

*“There are several limitations to the counting method used. It underestimates the number of people experiencing homelessness, particularly because homeless individuals are difficult to contact and it is not possible to effectively count hidden homeless individuals... Because the method was only a snap-shot of homelessness on one day, it doesn't differentiate between long-term and short-term homelessness.”*

The Community-University Institute for Social Research (CUISR) conducted the first count of Saskatoon's homeless population on May 22, 2008.

The purpose of the project was to count the absolute and sheltered homeless population and determine their service use patterns and needs. The results will be used to inform service delivery and better serve the needs of Saskatoon's homeless population.

The data collected indicate that homelessness is a problem in Saskatoon and that further policy discussions and actions are required.

A total of 260 people (228 adults and 32 children) were counted as being homeless on the night of May 22, 2008. Of those, 199 people (169 adults and 30 children) were housed by service providers (emergency shelters and transitional housing) and 48 people (46 adults and two children) were counted outdoors.

Most respondents had been homeless for less than a year. The shortest amount of time a respondent was homeless was 1.5 days whereas the longest amount of time was 16 years.

Most of the respondents were not on a housing waiting list and all of those who were on a waiting list found the application process difficult.

Most respondents wanted help finding housing and reported they were not currently receiving help from housing, health, or justice service providers.

Perceived housing affordability and availability were the key barriers to finding housing that were identified by the survey's respondents.

Nearly 70 per cent of the people interviewed in shelters were employed and 74 per cent worked full-time. People staying in shelters and transitional housing reported higher levels of employment than people staying outdoors.

Equal proportions of respondents were Caucasian (41 per cent) and Aboriginal (46 per cent). Considering that Aboriginal peoples comprise 9.8 per cent of Saskatoon's population, the findings confirm the overrepresentation of Aboriginal people within Saskatoon's homeless population.

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## Homelessness and Housing in Saskatoon

### Evidence-based Research Findings

#### Current Research in this area

Hidden Homelessness Research Project

Collection of baseline data for the Homelessness Partnering Strategy to complete the community plan

Policy paper on homelessness and housing in Saskatoon

Saskatoon Report Card on Homelessness

Homeless Individual and Family Information System (HIFIS)

*A homeless count looks at people sleeping outdoors or in emergency shelters/transitional housing, and does not take into consideration people who are considered the “hidden homeless” or those at risk of being homeless.*

Community university institute for  
social research

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