



The h3 Project: Result of The City of Hyattsville Survey [64 Respondents]

November 30, 2023- January 30, 2024 (60 Days)

Prepared by:

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The h3 project

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For:

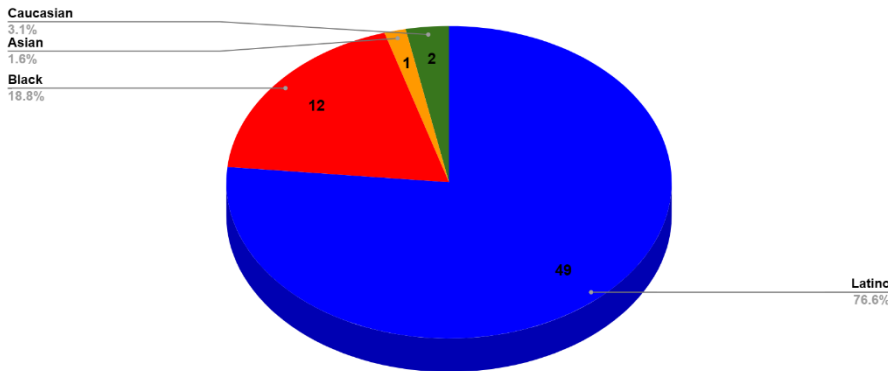
The City of Hyattsville

THE CITY OF HYATTSVILLE HOMELESSNESS SURVEY RESULTS

Methodology: Surveys were conducted at various times (between the hours of 10am and 9pm) and days of the week (Monday-Sunday) from 30 November 2023- 30 January 2024 in an attempt to survey the most diverse and representative sample of individuals experiencing homelessness and either living in or frequenting The City of Hyattsville area. On average, surveys took between 20- 50 minutes. In total The h3 Project was able to survey 64 willing individuals in the City of Hyattsville area. Individuals were encouraged to share as much as they felt comfortable with. To compensate individuals for their time, each person received his/her choice of a \$10 Gift Card from McDonalds, Subway, Dunkin' Donuts, or Walgreens.

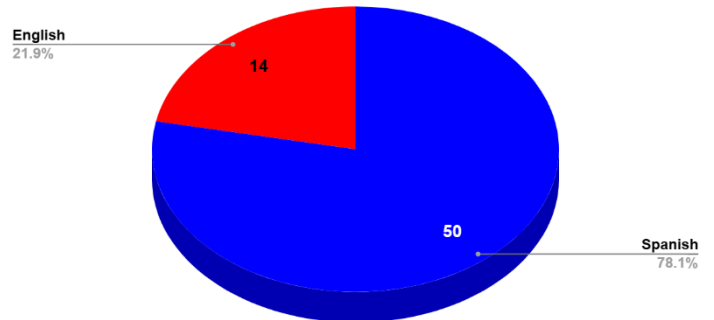
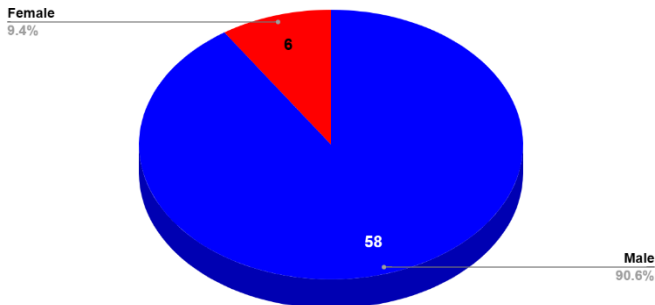
Demographics:

64 Respondents



Ref. Demographics The majority of respondents identified as Latino (76.6%) and Male (90.6%). 18.8% of respondents were Black, and 9.4% of respondents were female. A minority of respondents identified as Asian (1.6%) and Caucasian (3.1%). No respondents identified as Trans F or Trans M, nor as 'Other' for race.

78.1% of respondents would only take the survey in Spanish. The majority claiming not to speak English. Only 21.9% of respondents were agreeable to being surveyed in English.

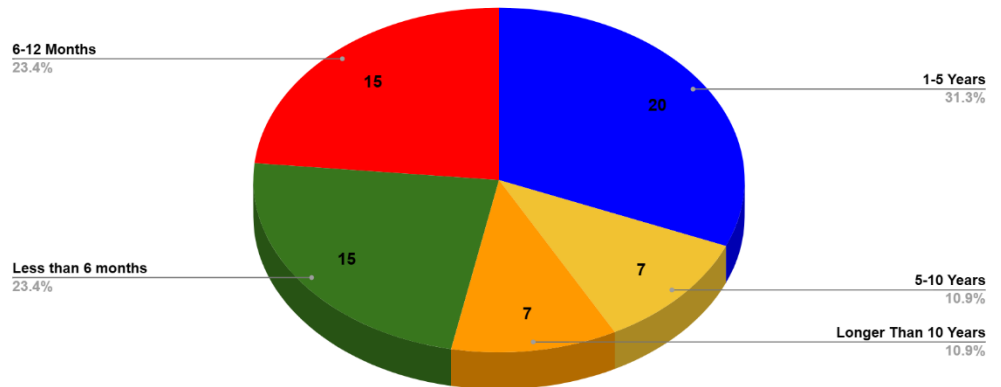


Observations:

The following charts display the answers of participants to the survey questions:

5. How many years have you experienced homelessness?

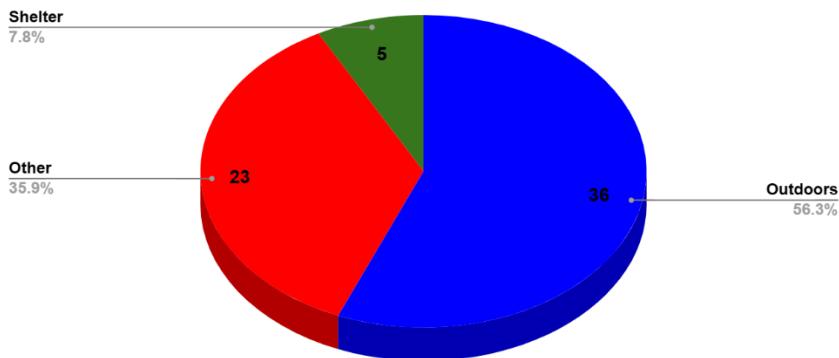
Ref. 5 The majority of respondents have experienced homelessness between 1-5 years (31.3%), followed with a disheartening 10+ years (23.6%). Four individuals declared experiencing homelessness for 15+ years.



6. Where do you typically spend the night?

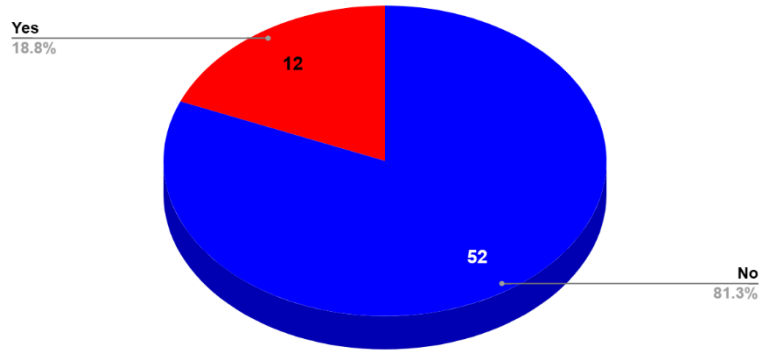
Ref. 6 The majority of Hyattsville respondents sleep outside (56.3%), but this was closely followed by 35.9% of respondents who chose 'other' as where they typically spend the night. Respondents of "other" cited couch surfing with relatives/friends, sleeping in a car, finding abandoned buildings and/or coordinating hotel or room rentals through panhandling, sexual exploitation, or negotiation.

Only 7.8% of respondents stated they slept in shelters. Although, several stated if one were to open nearby, that they would consider it.

