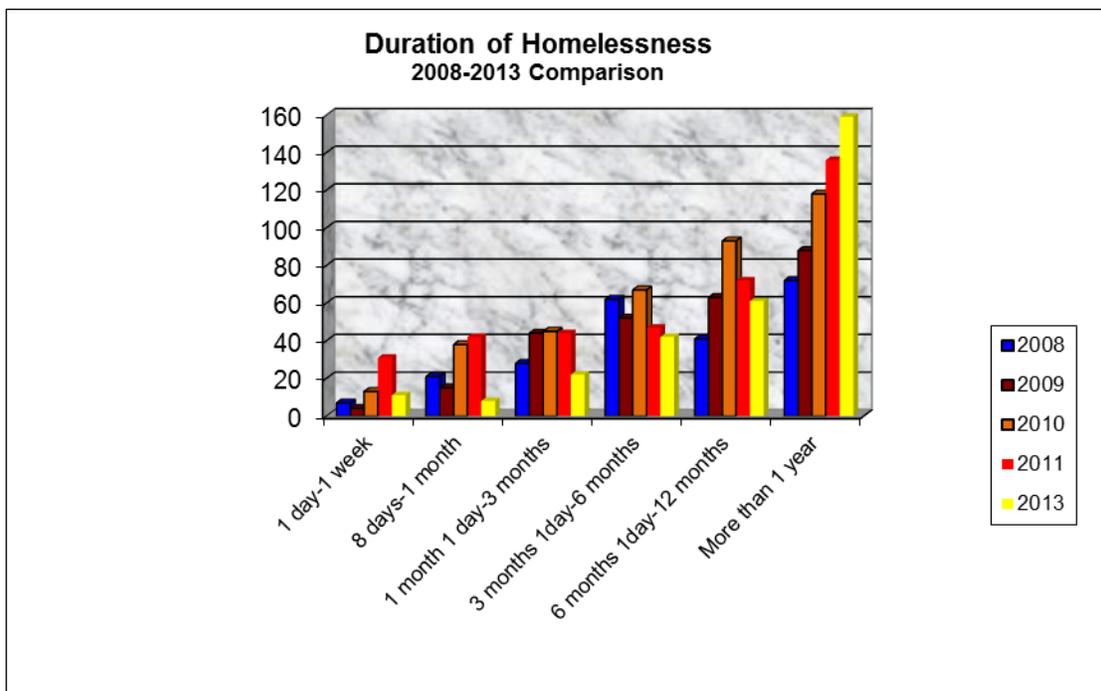
*Duration of Homelessness*

Because of the change in definitions and instructions on completing the survey in 2012, there is not enough data available to draw comparisons between 2012 and 2013. However, there is data from previous years that will assist in looking at trends.

The most significant trend that jumps out of the comparison data is the dramatic growth in the number of individuals who have been homeless for more than a year. In 2011, 36.5% (136 out of 372) of those who responded to this question reported being homeless over one year. In 2013, this percentage rose to 52.5% (159 out of 303). It is not possible to determine how many, if any, of these are the same people reporting being homeless for over three years.

38 individuals (16 HUD and 22 non-HUD) who had been homeless for less than one year reported having been homeless on other occasions within the past twelve months, and 47 (30 HUD and 17 non-HUD) individuals reported having been homeless at least four times since January, 2010.

Chart 7



*Children and the Homeless*

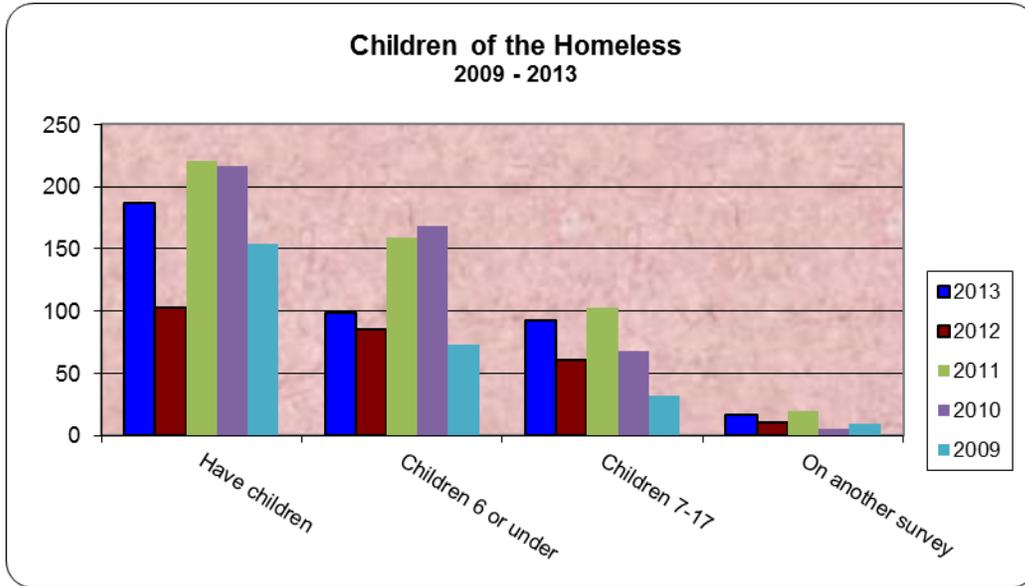
*All Children (Homeless or Non-homeless)*

