

Nipissing Counts 2021: A Count and Survey of Individuals Experiencing Homelessness in the Nipissing District



December 2021

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For the

District of Nipissing Social Services Administration Board (DNSSAB) and Associated Community Partners

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1.0 Acknowledgements

1.1 Land Acknowledgement

The District of Nipissing Social Services Administration Board would like to acknowledge that we are meeting on Aboriginal land that has been inhabited by Indigenous peoples from the beginning.

As settlers, we are grateful for the opportunity to meet here, and we thank all the generations of people who have taken care of this land for thousands of years.

Long before today, as we gather here, there have been Aboriginal peoples who have been the stewards of this place.

We acknowledge that we are on the traditional territory of the Anishnaabe peoples, in the Robinson-Huron and Williams Treaties areas. We would also like to acknowledge the neighboring communities of the Nipissing First Nation, as well as the Dokis First Nation. We wish to recognize the long history of the First Nations and Métis peoples in Ontario, and show respect to them today.

We recognize and deeply appreciate their historic connection to this place. We also recognize the contributions of the Métis, Inuit and other Indigenous peoples have made in both shaping and strengthening this community in particular, and our province and country as a whole.

As settlers, this recognition of the contributions and historic importance of Indigenous peoples must also be clearly and overtly connected to our collective commitment to make the promise and challenge of Truth and Reconciliation real in our community.

1.2 Partnership Acknowledgement

The District of Nipissing Social Services Administration Board (DNSSAB) would like to thank the community partners and individuals from across the District of Nipissing who assisted and supported the Nipissing Counts 2021 initiative. The DNSSAB would like to thank the following organizations:

Nipissing District Homelessness and Housing Partnership Community Advisory Board
Low Income People Involvement of Nipissing (LIPI)
AIDs Committee of North Bay & Area (ACNBA)
Crisis Centre North Bay
Nipissing First Nations True Self – Debwewendizwin Program
North Bay Indigenous Friendship Centre
Canadian Mental Health Association North Bay & District
The Gathering Place
The Salvation Army Community & Family Services North Bay
North Bay Police Service
YES Employment Services
Hope Awaits Ministries
North Bay Regional Health Centre
North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit
North Bay Jail
North Bay Public Library
Nipissing Transition House
Ontario Disability Support Program – Ministry of Children, Community & Social Services
Legion Service Bureau
Compassionate Committee North Bay
Canadore College
Nipissing University
West Nipissing General Hospital & Alliance Centre
West Nipissing Public Library
Horizon Women's Centre
Mattawa & Area Food Bank
Hopital de Mattawa Hospital
Township of Mattawa
Mattawa Women's Resource Centre
Temagami Non-Profit Housing Corporation
East Ferris Public Library
Callander Public Library
Township of Chisholm
District of Nipissing Social Services Administration Board – Resource Centre South Algonquin
The City of North Bay

2.0 Background

On Wednesday October 13, 2021 beginning at 8:00am through to October 14, 2021 at 7:59am, the District of Nipissing Social Services Administration Board (DNSSAB) oversaw the implementation of a 24-hour enumeration of homelessness in the Nipissing District. This initiative included both a Point-in-Time (PiT) count and survey that was funded by the Community Homelessness Prevention Initiative (CHPI). The count and survey of individuals experiencing homelessness took place within the communities of North Bay, Mattawa, West Nipissing, Temagami, East Ferris, Callander, Chisholm, and South Algonquin. The objective of this year's enumeration was not only to gather demographic and numerical information on the District's homeless population, but also to use this information – with consent – to add individuals to the District's first operational By-Name List registry. The results from this event will assist the DNSSAB and District community partners including local municipalities, service and support providers, to triage clients effectively to services, help these individuals on a needs-basis based on prioritization, and advocate for resources necessary to end homelessness. Further, this data will assist in the decision-making process surrounding policies and programs, with the goal of reaching the DNSSAB's vision of creating health communities without poverty.

The information gathered from this initiative will allow the Nipissing District to:

- Create and implement the District's first operational By-Name List registry
 - Use the By-Name List to support coordinated access, effective triage to services, and advocate for the necessary resources to end homelessness
- Identify the demographics and needs of the local homeless population;
- Enhance system planning and program development;
- Measure progress towards ending homelessness;
- Increase public awareness about homelessness in our communities;
- Test the efficacy of programs and interventions currently in place, aimed at ending homelessness

3.0 The Results

3.1 Definitions

| Unsheltered Homelessness |
|---|
| Those who are sleeping in places unfit for human habitation. This includes sleeping in the following types of locations: the streets, alleys, parks, public locations, transit stations, abandoned buildings, vehicles, and other outdoor locations where people who are homeless may sleep. |
| Absolute Homelessness |
| Sheltered Homelessness |
| Those who are sleeping in emergency shelters, extreme weather shelters, violence against women shelters, and transitional shelters. This can also include people who are receiving vouchers to stay in hotel/motel rooms when there are no shelter beds available. |
| Absolute Homelessness |
| Provisionally Accommodated |
| People who are “couch-surfing”, meaning they are living temporarily with others but do not have security of tenure. Provisionally housing populations can also be staying temporarily in a motel/hotel or those who are staying in a public institution (hospital, detox, detention, etc.) but do not have permanent housing. |
| Transitionally Housed |
| A type of accommodation that is meant to bridge the gap from homelessness to permanent housing through the use of structure, supervision, and support. It is an intermediate step between emergency shelter and permanent housing that is limited in time to a stay of approximately three months to three years. Transitional housing also provides an environment where individuals can work in a supported environment to address issues that led to homelessness. Individuals will be working towards moving on to long-term permanent housing. |
| Dependent Children |
| During the administrative count and survey process, participants and service provider staff identified the number of dependent children who parents/guardians were identified as homeless during the screening process. |

3.2 Overall Enumeration Data

Enumeration data includes those who were counted through the successful completion of a Nipissing Counts survey, combined with those who were counted through an administrative count process on behalf of the community partners servicing the homeless population during the 24-hour time period covering Wednesday October 13th, 2021 at 8:00am through to Thursday October 14th at 7:59am.

The data collected through enumeration provides insight into the minimum number of individuals who were experiencing homelessness in the Nipissing District within the given 24-hour period.

Due to the transient nature of homelessness and the vulnerability of the homeless population, the enumeration of homelessness total will always be considered an under-representation of the total number of individuals experiencing homelessness in the Nipissing District over a 24-hour period.

| Administrative Count |
|---|
| Coordinated count data was collected from emergency shelters, transitional housing providers and public institutions during the 24-hour time period. Administrative count data from these organizations is de-duplicated to ensure that the same person is not included more than once. |

| Survey Data |
|---|
| The survey data provides totals for specific categories of homelessness, which were included in the overall enumeration total. The survey data totals included in the overall total found below include: those who indicated they were sleeping unsheltered, those experiencing hidden homelessness (ie. couch surfing), and individuals who did not know where they would be staying but did not have a fixed address. |

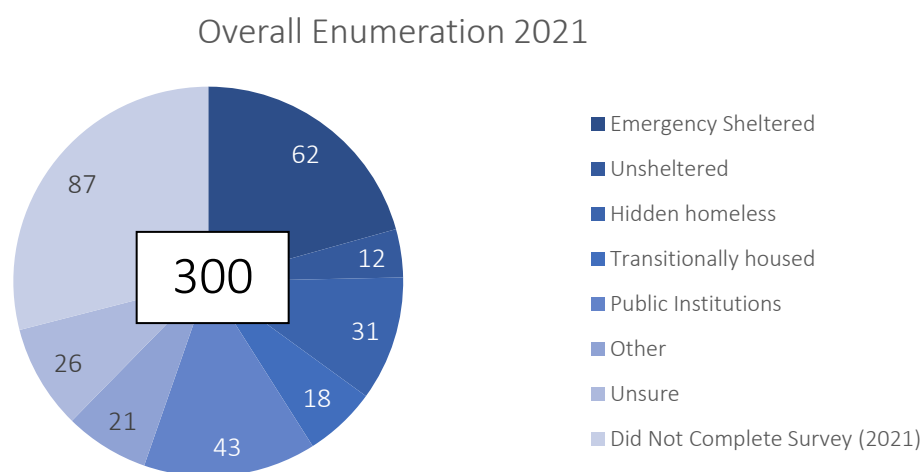


Figure 1: Overall Enumeration 2021

3.3 The Survey

From Wednesday October 13th beginning at 8:00am and proceeding through to Thursday October 14th at 7:59am, Nipissing Counts 2021 surveys were conducted throughout registered locations across the District. These locations included the communities of North Bay, Mattawa, West Nipissing, Temagami, East Ferris, Callander, Chisholm and South Algonquin.

| | |
|-----|---|
| 248 | Surveys used throughout the event |
| 7 | Individuals screened out |
| 20 | Duplicate surveys – not included in the final results |
| 87 | Individuals counted through tally sheets and administrative data |
| 213 | Total number of valid, de-duplicated surveys used in the enumeration and demographic analysis |

300

Total number of people counted who were experiencing homelessness in the District of Nipissing on October 13, 2021

3.4 Survey Findings

The demographic information and respondent need insights found in this section are based on the analysis of 213 surveys conducted in District communities including: North Bay, Mattawa, West Nipissing and South Algonquin. No surveys were completed in Temagami, East Ferris, Callander or Chisholm.

North Bay

197

Mattawa

7

West
Nipissing

7

South
Algonquin

2

3.4.1 Sleeping Arrangements

Individuals completing the survey were asked to provide information regarding their sleeping arrangements for the night of October 13th, 2021. As part of the screening process, respondents who indicated they had their “Own apartment/house/room rental/monthly motel/hotel rental” were screened out as they did not fit the working definition of homelessness for this research.

