

UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI'I CENTER ON THE FAMILY, WAIKIKI HEALTH, & HALE KIPA

# Street Youth Study

*Summary Report*

2018

The Experience of Homeless, Runaway and Other Street Youth on O'ahu



# Street Youth Study

## Summary Report

UH Center on  
the Family,  
Waikiki Health,  
and Hale Kipa

### Street Youth on O'ahu

Homelessness among youth is a serious and complex problem, with research showing that youth aged 12–17 are at higher risk than adults of becoming homeless. Transition-aged youth between 18 and 24 years are one of the fastest growing homeless populations. Homeless youth often do not receive adequate services. They may not meet shelter admission policies and, at times, there is a lack of bed space for youth. Although homeless young adults can use shelter services, services may not always be a good fit for the needs of this transitioning population.

Existing research and information on homeless and runaway youth in Hawai'i are limited and perhaps dated. In an effort to better understand the experiences and service needs of homeless and runaway youth on O'ahu, the University of Hawai'i Center on the Family partnered with Waikiki Health and Hale Kipa—two leading organizations that serve street youth on O'ahu—to conduct the Street Youth Study. Study findings offer a snapshot of O'ahu's homeless and unaccompanied youth, and further our understanding of this population's experiences and service needs.

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### About the Study

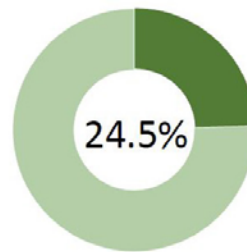
The Street Youth Study survey consisted of 65 questions that addressed (1) basic demographics, (2) the homeless and runaway experience, (3) risk factors for homelessness, and (4) well-being and service utilization. Interviews were completed between July and October 2016 with 151 young people, aged 12–24, who were homeless or had run away from home. Nearly a quarter (23.8%) of participants were between the ages of 12 and 17, and 76.2% were between the ages of 18 and 24.

The full report and additional findings can be found at:  
<http://uhfamily.hawaii.edu/publications/list.aspx>

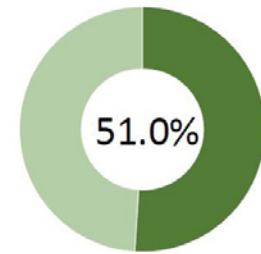
## Demographic Background

	% of Youth
<b>Gender Identity</b>	
Male	58.9%
Female	37.1%
Transgender	3.3%
Gender non-conforming	0.7%
<b>Race</b>	
Hawaiian/Part Hawaiian	44.4%
Other Pacific Islander	15.2%
Caucasian	10.6%
Asian	6.0%
Black	6.0%
Other/2 or more races*	17.9%
<b>Birth Place</b>	
State of Hawai'i	56.3%
Other state in the U.S.	29.8%
American Samoa, Guam & other U.S. territories	2.6%
COFA countries	9.3%
Other country	2.0%
<b>Total number of respondents</b>	<b>151</b>

\* "2 or more races" category does not include part Hawaiian.

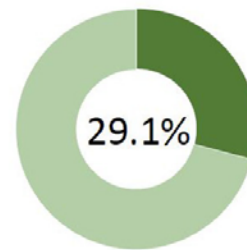


**Dropped Out of School**

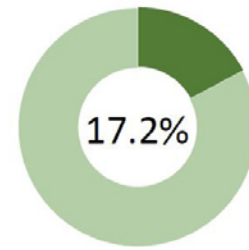


**Idle Youth\***

\* Not enrolled in school nor working



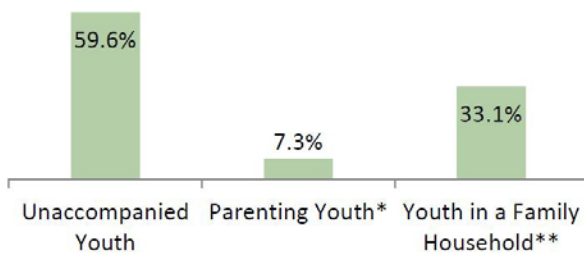
**Ever Had a Child**



**LGBTQ**

## Living Arrangements

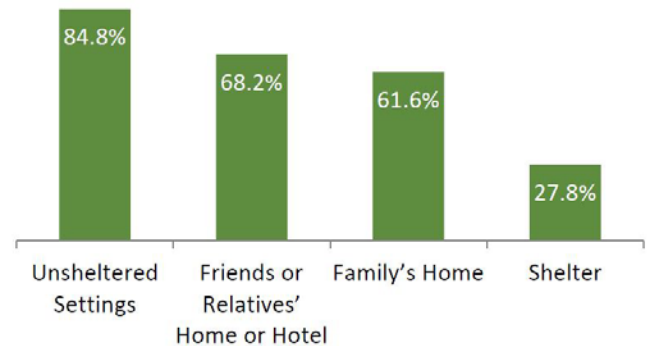
**Living Arrangements**



\* Living with a child as household head or spouse

\*\* Living with a parent, grandparent, or foster family.