Of 300 respondents who answered the question about children, 159 total respondents have children, 28 HUD homeless and 131 non-HUD homeless. The percentage of respondents who have children rose sharply from 35.6% in 2012 to 53.0% in 2013. While the total number of children rose from 146 in 2012 to 191 in 2013, the number of children who were with their parents while their parents were homeless dropped.

- 2009 – 111 aged 6 or younger and 76 between ages 7 and 17
- 2010 – 177 aged 6 or younger and 57 between ages 7 and 17
- 2011 – 159 aged 6 or younger and 103 between ages 7 and 17
- 2012 – 85 aged 6 or younger and 61 between ages 7 and 17 (Total HUD and TRA)  
(37 HUD 6 or younger and 40 HUD between 7 and 17)

- 2013 - 99 aged 6 or younger and 92 between ages 7 and 17  
 (9 HUD 6 or younger and 5 HUD between 7 and 17)

Chart 8



*Homeless Children*

60 non-HUD and 3 HUD homeless respondents indicated that their children were with them every time they had been homeless. 59 of the non-HUD homeless had been homeless for more than one year with their children, but no HUD homeless had been homeless for more than one year with their children.

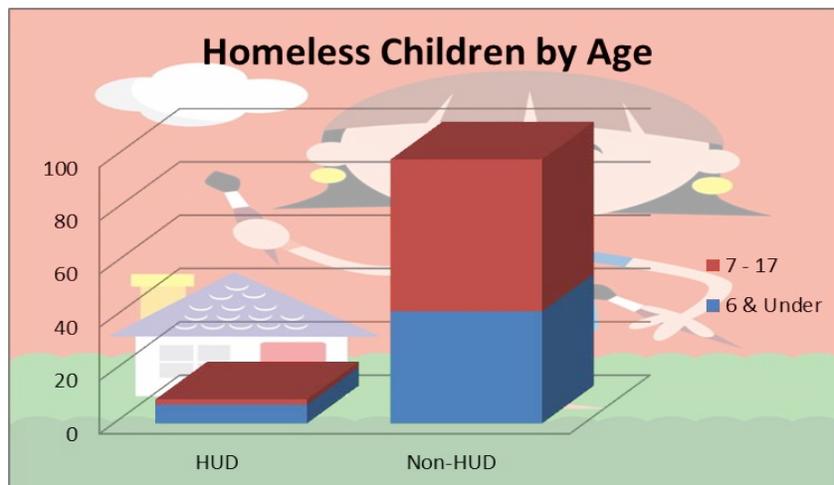
The reported number of children who were with their parents while their parents were homeless are:

HUD: 7 children 6 years old or under and 2 children between ages 7 and 17

Non-HUD: 42 children 6 years old or under and 57 children between ages 7 and 17

The total number of children who were homeless with their parents in 2013 was 108.