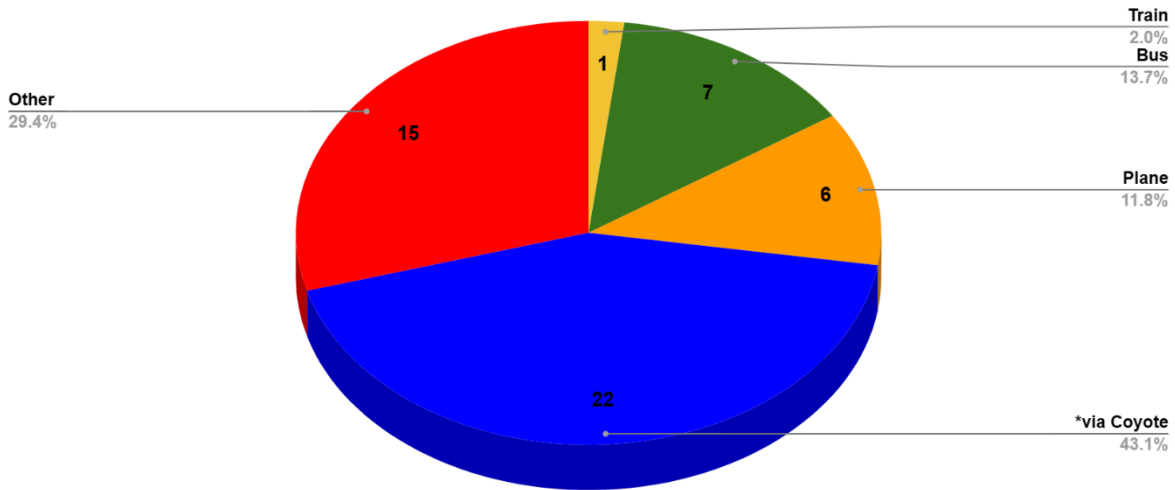


7. Are you from Maryland? (If Yes, Skip to #9)

Ref. 7 81.3% of all respondents reported not being originally from Maryland, while 18.8% said they were born and/or raised in the area.



8. If not from Maryland, how did you get to Maryland? [52 Respondents]

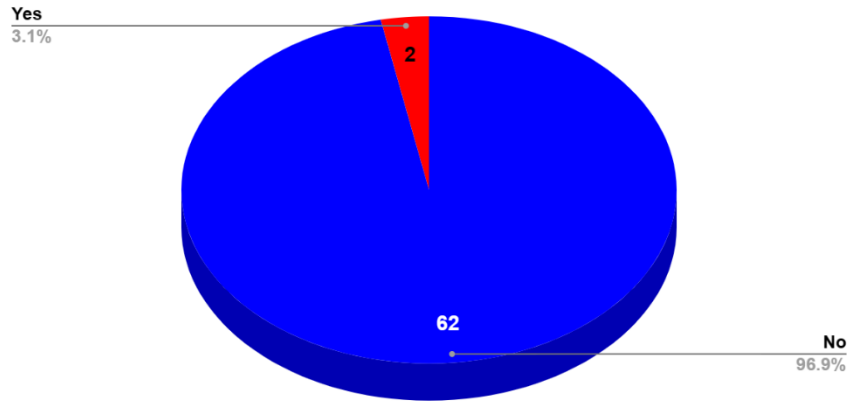


Ref. 8 Although ‘*via coyote’ was not originally a survey option when asking Q8, it was given so often as the answer that it necessitated making it a choice. The majority of respondents (43.1%) reported arriving via coyote to Maryland, followed closely by Other (29.4%) which mostly was described as walking for multiple days through states and even countries either by oneself, with a sibling(s), as a family unit, or with friends. Border crossings mentioned included Texas, California, and Arizona.

*A coyote in the context referred to by respondents refers to a person who facilitates or transports individuals across a border illegally, most often for a fee. Coyotes are typically involved in smuggling people across borders, bypassing legal immigration processes.

9. Do you want to return 'home' (if not from Maryland) or relocate to another state (all)?

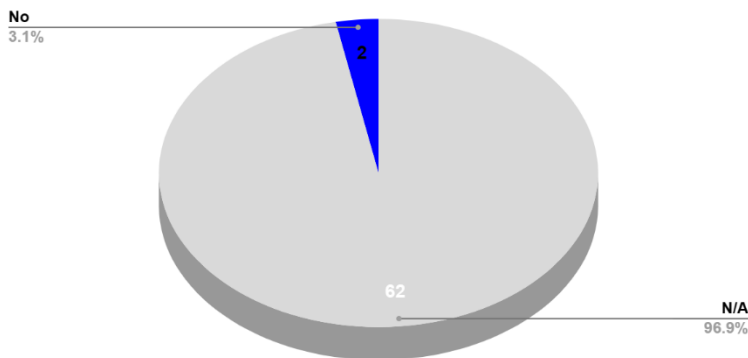
Ref. 9 96.9% of all respondents reported they had no interest in relocating to any other state. The majority did not want to relocate to any other city- even within Maryland. Respondents cited having family and friends in Hyattsville as justification for staying.



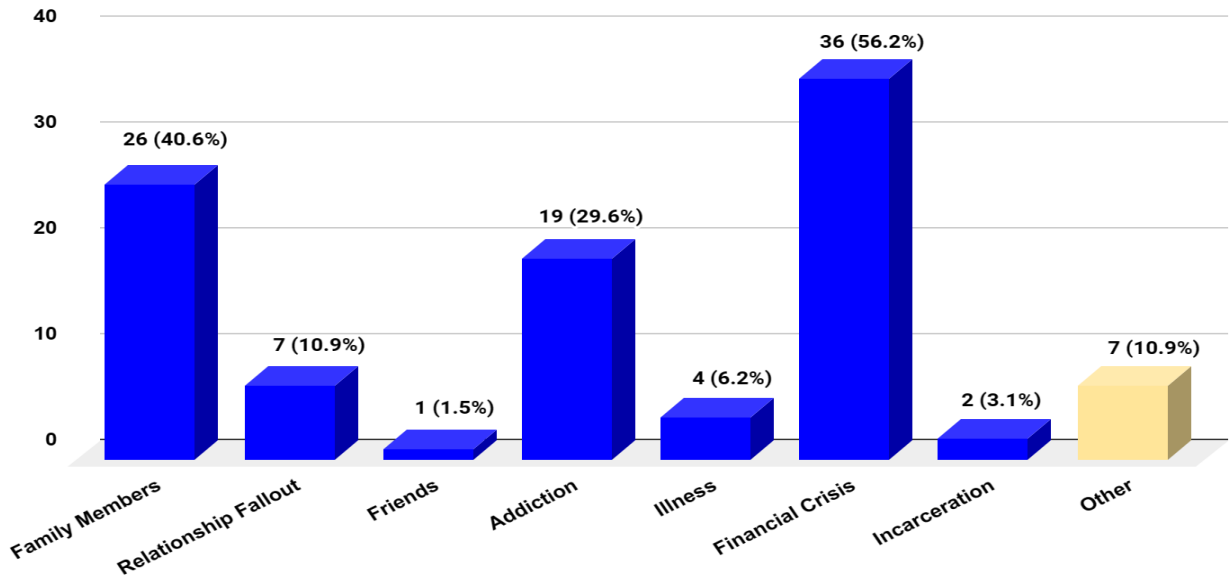
10. If you want to relocate, have you tried Traveler's Aide? [2 Respondents]

Ref. 10 Only 2 respondents (3.1%) of 64 stated they were willing to relocate to another state. However, both stated they would be willing to live "anywhere that would provide housing," although neither had heard of Traveler's Aide.