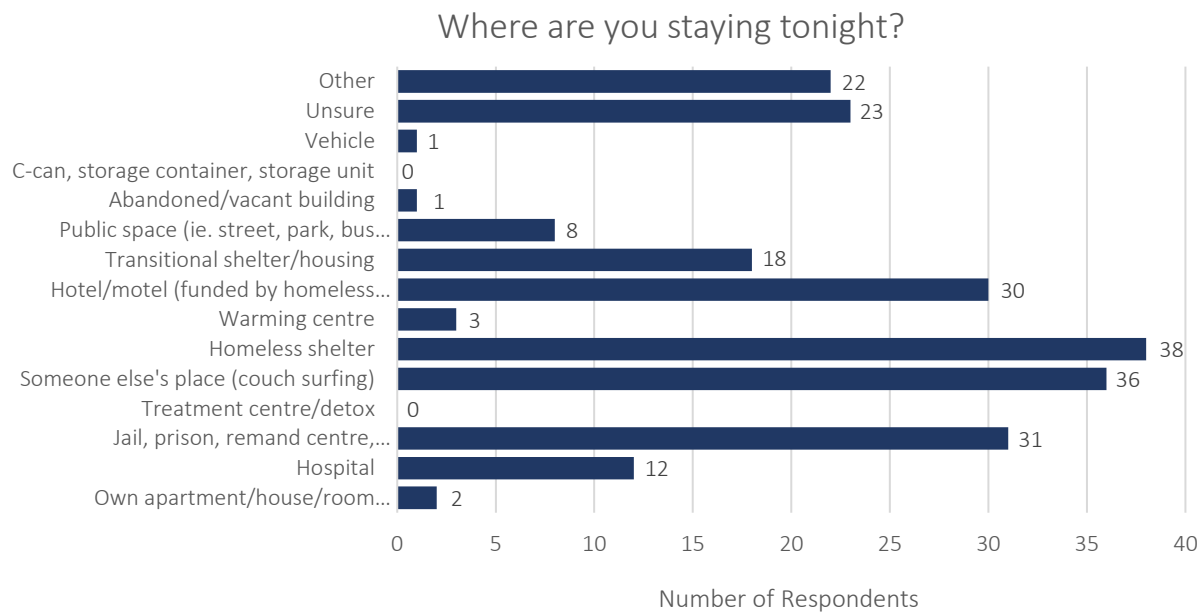


Figure 2: Where are you staying tonight?

Key Findings:

- When asked, “Where are you staying tonight?” respondents most frequently indicated that they were staying in an emergency shelter (N = 62, 29.11%)
- A total of 43 respondents (20.18%) were surveyed while staying in a public institution including jails, prisons, remand centres, or detention centres; hospitals; or treatment centres including those used for detoxification

- The third highest response category included those who were experiencing “hidden homelessness” or “couch-surfing” with a total of 31 or 14.55% of respondents
- 26 (12.21%) individuals did not know where they would be spending the night, but did not have a place of their own
- There were 12 (5.63%) individuals who were living unsheltered, or “sleeping rough” at the time the survey was conducted
- The remaining 18 (8.45%) respondents indicated that they were transitionally housed

3.4.2 Family Homelessness

During the survey, respondents were asked the question, “do you have any family members or anyone else staying with you tonight?” to which 43 (20.18%) indicated that they had dependents/children, a partner/spouse, or another family member staying with them. It should be noted that eight respondents did not answer this question.

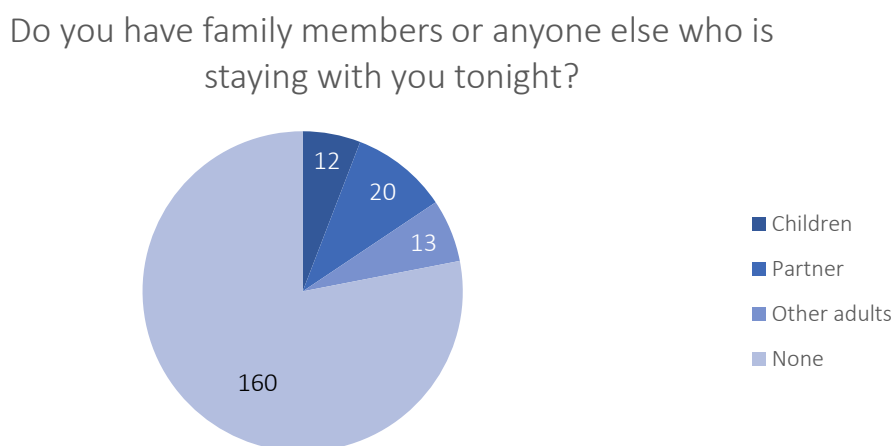


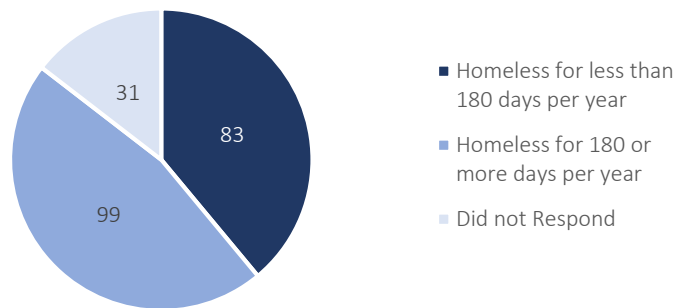
Figure 3: Do you have any family members staying with you tonight?

3.4.3 Demographic Profile of Homelessness

Not only is it important to build a snapshot of *how many* individuals are experiencing homelessness in the Nipissing District, but learning *who* or *which demographic groups* are building this snapshot will help community partners, service and support providers to adapt and align resources responsively based on the populations they are serving.

3.4.3.1 Chronicity

Chronic vs. Not Chronic Homelessness



99 (46.5%) of the 213 survey respondents identified as being homeless for more than 180 days (6 months) of the last year.

Figure 4: Chronic vs. Not Chronic Homelessness

3.4.3.2 Age of Respondents

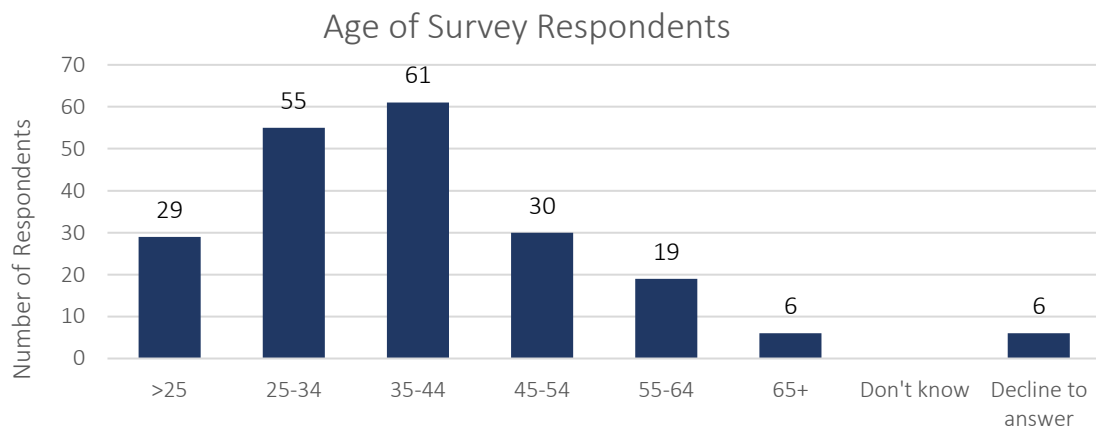


Figure 5: Age of Survey Respondents

The results of the survey showed that 29 (13.61%) respondents were under the age of 25. The majority of respondents were between the ages of 25 and 44, with 55 (25.82%) in the 25 to 34 age range, and 61 (28.63%) in the 35 to 44 age range. 19 (8.92%) respondents fell in the 55 to 64 age category, and 6 (2.81%) were 65 years of age or older. 6 respondents declined to answer the question. There were 7 incomplete surveys from which data could not be pulled.

3.4.3.3 Age at First Homelessness

Survey respondents were asked to indicate at what age they first experienced homelessness. The results can be seen in the chart below.

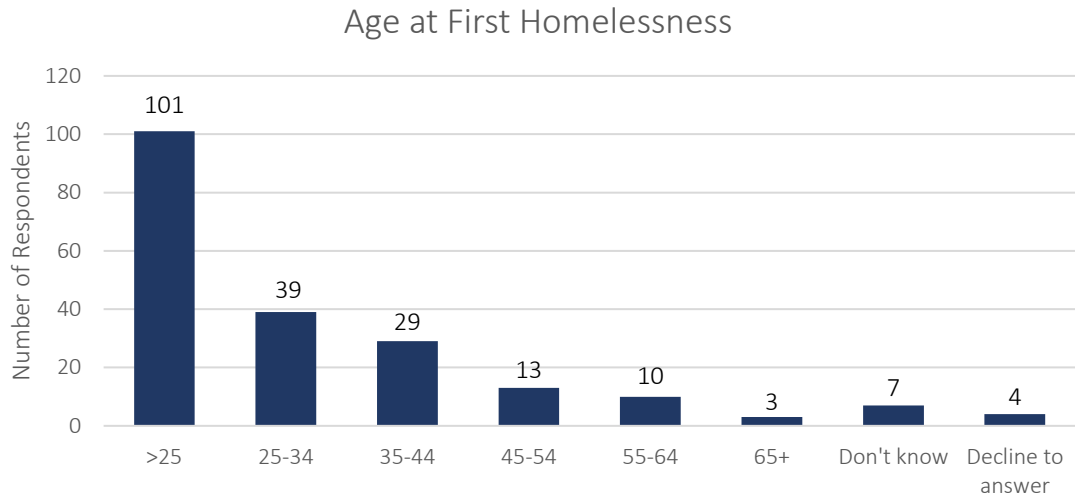


Figure 6: Age at First Homelessness

The majority of respondents (101 or 47.41%) reported that they had first experienced homelessness before the age of 25. The trend shown above indicates that the younger an individual is, the more likely they are to experience homelessness for the first time. In other words, younger individuals are more susceptible. As in the last section, 7 respondents did not fully complete the survey accounting for the missing responses to this question.

