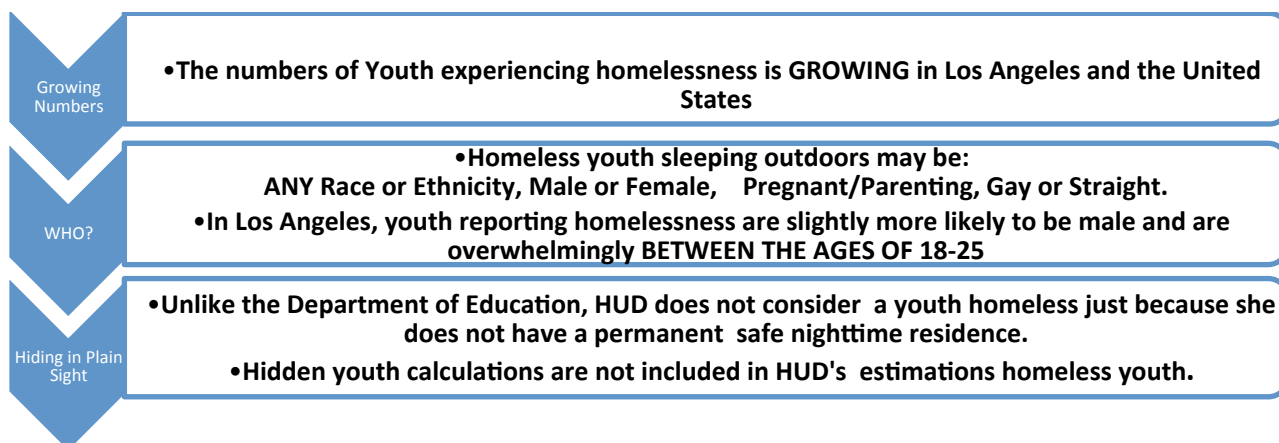


## Growing Numbers and Hiding in Plain Sight



Youth homelessness is on the rise nationwide<sup>i</sup> and is a growing concern in Los Angeles County.

- In 2006 one in every 50 children in the United States was homeless; by 2013 it was one in 30 – over 2.5 million children.<sup>ii</sup>
- In Los Angeles there was a 22.8% increase in unaccompanied youth from 2011 to 2013 alone.<sup>iii</sup>
- Up to 40% of area homeless youth may identify as LGBTQ.
- In Los Angeles, youth reporting homelessness are slightly more likely to be male
- Los Angeles homeless youth are overwhelmingly **BETWEEN THE AGES OF 18-25**.
- In California and in Los Angeles, almost half of unaccompanied youth are **black or African-American**; however there is variation between service areas.<sup>iv</sup>

### THE LAHSA/ HUD Homeless Count Numbers DO NOT include HIDDEN YOUTH

#### **Hidden Youth are Hiding in Plain Sight:**

- Many of these youth may be in school or holding low-paying jobs and have inadequate resources to pay for a place to live. They couch-surf, sleep in cars or abandoned structures, or find temporary refuge in a hotel room. Days may be fraught with uncertainty about where to safely sleep that night.
- Other youth are alone and prostituting in exchange for a bed, locked up by their pimp or trafficker, sleeping in a park, hiding in an abandoned building, stoned in a crack house, running with a gang or lost in a meth alley.

#### **LA Homeless Services Authority and other experts agree that Reported Youth numbers ARE AN UNDERCOUNT<sup>v</sup> due to:**

- The understandable unwillingness of youth to self-identify
- Youth do not typically mix with the homeless adult population
- Youth are less likely to access traditional homeless services frequented by adult homeless populations
- Youth frequently “hide in plain sight” to avoid stigma.
- Count Numbers vary widely due differing federal definitions of “homelessness”, and subjectivity of counters.
- The failure to adopt a uniform rigorous reporting methodology designed to capture hidden homeless youth

**LAHSA/HUD DOES NOT consider youth who are sheltered for the night but who are without a permanent nighttime place of residence to be Homeless. LACOE/Department of Educations DOES consider these youth homeless.**

<sup>i</sup> National Center on Family Homelessness, *America's Youngest Outcasts: A Report Card on Child Homelessness (2014)*; Los Angeles County Chief Executive Office, *Los Angeles County Services for Transition Age Youth: Programs, Data and Recommendations (2011)*.

<sup>ii</sup> *America's Youngest Outcasts*.

<sup>iii</sup> 2013 Greater Los Angeles Homeless Count, The 2014 Annual Homeless Assessment Report (AHAR) to Congress

<sup>iv</sup> *Los Angeles County Services for Transition Age Youth: Programs, Data and Recommendations; Children's Data Network Report on Transition Age Youth (2015)*

<sup>v</sup> 2015 Greater Los Angeles Count Results-LA Homeless Service Authority “Youth Count”