*(*Which in this case would be irrelevant as neither respondent has a support system already in place elsewhere- which is a requirement of getting travel assistance from travelers' aide.)*

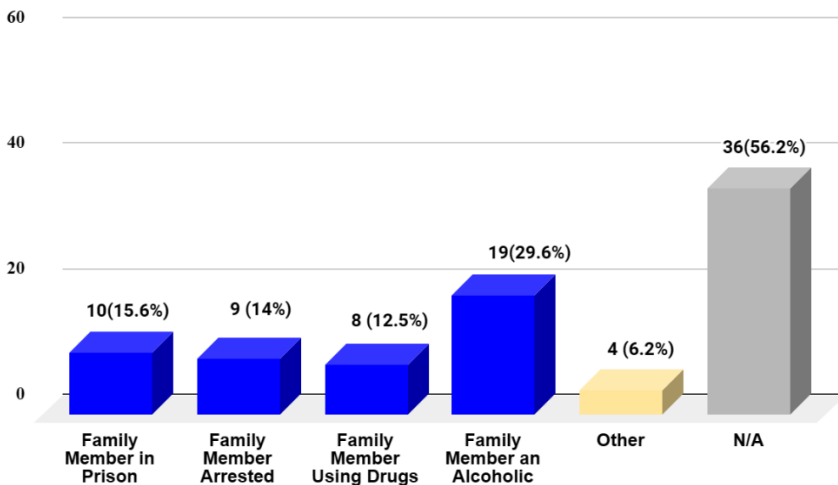


11. What are the main conditions/events that led to you becoming homeless? (Choose all that apply)



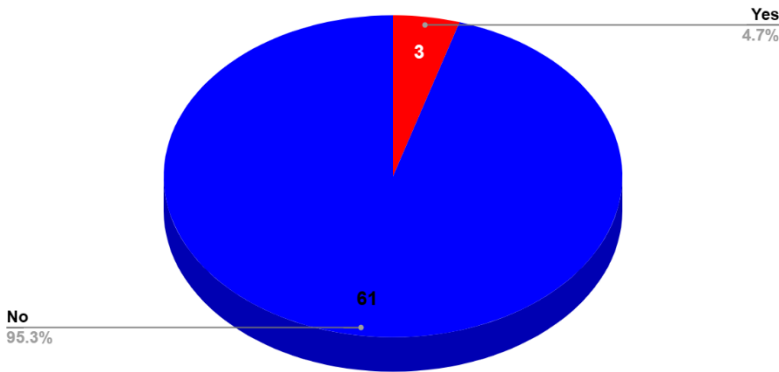
Ref.11 This was a multiple answer option. Most respondents chose more than one reason that contributed to their current state of homelessness. Over half of respondents reported ‘financial crisis’ to be the main reason they were experiencing homelessness. A couple of respondents stated they had been evicted from their housing after losing jobs due to COVID. “Other” category responses included: “I was hit by a car, and now that I am blind I cannot find work,” “a gang cut off four of my fingers making it difficult to do manual labor like I once did,” “Because I do not have a place to do laundry, I cannot keep clean enough for a job,” “I was in a car accident and lost everything,” and “My mother and daughter died.”

12. During your childhood did you ever experience any of the following (choose all that apply):



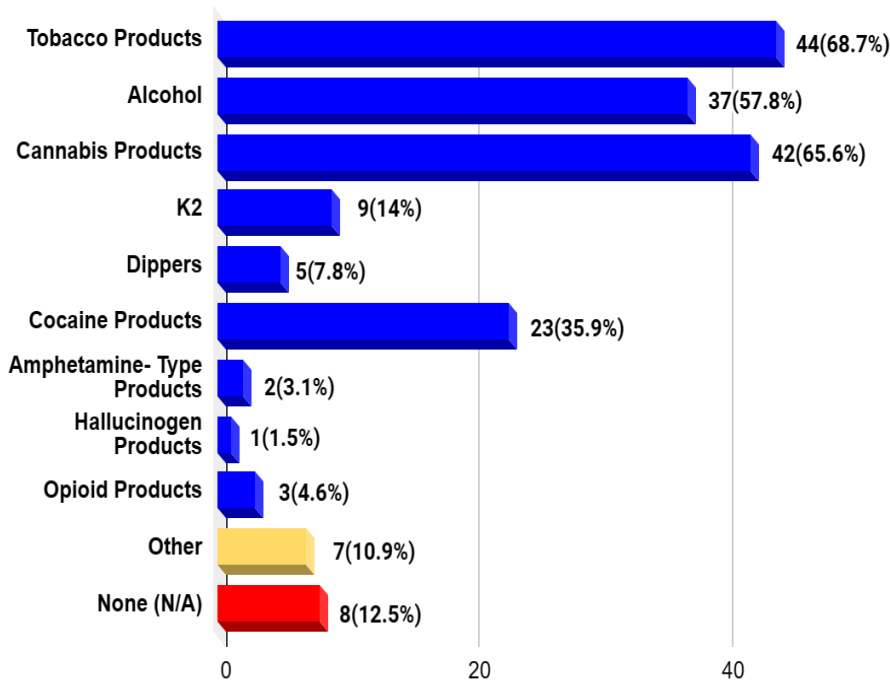
Ref. 12 56.2% of respondents (all Latino) claimed not to have experienced any traumatic childhood event. Of those who did, the majority cited alcohol (29.6%) as the main factor in childhood trauma. Most non-Latino respondents cited experiencing two or more events. ‘Other’ included gang violence (2), and non-disclosure.

13. Were you ever in the Foster Care system?



Ref. 13 The majority of respondents (95.3%) have never been in the foster care system. 4.7% of respondents stated they had been in the foster care system at some point. Of these, 2 stated that they became homeless when they aged out and had nowhere to go.

14. There are many types of coping mechanisms that individuals may use while experiencing homelessness. In the past six months which of the following have you used (non-medical only):

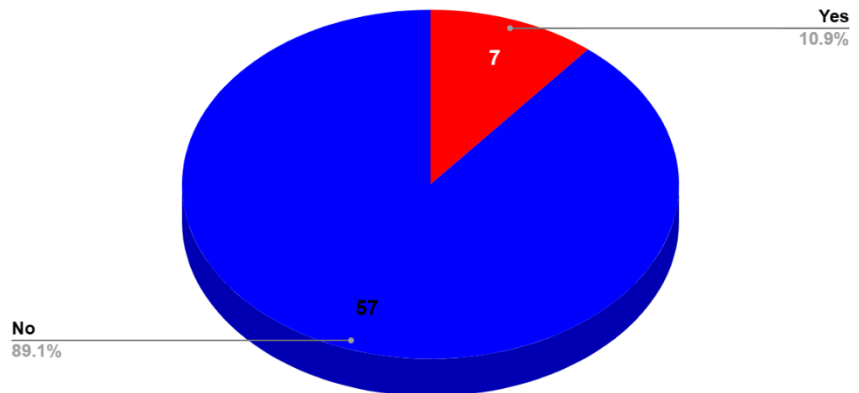


Ref.14 Note: Tobacco Products include Cigarettes, Snuff, etc. Cannabis Products include pot, grass, hash, etc. Cocaine Products include Coke, Crack, etc. Amphetamine Products include Speed, Meth, Ecstasy, Molly, etc. Hallucinogens include LSD, Acid, Mushrooms, etc. Opioids include Heroin, Fentanyl, Morphine, etc.

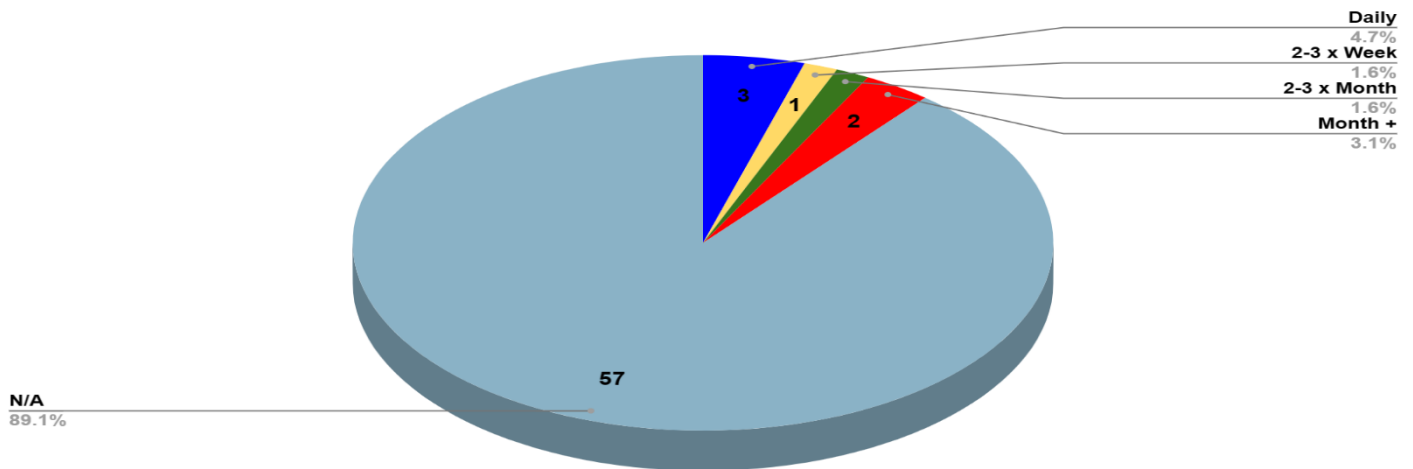
Ref.14 Respondents could choose as many substances as applicable. Substance use is a common coping mechanism used by individuals experiencing homelessness to numb traumatic experiences and/or to cope with physical pain and/or mental instability. Some reported 4-5 different coping mechanisms. Other included "Percocet," "anything I can get," "fentanyl," "any pills that taste like candy," and "pills with fentanyl."