**Where They Stayed in the Past 12 Months**

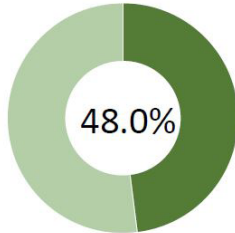




## Homeless Experiences

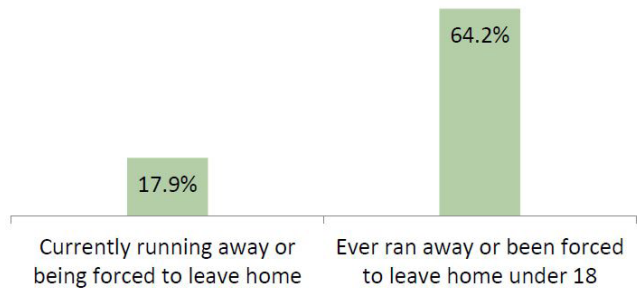
All youth interviewed reported having **homeless experiences**. The average age of the first homeless episode was:

**14.1**  
years

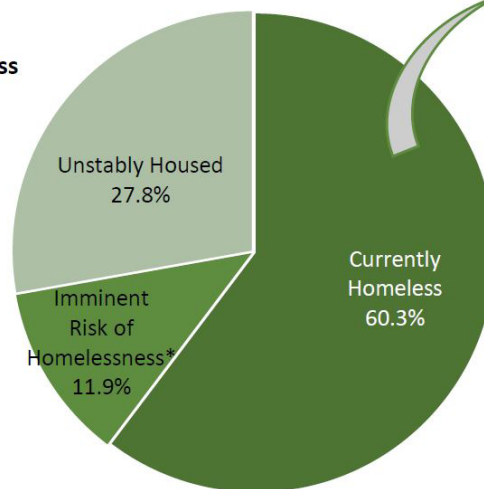


had their first homeless experience with their families

### Runaway or Throwaway Experience



### Currently Homeless



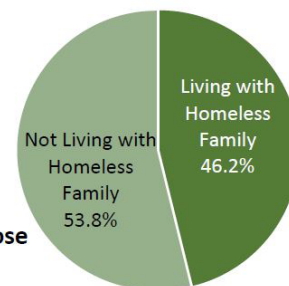
\* Imminent risk of homelessness means their current residence would be lost within two weeks, no subsequent residence had been identified and they lacked the resources or support networks to obtain permanent housing.

**59.3%**

of all homeless youth had been continuously homeless for a year or more

**28.6%**

of all homeless youth reported that their family is currently homeless



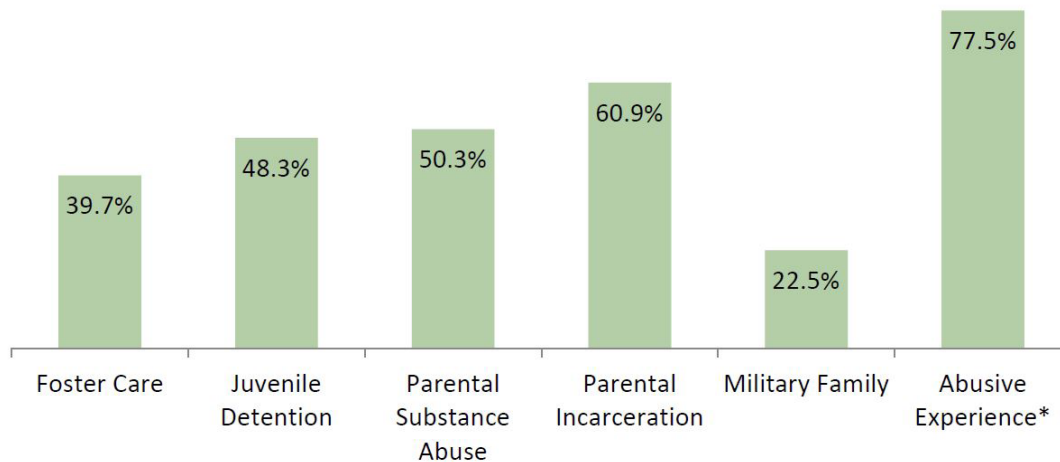
Homeless Youth Whose Family is Homeless

## Risk Factors for Youth Homelessness

### Interactions with Systems

### Family-based Risk Factors

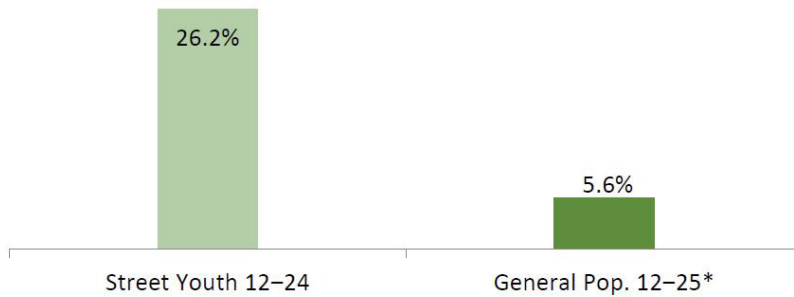
### Abuse



\* Include verbal/emotional abuse, physical abuse, and sexual abuse.