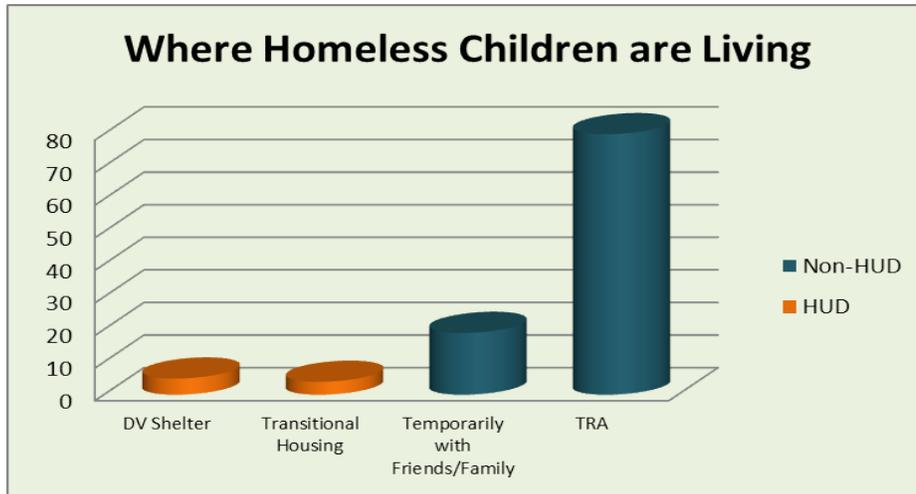
Chart 9



No homeless children were on the street or in places not intended for human habitation. There were 5 HUD homeless children in domestic violence shelters, (4 aged 6 or under, 1 between 7 and 17), and 4 in transitional housing (3 aged 6 or under, 1 between 7 and 17).

Nineteen non-HUD homeless children were living temporarily with friends or family, 15 aged 6 or under, and 4 between ages 7 and 17. The remaining non-HUD children who were homeless were living with parents receiving Temporary Rental Assistance (TRA), 27 aged 6 or under, and 53 between ages 7 and 17.

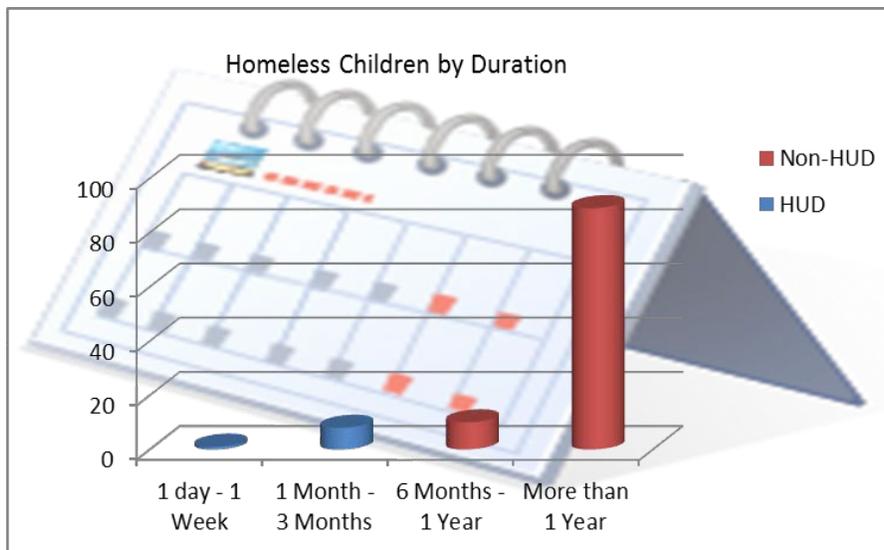
Chart 10



The HUD homeless children were all homeless for a very short time compared to the non-HUD homeless children. Four HUD homeless children (3 aged 6 or under, 1 between ages 7 and 17) had been in a domestic violence shelter between 1 and 3 months, and 4 more with the same age distribution had been in transitional housing for the same length of time. One child aged 6 or under had been in a domestic violence shelter between one day and one week.

Ten non-HUD children (9 between ages 7 and 17) lived with parents receiving TRA between six and twelve months. All other non-HUD children had been homeless for more than a year, including all homeless children living temporarily with friends or family.

Chart 11



*Sources of Income*

20% of HUD respondents stated they had no source of income in 2013 compared to 24.2% in 2012. This is a fairly significant drop, but it must be remembered that there is a small number of actual HUD homeless surveyed in Sussex County.

The highest source of income for HUD homeless with only one source in 2013 was wages (20%), which is a sharp increase over 6.7% in 2012 but does not approach the 38.2% reported in 2011 or 39.6% in 2010. In 2012, the highest source of income for HUD homeless with one source was GA (7.5%). However, there were no HUD respondents in 2013 who had only GA as their source of income.

19 HUD respondents and 220 non-HUD respondents had multiple sources of income. The most common multiple sources of income for all respondents were combinations of General Assistance (GA), Medicaid and Food Stamps or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Medicaid and Food Stamps (61 GA/Medicaid/Food Stamps and 60 TANF/Medicaid/Food Stamps or 20.0% of those with multiple sources of income), a return to 2011 levels after a significant drop to 8.3% in these sources of income for 2012. Six individuals also received SSI in addition to these sources of income.