15. Do you have a case manager? (If No Skip to #18)

Ref.15 Having a case manager is essential for securing housing and other vital services. However, an alarming 89.1% of respondents indicated they have no case manager. A significant number of respondents who did not have a case manager expressed a strong desire to have one.



16. If you have a case manager, how often does s/he contact you?



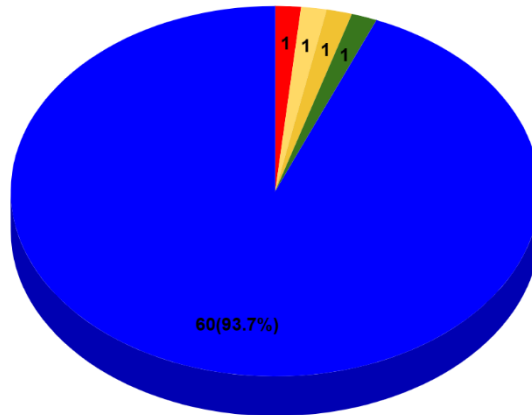
Ref.16 Of the 7 respondents (of 64) who indicated having a case manager, the majority (3 respondents) reported engaging with their case manager daily. 2 respondents indicated case manager visits more than a month apart. All respondents indicated a desire of more frequent case manager interactions.

17. If you have a case manager, what organization are they with?

*Of the 7 respondents who indicated having a case manager, none of them could recall the case managers name, and the majority could also not remember the name of the organization that they are with. One, however, did indicate that an old case manager of his was from the Montgomery County Coalition for the Homeless, another indicated he used to work with Sasha Bruce in DC, and a third stated this he is with Covenant Psychiatric Care.

18. When was your last SPDAT?

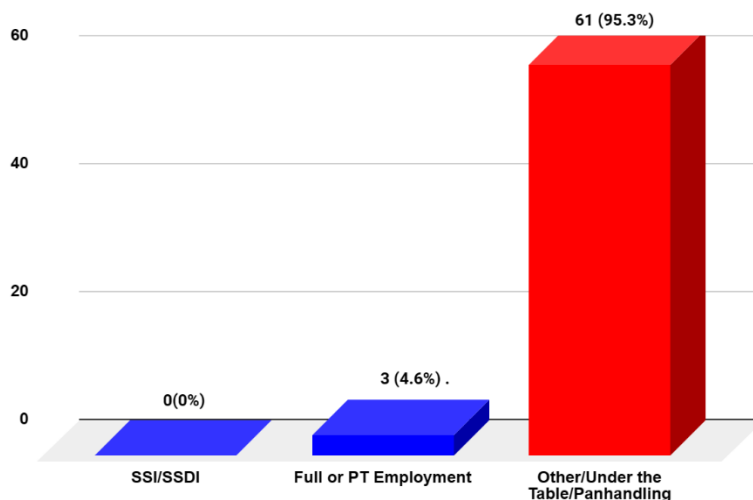
- 1-3 Months Ago
- 3-6 Months Ago
- 6-12 Months Ago
- More Than 1 Year
- Never Had One



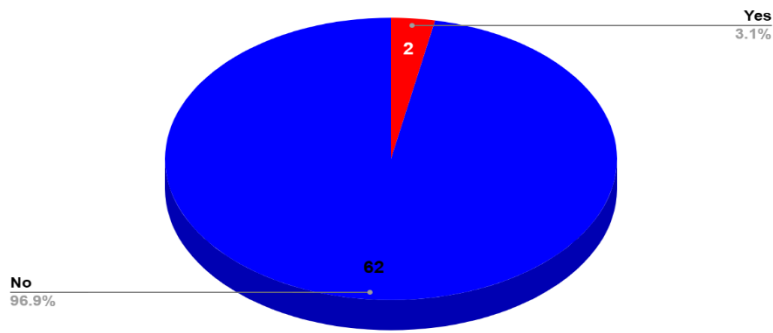
Ref.18 Alarming, 93.7% of respondents reported never having done a SPDAT. That includes 3 of the 7 that reported having case management. The VI-SPDAT (Vulnerability Index - Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool) is a survey administered both to individuals and families to determine risk and prioritization when aiding homeless and at-risk of homelessness individuals. It is highly recommended to update the SPDAT annually, as circumstances and vulnerability can rapidly change when experiencing homelessness. This also keeps an individual active and up to date in the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) which all outreach providers use. Additionally, to be considered for a Department of Human Services (DHS) CAHP Housing placement, an individual needs to have had a SPDAT.

19. Do you currently receive any income? (Select all that apply)

Ref.19 Although the vast majority (95.3%) of respondents reported not having any dependable income, all expressed the desire for employment. Some stated they would take “any job that pays.”

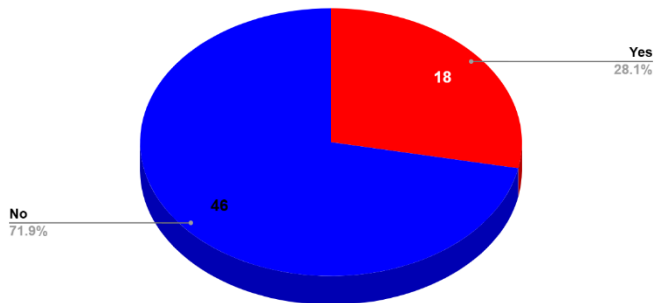


20. Are you a Veteran?

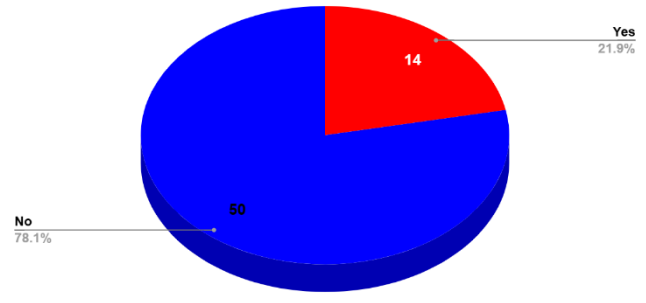


Ref.20 2 respondents reported being a Veteran. In the DHS CAHP System Veterans have a separate path that can actually expediate and prioritize them in the housing process. Consequently, early identification is critical to get them quick access to services.

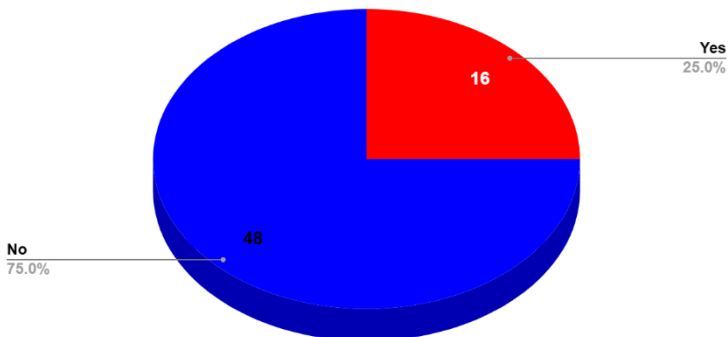
21. Do you have a valid government ID?