3.4.3.4 Gender Identity

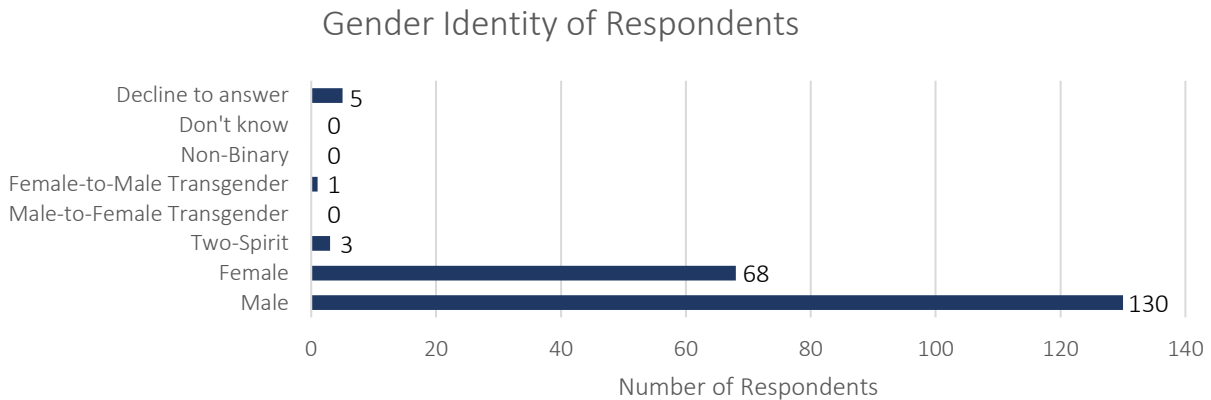


Figure 7: Gender Identity of Respondents

The above chart represents the distribution of gender identity. The majority (130 or 61.03%) of respondents identified as male, demonstrating that male individuals are at a higher risk of experiencing homelessness than their female, two –spirit, transgender, or non-binary counterparts. Female respondents represented 31.92% of the total surveyed homeless population, followed by 1.4% identifying as two-spirit, and 0.04% identifying as having transitioned from female to male.

3.4.3.5 Sexual Orientation

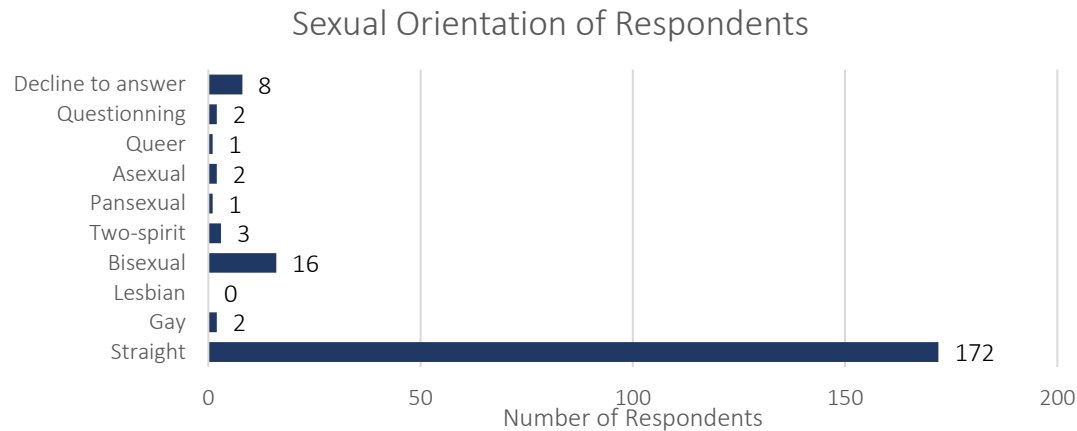


Figure 8: Sexual Orientation of Respondents

Previous research shows that those with, “minority sexual orientations...appear to be disproportionately at risk for homelessness” (Corliss et al. 2011). Sexual orientation is based on who an individual is or is not sexually attracted to. The results of the 213 surveys found that 27 respondents or 12.67% of the studied population identified as a sexual minority. The remaining 172 respondents, or 80.75% identified as straight or heterosexual.

3.4.3.6 Indigenous Identity

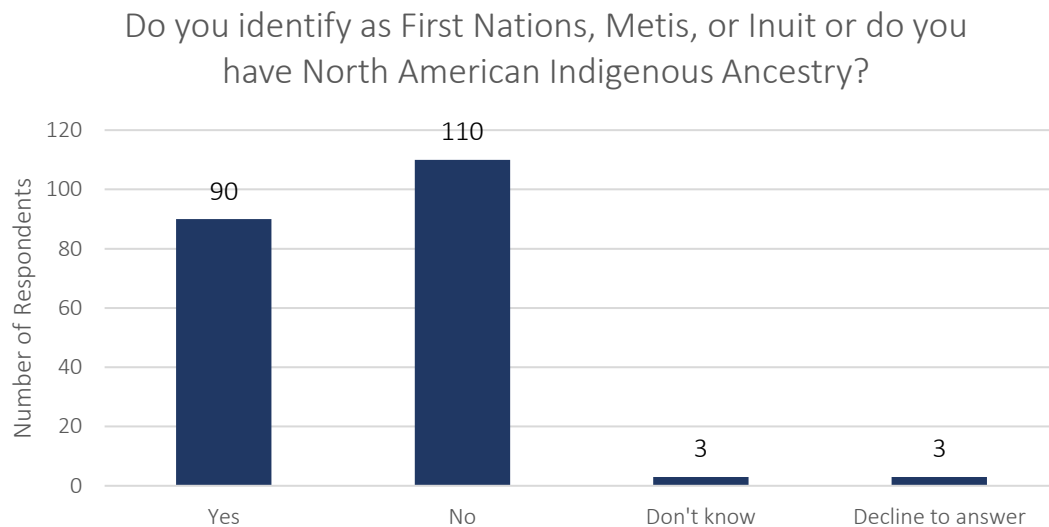


Figure 9: Do you identify as First Nations, Métis or Inuit, or do you have North American Indigenous Ancestry?

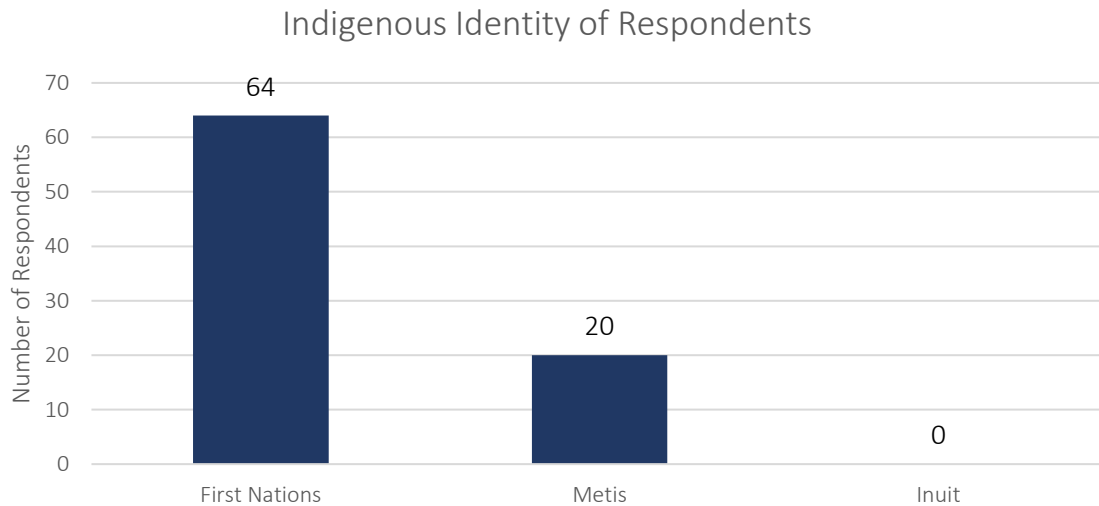


Figure 10: Indigenous Identity of Respondents

One of the vulnerable demographics susceptible to experiencing homelessness highlighted in many previous research studies, was Indigenous identity. Patrick (2014) studied the contributing factors that lead to Indigenous homelessness. Her results showed that historical dispossession of lands, colonial and neo-colonial practices of cultural oppression and erosion, intergenerational traumas, systemic racism, government policies and the current economy and housing markets all play an integral part of the susceptibility of Indigenous individuals to experiencing homelessness. It is important to note, that the concept of “home” is not universal, and may not refer to just housing. “Home” can be spiritual, as it is for many of Indigenous cultures. Based on the completed surveys, 90 individuals (42.25%) identified as having Indigenous ancestry. Although the majority of respondents (110 or 51.64%) indicated that, they did not have Indigenous ancestry.

Based on the data collected from the 90 Indigenous respondents, 64 individuals (71.11%) identified as First Nations, “persons who identify as such, and who may or may not be registered under that title” (Patrick 2014). 20 individuals (22.22%) identified as Métis: a culture derived from a mix of Indigenous and European ancestry, “with a unique culture, language, traditional homeland and sense of nationhood” (Patrick 2014). There were no respondents of Inuit ancestry. Those of Inuit ancestry are descendant from the ancient Thule people, and “have occupied parts of Canada’s northernmost regions thousands of years before European arrival” (Patrick 2014).

Respondents that identified as having Indigenous ancestry were asked which communities or bands they were from, producing the list below.



Figure 11: Indigenous Communities from which Respondents Relocated

3.4.3.7 Racial Identification

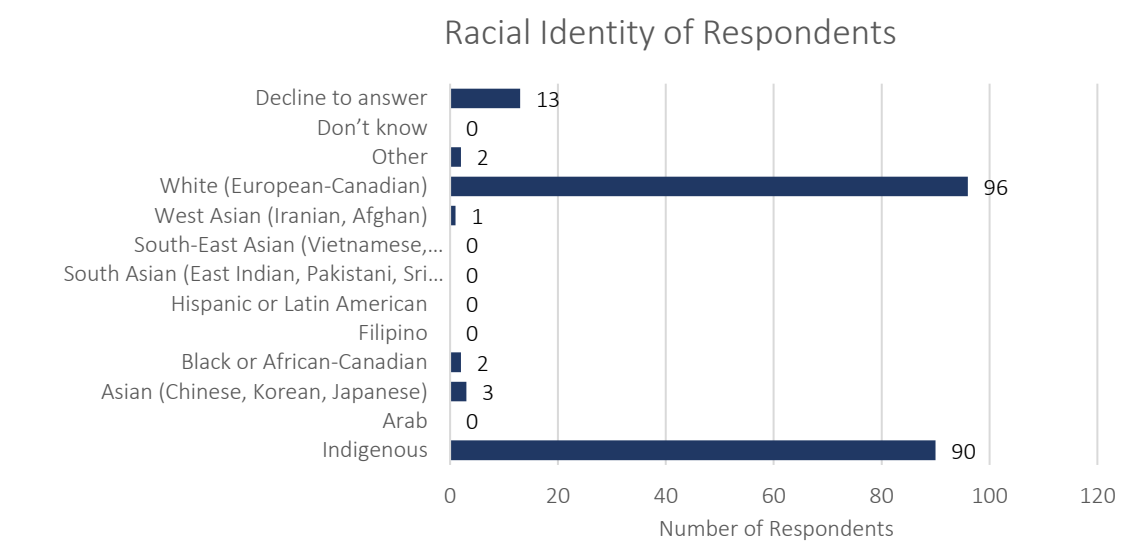


Figure 12: Racial Identity of Respondents

The racial identity of respondents was collected. This data showed that the majority of the surveyed population identified as European-Canadian (White or Caucasian) (96 or 45.07%), and Indigenous (90 or 42.25%). These findings were unsurprising, as these two racial identities have been highlighted as two of the most popular in the Nipissing District population according to the 2016 national census.