Table 4

Sources of Income	2013		2012		2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006
	HUD	Non-HUD	HUD	Non-HUD	All	All	All	All	All	All
SSI	2	83	8	70	86	51	47	55	81	51
SSDI	1	21	7	18	22	18	20	22		17
TANF	6	69	14	54	121	104	79	56		55
GA/PA/Welfare	4	63	18	45	116	129	119	95		
Medicaid	16	208	36	137	311	250	175	109	110	130
Medicare	1	9	5	18	15	22	11	24	168	10
Social Security	0	4	1	6	4	5	6	8		9
Wages	12	29	21	3	37	48	12	3	9	42
Unemployment	3	5	10	1	9	17	3	23		13
VA Benefits	0	1	0	0	0	1		3		4
Child support	4	12	7	3	30	28	11	2		18
Day laborer	0	0	0	1	2	2	2	12		
Food Stamps	12	208	43	137	307	254	197	127	153	122
No source of income	6	3	29	0	17	14	11	14		40
Receiving NO benefits	2	4	10	0	4	11	6	20		
Other	0	4	2	1	11	16	6	18		10

The percentage of those receiving Food Stamps rose from 62.3% in 2012 to 72.6% in 2013, as did the number of Medicaid recipients, from 59.9% in 2012 to 73.9% in 2013. The percentage of GA and TANF recipients was relatively static across those two years. The percentage of those with income from wages rose from 8.3% in 2012 to 13.5% in 2013.

In 2013, through the diligence of those conducting the surveys, there is good data on the monthly incomes of survey respondents. Only 22 respondents did not answer the question on income.

HUD homeless respondents reported monthly income as follows:

- 11 with 0 income
- 6 under \$200
- 5 between \$200-\$500
- 9 between \$500-\$1000

Only 6 people had income over \$1000 per month:

- 2 between \$1000-\$1500
- 2 between \$1500-\$2000
- 1 between \$2000-\$3000
- 1 between \$3,000-\$4,000

The highest monthly income for HUD respondents was \$3750.00.

Non-HUD homeless reported these monthly incomes:

- 7 with 0 income
- 44 under \$200
- 88 between \$200-\$500
- 88 between \$500-\$1000

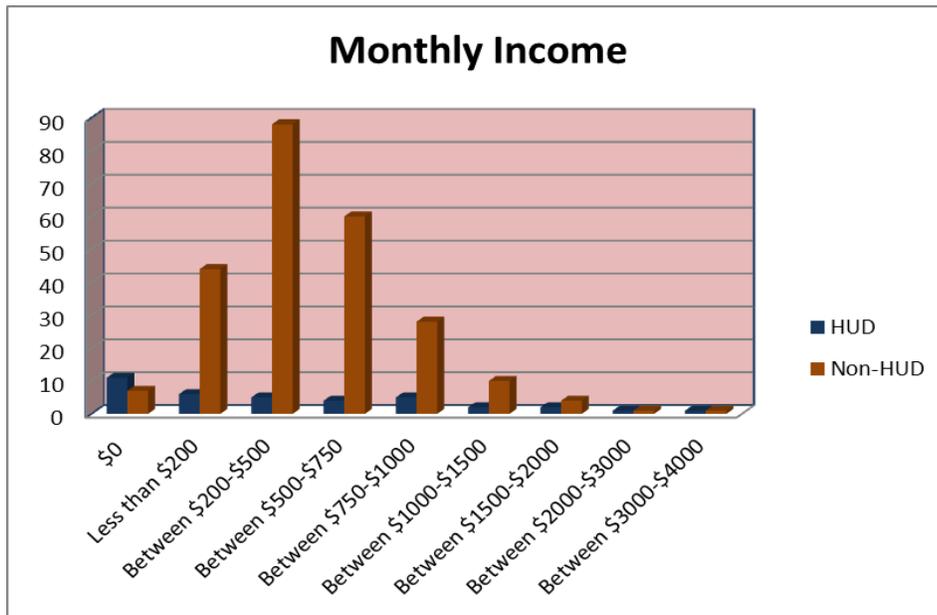
16 individual reported monthly income between \$1000-\$4000:

- 10 between \$1000-\$1500
- 4 between \$1500-\$2000
- 1 between \$2000-\$3000
- 1 between \$3000-\$4000

The highest income reported was \$3244 per month.

Overall, 78% of all respondents reported monthly income less than \$750.00, which is significantly less than the 2013 Federal Poverty Guideline of \$958 per month for one person.