## Health Issues

### Youth Reporting "Fair" or "Poor" Health

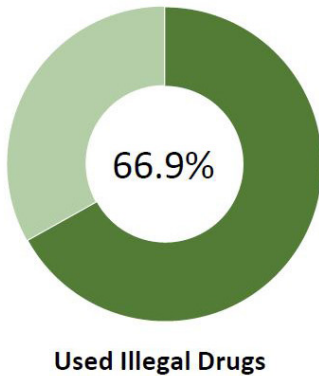


Street youth were 3.6 times more likely to report "fair" or "poor" health, compared to their peers in the U.S.

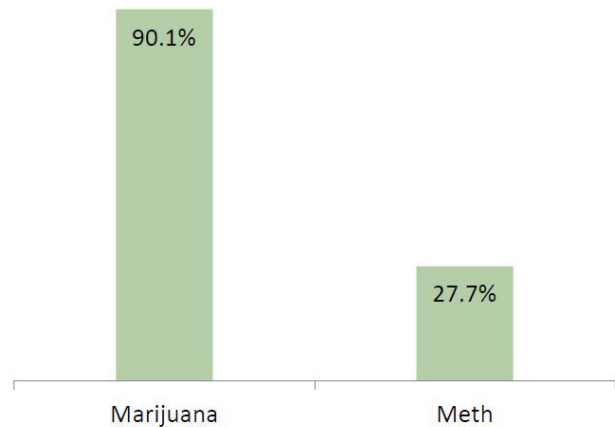


\*Source: National Survey on Drug Use and Health (2015).

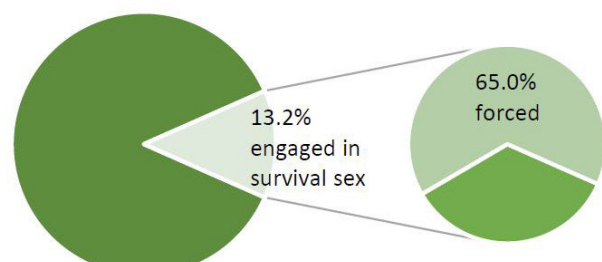
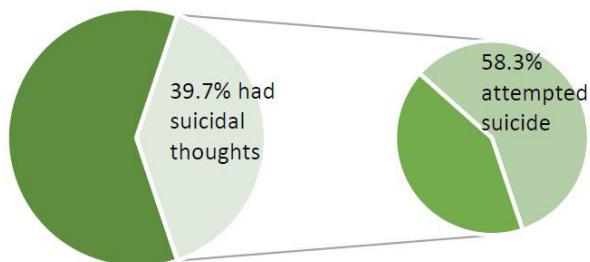
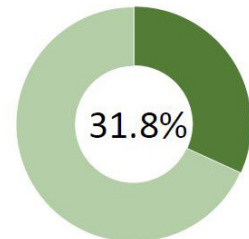
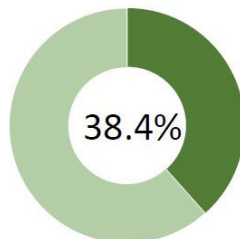
### Two-thirds of youth had used illegal drugs in the past 30 days.



### Most Commonly Used Drugs



Some youth could benefit from treatment that addresses their physical, emotional and psychological health issues.



\* Had sex in exchange for money, food, drugs, or a place to stay.

\*\* Someone made you or persuaded you to do so.

## Service Utilization and Priority of Needs

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Service Utilized	% of Youth	Service Utilized	% of Youth
Hot meal	75.5%	Counseling	34.4%
Clothing/hygiene supplies	69.5%	Obtaining ID/documentation	33.1%
Shower	69.5%	Job resume help	31.8%
Laundry facilities	52.3%	Recreational activities	29.8%
Clinic (including family planning services)	50.3%	Reconnecting with family	25.8%
Outreach	49.7%	Haircuts	22.5%
Lockers	45.7%	GED classes	15.9%
Transportation assistance	45.0%	Treatment for substance use	13.9%
Safe shelter	42.4%	Airfare assistance (for family reunification)	4.6%

Youth respondents preferred services that met basic needs over ones such as airfare assistance for family reunification, treatment for substance use and GED classes.

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### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This study would not have been possible without the initiative, leadership and support of Waikiki Health and Hale Kipa, Inc. We would like to thank these organizations for their vision and call for data on this population; and the outreach staff at each organization for their input on survey design and assistance with data collection; and especially, the participants, without whom this entire project would not be possible.

### SUGGESTED CITATION

Yuan, S., Stern, I. R., Gauci, K. T., & Liu, L. (2018). Street Youth Study: Summary Report. Honolulu, HI: University of Hawai'i Center on the Family.

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