3.4.3.8 Veteran Status of Respondents

According to Veterans Affairs Canada (2021), there are currently 1,920 veterans living in the Nipissing District. The results of the Nipissing Counts survey indicate that, 13 of these veterans (6.10% of survey respondents) had served in the Canadian Military. While no respondents had previously served in the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) alone, one respondent stated that they had served in both the Canadian Military and RCMP.



3.4.3.9 Sources of Income

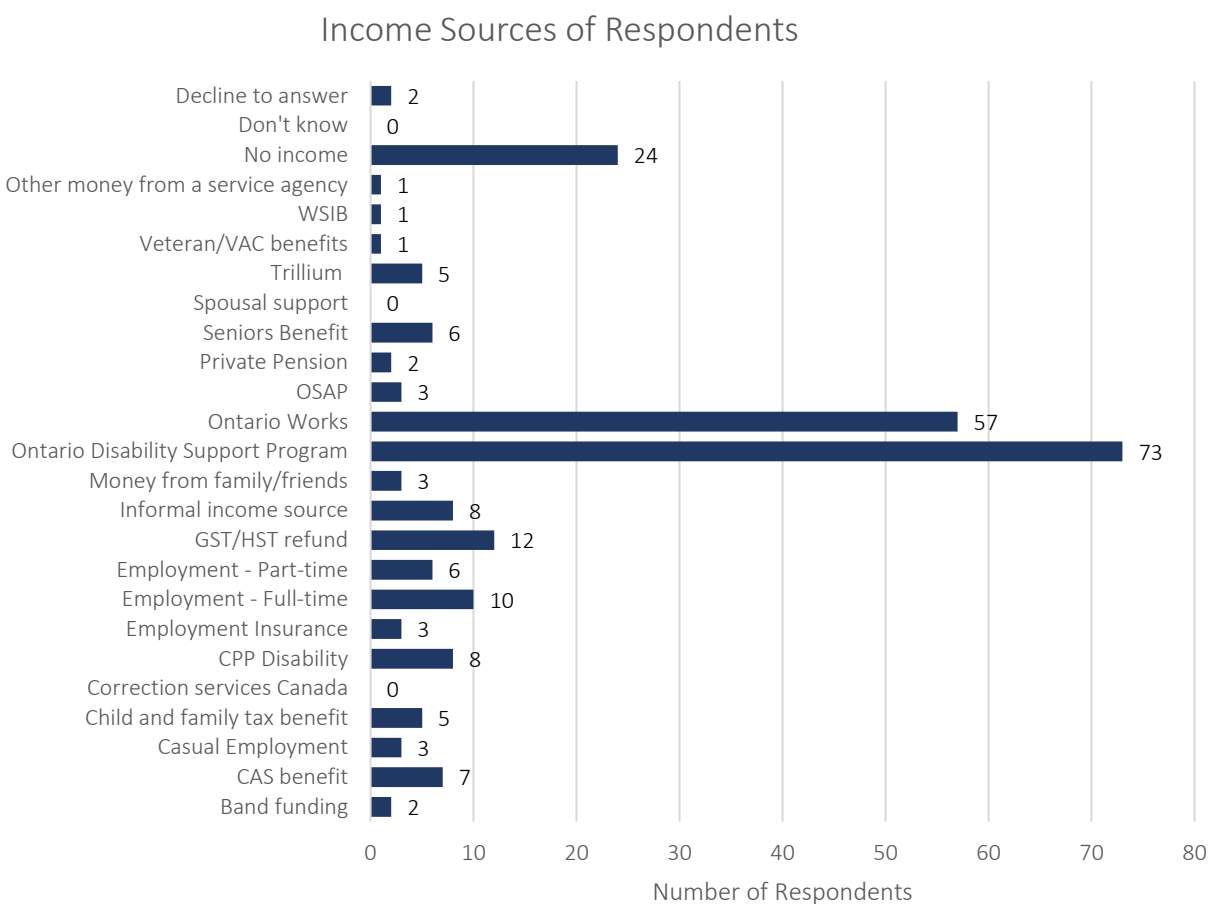


Figure 13: Income Sources of Respondents

As part of the survey questionnaire, respondents were asked to identify their sources of income. The above chart shows the distribution of responses. Of the 213 participants, 73 (34.27%) indicated that they receive Ontario Disability Support Program assistance, and 57 (26.76%) identified as Ontario Works recipients. From this, it can be concluded that the majority of respondents were recipients of social assistance. Other key findings from these results include:

- 24 (11.26%) respondents had no income
- 12 (5.63%) received GST/HST refunds
- 10 (4.69%) were obtained full-time employment
- 8 (3.75%) respondents were recipients of CPP Disability
- 8 (3.75%) maintained an informal source of income. Examples of this include panhandling, bottle collection, and sex work.
- 7 (3.28%) received a per diem benefit through the Children's Aid Society (CAS)
- 6 (2.81%) respondents identified Seniors Benefits as a source of income
- 6 (2.81%) indicated that they were employed part-time
- 5 (2.34%) received Trillium benefits
- 5 (2.34%) were recipients of the Child and Family Tax Benefit
- 3 (1.41%) received the Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP) payments
- 3 (1.41%) respondents indicated that they were receiving money from family and/or friends
- 3 (1.41%) were living off of Employment Insurance (EI)
- 3 (1.41%) maintained casual employment
- 2 (0.93%) indicated that they received Indigenous Band funding
- 2 (0.93%) stated that they were receiving payments from their private pension
- 1 (0.46%) respondent indicated that they were currently receiving Workplace Safety and Insurance Board payments
- 1 (0.46%) was receiving money from another service agency
- 1 (0.46%) was eligible and receiving Veterans Affairs Canada (VAC) benefits
- 2 (0.93%) respondents declined to identify their source of income

It is important to note that the categories above are not exhaustive, in that respondents could indicate more than one source of income.

3.4.3.10 Spoken Language

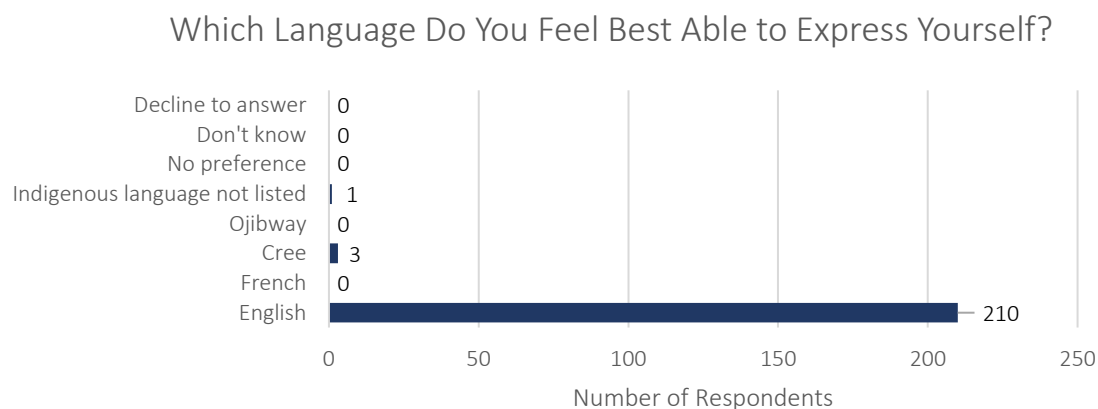


Figure 14: Which language do you feel best able to express yourself?

Before the survey was administered, respondents were asked, “In which language do you feel best able to express yourself?” to which the majority of respondents (210 or 98.59%) indicated that English was their preferred language. Three respondents (1.41%) indicated that they felt best able to express themselves in Cree, and one individual stated that they felt best able to express themselves in an Indigenous language not listed on the survey. It is again important to note that this list was not exhaustive, similar to the

category of “income”. One respondent indicated that they were comfortable expressing themselves in both English and Cree.

3.4.3.11 Experience with the Child Welfare System

Were you ever in foster care or in a youth group home?

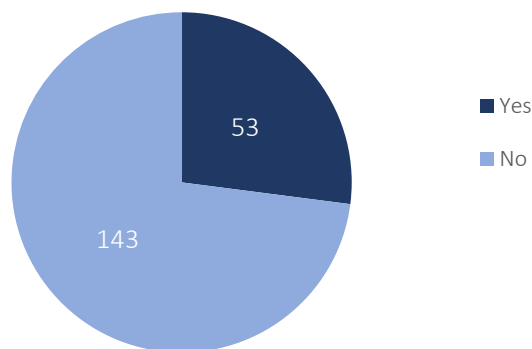


Figure 15: Were you ever in foster care or in a youth group home?

Previous research has found that individuals who have been in the child welfare system are more susceptible to experiencing homelessness (Echenberg & Jensen 2012). This may be due to the system rules that state a child has “aged out” when they reach 18 years of age, regardless if they are developmentally ready, or skilled enough to be responsible for their own well-being. Due to this, many individuals leave the welfare system and as a result end up homeless (Echenberg & Jensen 2012). On the survey, respondents were asked, “As a child or youth, were you ever in foster care or in a youth group home?”. Of the 213 surveys, 53 (24.88%) individuals identified as having been in the child welfare system.

3.4.3.12 Student Homelessness

With the addition of Canadore College to list of community partners participating in the enumeration, it was important to include student status as a demographic factor in the analysis. This data would allow the local colleges and university to provide services to their students who may be experiencing homelessness.



Of the 213 survey respondents, 7 identified as being a student enrolled at a post-secondary institution. It is important to note that enrollment status was not limited to Nipissing University and Canadore College, but any post-secondary institution that the individual may be attending.

3.4.4 Homeless Experiences

3.4.4.1 Causes for First-Time Housing Loss

What caused you to lose your housing for the first time?