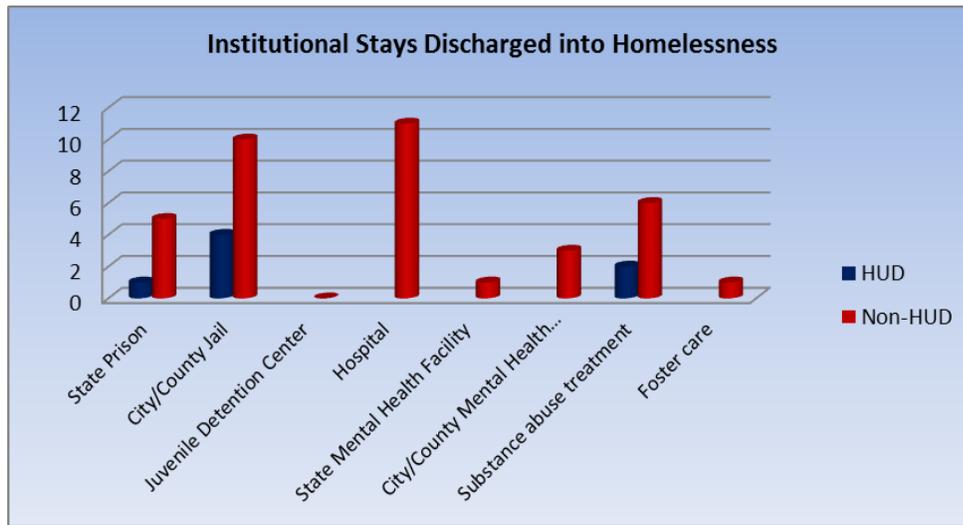
Chart 12



*Discharged from an Institution into Homelessness in the Last Three Years*

7 HUD and 37 non-HUD homeless individuals were discharged from institutions into homelessness between 2010 and 2013. Of those who were (HUD and non-HUD combined), 55.5% were discharged from either a city/county jail or from a hospital. This is down from 61.5% from those same sources in 2012, and very close to the 54.5%-57% range from 2011 through 2009.

Chart 13



*Factors Contributing to Homelessness*

In 2013, 56 total respondents (10 HUD, 46 non-HUD) identified a single cause of their homelessness. Among the HUD homeless, relationship breakup/death was cited 16 (40.0%) times and eviction 15 (37.5%) times, with loss of job and domestic violence both as contributing factor 13 times (32.5%). HUD homeless who cited a single cause reported loss of job 5 times (4 loss of job, 1 loss of job due to transportation). Relationship break-up/death was cited twice, and mental illness/emotional problems, incarceration and eviction each once.

Non-HUD homeless who cited a single cause reported natural disaster or medical problems more than any other single cause: 9 natural disaster, 9 medical problems, 6 loss of jobs and 6 relationship break-ups/deaths. The remaining single causes were eviction (5), mental illness/emotional problems (3), domestic violence (2), high cost of housing (2), alcohol or other drug problems (1) and other (unidentified 1).

Obviously, one of the most significant factors for 2013 compared to 2012 was the impact of Superstorm Sandy, raising the number of non-HUD homeless due solely to natural disaster from 3 in 2012 to 9 in 2013.

The remaining respondents all identified multiple factors contributing to their homelessness.

Major factors cited for the total population (see Table 5 for break-down between HUD and non-HUD) were:

- Evictions (including foreclosures) – 163 respondents (53.8%), a small drop of 1.2% over those reported in 2012
- Housing costs too high – 138 respondents (45.5%), up slightly from 44.3% in 2012
- Medical problems – 135 respondents (44.6%), down from 49.8% in 2012
- Mental illness/emotional problems – 136 respondents (44.9%), almost exactly the same as the 44.6% in 2012
- Loss of job and inability to find another - 134 people (44.2%), a continuing rise from 42.6% in 2012
- Relationship/family break-up or death – 113 respondents (37.3%), a drop of 5.6% from last year's 42.9%

19.8% of all respondents (60) stated that alcohol or other drug abuse problems contributed to their current situation, a small drop from 20.4% in 2012.

Table 5

	2013		2012		2011	2010	2009	2008
	HUD	Non-HUD	HUD	Non-HUD	All	All	All	All
Total	40	263	120	169	391	377	292	293
Alcohol or other drug abuse	9	51	30	29	95	98	77	66
Domestic violence	13	28	26	21	75	66	44	47
Eviction/foreclosure*	15	148	40	119	181	74	98	52
Wages too low	4	24	26	17	59	43	41	37
House condemned	1	3	1	0	2		1	0
Housing costs too high	12	126	54	74	158	132	118	119
Incarceration	3	13	9	9	38	29	38	10
Loss of child support	0	25	5	14	41	10	19	10
Loss job/can't find work	13	121	48	75	160	150	110	99
Lost job/no transportation	7	37	14	26	30	24	21	12
Medical problems	4	131	23	121	119	85	84	80
Mental illness	6	130	35	94	161	108	85	85
Natural disaster	0	11	0	3	6	4	0	3
Relationship breakup/death	16	97	66	56	163	162	78	105
Utility costs too high	6	100	24	53	78	37	37	
Other	7	16	7	8	7			13