22. Do you have your social security card?

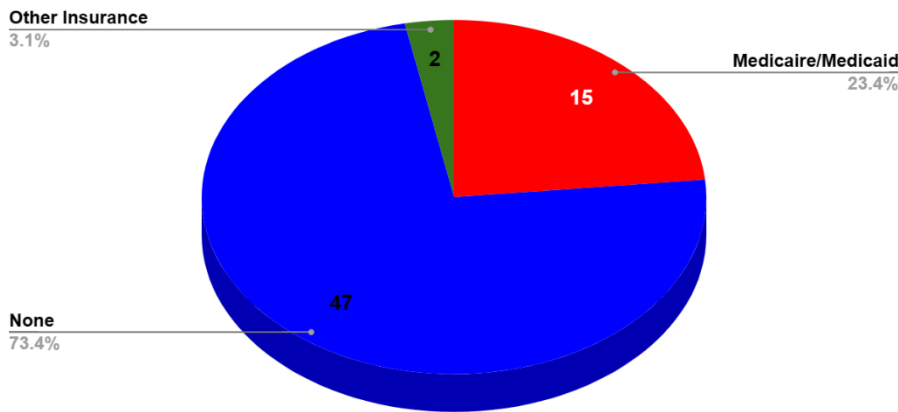


23. Do you have your birth certificate?



Ref.21,22,23 More than 70% of respondents stated they do not have their birth certificate, valid government identification, nor a social security card. Many individuals indicated they had none of the three vital documents - citing they had either been lost or stolen. All three items are necessary to take advantage of most employment and housing opportunities. Respondents that answered in the affirmative overwhelmingly stated that their documents were being kept safe by a family member or friend that was housed.

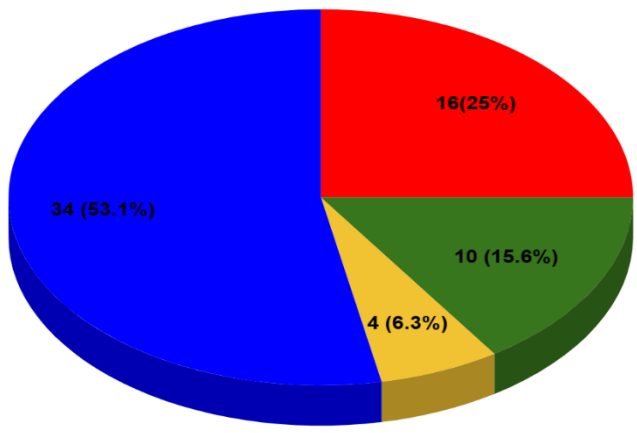
24. Do you have health insurance?



Ref.24 While 23.4% of respondents claimed to have Medicare/Medicaid, alarmingly the majority of respondents (73.4%) reported to not have any health insurance at all. Several respondents stated they would like health insurance, but do not know how to get it.

25. When was the last time you were seen by a doctor or health clinic?

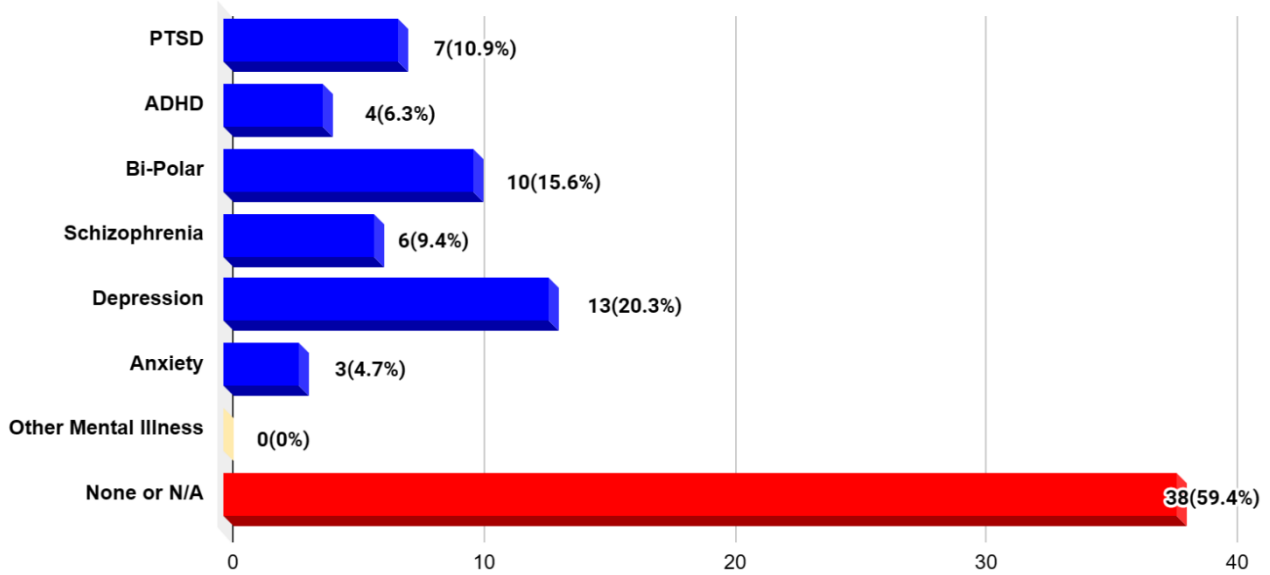
- Less Than 1 Month Ago
- 1-3 Months Ago
- 3-6 Months Ago
- More Than 6 Months



Ref.25 Over half of respondents (53.1%) reported to have not been seen by a doctor or visited a health clinic in over 6 months. Some respondents said it had been years. One said he has never been to a hospital or health clinic. 25% of respondents stated they had been seen by a doctor within the last thirty days. Of these, several said it was within the last week, and one stated he had been taken to the hospital the day prior for alcohol intoxication.

* Individuals with active warrants, or that are undocumented, are especially reluctant to go to hospitals, as they often fear they will be arrested or deported if they do.

26. Have you ever been informed by a medical professional that you may have (choose all that apply):



Ref.26 Although 59.4% of individuals did not self-declare any mental instability diagnosis, those that did typically reported more than one diagnosis. 20.3% of respondents indicated being diagnosed with depression.

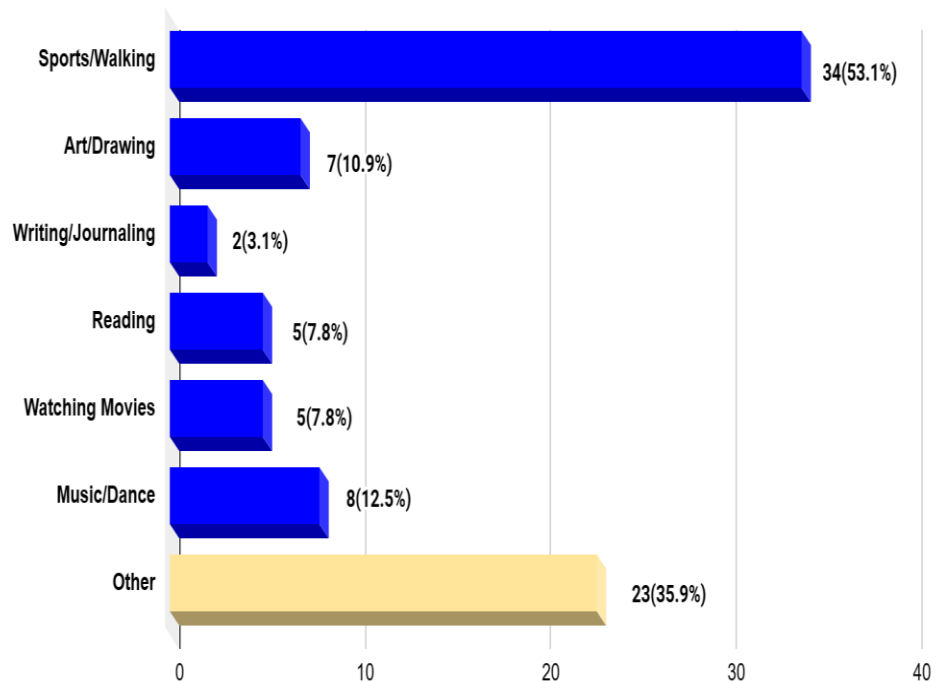
27. Do you have any hobbies/ anything you enjoy doing that makes you happy? (Choose all that apply)

Ref.27 Respondents were encouraged to choose all that apply. "Other" activities reported include playing with her children, going to church, fishing, gambling, gardening, video games, photography, and makeup.