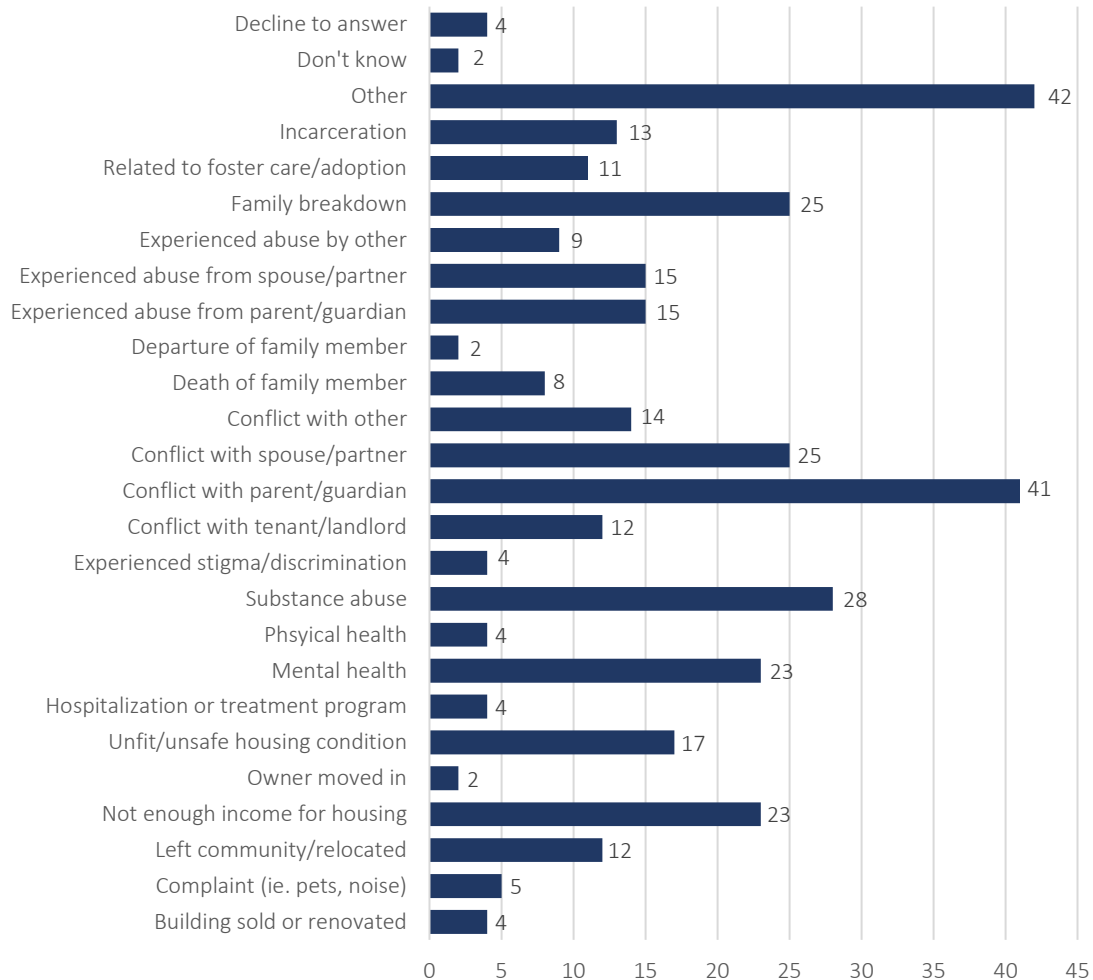


Figure 16: What caused you to lose your housing for the first time?

Of the causal factors indicated by survey respondents, the most frequent were reasons for first-time homelessness were not indicated on the survey (42 or 19.71%). For reasons indicated on the survey, the five most frequent responses included “conflict with parent/guardian” (41 or 19.24%), followed by “substance abuse” (28 or 13.14%), “conflict with spouse/partner” (25 or 11.73%), “family breakdown” (25 or 11.73%). Both “mental health issues” and “not enough income for housing” received 23 (10.79%) responses.

3.4.4.2 Causes for Most Recent Housing Loss

What caused you to lose your housing most recently?

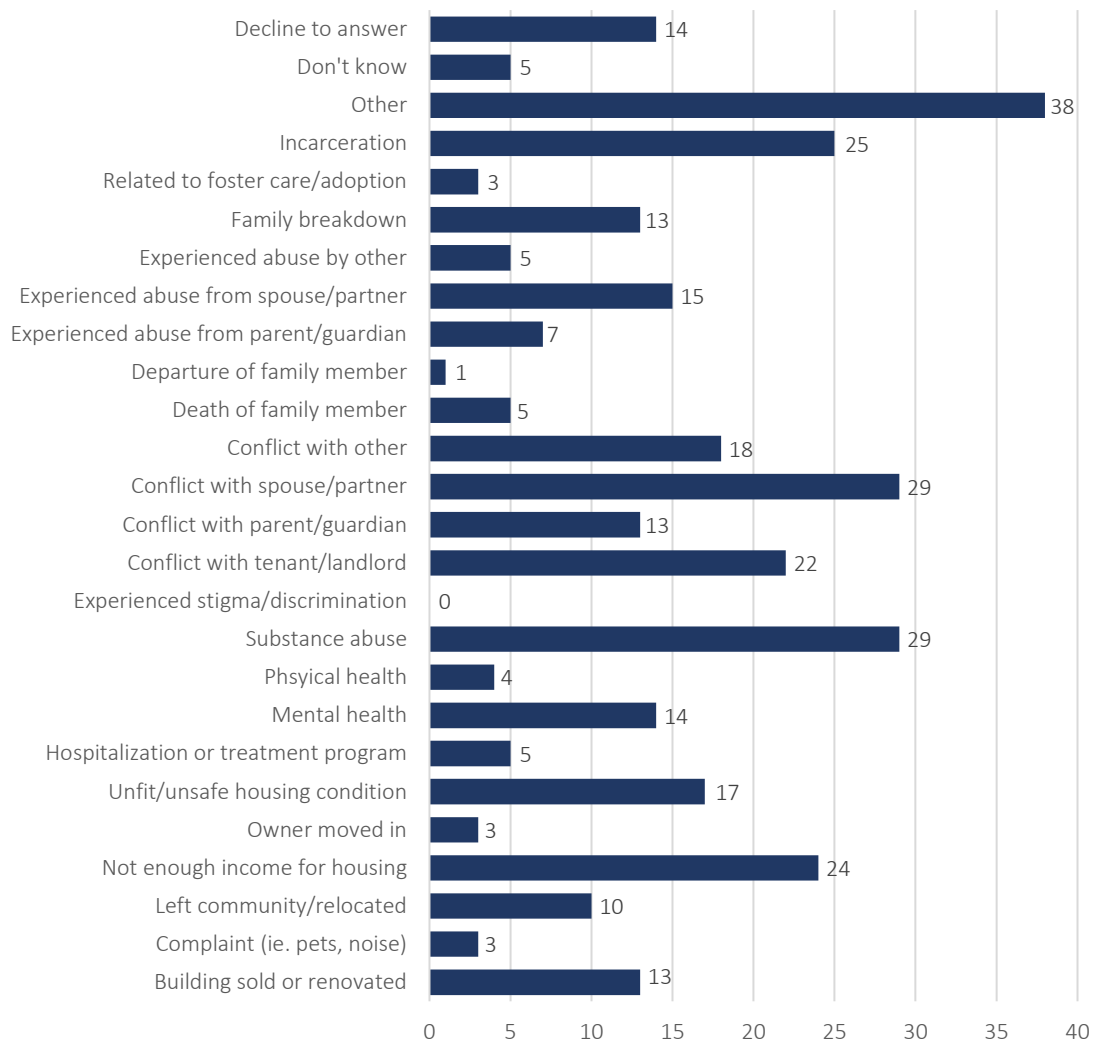


Figure 17: What caused you to lose your housing most recently?

The indicated causal factors of most recent housing loss according to the respondents of the survey can be seen in the above chart. The top five reasons for housing loss in 2021 were:

1. Reasons not indicated (38 or 17.84%)
2. Conflict with spouse/partner (29 or 13.61%)
3. Substance abuse (29 or 13.61%)
4. Incarceration (25 or 11.73%)
5. Not enough income for housing (24 or 11.26%)

3.4.4.3 Barriers to Obtaining Housing

What challenges or problems have you experienced when trying to find housing?

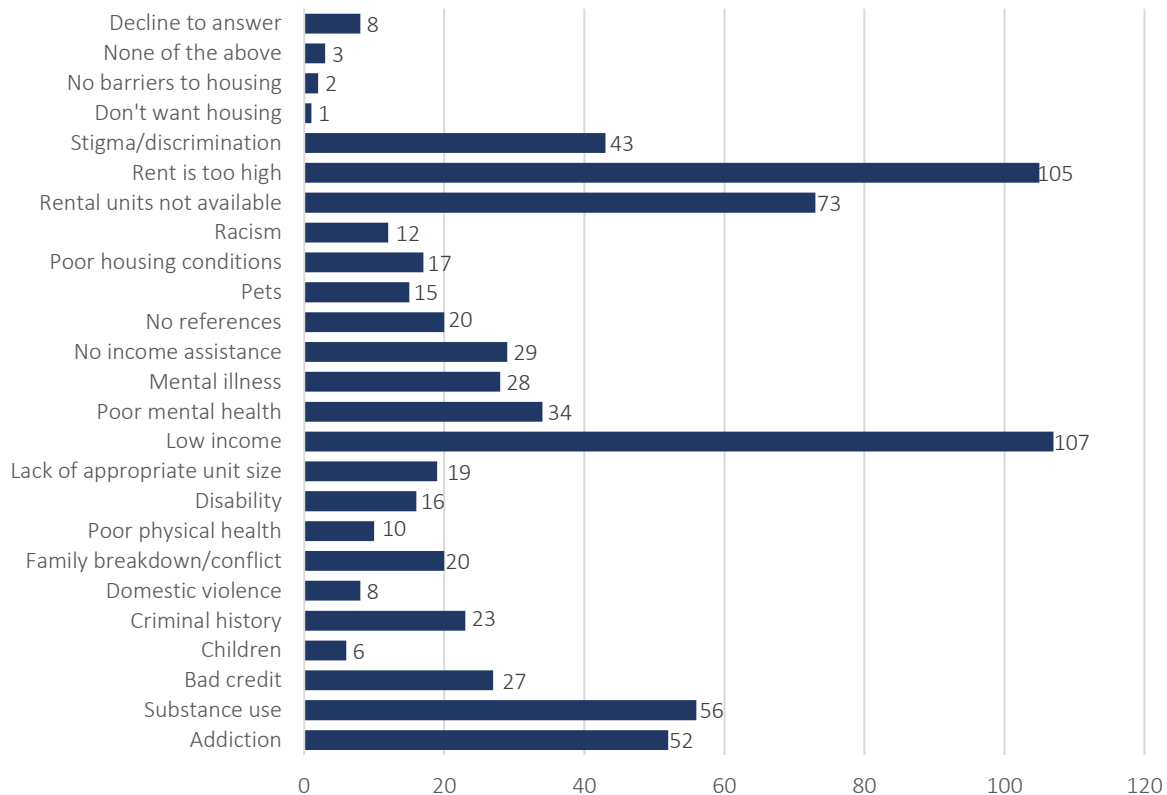


Figure 18: What challenges or problems have you experiences when trying to find housing?