\*Previous years combine evictions and foreclosures – there were 6 total foreclosures in both 2013 and 2012

*Services Received and Needed by the Homeless*

The average number of services received per HUD respondent was 2.4 (down from 3.2 in 2012) and per non-HUD respondents 5.2 (down from 5.9 in 2012) for an overall average of 4.8, the same as in 2012. The average number of services needed by all homeless in 2013 was 1.0 compared to 1.7 in 2012. This indicates that more homeless individuals are actually receiving necessary services. It is no surprise that the major needs are housing, educational training and employment assistance, but mental health services continue to be the second greatest need for both HUD and non-HUD homeless individuals.

Table 6

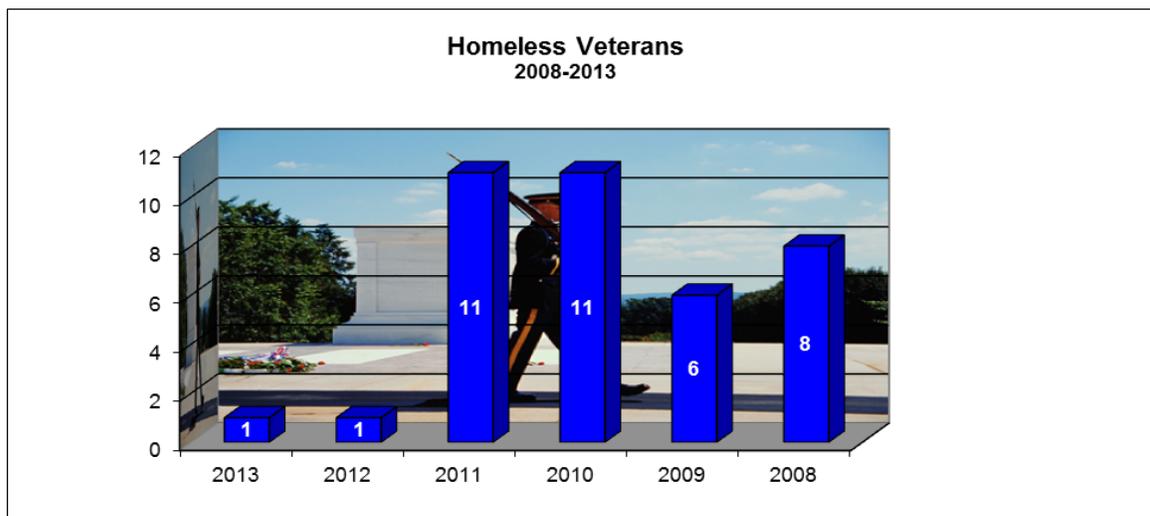
	HUD		Non-HUD	
	Received	Need	Received	Need
Mental health	10	8	131	36
Substance abuse		3	35	14
HIV	1	1		
Domestic violence	3		23	4
Medical - Disability	1		68	6
Veterans			1	1
Assistance with ID	4	1	1	
Child care	1	3	53	10
Dental	2	7	78	7
Educational training	5	7	55	33
Emergency Food	18	7	183	19
Emergency shelter	23	3	65	1
Employment assistance	10	6	85	19
Housing	7	18	191	30
Immigration			3	
Legal services	1	7	98	14
Medical - Routine	4	6	160	9
Transportation	4	7	145	12
Other		7		2

\*Note: This table shows the number of services, not the number of individuals. Many individuals received and/or needed multiple services.

*Veteran Status*

There was 1 HUD homeless veteran (2.5%) and no non-HUD homeless veterans responding in 2013 which is a drop to an overall rate of .3% for 2013. This is down from the 2.1%-3.0% range shown in the period of 2008-2011, and even the .8% reported in 2012. Veteran status was not reported in 2006 or 2007.

Chart 14



*Age, Gender and Causative Factors*

There were some significant findings in looking at the combined data on age, gender and causative factors.