*2 individuals stated *nothing* makes them happy.

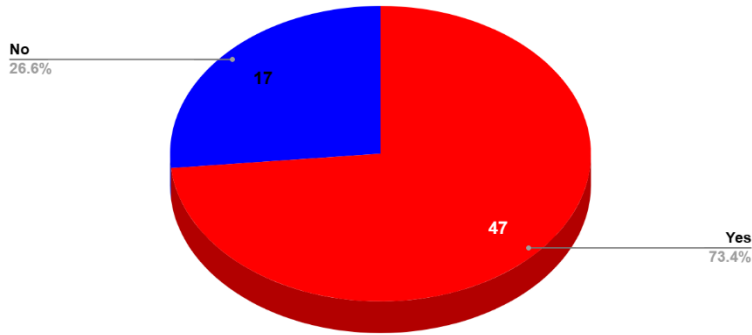
*1 individual said "*only faith*" makes her happy.

*1 individual stated he is *too busy trying to survive* to be able to enjoy anything.



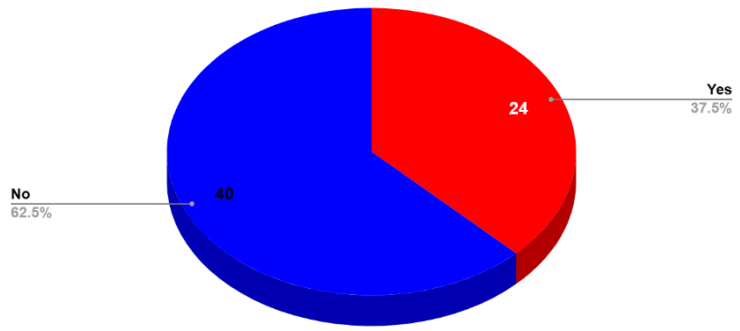
28. Would you be willing to share an apartment with someone?

Ref.28 73.4% of respondents said they would be willing to share an apartment with someone if given the opportunity. 26.6% stated they do not want to share, although many of those who said 'no' said if it were a family member or a friend, they would consider it.



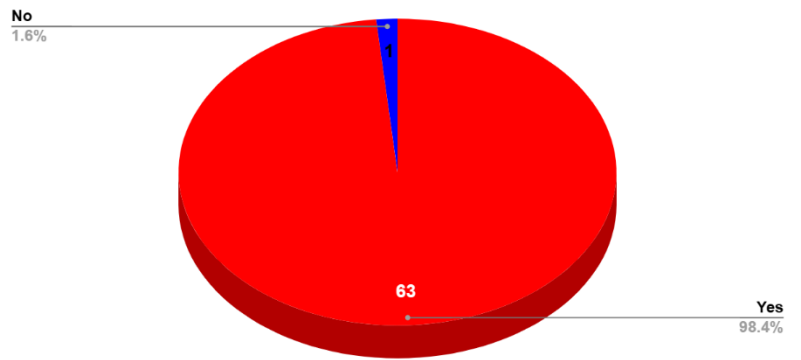
29. If housing were located outside of Maryland, would you be interested? (Check all that apply)

Ref.29 The majority of respondents (62.5%) indicated that they only wanted to live in Maryland. And many further indicated they wanted to remain in Hyattsville. Of those willing to live outside of Maryland (37.5%), most were agreeable 'only if' it was still in the DCMV area.



30. Are you interested in getting employment?

Ref. 30 98.4% of respondents are interested in employment. Employment interest included such jobs as painting houses, gardening, food service, construction, custodian, car mechanic, dry wall, cashier, remodeling, and woodwork, among others. The one individual, out of the 64 respondents, who indicated he did not want a job stated that he was too disabled to hold an employment position.



Lessons Learned

Community engagement is the essence of successful outreach. Individuals experiencing homelessness have varying needs, and while some needs can be met faster than others, the genuine and heartfelt interest of outreach staff are crucial elements to secure trust, thus delivering vital assistance successfully. The engagement approach must be tailored to the person to establish a solid base for the relationship. Conducting a SPDAT, attaining current and vital records such as an identification card, a social security card and a birth certificate are all a necessary part of navigating assistance programs such as housing, nutritional needs, healthcare needs -both physically and mentally,- which go hand in hand with delivering weather appropriate clothing, access to hygiene and other relevant resources to solidify initial relationship building.

The h3 Project is keenly aware of the unique challenges that come with engaging in homeless street outreach. One of the primary obstacles we face is establishing trust and building meaningful connections with individuals experiencing homelessness. Many of them have faced deep-seated traumas, stigmatization, and a lack of consistent support systems, making it difficult for them to open up and accept help. Moreover, the ever-changing nature of homelessness poses further challenges, as individuals often move locations or face different circumstances, requiring us to adapt our strategies constantly. Limited resources and funding also sometimes make it challenging to provide comprehensive assistance to all those in need. Nevertheless, through determination, compassion, and innovative approaches, The h3 Project strives to overcome these hurdles and make a positive impact in the lives of the homeless population. Through daily interactions and observations, we collate an extensive amount of information that we utilize to tailor a step-by-step individualized roadmap to success. Maximizing on this work model for our clients, we have managed multiple family reunifications, permanent housing projects, detox referrals, employment assistance, obtained vital documents (government ID/Birth Certificate/ social security card), enrolled in healthcare coverage, and applied for nutritional assistance.

To ensure a diverse and representative outcome of surveying individuals experiencing homelessness in The City of Hyattsville, The h3 Project collaborated with various stakeholders in the Hyattsville community, including law enforcement, government officials, security guards, grocery store staff, restaurant staff, and church staff, in an effort to identify the most suitable locations for conducting surveys with individuals experiencing homelessness. Some of the targeted and frequented locations included Langley Park, U-Haul, Aldi, Salvation Army, West Hyattsville Metro Station, Hyattsville Crossing Metro Station, Mall at Prince George's, McDonald's, PG Plaza Day Center, Home Depot, St. Ann's Infant and Maternity Home, 7-11, Queens Chapel Town Center, and 7911 New Hampshire Ave, among others. While surveying these locations, it quickly became apparent that an immediate challenge of Hyattsville is the lack of shelters, day centers, and reliable meals for the homeless population. Many churches appeared to only be able to provide assistance on a sporadic basis, particularly when the weather was tolerable, and staffing was available.

Nevertheless, over the past couple of months, while conducting surveys in Hyattsville, our team at h3 encountered a fascinatingly similar group of individuals who were experiencing homelessness. We noticed that these individuals, particularly in the Hyattsville area, displayed a notable level of skepticism and uncertainty when approached for questioning. Despite our team introducing themselves as outreach workers, presenting h3 badges and business cards, and explaining the purpose of the surveys, it often required numerous interactions before some individuals were willing to participate and answer the survey questions. Even with the incentive of earning a gift card, some would observe from a distance, approaching only when they felt assured that there was no threat. Interestingly, on several occasions, an individual would provide one name at the beginning of the survey but then later disclose their true given name to our h3 staff by the end of it.

In some instances, individuals who were feeling paranoid accused our staff at h3 of being undercover police officers and attempting to gather information to facilitate deportations or criminalize certain activities. Thankfully, in most cases, there were locals present who could vouch for h3's credibility and assure the person that they could trust us. However, there was one occasion when tensions escalated, and it was suggested that h3 should leave the area. Considering the importance of safety, we prioritized this recommendation and promptly departed.

Despite the initial challenges of building trust with this particular group, h3 staff made noteworthy progress with several individuals by the end of the sixty-day outreach period. These individuals would eagerly anticipate our arrival and inquire about our next visit upon departure. In addition to conducting surveys, our outreach efforts involved distributing essential supplies that were in high demand or specifically requested. Depending on the weather conditions, h3 staff distributed numerous hand warmers, toe warmers, gloves, hats, socks, hygiene kits, Naloxone, Fentanyl testing strips, blankets, and clothing. To further foster engagement, we occasionally treated them to pizza and coffee, which proved to be greatly appreciated. Furthermore, we discovered that having fluent Spanish speakers conduct the surveys played a crucial role in establishing rapport. It put the individuals at ease, as it became evident that the majority had limited or no proficiency in English.