In order to understand the challenges faced by the homeless population in the Nipissing District concerning obtaining housing, the most frequently indicated barriers were studied. Respondents were asked, “What challenges or problems have you experienced when trying to find housing?”. The top five reasons provided by participants were:

1. Low income (107 or 50.23%)
2. Rent is too high (105 or 49.29%)
3. Rental units not available (73 or 34.27%)
4. Substance use (56 or 26.29%)
5. Addiction (52 or 24.41%)

It is important to note that the reasons indicated in the above chart are not exclusive, in that respondents could indicate more than one reason for their difficulty finding housing.

3.4.4.4 Health-Related Challenges

Health-related issues encompass both the mental and physical well-being of the individual. During Nipissing Counts 2021, surveyed participants were asked “Do you experience challenges related to any of

the following: illness or medical condition, physical disability, learning disability, mental health, or substance abuse?”. As indicated by the respondents, the results are as follows:

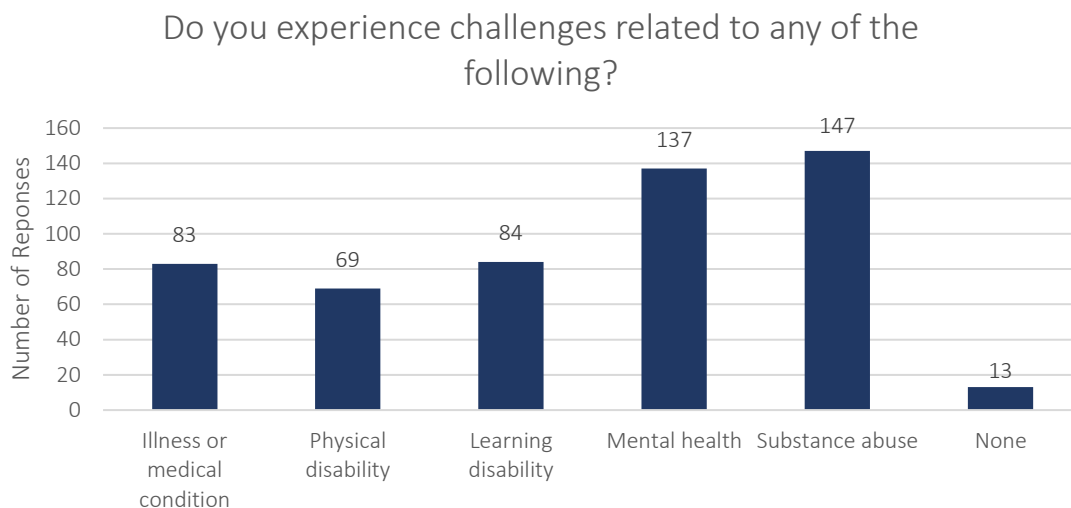


Figure 19: Do you experience challenges related to any of the following?

Almost all individuals experiencing homelessness in the Nipissing District experience at least one form of health-related challenge. 147 (69.01%) respondents indicated that they experience challenges related to substance abuse, 137 (64.31%) struggle with mental health, 84 (39.43%) reported having a learning disability, 83 (38.96%) stated they are dealing with an illness or medical condition, and 69 (32.39%) are coping with a physical disability. 13 respondents indicated that they did not experience challenges related to any of the above health-related issues.

3.4.4.4.1 Willingness to Accept Treatment

If you were offered a place in a treatment program today,
would you accept it?

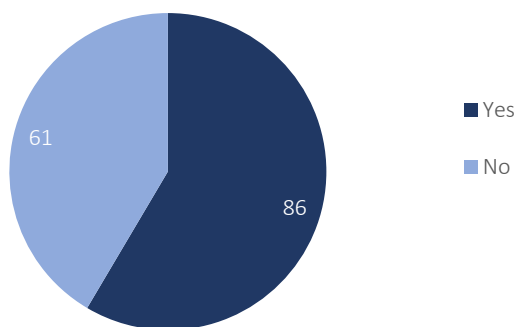


Figure 20: If you were offered a place in a treatment program today, would you accept it?

The respondents that indicated they experienced challenges related to substance abuse were asked if they would accept a place in a treatment program, should one become available. Of the 147 applicable

respondents, more than half (86 or 58.50%) said that yes, they would accept a place in a treatment program if offered.

3.4.4.5 Plans for Winter

In order to effectively prepare to serve and support the homeless population, a question regarding the respondent's plans for winter with regards to housing was posed. The response distribution was as follows:

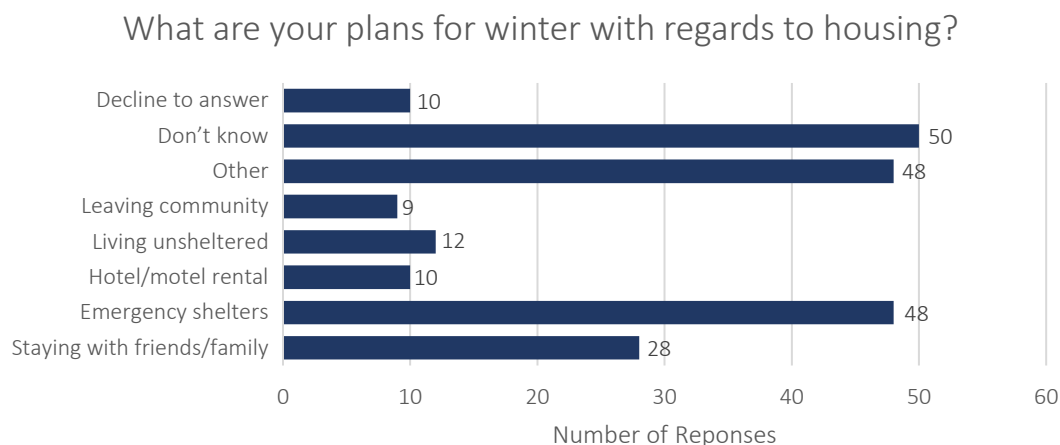


Figure 21: What are your plans for winter with regards to housing?

The most frequent response to the question above was “Don’t know”. 50 (23.47%) respondents did not know what to do for housing during the winter months. Almost the same number (48 or 22.53%) of those experiencing homelessness stated that they would likely utilize emergency shelters. 48 (22.53%) respondents indicated that they had plans other than those listed as an option on the survey. 28 (13.14%) said they would be staying with friends or family, 12 (5.63%) indicated that they did not have any plans, and would be living unsheltered, 10 (4.69%) stated that they would be renting a hotel or motel room to stay in, and 9 (4.22%) respondents said they would be leaving the community. 10 respondents declined to answer the question.

It is important to note that some respondents, who indicated that they would be staying at an emergency shelter during the winter months, also indicated that if this option were not available they would be living unsheltered.

3.4.5 Homeless Migration in the District

During the COVID-19 pandemic, concerns were raised about homeless individuals travelling between communities and adding financial and social pressures on already challenged shelter and service capacity within the District. In an effort to address this concern, additional survey questions were added pertaining to where the respondents lived before moving to the Nipissing District (if applicable), how long ago they moved to the District and the reasons behind their migration.

3.4.5.1 Where Did You Live Before Coming to Nipissing District?

Of the 213 survey respondents, 147 (69%) indicated that they have not always lived in the Nipissing District. The locations from which they migrated can be seen below.



Figure 22: Migration Distribution of Homelessness in the Nipissing District

The above distribution map visualizes the areas within Ontario from which homeless individuals have migrated over the last few decades. As shown, the migration patterns are evenly distributed between southern, eastern and northeastern Ontario.

3.4.5.2 Reasons for Migration

To understand why individuals experiencing homelessness have travelled to the Nipissing District, the indicated reasons for moving were examined. Respondents were asked, “What is the main reason you came to the community?”. The reasons given are listed below in order of response frequency.

The indicated reasons provided by respondents of the survey directly related to homelessness are highlighted in the chart above. These reasons include “access emergency shelters”, and “access services and supports”. Combined, these reasons for migration account for 11% of all responses given. The remaining 89% of respondents indicated that they moved to the Nipissing District for reasons not directly related to homelessness.

| Indicated Reason | Number of Responses | Percentage of Respondents |
|------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------------|
| Family moved here | 35 | 24% |
| Reason not on survey | 28 | 19% |
| Visit friends/family | 16 | 11% |
| To find housing | 13 | 9% |
| Access emergency shelters | 10 | 7% |
| To attend school | 8 | 5% |
| Incarceration | 7 | 5% |
| Personal safety reasons | 6 | 4% |
| Access services and supports | 6 | 4% |
| Seeking employment | 5 | 3% |
| Secured employment | 4 | 3% |
| Attend court | 1 | 1% |
| Environmental displacement | 1 | 1% |
| Recreation | 1 | 1% |
| Decline to answer | 6 | 4% |
| Total | 147 | 100% |

Figure 23: Reasons for Migration

The most common reason for migration was found to be “family moved here”, accounting for 35 or 24% of respondents. The subsequent indications for moving to the District not directly related to homelessness, included reasons not indicated (28 or 19%), to visit friends/family (16 or 11%), to find housing (13 or 9%), to attend school (8 or 5%), or incarceration (7 or 5%). Personal safety was also a listed reason (6 or 4%), as was seeking employment (5 or 3%), secured employment (4 or 3%), to attend court (1 or 1%), environmental displacement (1 or 1%), and recreation (1 or 1%). These reasons were not considered to be directly related to homelessness, as those not experiencing homelessness could have used these justifications for moving to the area. Six respondents declined to indicate why they moved to the District.

3.4.5.3 Timeline and Migration Cross-Analysis

To go one step further with the migration analysis, how long the respondents had been living in the area was examined. Surveyors asked the participants, “How long have you been in the community?”. The results from their responses can be found below.