Among the HUD homeless respondents, overall the single outstanding factor was the breakup of a relationship or death. In the 30 and under age bracket, this was the single most commonly cited factor contributing to homelessness. For the total HUD population under 30, 45.5% of respondents (55.6% of women and 0% of men) cited this as a contributing factor. This was down from 61.1% overall in 2012, but the most significant change was that no men 30 or under reported relationship break-up/death as a contributing factor in their homelessness in 2013 compared to 45.5% in 2012. The second most outstanding factor in this age group was domestic violence, which was cited by 8 women (44.4% of women) and no men, for an overall percentage of 36.4%, up sharply from 23.6% in 2012. 5 of those women also cited relationship break-up/death in conjunction with domestic violence as factors causing their homelessness.

For men in this age bracket, 3 (75% of men) cited the high cost of housing and/or utilities and 2 (50% of men) cited loss of a job. Overall, 31.8% of all HUD respondents cited the high cost of housing as a causative factor in their homelessness.

Among the 31-40 year old HUD respondents, women cited domestic violence and mental illness/emotional problems combined 60% of the time, while again no men cited these factors as causative for an overall percentage of 37.5% for both factors. Men in this age group cited both eviction and loss of job (2, or 6.7% of men) as the number one causative factor. Overall, 50% of all HUD homeless cited eviction and 37.5% cited loss of job as the number causative factors. These all reflect a change from 2012 for which the number one causative factor in this age group was mental illness/emotional problems (45.0%) and the second most reported factor was relationship break-up/death (40.0%).

The other age groupings for HUD homeless were so small that no meaningful statistics can be derived from them.

Among the non-HUD population 30 and under, the high cost of housing (56.0%) was the most commonly cited factor, followed by loss of job/can't find work (54.7%) and eviction (53.3%) relationship break-up/death (52.0%),

and mental illness/emotional problems (50.7%). In 2012 for this age group, relationship break-up/death was the most frequently cited causative factor.

In all of the age brackets 31-40, 41-50 and 51-60, the top causative factor was eviction. It is only in the 61-70 age bracket that medical problems overtake eviction as the number one most frequently cited cause of homelessness (57.1%). Mental illness/emotional problems was the top cause cited in the over 71 bracket, which consisted of 3 women and 1 man.

Table 7 – Top Causative Factors by Percentage - Non-HUD Selected Age Groups

	30 & under			31-40			41-50			51-60		
	All	Men	Women	All	Men	Women	All	Men	Women	All	Men	Women
High cost of housing	56.0	43.8	59.3	57.9	40.0	67.6	38.8	33.3	41.5	33.3	34.8	31.8
Lost job/can't find work	54.7	50.0	56.0	43.9	35.0	48.7	48.4	42.9	51.2	22.2	26.1	18.2
Evictions	53.3	50.0	54.2	61.4	60.0	62.2	53.2	66.7	46.3	57.8	65.2	50.0
Relationship break-up/death	52.0	37.5	56.0	43.9	25.0	54.1	37.1	33.3	39.0	22.2	26.1	18.2
Mental illness/emotional problems	50.7	50.0	50.8	47.4	40.0	51.4	53.2	61.9	48.8	53.3	60.9	45.5
Medical problems	36.0	43.7	34.0	47.4	45.0	48.7	53.2	71.4	43.9	35.6	39.1	31.8

*Gender, Age, Causative Factors and Duration of Homelessness*

Because the 2013 data was so complete, it is possible to start tracking potential trends by gender, age, causative factors and duration of homelessness to see if there is any correlation between duration of homelessness and these other factors. A preliminary analysis of 2013 as a base year for this shows that the percentage of both men and women over age 30 who are homeless for more than a year increases (51% for women, 31% for men) to the 60<sup>th</sup> percentiles for both men and women between 31 and 40. However, while it remains at 63% for women in this age group, it increases to 81% for men 41 to 50. It drops back to 50% for women and 61% for men aged 51 to 60. For those aged 61 to 70, 86% of women and 71% of men were homeless for more than a year, but these sample numbers are so small that it is hard to base a trend on them.

As might be expected, either medical issues or mental illness/emotional problems were much more likely to be causative factors for both men and women over 51 who were homeless for more than a year, but there is a significant difference in the major causative factors between men and women aged 41 to 50. For women in this age group, medical problems were the most often cited (88%), but loss of job was second (77%), with eviction and high housing costs tied for third (69%), followed by relationship break-up/death (65%). For men in this group, 91% of those who had been homeless more than a year cited medical problems and 76% cited mental illness/emotional problems, while only 53% cited loss of a job and 35% cited relationship break-up/death.

As long as the data collection maintains the standard set in 2013, future surveys will be able to show if this difference in the 41 to 50 age group is an anomaly or a trend among Sussex County residents who have been homeless for more than one year.