During our surveys, we discovered a sizable number of individuals hailing from El Salvador, Mexico, Guatemala, and Honduras. However, we also had the opportunity to connect with a few immigrants from Haiti, Jamaica, and Vietnam. As trust began to develop, these individuals started sharing their personal stories with us. Many revealed that they were fleeing their home countries due to rampant gang violence. One person, in particular, showed us a hand missing four fingers, a grim reminder of a brutal act committed by a gang member. Another individual sadly expressed their desire to work, but acknowledged that their facial scars, inflicted by gang-related violence, instilled fear in others, making it difficult

to find employment. Additionally, we encountered a person who had suffered a vicious attack, resulting in a visibly empty eye socket. These narratives shed light on the immense challenges and trauma that these individuals have endured.

The survey results revealed several concerning findings that warrant attention. Firstly, a considerable number of individuals in the area lack vital documents, which poses challenges for accessing essential services and support. Additionally, a disturbingly high proportion of respondents reported never having received a SPDAT, which is a requirement to be considered for government housing placement. Further, alcohol emerged as a prevalent challenge, evident from the experiences shared by individuals recently hospitalized, who admitted to passing out due to alcohol consumption. However, it is important to note that alcohol is not the sole issue. There is also a clear interest in Percocet's and the combination of various illicit substances containing Fentanyl, raising concerns about the risk of overdose and the need for targeted interventions.

One significant insight that emerged from the survey is the pressing need for accessible medical care on the streets. Many individuals expressed a desire for medical attention but expressed fear of going to the hospital due to concerns about deportation or arrest. Several respondents provided detailed accounts of worsening medical conditions and sought advice. Fortunately, The h3 Project has established a strong partnership with Street Health DC, a group of Georgetown doctors who actively shadow h3 staff during street outreach on a weekly basis. Street Health DC specializes in providing medical care by meeting clients where they are and has shown interest in extending their services to the Hyattsville area during h3's presence on-site.

Another challenge faced by individuals is the language barrier. However, h3 has a dedicated team of bilingual staff members who play a crucial role in ensuring a continuum of care and effective communication with the community.

Notably, there is a concerning presence of transitional-aged Black youth (aged 18-24) experiencing homelessness in the PG Mall and Langley Park area. These individuals disclosed that their homelessness stemmed from their parents being evicted from their previous residences. As a result, some of them are now living out of cars, while others mentioned relying on sporadic stays in motel rooms when they can afford it. One individual revealed that their parents instructed them to panhandle in order to generate money for living expenses. Additionally, it was revealed that McDonald's has become a popular gathering spot for youth who engage in drug use. These individuals shared that drug use is typically tolerated both inside the McDonald's establishment and in close proximity to it. This raises concerns about the safety and well-being of these vulnerable individuals in such environments.

During a survey engagement, h3 had the opportunity to speak with a seventeen-year-old who shared a heart-wrenching story. He revealed that his mother had been deported to El Salvador, leaving him alone in Hyattsville. He bravely disclosed

that he is battling addiction to fentanyl and had a frightening overdose a few months ago. Despite these challenges, he expressed an ardent desire to graduate from school. However, he is unsure of where to begin the process and has concerns about rumors of gang violence in schools, which adds to his worries.

During the survey, the seventeen-year-old was accompanied by a nineteen-year-old friend. They both shared their living situation, explaining that they managed to find temporary shelter in apartment buildings, specifically in the hall, lobby, and laundry room off Hamilton Street. It was apparent that they were in different stages of being under the influence, but they were remarkably open about their use of fentanyl. When offered Narcan, a life-saving medication for opioid overdoses, they willingly accepted it. Additionally, they were thrilled to receive dry socks and clothing, swiftly changing out of their wet attire.

We have found that listening to a homeless person's story is not just an act of kindness, but also a powerful way to foster understanding and empathy. Each individual experiencing homelessness carries a unique journey filled with experiences, challenges, and sometimes unimaginable hardships. By taking the time to genuinely listen, we not only validate their existence but also acknowledge their humanity. Their stories offer us a rare gift, enabling us to comprehend the complex web of circumstances that led them to their current situation. Understanding their struggles, aspirations, and dreams allows us to tailor our assistance more effectively, working towards helping them find a path to a better future. By embracing their stories, we can bridge the gap between us and them, transforming their narratives into a catalyst for change and compassion. We allowed every individual to elaborate on their level of comfort while answering questions from the survey. Some individuals we spent nearly an hour listening and talking to, while documenting concerns. Others were able to express their concerns in a much shorter period of time. What we found, overwhelmingly, is that the vast majority of individuals on the streets desire housing and employment. Many detailed lives wrought with trauma and expressed a deep-rooted desire for 'someone' to assist getting him/her off the streets.

h3 staff appreciated the opportunity to engage with individuals residing in and/or frequenting the City of Hyattsville area. However, it was disheartening to discover that a significant portion of individuals experiencing homelessness in the area do not feel valued. During the survey, several respondents expressed their frustration with the lack of case managers, a lack of employment opportunities, and not having any assistance with where to go for services. This situation has led to heightened anxiety and increased distrust towards the housing system and government officials.

It is evident individuals in the City of Hyattsville area require comprehensive support and a compassionate approach to address their unique circumstances. However, based on the surveys conducted, it is dishearteningly clear that a substantial number of individuals residing in or frequenting the area lack crucial elements necessary to achieve that

objective. Here is a snapshot of some select narratives from those experiencing homelessness in the City of Hyattsville area:

Question: How do you envision yourself at this same time next year?

- “I am going to turn a building into housing or sell it. This time next year I will be highly successful.”
- “Working. That is, it. Working, stable and safe.”
- “With a job and a place that I can call my own. With my own room, either by myself or with my family that is also experiencing homelessness.”
- “I see myself helping my sister and mother get on their feet with a house. I also see myself working on my football career.”
- “I see myself having a house and a job.”
- “I see myself sitting in my own home and visiting Six Flags Park. I have never been and would like too.”
- “I want a place to live and with a job that I know how to do. Like remodeling. I am very good at it.”
- “In a year I am not sure what I see myself achieving exactly... but I do see myself being happy. I want God to give me a good view of the sky.”
- “I just want to say happy New Year! No use thinking ahead a year when I do not know what tomorrow brings.”
- “Housed with some type of assistance, it does not matter from whom. But just someone to help get me back on my feet.”
- “I’d like a job, four cars, housing and a business.”
- “It is simple. I just want to be off the streets and not homeless.”
- “In a house. Chilling, working and S**t.”
- “Employed, and most importantly reunited with my daughter and her mother. I would also like to be financially stable or on the way to becoming financially stable.”
- “I want to be working and hopefully graduating from school...I want to go to school, but do not know how. And there is nobody to help me learn how.”
- “Working, that is all. If I am working, I will be good.”
- “I want to stay in the U.S because my whole family is here... but one day I plan on getting off the streets.”
- “To have my [legal] papers, so that I can get a real job.”
- “I hope to God... I hope... it will be better. That I will be in a better place. I just want to complete my dreams.”
- “I see myself hanging on, never giving up, holding on to faith and knowing things will go the right way. Even if it takes longer than I expect.”
- “Just Housed.”
- “I would want to stay here, hopefully it would be more pleasant around here. Maybe people will be kinder and help me maybe find a place.”
- “I want to start a new life and leave behind the old voices telling me that I am not good enough. That I am trash and worthless. I do miss my friends and my ex-wife.”
- “I want to do better for God. But I also want my family to know that I need them to help me get off the street.”
- “I see myself being by myself because you create problems by loving someone when you lose them. It hurts too much.”
- “Doing better in life and just finding a job.”
- “The truth is I do not know. But maybe just have a stable job or to ask God to keep me alive.”
- “If I ain’t dead, I want to tell my story.”
- “In a year I will have stable housing and allowed to see my sister and nephew in Hyattsville.”
- “I want to be mixed with good people and bad people, have my own job and apartment. And my real self.”
- “To have my own bed and stop losing to the voices in my head.”
- “I will have a full-time job, so that I can have my own room. Even if I have a roommate or live in the basement. I just want a roof over my head. Somewhere I can just rest in peace.”
- “I will have a permanent job and not worry about where I’m gonna lay my head.”