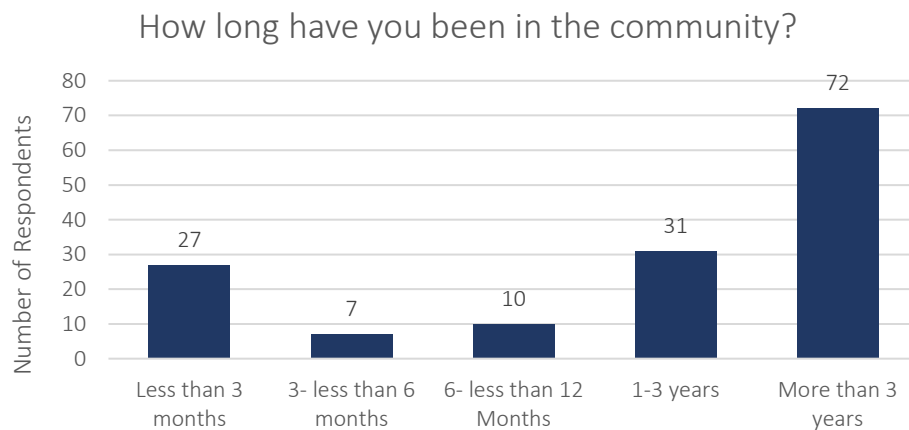


Figure 24: How long have you been in the community?

27 (28.36%) respondents indicated that they had just recently (within the last 3 months) moved to the District. Seven (4.76%) stated that they had arrived between 3 to less than 6 months ago, 10 (6.80%) had moved to the area between 6 to less than 12 months ago, and 31 (21.08%) arrived between 1 to 3 years ago. Nearly half of all respondents indicated that they had moved here more than 3 years ago (72 or 48.97%).

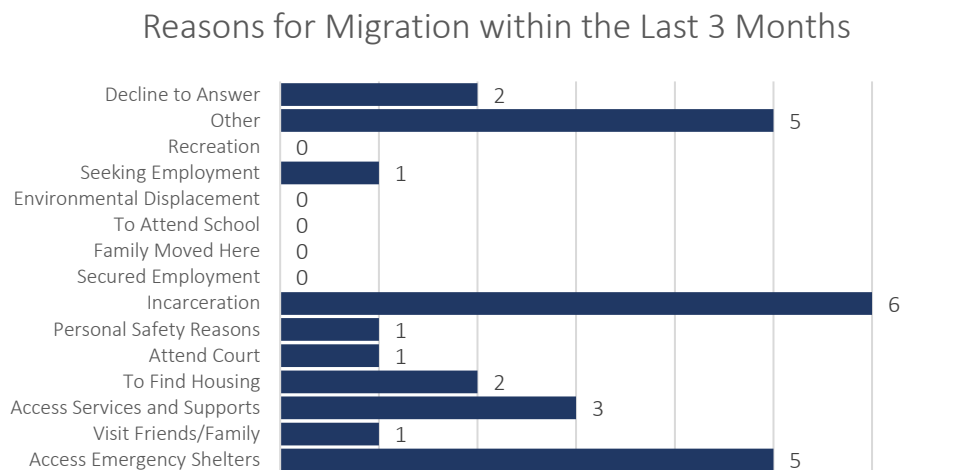


Figure 25: Reasons for Migration within the last 3 Months

The majority (19 or 70.37%) of respondents that migrated to the District within the last 3 months indicated that they had moved to the area for reasons not directly related to homelessness. Incarceration was the most frequented response with 6 (22.22%) participants, followed by other reasons not indicated on the survey (5 or 18.51%), to find housing (2 or 7.40%), to visit friends/family (1 or 3.70%), to attend court (1 or 3.70%), for personal safety reasons (1 or 3.70%), and to seek employment (1 or 3.70%). Eight respondents (29.62%) within the last 3 months migrated to the District to access homeless services including shelters and supports.

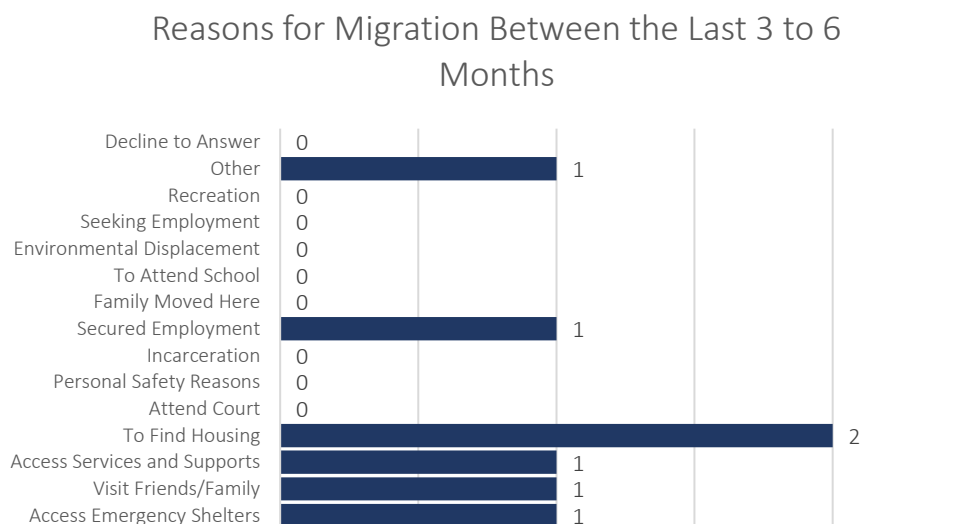


Figure 26: Reason for Migration Between the last 3 to 6 Months

Within the last 3 to 6 months, 2 or 28.57% of respondents indicated that they had moved to the area for reasons directly related to homelessness. The remaining 5 or 71.43% of respondents moved for reasons like finding housing (2 or 28.7%), visiting friends and family (1 or 14.28%), they had secured employment (1 or 14.28%) and other reasons not indicated on the survey (1 or 14.28%).

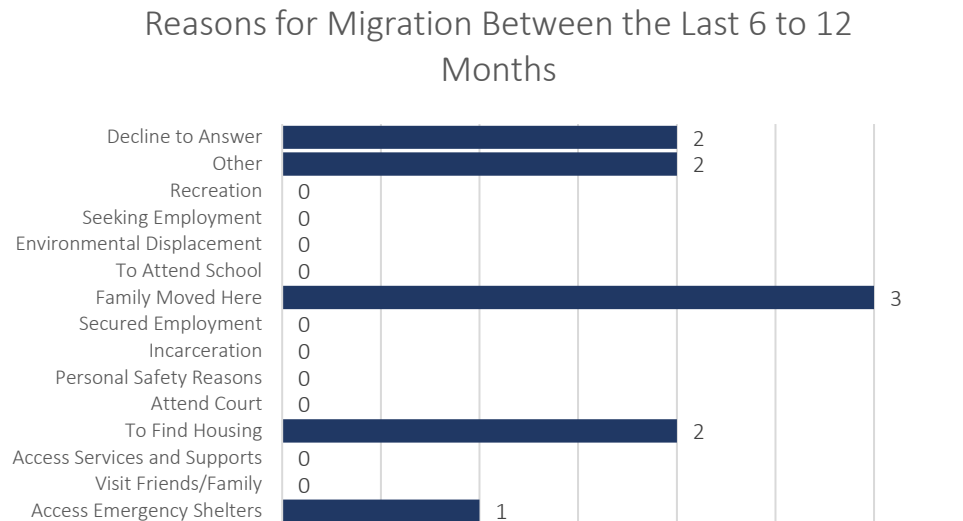


Figure 27: Reasons for Migration Between the last 6 to 12 Months

Responses of those who migrated to District between the last 6 to 12 months indicate that only 1 (10%) individual came for reasons directly related to homelessness. Other participants stated they travelled for the following reasons: family moved here (3 or 30%), to find housing (2 or 20%), and other reasons not indicated on the survey (2 or 20%).

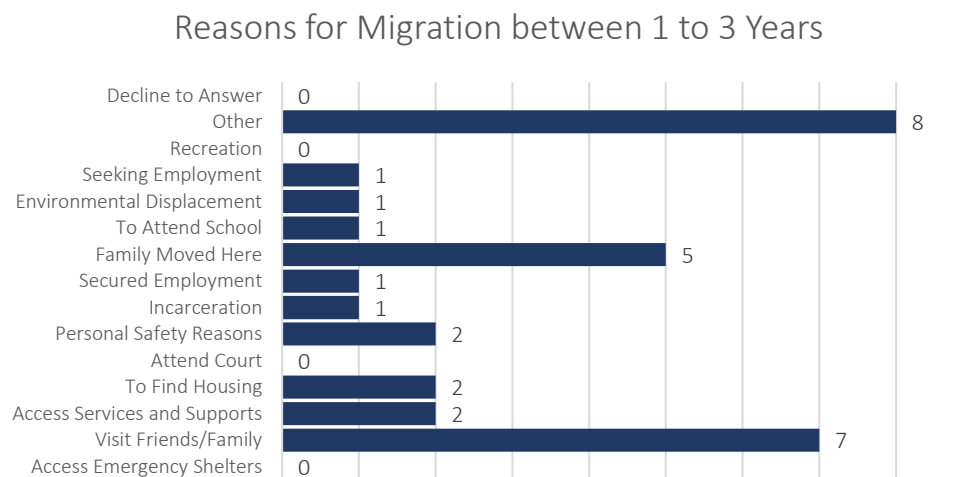


Figure 28: Reasons for Migration Between the last 1 to 3 Years

Of the 31 individuals that moved to the Nipissing District in the last 1 to 3 years, 29 (93.54%) indicated that they had migrated for reasons not directly related to homelessness. These respondents had come for other reasons not indicated on the survey (8 or 25.80%), to visit friends and family (7 or 22.58%), their family had moved here (5 or 16.13%), to find housing (2 or 6.45%), personal safety reasons (2 or 6.45%),

incarceration (1 or 3.22%). Others moved to the area, for they had secured employment (1 or 3.22%), to attend school (1 or 3.22%), or were seeking employment opportunities (1 or 3.22%). The remaining two individuals (6.45%) had moved to the District to access services and supports.