*Chronically homeless*

There were only 5 respondents who met the HUD criteria for chronically homeless in 2013, so any meaningful comparison to previous years is not possible. However, data on these individuals should not be overlooked.

The chronically homeless population is much less stable than the overall HUD homeless population, with 3 of them staying on the street or not knowing where they will spend the night. An additional 2 were in transitional housing.

3 spent the night of January 30<sup>th</sup> in Newton, and the remaining 2 were in Sussex. There were 2 whose last permanent address was in Sussex, 1 in Franklin and 2 in Essex County.

There were 2 chronically homeless men and 3 chronically homeless women. Ages ranged from 19 to 62, which is higher than last year's oldest by ten years. There was one 19 year old woman, one 47 year old woman, two men aged 56 and 57, and one woman aged 62.

Four chronically homeless respondents are white and one was black. None are Hispanic.

Four of the chronically homeless have been homeless for more than 1 year, and one had been homeless between 8 days to 1 month, but at least four times in the last three years.

Two of the chronically homeless have no source of income. One received General Assistance and Food Stamps, and one is on SSDI, Medicaid and is earning wages. One is earning wages at \$1771 per month.

Three chronically homeless respondents have been discharged from city or county jails into homelessness and one was discharged from a private inpatient substance abuse treatment facility into homelessness.

All the chronically homeless cited more than one cause as a contributing factor to their homelessness. Four said that alcohol or other drug abuse problems were a contributing factor. The three next most commonly reported factors were relationship break-up/death (4), housing costs too high (3), loss of a job and can't find work (3), and domestic violence (2).

The average number of services received per individual (5.6) is higher than that of the entire population surveyed (4.8), and the HUD group (2.4). Three respondents each stated that they needed dental services, emergency food, employment assistance, housing and medical services. Four had received emergency food, and three each had received mental health services and dental services.

There were no chronically homeless veterans.

### *Results and Conclusions*

While it is always difficult to draw conclusions about the state of homelessness in general from such a limited survey, there are several areas that must be highlighted.

First of all, the percentage of Latino/Hispanic respondents continued to drop from a high of 9.4% in 2010 to 3.9% in 2013.

There was a significant increase in the number of homeless respondents over age 70 from 1 to 4. While the numbers are small, they should still be noted as an area of concern. Also, there was a substantial increase in the percentage of HUD respondents under age 30.

There was also a sharp increase in the number of respondents receiving Temporary Rental Assistance, concurrent with increases in those receiving General Assistance, Food Stamps, and TANF since 2012. At the same time, the percentage of respondents who were spending the night on the street or didn't know where they were spending the night dropped.

One of the most significant findings is the sharp increase in the percentage of those surveyed who have been homeless for more than a year. The last year in which reliable data about duration of homelessness was collected was 2011, which showed 36.5% of those surveyed as being homeless for more than one year. In 2013, this percentage jumped to 52.5%. While the actual number of people only rose from 136 in 2011 to 159 in 2013, the rise in the percentage of the total number of people surveyed is still a matter for concern.

For the first time in 2013, the data collected was complete enough to begin to analyze some trends regarding children who are homeless with their parents. 2013 will serve as a baseline for tracking this information in future surveys to identify characteristics of Sussex County's homeless children. One piece of information that jumped out of the data was the number of children who have been homeless for more than one year (89 of the 99 non-HUD homeless children).

There were a couple of interesting trends in the factors contributing to the homelessness of the respondents. Among the HUD homeless, the breakup of a relationship/death was clearly the most commonly cited factor, even though there was a drop since (40.0% of the total HUD population, down from 52.5% in 2012.) The second most frequent factor was no longer the high cost of housing, cited by 56.0% of all HUD respondents in 2012 but only 30.0% in 2013. Eviction (37.5%) was the second most frequently cited causative factor.

For the non-HUD respondents in all age groups, eviction was cited by 56.3% of respondents, followed by medical problems (49.8%), both of which are down just slightly from 2012.

Overall, it appears that young adults, especially women, are increasingly likely to face homelessness by age 30, and those who find themselves homeless are more likely to remain homeless for a long time. These results indicate that greater attention needs to be paid to young people as they leave high school and college. They also highlight the need for affordable housing, and perhaps transitional housing as many of these young women leave relationships, have trouble finding work, and cannot afford to live on their own.

Some of the challenges faced by Sussex County's homeless are undoubtedly a result of an economy that is recovering too slowly to enable them to find work at a livable wage, but there are certainly some indicators to be taken into consideration in planning services for the county's residents in need.