- “I would want to be back in my country, but it is really not safe for me. So hopefully I can get a job here, so that I can have my own money.”
- “I need to work, so just a job, because without it there is nothing worth living for.”
- “Independent, working out of my own apartment.”
- “I will have an apartment and work for a construction company.”
- “I want to have my own construction business so that I can help my children’s mother (send money to her back home).”
- “I will take anything that comes my way, whether it is a job or a room to stay, but I really want to be working.”
- ‘Working for a company. Any company.’
- “With my family, with a job and with housing.”
- “Only God knows, but all I ask for is to be full of good health. I really do not want to die out here. And sometimes I think I might.”
- “That's a long forecast, it's too far away to think.”
- “To be with them in my own place” (Motioning to his young child and girlfriend)
- “To have my own place with my boyfriend and our child.”
- “I would still want to be in Langley Park because I am comfortable, and it is not terrible. But in a better position, not in my car without a job.”
- “I don’t know, we cannot see the future, whatever God has decided for me will happen.”
- “Living on my own. Financially stable, and not far away from the DMV.”
- “With a job, a home and stability.”
- “Here, always in Silver Springs or Hyattsville- close to my friends, because they have always helped me when I need support with housing and food.”
- “I want to change my life, have my own construction company.”
- “That is what I am wondering about myself. I am clean, I am a good person, but I am wondering where I will be. I am an incredibly sad man.”
- “To be on good terms with my family. They live in Langley Park and will not talk to me right now. I have done some unforgiveable things. But I wish they would give me a chance to be better.”
- “I do not know. I am worried about surviving today. I do not know if I will be alive next year.”
- “Getting my ID, having enough food- I’ll probably be right here.”:
- “Inside, housed and safe.”
- “Healthier than I am now.”
- “A year? (laughing) Very simple. In a house with a job. I do not need anything more.”
- “Not to be dead.”

Question: If you could deliver one message to the Mayor, government officials in the City of Hyattsville and/or other Hyattsville residents about life on the streets, and what you (and others) need most, what would it be?

- “It sucks out here. Help us, Hurry please. We do not want another year out here. We need help.”
- “We need drug and mental health clinics. People are suffering.”
- “It is really rough out here being homeless. People need to be more supportive and make it easier for us to get jobs and go to school. We are willing!”
- “My mom has done her best to keep a roof over me and my sister’s head. All we ask is that people be kind and help us maintain the little we have left.” (Family living out of a car)
- “No, because every time I express my concerns the Government never seems to hear a word I say.”
- “This is the best Government, but please... help more Latinos.”
- “Stop Ignoring us. We are here. In front of you.”
- “I always voted for democracy because democracy is like a church. It does not matter who you are, or what you look like. The Shelters are too packed though. We need more options.”
- “My utmost respect to this Country and State, but please- show up more for the Latinos like the Governor promised.”

- “Keep working harder, if you tell *me* to work hard, then they need to work harder too.”
- “Please help more Latinos and take better care of the local community.”
- The truth is I do not like Donald Trump. Delinquency is a big problem. I was just jumped, and no one cared.” (Respondent had a visible cut on his face and a black eye)
- “I work and have a job, but that is not enough. When I do drugs, I have nobody to check on me and that is why I am homeless.”
- “I am trying to work and have a job, but I need more help.”
- “People here need more help. I am tired of my friends sleeping on the streets.”
- “F*** this question! Nobody really cares about us anyway. If they did, they would help us.”
- “I would like to have places where I can stay. The only options are in DC, and anywhere else we are considered solicitors.”
- “I do not mean to do some of the things I do. They are just some things you have to do to survive.”
- “We need more jobs. Covid left us f**ked.”
- “People who have been adopted or in the foster care system should be able to get housing, no matter how old they are.” (Respondent aged out of foster care into homelessness)
- “Help more minors- because schools aren’t always safe and there isn’t always anyone to help someone enroll.”
- “We need more safety; I have friends who overdosed, and no one wants to help. They view us as a disgrace.”
- “They need to do more. Friday night an ambulance came to check a man for hypothermia. The EMT’s did not even take him to the hospital, they only check on us- sometimes- but do not really help. The only thing they do is throw ‘Hyattsville’ day (festival).” I wish the Government could do more for the community, you [speaking to the surveyor] do not see it happening, because you are not out here with us. You are lucky.”
- “Please respect us because we are ignored and are barely surviving.”
- “The hospital needs to come out to me.” (Respondent was bleeding heavily from a gash, but was still waiting for an ambulance called ten minutes prior)
- “It is not easy; it is extremely hard you never know who is behind you. Every brain, every person thinks differently. Some people will drink (alcohol) forever, some will not. You just never know. It is up to the person.”
- “Nothing is wrong with the world, just with the people in it. I still have some support. I can go inside to get food and clean up in a couple places. It is definitely an experience to be homeless. But it is also a tradition. America is all different, it is all about tradition. But really, it is not that bad being homeless in America.”
- “I would just like to say to try to be better and not make our lives harder or to not add to our -already too many-problems.”
- “We need more jobs that allow us to afford rent.”
- “Come out here with us. See what it is like out here. The danger. Come after 8pm. See the rats. Rats are living better than people.”
- “I want them to take away all the drunks but.... Give me one more beer.”
- The Governor has a chance, but the Government is stupid. I do not know where I will go. PG is no good and they make many problems for me here. Even when I am minding my own business.”
- “Give more opportunities for people on the streets.”
- “Just jobs. Yes, that is all we need. If we had jobs, we would all be ok.”
- “We have skills, we aren’t useless, and we want to help, but there is zero opportunity.”
- “You need to help us, or the problem will get worse, it is really that simple. We just need help.”
- “Aldis and 7Eleven kicks us out because one person does wrong, so we all get the blame. Where is the justice in that?”
- “Fear on the street makes you weak.”
- “What would be cool is a place we can all link up. We already came together as a people, but we want employment.”
- “Well, nothing more than we need more jobs and more opportunities.”
- “They need to strengthen their workforce and combat the drug problem. I would have four pages if I told you everything -but ultimately more programs for Central Americans.
- “We need more unity; do you know what unity is? She (respondent pointing at a sex worker) does not know unity, but it is supporting each other.”

- “We need more emotional support, especially for women, jobs-you know.”
- “No, I don’t care for them because they don’t care for the homeless.”
- “Life on the street is horrible. Why would anyone with power allow this to exist? Help homeless people off the streets.”
- “Give us jobs, we need justice for people who shouldn’t be homeless.”
- “When Donald Trump was president, the economy was booming, South Americans were getting help yet people waiting here longer are not getting s**t. The current Government is not helping us.”
- “It isn’t safe out here and I go days without eating, they see my eye and don’t want to help me.” (Respondent has a visible injury to one eye causing him to be blind in that eye)
- “We need more jobs, rent is too high, and the jobs I can find won’t pay me enough.”
- “Just give us a real chance to really work, all we need is a work permit. And we will show you how hard we can work.”
- “The Government is good. I hear there is a shelter in Baltimore that might be nice, but I have nothing bad to say about anything. We have everything.”
- “Try it for 24 hours and tell me what you think.”
- “It does not matter what I say, nothing will change. There is a lot of crime, some people come and go but problems are not something someone like me can ignore.”
- “Let us be part of the community, do not just pretend to embrace us and then reject us. There will always be some who do not understand us. But give us a chance.”
- “There are no jobs. the only change I want around here is a job.”
- “We need more Government support.”
- “I wouldn’t know what to say, but to have a better relationship with the people who stay here.”
- “We need to generate more jobs in Langley Park and Wheaton if we are gonna survive. Somehow. And it would be great if we had help doing it.”
- “Nothing. They will not listen.”
- “I recently came here, specifically to Hyattsville but now can you help me? How can the Government of Hyattsville help me? Nobody has even tried to help me. You are the first person to ask me what I think or need.”
- “Thank you and keep supporting us immigrants. Keep helping us in any way you can.”
- “I only have one request, please just help me with housing.”
- “Well first, we need to get the pig out of the Government.”
- “Please check on the kids that pass through here and stop leaving us alone. When you leave us alone is when terrible things happen. And nobody sees it. Or maybe they do not want to see it.”
- “Just remember. None of us wanted this. It can happen to anybody.”