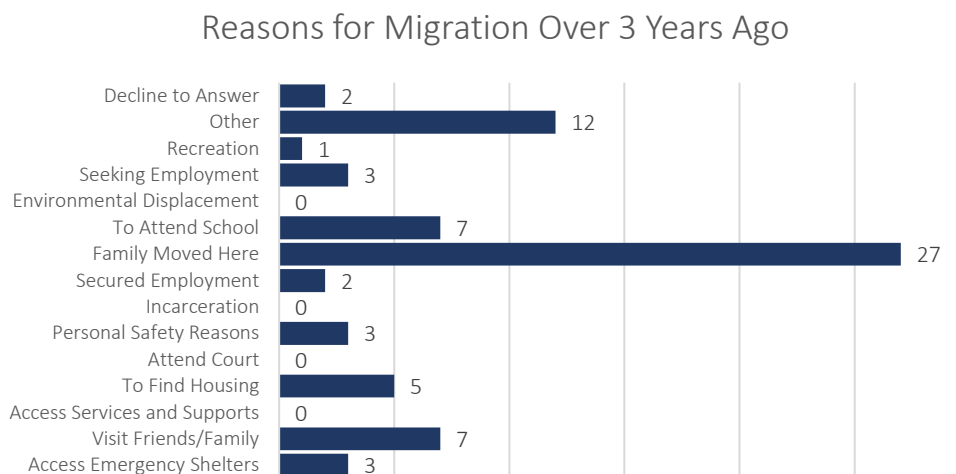


Figure 29: Reasons for Migration over 3 Years Ago

Individuals, who moved to the District over 3 years ago, arrived primarily for the reason that their family had moved here (27 or 37.5%). Twelve (16.66%) individuals relocated for other reasons not indicated on the survey. 7 (9.72%) moved to attend school, 7 (9.72%) to visit friends and family, and 5 (6.94%) to find housing. 3 individuals had moved (4.16%) for personal safety reasons, 3 (4.16%) seeking employment, 2 (2.77%) had secured new employment, and 1 (1.38%) for recreation. 3 respondents (4.16%) indicated that they had moved to the area for reasons directly related to homelessness, such as accessing emergency shelters.

3.4.6 Relation of COVID-19 to Homelessness

With the introduction of the COVID-19 virus, it was important for the DNSSAB and associated community partners working collaboratively on the project to understand if the survey respondents' most recent housing loss was related to the pandemic. Participants were asked, "Was your most recent housing loss related to the COVID-19 pandemic?" to which they could respond "yes" or "no".

Was your most recent housing loss related to
the COVID-19 pandemic?

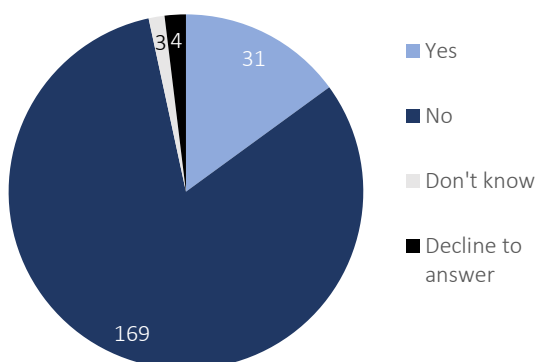


Figure 30: Was your most recent housing loss related to the COVID-19 pandemic?

Of the 213 survey respondents, 31 (14.55%) indicated that their most recent housing loss was, in fact, related to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the majority of respondents (169 or 79.93%) stated that their most recent loss of housing was not related to the pandemic. 3 (1.41%) did not know, and 4 (1.87%) declined to answer. There were also 6 respondents who did not complete this section of the survey.

4.0 Introduction of the By-Name List

A provincial mandate was introduced in 2021, which required all Service Managers in Ontario to implement a By-Name List (BNL) registry by December 31, 2021. A BNL can be described as a registry of real-time data that supports coordinated access between community partners working within the homelessness sector; an understanding of homeless inflow and outflow; triage to services and supports; and advocacy for the policies and resources necessary to functionally end homelessness (Built for Zero Canada, 2021). The BNL registry will allow community partners to “track and support the individuals and families moving in and out of homelessness, connecting them to the most appropriate housing, services and supports” (Mark King, DNSSAB Board Chair 2021).

Survey respondents were asked if they would consent to having their information collected and used to add them to the Nipissing District’s first operational By-Name List. 169 respondents agreed, resulting in a 79.34% uptake.

5.0 Comparative Analysis

In an effort to better comprehend the fluctuations in the homeless population from the last enumeration conducted in March of 2020, a comparative analysis using the results from both surveys was completed.

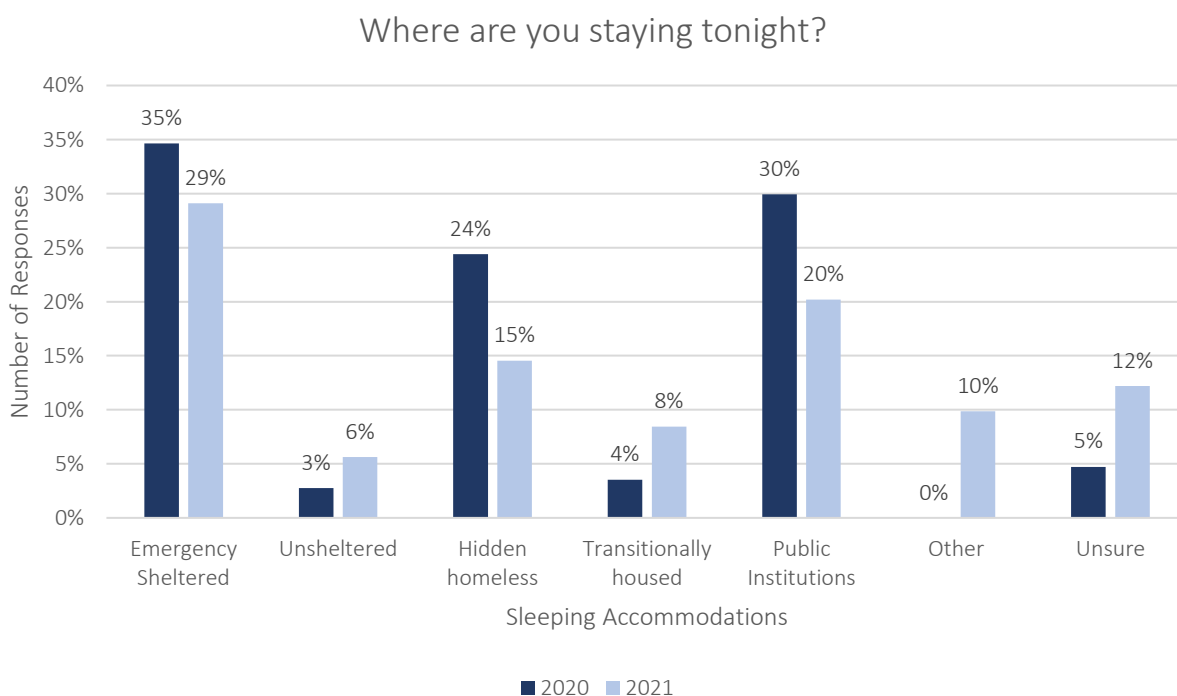


Figure 31: Where are you staying tonight?

When conducting the comparative analysis between the results from 2020 and 2021, decreases in the number of individuals accessing emergency shelters (-6%), those in public institutions (-10%), and those who are experiencing hidden homelessness (-9%) were observed. These fluctuations could be attributed to a reduction in building capacities due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and the introduction of social distancing, public safety and screening protocols.

Increases were seen in populations accessing transitional housing (+4%), those living unsheltered (+3%), and those who did not know where they would be spending the night (+7%).

6.0 Conclusions

6.1 Key Areas for Discussion

Based on the results of Nipissing Counts 2021, the following items have been identified as key areas for discussion between the community partners of the District, in order to best serve the homeless population living here.

6.1.1 Changing Face of Homelessness

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent closures and regulations, homelessness became more visible in the Nipissing District. Shelter capacities were reduced, front-line services were restricted and homelessness support services were often forced to operate with limited staffing options and restrictive protocols.

The increase in the number of individuals experiencing homelessness in the Nipissing District was **3%**. This was an addition of **7 individuals** from the results shown in the 2020 enumeration. One possible explanation for this variance could be the inclusion of student homelessness in the 2021 survey. This year's survey found that 7 individuals identified as students enrolled in a post-secondary institution – the exact increase in number from the 2020 count. This additional question was added to the survey at the request of the postsecondary institutions in the District. Both Nipissing University and Canadore College indicated that they have resources for students who may be experiencing homelessness and wished to use the PT Count as an opportunity to connect students to those resources.

6.1.2 Chronic Homelessness

99 respondents (46%) identified as being chronically homeless. Addressing chronic homelessness is a significant area for discussion. Both the federal and provincial governments have directed that communities address this as a priority with the goal of ending chronic homelessness within the next ten years. The community will need to consider chronic homelessness when identifying the priorities that will first be addressed by the Coordinated Access Nipissing process.

6.1.3 Indigenous Homelessness

It is important to discuss the overrepresentation of Indigenous individuals experiencing homelessness. It was found that 90 respondents (42.25%) identified as having Indigenous ancestry. This issue requires further discussions on current services and supports in the community, areas where improvements to those services and supports can be made, and where enhancements can be made for future opportunities to secure resources necessary to address the problem.

6.1.4 Housing Affordability

When asked what barriers were encountered when trying to obtain housing, the number one response was that income was too low. This was followed by the fact that the cost of rent in the District is too high. When combined, these two factors produce a crisis for those experiencing homelessness. Discussions are required around these issues, to ensure adequate housing is available to those in need.

6.2 Final Thoughts

The enumeration results produced from Nipissing Counts 2021 provide a snap shot of homelessness within the District of Nipissing on October 13, 2021. Although 300 individuals were identified as being homeless on that date, an increase of 3% from March of 2020, it is important to recognize the progress that has been made in just 19 months.

Although the pandemic challenged the homelessness system's capacity within the District, it also provided opportunities for collaboration between community partners, promising practices, and new funding. Since the March 2020 PiT count, almost 100 new shelter, transitional and permanent housing units have been funded for individuals coming from homelessness. Included in these are dedicated units for Indigenous populations.

In addition, Nipissing Counts 2021 will launch the use of the District's first operational By-Name List allowing community partners to work collaboratively and build a Coordinated Access process specific to the Nipissing District. Previous counts have not had the ability to identify which respondents have been homeless from one enumeration to the next, but with the BNL in use that will not be an issue during future counts.

The results of Nipissing Counts 2021 should be seen as another opportunity to identify priorities, align resources and measure the District's progress towards ending chronic homelessness by 2024.

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